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Submission: Submission to IPART re IPART More efficient, more integrated Opal fares: Draft proposal
Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission.

I have been a NSW JP since 1963 [REDACTED] and am a Self-Funded Retiree (SFR) volunteering on community JP desks in two shopping centres at Castle Hill near my home and another desk in the Supreme Court of NSW in Sydney.

The draft proposal has two recommendations relating to the Gold Opal card:

1. Increase the daily cap from \$2.50 to \$3.60
2. Deny SFRs a Gold Opal card and instead offer them a Concession Opal card with a \$9 daily cap.

Re item 1, I have no real objection and have long thought that \$2.50 was in need of a small increase.

Item 2 however poses another serious cost for volunteers who travel on public transport to the city. There are three JP desks: Supreme Court, Downing Centre Court and the Town Hall all staffed by volunteers most of whom would be SFRs. Finding such volunteers for weekdays is always a problem and there are many organisations that depend on them. The National Maritime Museum comes to mind and there must be dozens like that where the increased travel cost burden on SFRs will see many simply say "no". I regret that in respect of my Supreme Court roster, that would be my decision.

There is a current belief that SFRs, who worked, perhaps denied themselves many things, and saved for their retirement so they would not be a burden to the taxpayer, that they are all well off and can afford price rises such as this. The fact is that for many SFRs, their annuity that they saved for, is only marginally better than the pension however they miss out on concessions that others who did not save when they could, receive because they are "entitled".

I would urge you to reconsider the change to the daily cap for SFR Seniors Card holders in the light of the effect on the many volunteers who are the backbone of many organisations in our city.