

# SYDNEY ALLIANCE SUBMISSION TO INDEPENDENT PRICING & REGULATORY TRIBUNAL

FEBRUARY 2016

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## 1. FOREWORD

The Sydney Alliance brings together diverse community organisations, unions and religious organisations to advance the common good and achieve a fair, just and sustainable city. We do this by providing opportunities for people to have a say in decisions that affect them, their families and everyone working and living in Sydney. The Sydney Alliance is a non-party political organisation. This submission contains real responses from members of Sydney Alliance partner organisations.

Since its inception, our Alliance has advocated for a world-class public transport system that is regular, reliable, clean, safe and easy to use for the people of Sydney regardless of health, wealth, age & mobility.

Our advocacy for improved public transport is premised on a broad view of the economic, environmental, health and social benefits of public and active transport. While some of these benefits may be difficult to measure and incorporate into numerical financial models, they are no less real for that.

Our vision for a public transport network that is planned, integrated and connected to where people live, work and play is summed up in the 'formula' 400-15-1 SCAA. The 'formula' means that everyone in Sydney should have public transport that is within **400m** walk, that comes at least every **15** minutes during the day, that requires only **1 fare** per journey no matter how many modes are used, and that is **Safe, Clean, Affordable** and **Accessible**.

The changes to fares in Sydney proposed by IPART impact directly on two elements of that formula – **1 fare**, and **Affordability**. While some of the changes proposed by IPART help our public transport system move closer to our vision, others do not.

In response to IPART’s draft decisions and recommendations, we have collected stories from Sydney-siders from all walks of life about the potential impacts on the daily lives. Selected stories make up the bulk of our submission below.

To introduce these stories, we wish to make the following points about fares for multi-mode journeys and fare increases.

### Fares for multi-mode journeys

We share the NSW Government’s view that the introduction of Opal across the public transport network in Sydney provides an excellent opportunity to address one of the major deficiencies in Sydney’s public transport system – the financial cost of switching modes to undertake a journey. The financial penalty that is imposed on those whose journeys involve more than one mode prevents trains, buses, light rail and ferries working together to provide a network grid that opens access to the entire city. The idea that services should work together to form such a network grid is now widely recognized as best practice in public transport planning.<sup>1</sup>

**As such, we welcome IPART’s draft decision to reduce the costs of multi-modal trips as a significant step towards ‘1 fare’ integration.** This will be welcomed by many public transport users, and over time will increase usage and accessibility as its implications become widely known.

However, we also think that changes to the fare structure for multi-modal trips should be accompanied by a review of the routes and frequencies of services across the network. For full modal integration, fare integration is an important first step. But service re-design is also required to make the most of this change. In particular, there are instances of bus routes duplicating train lines that may no longer be required if users are no longer penalized for switching modes, enabling a re-allocation of those bus kilometres to other parts of the city where services are poor.

### Fare increases

As evidenced by the stories we have included in our submission below from citizens across the city, there is widespread concern about many of the fare increases proposed in the draft report.

### Discounts for frequent users

**We oppose the substantial fare increases IPART proposes for frequent users of public transport.**

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<sup>1</sup> See for example Mees, P 2010, *Transport for suburbia: beyond the automobile age*, Earthscan; Nielsen, G, Nelson, JD, Mulley, C, Tegner, G, Lind, G & Lange, T 2005, *Public transport - Planning the networks - HiTrans Best Practice guide 2*, European Union Interreg III and HiTrans, Skyta, Norway; Walker, J 2012 *Human Transit: How Clearer Thinking about Public Transit Can Enrich Our Communities and Our Lives*, Island Press.

When Opal was introduced, discounts for frequent transport users were touted as one of the signal benefits for passengers, and were vital in light of the abolition of discounts associated with weekly, monthly and yearly paper tickets.

We strongly believe in the maintenance of substantial discounts for frequent users, as a measure to enable and encourage public transport use. IPART's regressive recommendations on this matter go much further than addressing the so-called 'perverse incentive' of users making 8 short trips to access the weekly cap – a practice which, it ought to be noted, was explicitly and publicly encouraged by the former Transport Minister Berejiklian during the introduction of Opal.

If IPART only sought to address this practice, it would not increase the number of trips required to access a weekly cap from 8 to 10. To do so completely removes the benefit of frequent travel for commuters travelling to work five days per week – the whole point here is precisely to reward those who do use public transport for non-discretionary travel, as a means to enable and encourage public transport use for those trips. At the very least, then, the proposal for weekly caps to be calculated via a user's most expensive trips during the week ought to be limited to 8, rather than 10 as proposed.

