

Dear Sir/Madam

RE Proposed Public Transport Fares in particular to the proposed changes for the GOLD OPAL CARD concession fares and card holders.

I wish to respond to the IPART Media Release on 20 December 2015

I was shocked to read of the proposed increase of the gold opal card from \$2.50 per day to \$9.00 a day which is an increase of 260% which way exceeds the cost of living.

As a self funded retiree I have chosen to take public transport where possible. Most retirees travel during off peak times which allows them to fill up spaces on the existing transport systems such as buses, trains and ferries. Which has little impact on the cost of the service. If the card were to be increased to \$9.00 a day it would have a significant impact on myself being able to use public transport. It would be cheaper for me to drive to the local shopping centre rather than travel on the bus.

My \$2.50 Opal card currently enables me to keep fit both physically and mentally as I use public transport to:

- travel to the gym twice a week and to the Blue Mountains once or twice a week.
- meet friends for social activities eg coffee or lunch
- undertake volunteer activities to support charities and schools
- attend theatre, and other cultural activities eg the Art Gallery
- remain engaged and active in my community

As we are in an aging society it is very important to keep ourselves active both mentally and physically active. The proposed increase in the gold opal card will have an impact on the number of activities that I undertake or I will rely on my car for short trips. The health bill continues to grow and with an increase of 260% most people will restrict their activities which will place a greater impact on the health area. Isn't preferable to keep to keep old people healthy and engaged with society rather than ending up at an earlier age with dementia, or being isolated from friends and becoming depressed and being hospitalised ?

As we age it is important for the whole of society to have a cheap efficient transport system that supports old people to feel safe and remain engaged with all aspects of their life so that they continue to feel a valuable member of society.

The proposed increase will have a significant impact on seniors lives so a modest increase based on change in cost of living could be considered.

Regards

Judith Vincent