7th July 2007

The Secretary,
Senate Community Affairs Committee
Parliament House
Canberra

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re the cost of living pressures on pensioners.

Prices of food seem to rise weekly making it difficult to budget. The high price of petrol is a problem but it does not end there, most pensioners vehicles are older than average and those living away from public transport run up high kilometers requiring vehicle servicing etc.

Few pensioners can afford to travel to see relatives or go to funerals because a problem of it is very far from home.

The government review on superannuration will benefit the younger pensioner who have or will have this added financial advantage but all the older long-term pensioners will miss out.

Aged pensions should be to a level that they leave no need for travel assistance or car regoes allowance both of which are a problem for state treasurers.

Aged pensions should be reviewed annually by a panel and taken away from treasurers just like parliamentary salaries are, which has given parliamentarians and their assistants a 7% rise 2006/7 and a 6,7%rise in 2007/8 while pensioners received $500 making it worth $3.29 per week over 3 years, hardly enough for a couple of loaves of bread.

A scheme must be thought up that gives pensioners more piece of mind remembering that by the time a person reaches 70 years everything is wearing down, the car they drive, the curtains at the windows and furniture and even the house they live in.

Thought should be given to the fact that when we receive money it goes on food first and then on utilities, the council rates { which are going up } items like insurance [that will go up }, heating and cooling making it obvious that such luxuries as holidays and days away are dependant on the generosity of relatives which becomes an embarrassment.

Now the opportunity has presented itself why not put the system straight once and for all taking the pressure off both state and federal treasurers who would like nothing better than for us all to disappear and not be a problem.