**We also oppose an 8% increase to the weekly cap from \$60 to \$65, a rate well above inflation and wages growth.**

#### Daily Cap

**We oppose a 20% increase on the daily fare cap for Opal users, an increase that is well in excess of the rate of inflation.**

**We also oppose the recommended removal of the \$2.50 cap for family travel on Sundays.** It is extraordinary that the reason for this increase seems to be that it attracts too many public transport users. From almost every angle – social, economic, environmental, cultural – this is a good problem to have. We could write pages and pages about the way our city benefits from families having access to cheap public transport for recreation on Sundays. Rather than removing this incentive for families to use public transport for recreation on the one day of the week when they tend to be free of work, school and sporting commitments, perhaps we could think about improving services to cope with the levels of demand? And if there is indeed evidence of substantial numbers of passengers shifting from Saturday to Sunday travel as claimed, why not address this by reducing the costs of Saturday travel rather than increasing the costs of Sunday travel? The proposed increases risk preventing the travel altogether, which would surely be the worst possible outcome for our city.

#### Gold Card eligibility and cap

**We oppose the recommendations for restricted Gold Card eligibility, and for the substantial increases on the daily cap for Gold Card holders.** The proposed removal of access to Gold Cards for those with NSW Seniors Cards quite simply fails to take into account the wider benefits of public transport travel by this cohort (regardless of means) for our city – not least of which are easy access to services, social networks and

recreation, and contributions to family, community and environmental care in our city. In the absence of any serious assessment of these benefits, neither the efficiency nor the fairness of wholesale changes to Gold Card eligibility and costs have been established by IPART.

## 2. Personal Submissions via Sydney Alliance

The following submissions were collected in response to the recommendations outlined above. Some submissions shared personal experiences; others speak to the overall issue of affordability, and the links between health, education access, inequality and housing. We have removed expletives, but otherwise these are transport users' own words.

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Public transport is so important to everyone. I have worked for many years with people experiencing social exclusion and isolation, increasing opal fares will have a very negative impact on their life chances and choices

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"No to a Fare Hike! Sydney is already an expensive city to live. They don't want you to ride a bike. They don't want you to take public transport. They don't want you to take Uber. They would rather you just stayed at home."

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Increasing in public transport fares hits hard on all Sydneysiders who are struggling hard to cope of with the cost of living. How can such hikes in public transport be justified without increase in their wages and incomes

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Hello iv had 7 operations on my joints and I have to catch publics transport on the smallest of trips if you put the price up I won't be able to afford to get adound

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"I myself don't use my Opal card a great deal, but it took Sydney so long to implement this type of travel option that I was really impressed when it happened. my 4 children use their Opal card continually & will be disadvantaged by the mentioned increases. One of my children is a single dad, & while he does work, he struggles to remain living in Sydney close to family, & devotes most of his weekends to his young daughter - he chooses not to drive or own a car to help them financially, so his reliance on the better form of travel is extreme. I cannot see why he should be affected unnecessarily by price hikes. Another child is pregnant with her first child after miscarrying towards the end of last year - she & her husband will be seriously affected financially when she needs to stop working, & any means of lightening financial load upon them is imperative. Being able to consider the option of a second car is not viable, & I for one think it unsafe to be the full time carer of a young child & not have fast access to help when needed. As for the hikes hitting seniors, I shall enter that age range myself in to not-too-distant future, & the recent death of my partner of >35 years has affected my financial security. Increasing public transport travel costs is unnecessary & not fair. This story is reflective of many, many others in this city - & I also think a big attraction of the Opal system is the ease & convenience with which it can be used by people from OS - we need to sell this city as the beautiful tourist attraction it I, & easier affordable travel options have to be an excellent drawcard. Our public transport system must seem complicated to those not familiar with it, so at least buying tickets should be a simple & affordable process."

[REDACTED]

“Over \$4 to go to city , what a joke! Our tax should cover that”

[REDACTED]

“Family sunday funday will become a thing of past. A family of 5 will cost us 40\$ instead of 12.50 Weekly city commute for work will cost double if free travel after 8 trips rule is removed. PLEASE DON'T ADD MORE PAIN TO OUR POCKETS.”

[REDACTED]

The opal was not meant to penalise commuters now with no yearly ticket i am already paying more if we loose the 8 trips it will really hurt.”

[REDACTED]

1. Fares are expensive as they are and with opal cards the prices are easily manipulated throughout the day 2 The government has not taken into consideration the changes to Sydney namely apartment building eg over 300 built next to marrickville station making trains overcrowded and people standing for the whole journey . Why should we pay even more for poor service ? 3.people without concessions do not get any reprieve . They pay taxes , full priced medication and now an increase in an already expensive transport system . Show us some respect !!

