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Submission: Dear Sir/Madam,

As a resident of Port Stephens I DO NOT support the proposal of the Special Rate Variation from Port Stephens Council.

During the consultation process by PSC, 70% of replies were opposed to any form of rate rise as this would impose a massive social burden in increasing the average ratepayers rates by \$700/yr by the end of the 7 year rate rise, this does not include any increases in waste management charges.

As an aged pensioner I am finding it increasingly difficult to keep up with all the increases in insurances car/house/health, electricity & water rates, food & fuel. I can sympathise with the other 23% of people over the age of 60 in the Port Stephens area to absorb such an impost on limited pensions and savings, let alone low income earners and residents in nursing homes. I admit that some of the councils proposals would be nice, but it is pie in the sky and the council should live within its means like everyone else.

The only way I see to meet the SRV would be to cease my private health insurance and add myself and wife to the public health system (two more to burden the system). This option is by far better than accepting the councils hardship plan which is appalling.

The council has refused to acknowledge the impact the SRV will have on many of their residents and I would suggest that the council be granted the minimum of rate increases.