

I am writing to ask you not only not to agree to public transport fares, but to lower them.

State Rail and CityRail's desire to increase them is not justified on grounds of equity and utility. Public services should not be provided on a commercial or cost recovery basis. The first and foremost consideration should be public utility. If State Rail and CityRail believe that they cannot provide an equitable and useful public transport service, they should be turning to government to seek the required funding to do so from general revenue. If in turn the government believes that public transport is appropriately funded, they should be asking State Rail and CityRail to demonstrate that they have spent available funds for the greatest benefit at the least cost.

If this fare increase is granted, neither the government or State Rail and CityRail will have to face the shambles that public transport has become over the past few years. They will not have to address the shortcomings of travelling on Sydney and greater metropolitan suburban and inter-urban trains. They will not have to provide clean and efficient rail services at an affordable cost to commuters.

Finally, any fare increases will only begin a further deterioration of public transport services that cumulatively will reduce patronage and hence the frequency trains serving the public.

In conclusion - please do not listen to State Rail and CityRail. Cheaper - not more expensive - fares will benefit not only commuters, but the integrity of the whole railway system.

Maris Bruzgulis