[REDACTED]

I am a senior living on a small superannuation and spend most of my time as a volunteer. I use public transport rather than driving, and travel outside of peak hours, and appreciate being able to travel for \$2.50 a day. If I had to pay full fares, I do not think I could afford to do what I do

[REDACTED]

“It's so expensive for travel already and there have been no train line improvements. Always delayed or cancelled services or the staff who drive the trains do their switches and the staff are always late. Every time it rains in Sydney, all services are delayed and the cannot function.This is unfair to the working class citizens who already pay a fortune when we made the switch to opal. This is unacceptable.. paying a premium and getting nothing in return. You should look and learn how trains run on time in Japan!”

[REDACTED]

“I believe public transport is the answer to city congestion and I want to see it easier and cheaper for people to use rather than increase the costs. I hope more and more people will use public transport- so please keep it cheap. Its good for peoples health to exercise more, good for the environment to cut down on emissions and good for the roads- less cars, less need for car parks, reduced traffic and parking options. PLEASE keep the COSTS DOWN.”

[REDACTED]

“The removal of the free trips after 8 trips will remove the incentive for me to use public transport everyday”

[REDACTED]

We use the Family Sunday fare for our outings which is a great way to see our city and surrounds. With the fare increases we would stop using this service as it would be too expensive for our family budget.

[REDACTED]

Because the amount of car congestion in Sydney has got to the point of belong disgusting. We need incentives for people to take public transport such as trains into the city and to travel intercity destinations such as Wollongong, Newcastle, Goulburn, Lithgow, so the list goes on. As well the amount of cars that could be taken off the road, if people were to take buses to local town centers, then there needs to be taken into consideration with the fares being paid. Because why would anyone in their right mind pay more for public transport than they do for private transport. Especially when public transport is almost double the travel time. Keep the fares where they are or at a

reasonable rate, and you will see an increase in overall patronage.

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“With the increase in population happening everyday , a decrease in price would encourage more to use public transport resulting in increased revenue - just a logical thought!!! Increased services would be required ,as well to move the people faster and more efficiently.”

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A fair hike is simply going to mean more cars on the road. We use the Sunday daily cap fare currently, if it increases, i would be using my vehicle

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I cannot believe that the NSW Government is considering scrapping the Family Sunday fare of \$2.50 per passenger. This is a great way to reduce congestion on Sundays and especially useful for major events. It's also a great way for us all to get out and see our city and visit museums, parks and other recreational facilities. In our family of four we regularly use this fare as you can budget for \$10 on public transport and we help keep the roads on Sundays less congested for other road users who are unable to take public transport

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Are you KIDDING! What have we done to deserve this. Not own a car? \$90.00 per week instead of \$60.00. \$360.00 each month instead of \$240.00! \$4,320.00 for the year instead of \$2,3040.00! O M G Is this what paying a mortgage feels like

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The powers that be have only JUST ceased selling the weekly paper tickets on 1 Jan 2016! They have not even considered that there is now, NOW - ONLY Opal travel. They seem to be unwilling to wait for the true data. One month of Opal use must be all they need. Let's up all the fares on an imaginary story! What a joke. This whole 'review' reflects very badly on IPART and the Transport Minister and undermines any justifications that exit their mouths or come off their printers. NO foundation. Greed. Better than actually managing the budget. Cannot articulate the visceral effect this Opal take-over is having . It's been doing my head in for 18mths now! Trapped in a system that sucks.... hard. In 2015 it cost me \$48.00 for weekly travel, 7 whole days, regardless of how many or how frequent. Now, instead of Opal's \$60.00 per week (\$15cap, 4days)- it will increase to \$90.00 per week (\$18 cap 5days). Nearly DOUBLE. Where else is this normal? I commute from North Bondi to Waterloo daily. A 21 minute drive. My bus route from Waterloo to Bondi Jn #348 is crap. It is supposed to come at 5.15pm. It is always up to 5.40pm. Am I expected to wait 40 mins to just get on a bus? Then pay through the nose for the privilege? The Waterloo area has increased its density several thousand-fold, but no more buses have been inserted into the timetable! Unbelievable! I catch OTHER buses to negotiate my way home. I can catch up to 3 buses to get to BJn and still get there earlier than the 348. How much is THAT going to cost me??? \$90.00 thanks! Besides rent, this will be the biggest household outlay for every working body unfortunate enough to be caught under the Opal net. Aaaaaaaauuggggggghhhhhhhhh. Worst Ticket System Ever.”

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“I can barely afford public transport as it is. The transport network is understaffed and under serviced and you want to charge more? I am finding it difficult to vote Liberal anymore.”

