



19 July 2007.

The Secretary,
Senate Community Affairs Committee
Post Office Box 6100
Parliament House,
Canberra Act. 2600.

Dear Sir,

Inquirey into the cost of living pressures on older Australians.

I thank you for creating this committee, which will give some retirees joy in the fact that interest is being shown toward us. I would like to offer you my observations on some concerns to both my fellow retirees and myself. .

There are four main areas that I feel are contributing to a number of symptoms that are important;

1. Concern for ones own health and the Health Industry in general,
2. Concern for discrimination practiced by the Federal Government,
3. Federal Government decisions that are leading to problems for the public in general, and
4. Reluctance by the Federal Government to show tolerance, understanding tolerance and goodwill to fellow man and or woman.

The majority of people that near retiring age experience aches and pains that may or may not be important. It is most imperative that these problems are diagnosed promptly. If one cannot rely on the health system for the diagnosis then the retiree comes under pressure.

It is no advantage to the patient to hear State and Federal Governments pointing the finger at each other blaming each other for the health provision. I am sure that no one has been cured or; changed their votes because of the finger pointing, perhaps if some of the money being spent on invasions was transferred to the health system, the problem could be alleviated.

I, along with other retirees sought to reduce monetary overheads when approaching retiring age. One way to reduce overheads was to sell the house, place a caravan on a permanent sight in a caravan park and live in the caravan park. This proved to be a good decision until the G.S.T. was introduced. One thing we did not expect was for the Federal Government to discriminate against retirees that are long term residents of caravan parks. Under the cover of introducing the G.S.T., the tax was introduced onto the accommodation cost of long term retirees living in caravan parks. There are approximately 25 long term retirees in the caravan park that I reside, therefore if this number is consistent with other caravan parks there are quite a number affected.

Caravan park residents are the only people in Australia to pay G.S.T on their accommodation!

Federal Government decisions [through the Social Security Department] are contributing to increases in the rental market. Each year the

Social Security Department increases the minimum level of rental assistance, by \$104 per year. This in effect, increases the rent in all rental property! Owners with low cost property for rent have to increase the rent to ensure rent assisted tenants apply to rent his/her property. If he/she does not increase the rent each year maybe an existing tenant will become ineligible for rental assistance. **In other words the renter has to stay ahead of the Department of Social Security minimum amount.**

Owners of rental property are now very used to seeing their property charges increase, consequently they add on a dollar or so above the \$104, supposedly to keep the shareholders happy and /or their pockets full.

Most retirees are concerned about the reduction in Australian morals, respect to each other, and tolerance and attitude toward non Anglo Saxon immigrants and residents. Most of us wonder what we are leaving for our children!

I guess that your committee has read many words along the same lines, written by more eloquent than myself. I converse with many people in four states of Australia and regularly hear the same concerns expressed. It seems to me that it is a shame that Australia is so devoid of leadership that our standards have reached this level.

I realize that I cannot turn the clock back to the 40's, 50's and 60's, but if everyone showed some respect for each other it would go some way towards improving the situation.

I hope that my contribution has been helpful in some way to your deliberations,

Yours Faithfully,


Ian T Foote,