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Submission: Good afternoon,

I would like to express my objection to the proposed price increase and proposed eligibility criteria in the Gold Concession and Concession Opal Card categories.

I am aware that the price of \$2.50 for the current Senior/Pensioner Card (or PET) has been applicable since 2005. You mention that the general level of prices (as measured by the CPI) have risen by almost 30%.

Have pensions increased by the same percentage that is currently proposed?

Have you also taken into account that recently the eligibility for a Pensioner Concession Card was made more restrictive with income and asset thresholds being substantially reduced?

Many previously eligible people can now no longer obtain (or retain) their Pensioner Concession Card.

This would disenfranchise quite a number of your customers if your recommendations were adopted.

You recommend that the eligibility criteria for a Gold Concession Card be restricted to holders of Pensioner Concession Cards or NSW War Widow/er Cards.

Holders of a NSW Seniors Card have been omitted as the only eligibility for a Seniors Card is an age limit and the provision that the holder works for less than 20 hours per week. This, you claim allows, "customers on relatively high incomes to access concessions".

If you are going to disallow customers whose income is high have you considered allowing customers who are holders of a Commonwealth Seniors Health Card to be eligible for a Gold Concession Card?

I believe that this card has some form of income restriction/limit.

I note that in the document no mention or consideration has been made in relation to the holders of a Commonwealth Seniors Health Card.

If you wish to "tighten" the eligibility for the Gold Concession Card then I would submit that this would be worthy of consideration.

I would also like to draw your attention to the fact that many Senior Citizens have only public transport to rely on to enable them to attend professional (medical) and social commitments. These are very important at this stage of their lives as too often we hear of people in this age group being isolated in their homes. We should do all that we can to encourage them to get out into their community. If this means that there may be some cost to the public purse then surely this consideration should be extended to them as they have contributed to the state for many years.

I would respectfully submit that the Draft Recommendations be modified as follows;

3. Pensioner Concession Card holders, NSW War Widow/er Card holders and Commonwealth Seniors Health Card holders should be eligible for a Gold Opal card.

4. NSW Seniors Card holders who do not also hold a Pensioner Concession Card, a NSW War Widow/er Card or a Commonwealth Seniors Health Card should be eligible for a Concession Opal card.

5. The Gold Opal daily cap should be set at \$2.50.

Yours faithfully,

Geoff Hook