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Public transport in Sydney is maligned enough already without adding more fuel for the fire. Higher fares will NOT cause public transport to be used any more than it is now at a time when it should be used more often by more people. There are few enough advantages to old age, but one of them should be inexpensive transport. My Seniors Card is rarely useful for much at all - higher transport fares will make it hardly worth having

[REDACTED]

"I have the Opal Gold Card, I am 63 years old and work 17 and a half hours a week. My wife works 2 days per week. We work part-time mainly because of health reasons and we have demanding jobs that are not particularly well paid. We just manage as our weekly expenses are more than \$1000 a week. I work in Bondi Junction and live in Concord West. If we had to pay full fare or if the cap were to increase, we would be forced to re-organise our lives and this may include one of us or both of us giving up our jobs

[REDACTED]

"Public transport is the most logical solution to our urban overcrowding and the threat of climate change."

[REDACTED]

I'm a pensioner, and these price increases will affect me, as any increases do, since they are not matched by raises in the pension. I use public transport two or three times a week, especially for doctor's appointments, but as I don't commute, it will not be a huge impost. But every dollar counts when the majority of my income is from the pension.. However, I am more concerned about the effects on older people who are not eligible for the pension. I have a friend living in Katoomba, who travels to Parramatta once a fortnight for study and business, and to Castle Hill regularly to visit her daughter and grandchildren. These changes will make it prohibitive for her to continue her studies, and she will also see her family less often."

[REDACTED]

"Can't afford to own a home in Sydney and rent is so expensive I don't have much money left over for other things let alone more expensive bus and train travel fare's "

[REDACTED]

So the plan is to make the most confusing fare system in the world, more confusing and also more expensive. When I was forced to use opal as my yearly mymulti expired, my yearly fare rose from \$2000 to apx \$2880. If these new fares are introduced I estimate my new yearly fare will be \$4080!!! Please note I moved to the central coast to a) save money and B) relieve pressure on Sydney housing market. I am now being punished for this. Also please note I have epilepsy and am not allowed to drive, again I feel I am being punished for a medical condition. Please reconsider and throw out these "recommendations" in the interests of our community and environment.

[REDACTED]

"It takes me two hours a day and costs me \$80 a week to travel from Granville to Kensington, where I work. I spend most of the time standing in crowded train carriages, and on a typical weekend must wait longer as stand-in buses replace the trains while trackwork is being done. This is not a modern, efficient transport system and I certainly don't feel a fare increase is justified, or sustainable for me or many other Western suburbs commuters who must go into the City and Eastern suburbs to find employment."

[REDACTED]

"My wife and I are seniors who are not eligible for the pension. We use public transport several times a week to go to the beginning of walks, to go to swimming pools, to go exhibitions and museums and to go to the start of bike rides. My wife suffers from lower back pain and needs to exercise regularly to keep this pain in check, I have Diabetes type 2 and need to exercise regularly to keep the diabetes from getting worse. If we have to pay full fare with a cap of \$9 per day, we will be paying about \$36 each per week, that is \$72 for the 2 of us. We just can't afford this. The seniors \$2.50 ticket was introduced to make sure that elderly people were able to go out of a day, not stay at home. The idea of this was to keep them mentally and physically healthy. Please do not put these fares up. If you do it will end up costing the government a lot more in health costs!"

[REDACTED]

"This was force on to the public by the government is was to be a better system. It fail many time. The machine on the bus don't work. Same at the railway station. The buses and trains still running late. Some times the buses don't show."

[REDACTED]

As a regular commuter, the current fares and free travels after 8 rides provision has been an incentive to use public transport more frequently. Increasing fare rates and the free travel to after 10 most expensive trips will make me less inclined to used public transport, and put further financial stress on my already tight budget due to the high cost of living in Sydney. It also seems that those of us who can't afford to live close to



the city will have to pay more in fares to travel to work and therefore experience added financial disadvantage.

██████████ "The fares for public transport in Sydney are very high already. The only way these should be going is down and not otherwise. Thanks."

████████████████████ I am only receiving the aged pension as a sole form of income. Half of which goes towards rent. The remainder for living expenses and bills. I definitely could not afford any increase in the £2.50 fare. It would greatly restrict me to be able to go anywhere and affect my life both socially and all the volunteer work I do

██████████ "Reading through the recommendations mentioned, every single one of them will impact someone I know, including myself, as I'm a pensioner living on a careful budget. I was always suspicious of Opal, and now my fears are being realised. Public transport - bus and train - needs to be kept as low-cost as possible to avoid financial pain, road congestion, air pollution etc etc. "

████████████████████ Our family of 5 uses public transport often on the weekends, to travel around Sydney enjoying the Harbour, beaches, walks, and also the many great features of the city (museums, galleries, exhibitions etc). This is quality family time, and these trips also provide opportunities to teach our children independence as they get older, and the importance of reducing our carbon footprint, especially given the current climate change issues. If fares were to increase, the costs of these trips would be a disincentive & the opportunity to provide educational experiences for our children would be constrained. Please rethink these changes!!

