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Submission: I am astounded that the NSW State Government already wants to change the Opal card. How often do they intend to do this?

In regards to the "first 8 trips and then it's free" rule, when the Opal cards were introduced the then Transport Minister encouraged us to "try to beat the system". Now the Transport Minister in that very same government is telling us all that we are somehow cheating or sending the Government broke! When any person does a basic TAFE Project Management course, one of the standard units that need to be completed is Risk. What are the foreseeable Risks with this style of ticketing? Did the NSW State Government not do a Risk Assessment before they introduced Opal? Did they not think that perhaps people would try to save money in this most expensive of cities?

Surely the main goal of having public transport is to encourage the public to use it. How will slugging every single user more money do that? For someone that catches a train from Parramatta to the City for work, a 10 trip cap would increase the price by \$10 or more per week - \$500 per year.

I also find it extraordinarily difficult to believe that anyone would think that doubling the price of pensioner tickets, or limiting their excursions to a couple of hours in the middle of the day, would be a good thing. I can't see how this could be an issue, anyway - there are hardly ever pensioners on my peak hour commutes, but after all they've done for this country surely the least we can do is encourage them to get out and about and enjoy their retirement. With most of them living below the poverty line, this would just be too cruel. For you or I an extra \$2.50 a day wouldn't mean so much, but for a pensioner it would make them question whether they really wanted to go out or not. It would take a big bite out of an already meagre budget.

With the current Light Rail works in George Street, my 5km commute by bus now takes 40 minutes each way every single day, despite the fact that I travel outside of peak hour. This is just a bit slower than running speed, and not much faster than walking speed. In the 21st Century! We are already inconvenienced enough without being slugged again and again.

I have one more comment that relates to my own personal experience. Sure, when Opal first started we were all gung-ho about saving money and doing \$2.10 trips at lunchtime. But that soon becomes tiring and I have realised that it's a massive waste of time. Surely your figures will show you that these short hops at the beginning of the week have slowed down. Why make massive changes to fix something that soon won't be much of a problem anyway.

Thank you for listening to me.