

Submission re. Public Transport Fares in Sydney and Surrounds

A significant rise in the daily fare cap from \$2.50 for senior opal card holders who are not on pensions will have a big impact on my husband and my behaviours, our social engagement, our cultural engagement, our health and well-being, our enjoyment of living in Sydney and our transportation choices. One of the fabulous things about living in Sydney has been the accessibility created by its public transport system and fares for those of us on a sufficient but limited income. That is at risk.

Will we choose to use our opal cards to go to the beach, to a film, to visit friends, to explore new areas, to get to the harbour, to do shopping, to walk by the ocean, in bushland, in unfamiliar suburbs or in the park as we currently do? Unlikely if it's at a significantly increased cost for the two of us when the marginal cost of using our 15-year old car is immaterial by comparison. Yes, we may still use public transport for the big day trips – to Katoomba, Kiama or Newcastle - but the shorter trips will be rarer while other transport or destination choices are possible.

Our choice of travel time and/or direction of travel often mean we're travelling on trains, buses and ferries with plenty of spare capacity. Losing the custom of lots of seniors will mean more empty seats on transport and in various venues, more road congestion and a disgruntled group of the population.