██████████ A fare hike with zero justification is outrageous! There are removing the incentive to use public transport and putting more motivation for people to commute via private means. We already struggle as it is during peak hour with the limited trains, buses and ferries running with the expensive price tag and they unreasonably want to increase the fare prices? What incentive is there if you remove off-peak prices? you're just asking for more people to travel at peak hour times with such limited capacity. Every year prices continue to rise and this isn't with CPI either - not all workers get a payrise every year, with every bill increasing and inflation this is not a just cause to increase public transport fares! We see ZERO return on investment for these fare hikes - constantly there are delays and cancellations with trains and forever late running buses! Where are the additional services? We are constantly being inconvenienced for upgrades and works on the lines - but are we compensated? The obvious answer = NO. There is no forward planning for this developed country with the increasing amount of its own citizens, let alone the international tourists that are on the rise contributing towards our economy. This is just RIDICULOUS!

████████████████████ "I am a 61 year old woman. My husband & myself have been paying taxes since we began working at 14, we have never claimed any type of compensation or pension & diligently planned our retirement unaided by a pension. The only reward for this we perceive is our gold opal card which we do not use during peak times & we acknowledge our driving skills are declining, keeping us "old farts" off the roads. If this is removed, where will be any incentive be found to plan a self-funded retirement & we will have no choice but to drive ourselves in our declining years. The extra transport costs will cause us to deplete our finances faster, thus forcing us to apply for a pension. "

██████████ "A good and comprehensive public transport system is one of the things I pay my taxes to fund and, additionally, contribute to by paying the cost of fares. I travel daily to work from Camperdown to North Sydney. Often I'm left waiting whilst buses fail to stop and when I do get on I'm often required to stand for the journey on overcrowded buses and trains. It does not seem reasonable or justifiable to expect Sydneysiders to pay increasing fares in such circumstances. It is laughable that these increases and losses of concessions are even being considered at a time when public transport access through the Sydney CBD is restricted due to the light/rail construction down George Street. The major problem with the proposals is, however, the lack of social responsibility and care for the well being of older Australians expressed in the raft of changes being proposed



to the Opal Gold Card. The ability of older Australians to be socially engaged and involved will be severely restricted if their access to reasonably priced public transport is removed. As people age their reflexes and eyesight diminish such that driving private vehicles becomes both a problem and a danger. When this happens, public transport is a necessity and, dare I say, a right. Shame on you Transport Minister and Premier!”

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“We need affordable public transport in Sydney and NSW. Increasing public transport costs for commuters does not encourage people to use public transport. Pushing more people into cars is bad public policy - economically, socially and environmentally. Don't increase public transport costs for commuters!”

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“Sydney transport is already one of the expensive means of commuting in the world and we face cruel charges compared to other Australian cities. Why such disparity? I strongly oppose this price raise and sydneyiders will stand against it”

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Transport underpins the functioning of a community. If people can't make it to work, school, to get their groceries, see their health professional, catch up with family and friends, volunteer and a multitude of other reasons, how can a community actually exist? Affordability of public transport is essential. Ease of public transport is essential. If transport is too costly or too difficult then people won't use it. This will affect their health, physical, mental, spiritual, it will impact the economy, the vibrancy of a neighborhood. Instead of challenging people to find money so many struggle to find already perhaps there is another way to fund the system? Perhaps there are ways to streamline spending instead (without impacting safety, access, cleanliness). Please reconsider any fare increase. The impact will be far reaching for people like me - those who do have a little buffer against such things - but it will be devastating for those that have nothing more to spend and no way to find more

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Sydney is impossible to drive in and from Campbelltown to the city each day there is no option but the train. Increasing the price is leaving commuters at ransom with this transport monopoly and no choice but to pay! ”

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“Hi I am appalled by the increase. Prior to Opal, I was purchasing Monthly and Quarterly tickets for transport to and from work. With the introduction of Opal, my fare to and from work has increased at least 3 fold (way above CPI or inflation). The pending increase is incomprehensible for us workers. Fares have increased enough! Please be fair and leave fares as they are. Cheers ”

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I travel by public transport everyday. I use spend at least \$40 a week. I travel in oak times but in the opposite direction. I pay peak prices to have a train carriage all to myself! This is already unfair, let alone with a price increase on top. People that dont travel peak routes should be rewarded by not having to pay peak fare. This should also include those from the end of the train line. If someone hops on a train in Bomaderry at 5pm they will be charged peak fare even though it will be 8pm by the time they reach central. Incentives such as free travel after 8 trips work. If Sunday fares are increased than more people will revert to driving again. We have some of the most affordable transport (compare with London) we should be proud of this and use it to get more people on public transport

