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Submission: I wish to make the following submission regarding the IPART review: Public Transport Fares in Sydney and Surrounds.

The proposed fare restructure will make a significant impact on my cost of living and I submit the following comparisons and figures in support of this assertion.

I travel daily between Berowra and St Leonards and have done for nearly two decades. With the Opal Card and its current regime of free trips after the first eight, my weekly expenditure on public transport is typically \$38.56. That is based on eight full peak fares of \$4.82. Occasionally I travel outside peak hours or have the opportunity/need to travel between Hornsby and St Leonards and so make additional savings.

The proposal to reduce the fare in mid-2016 to \$4.74 but remove the free-trip incentive would mean a weekly cost to me of \$47.40 - a 23% increase.

The proposal to increase the fares incrementally over the following two years to \$5.39 (in July 2018) represents an increase in cost to me of around 40%. That is calculated from the current fare, although I would anticipate some normal fare increase in that period, but not to that extent.

This increase is further highlighted when compared to the cost of paper tickets in 2013 prior to Opal becoming available to me. A quarterly ticket equated to \$21.78 per week. The proposed 2018 fare is a 147% increase on that.

I am a firm supporter of public transport and appreciate the convenience of the Opal card, although it initially cost me more each week. But the proposed fare reform will impose a significant burden on our household expenses.

Looking at the figures, this will also be the case for the many thousands of commuters travelling down the North Shore Line. Statistically, we may not represent the bulk of commuters, particularly in view of the suggestion that '60% will pay less in 2016-17' and '8% will pay more in 2018' (SMH 21-12-15). But there are still many thousands using the North Shore line who will be significantly worse off under the proposals.

I hope you take these matters into consideration.