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Submission: I find it impossible to support the proposed changes to Gold OPAL card senior concession fares and eligibility for obtaining concession fares. Many of the Gold OPAL card holders are 'self funded' retirees who receive little or NO government grants, subsidies, pensions or benefits.

The current eligibility and fare structure of daily \$2.50 cap allows large numbers of self funded retirees to remain physically, mentally and emotionally fit and well, thus reducing the demand that these citizens place on the medical and welfare systems provided by both State and Federal Governments. Not only do the opportunities provided by the daily \$2.50 cap maintain the well being of seniors, especially those who are widows/widowers and others living in single person households, it allows seniors to remain independent by providing affordable and easy access to social events, medical and other appointments, meeting friends, shopping, attending cultural activities, child minding and other grand parent duties and the like. Social isolation can lead to depression, poor physical and mental health causing increased demand on welfare and health services.

In addition, self funded retirees make up a vast portion of the volunteering force engaged across the State in hundreds of activities supporting government and non-government departments, hospitals, libraries, schools, galleries, environmental, charity and welfare organisations. Any increase in the daily cap would very much reduce the number of voluntary hours that self funded retirees would be able to offer due to the increased costs of travel.

A fare raise from \$2.50 per day to \$9.00 per day is almost a 260% increase-this is LUDICROUS. There should be NO move to introduce a two-tier system for Gold OPAL card eligibility as it is discriminatory to penalise former tax payers who for various reasons due to their own previous budgetary efforts to cater independently for their retirement needs do NOT qualify for a Centrelink benefit.

The timing of this announcement means that many affected citizens are unaware of this media release which means that changes could be implemented by stealth.