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We urgently need to get people off the roads and onto public transport to reduce congestion and cut down carbon emissions. We need to be encouraging public transport my making it cheaper, not discouraging it by making it more expensive

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As a senior citizen, who uses public transport regularly, this proposed increase could add up to \$12 a fortnight or two cups of coffee or missing a lunch for me and thousands like me. If the state government want more people to adopt public transport as a major way of preventing global warming (more road congestion and traffic gridlock ) not to mention ongoing cost of upgrading motorways, surely the cost of public transport should be coming down and there should be more regular services to accomodate the increased usage. An increase in fares would be a backwards step, as was the removal of my favourite form of transport as a boy the Bondi Tram.

[REDACTED]

“As an urban planner specialising in transport sector research I have seen no evidence of user-pay systems effectively delivering economical public transport. In respect to rail, the NSW government spends roughly the same amount of money on ticket officer salaries as it generates from fining people that do not have a valid ticket. This greatly inhibits the movement of people throughout the network and the related economic contributions such movements represent (travel to/from work, travel to shopping centres, etc.) Further to this, turn-styles and ticket officers act as barriers, creating bottle-necks in the flow of passenger movements and reducing the overall efficiency of the system. Not only should ticket prices not be raised but the entire user-pay system should be investigated for its negative effect on transport efficiency and economy.”

[REDACTED]

“As it currently stands, public transport takes up a huge chunk of my daily expenses. Given its social, economic and environmental benefits, public transport should be encouraged, but continuous price hikes does the opposite of this. These hikes seem unjustified, especially when compared to public transport fares in other major cities in the world.”

[REDACTED]

“I oppose the drastic increases in fares for NSW transport as recommended by IPART. The increases should be no more than increases in CPI. Sydney needs more people to use public transport rather than less. A heavy increase in fares as recommended would scare people away from using public transport. The net result would be greater environmental impact from people using less environmentally friendly transport means. The net result would also be a smaller operating profit for NSW transport because infrastructure would remain the same, but fewer customers, so fewer sales. Another reason why I think it is unfair to have a big hike in fares is that over the last two years a lot less staff is now working on railway stations because of the introduction of the Opal system. Reduced staff means reduced services and also reduced security. A few weeks ago I was at Mt Druitt station in the evening and I needed assistance with something that could have been a life or death situation, but no staff was to be found on the whole station.”

[REDACTED]

“I don't want the Opal Card fares to go up as they are already more expensive than my original Travel Ten fares which I can no longer choose to use. I work part time and cannot accumulate the free rides after 8 rides. Opal works out much more expensive and given there is no other option of payment in bulk, it is unfair and difficult for low-average income earners. Thank you.”

[REDACTED]

An increase in public transport fares will contribute to an increase in private vehicle travel in Sydney, further worsening traffic congestion. My wife and I are self-funded retirees who do not own a car and we will be badly affected by these proposed changes to the public transport fare structure

[REDACTED]

As self funded retirees my husband and I don't claim a pension from the government. As such every increase in charges from wherever they originate directly affects us as we do not have income coming into offset these changes. The government has introduced this scheme for us to fund ourselves however if everything starts to increase, others in situations like ourselves will end up on the pension. Now that will be counterproductive for the economy!”

[REDACTED]

“One of these changes make any sense except in the context of making public transport more profitable for the state government. There will be a net loss to the government in terms of productivity as more are forced onto the roads and the city grinds to snarling halt. All seniors need a cheaper cap for their benefit as well as societys as it keeps them mobile and active, but off the roads. Having users pay for all trips then get a refund based on the 10 most expensive trips for the week is madness. Where is the incentive for starters? and then when faced with a huge transport bill for the week users will be forced to avoid public transport as for many a refund next week on money they don't have isn't an option. There is a need to wind back the current loophole, but with all these great minds together surely there is a more straightforward solution. Public transport needs to be promoted and pushed as hard as possible as it's the future - i don't think that IPART understand this. Smart cards should lead to improvement of the offering not to create a nightmare for all. ”

[REDACTED]

“I don't want the fares to be raised nor do I want the service privatised. Public Transport should be a right and an affordable service that all should be able to use. It's necessary for a functional city. City rail currently do a fine job and i am sure that it makes a profit. Keep the fares affordable and the public asset in public hands

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"I will be the first to admit that I have benefited recently from the switch to Opal. The system is flawed and I agree it needs an overhaul. The one proposed is outrageous. Our city is crippled by infrastructure capacity. Pennant Hills Rd, Parramatta Rd, Pacific Hwy to name a few. The lost productivity and human hour costs these roads suck up is out of control. What is one way to alleviate this? A thriving public transport system. How do you kill a public transport system? Make it considerably more expensive than ever before! The Opal system is designed to encourage people to use public transport. The proposed changes defies this ideal. I hope there is someone within the decision making process that has the common sense to quash this nonsense."

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"This will encourage people not to use public transport and drive. Seems Sydney is going backwards when the entire world is working to introduce incentives for public transport users. Short term vision of profit will not only burn a big hole in the corporations pocket, but will hurt commuters, not to forget the impact on roads, drive time and eventually productivity of the state/nation. Penny wise, Pound foolish move by the govt. Make money - is that your only mantra, what if people started following its leaders by avoiding tax?"

██████████████████

"We have already paying too much travel cost compare to other cities in Australia. If they increase again, this is going to be extra financial burden for single income earners like me."

██████████████████

"I am over 70 and now retired, living on superannuation. I have been steadily shifting my travel within the city onto public transport, in non-peak hours, with a view to reducing, and hopefully eliminating, my use of cars. If the proposed leap in charges goes through, it will create a strong incentive for people in my position to revert to car travel, and so clog up the streets of Sydney even more. This proposal is really perverse policy."

██████████████████

"The increase in cost as a family to travel will make us reconsider and cancel Some train travel especially the huge hike in Sunday's. "

██████████████████

I did not believe that opal card was fair. However, we are seem to be forced to the trend. My husband used to buy mothly ticket from city rail ticket window. Opal card system may seem trendy and convenient. If the new adjustment come to be applied lots of public transport commuters definately will be troubled by having to pay more

██████████████████

"I am a retiree and am appalled by these proposed changes/increases to the users of public transport. Be on a low fixed income my partner and I rely on public transport as we live in Katoomba to commute. Increases of 8% is outrageous pensions and wages are set well below this increase. The changes to the use of Gold Card holders is going to have serious impacts on our life style and ability to travel. The increased use of user pay to "fatten up public services" leading to privatisation is current government policy. Thank you for analysing these proposals. "

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I am comfortable with all the proposed changes, except #5. The concession on Sunday is important, and could perhaps be extended to include Saturday without causing budget stress. The weekend is often the only time many families can have an excursion as a family. Many of the free community events around sydney are only on during the weekend The weekend roads are already often more cluttered around Sydney than during peak hour. Raising public transport costs for the weekend are only going to aggravate the problems on the roads If the cost for a single person or a family of four is more than the cost of private transport ( if low income families have a car), of course, the car joins the jam on the road

██████████████████

I'm a senior pensioner living in Campbelltown. I often use public transport, several times a week, as I'm involved in several community groups and attend meetings etc - sometimes in the city or throughout western Sydney. An efficient, accessible and public transport system is essential, and a much better option than driving around everywhere. It's benefits include access, reducing pollution, and more economic value, for both the public and the government (compared to road transport). But more and more commuters are being squeezed, which doesn't encourage use. So it's time the government started to think more about the big picture, and not just on the short-term benefits of making deals with private contractors to build more motorways - the

rewards of which are very limited and dubious, and ultimately wasteful

██████████

Since using Opal, I have stopped taking my car on short trips and to the city on weekends because I can travel either for free after earning my free trips during the week. This is better for the environment and for traffic in our streets. Inner city traffic in my area is at a stand still. Do we really want to push more people into their cars because public transport is too costly? I also do not agree with punishing everyone for the actions of a few who are taking advantage of the current well publicised Opal loopholes. Perhaps trips on the bus of less than a certain number of stops should not be counted as this is the main way they seem to be building up the extra trips to the CBD. Fix the loopholes, not the system. The system is not so broken it needs to be changed. Perhaps consider timed access in the CBD instead of point to point fares. The \$2.50 on Sunday cap has encouraged more people to think twice about driving to the city on weekends. Removing this capped Sunday fare would encourage families and groups to drive to the city again. Not sure how this is a good idea. Some of the people taking advantage of the \$2.50 Sunday fares might then realise how train travel in Sydney is actually not anywhere near as bad as the media suggest and become more regular users of public transport. In my opinion it is ethically irresponsible to put up barriers to the use of public transport in this day and age when the environment is suffering so badly.

██████████

“Fares are now affordable. The Government must take cost of living in Sydney, particularly rents, into account when considering any fare rise. We signed up to Opal because we needed the benefits it brought - was it all a con? ”

██████████

“I live in French Forest and commute to Mascot each day. Prior to the rollout of the Opal card I had a multi ticket. This enabled me to board a bus from Frenchs Forest to Wynyard & then a train to Mascot Station at a monthly cost of \$175. With the rollout of Opal overnight my fair jumped 34.1% - an increase of \$720 annually which is ridiculous (from \$2,100 to \$2,820). I then learnt I had to use ONE mode of transport to reduce this cost. I now have to take a bus from Wynyard to Botany. This adds an extra 20 minutes to my already long commute (and this is on a good day depending on traffic around Alexandria). Because of this one mode of transport policy I am penalised for using public transport? I am going to the exact same location so I find this unfair. You should be encouraging people to take public transport not discouraging them. I also sent a letter to the then minister of transport and was replied by the parliamentary secretary, Ray Williams MP with a standard reply they must send everyone. It never addressed this increase; the unfairness of this one-mode travel system; or the whopping 34.1% increase to me? If this price increases further it makes no economic sense for me to use public transport. If prices increase once more I have decided to ride my motorcycle to work. Even with the EasiRider Toll Pass; petrol; rego; wear & tear on the bike it works out much cheaper for me. I will happily throw my Opal card in the bin and add to the congestion. It is that simple because this Opal User system has not been properly thought out. Paul”

██████████

“Dear IPARTribunal, the hike in public transport fares does not provide the public the value that the Opal card and electronic ticketing was intended to provide for the travellers. Savings made by the government with electronic tickets has led to the reduction in rail staff available at rail stations. The government is attempting to reduce the number of vehicles on our roads. The increase in public transport costs will lead to an increase in vehicle use please consider the original plane of 4%. ”

██████████

The price of public transport already affects my decision as to whether I go somewhere, especially if it is to a volunteer event. Higher prices will definitely restrict my travel even further as I live on a very low income

[REDACTED]

"I'm a student. I think public transport is supposed to be the most efficient and economical means of travel and it would be great if it remained that way. Driving is not available for everyone and the costs are astronomical, public transport access increases opportunities and avenues especially for students from all over Sydney. Increasing prices will only make students like me who live out of the city more expensive and difficult to access our education. I want to live in a place that encourages the use of public transport not deters people away from it, a place where everyone no matter where you live can feel like they have access to the entire city and are not isolated to their suburb. Affordable public transport to me = opportunities!"

[REDACTED]

I buy a single fare which costs me \$4 from Central to North Sydney station. This is a rip off by this Baird Government as they have abolished off peak travel. Now it costs \$7.80 for a return trip for this journey of 4 stations each way. The fare increases in the past few years had been close to 5% each year which is well above the inflation. The best way to show indignation for the travel fares is to vote this Liberal government out of office."

[REDACTED]

"In this increasingly expensive economic climate, it is crucial to keep public transport fares at a reasonable level. Inflation is skyrocketing, but wages/pension payments are not increasing at the same pace. Therefore people who are earning a modest wage or whom are on a pension/unemployment benefit will be penalized big time, adding an increased burden to those who already struggle with mortgage repayments and general costs of living. Please consider a more reasonable increase in line with wage inflation, in order to give the common people a chance to live life in a more reasonable manner."

[REDACTED]

FACT: Opal is already more expensive than the previous paper ticket system for the majority of Sydney's public transport users. By making it even more expensive, the NSW Gov will push public transport users back into their cars. The NSW Gov should reduce fares to a point where there is a noticeable reduction in car use. The NSW Gov should introduce a Congestion Charge based on individual vehicle emissions (It has worked in London). In fact, they should take a good look at Transport for London which is now a world leader in public transport.

[REDACTED]

"Recently as of the new year, 2016, my regular Oscar train morning commute has been replaced by an old non airconditioned carriage set. The increase in time table delays and general replacing of trains every other week by busses really is not indicative of an increase in customer value. Sydney Transport is running dangerously close to a legally applicable description of bait-and-switch of their promised product, and what customers actually receive for their fare. Should the fares increase under this new structure - by approximately \$15 / per week for me personally, I would be more inclined to investigate legal options of raising complaints against Sydney Transport for bait and switch with the ACCC. The new structure is contempt against customers."

[REDACTED]

"Instead of getting free travel for the rest of the week from the first 8 trips, IPART recommends it be after the 10 most expensive trips in a week. Abolish the current Sunday daily fare cap of \$2.50 for everyone and replace it with a weekend cap of \$7.20 in 2016, increasing to \$8.00 in 2018. These proposals discourage people from using public transport on the weekends (when the system is underutilised and the marginal cost of carrying each additional passenger is minimal). For someone who work 5 days a week Monday to Friday, I might have no choice but to take public transport to/from work. However, on the weekend, if I have to pay through the roof for public transfer as well, I would probably just take the car. The current system also allows people the opportunities to go to places further away that they wouldn't otherwise be able to afford on the weekends. This has to be good for the mental wellbeing of the population as a whole. This sounds counter-intuitive to me when the government is trying to convince people that there are too many cars on the roads?"

[REDACTED]

I've been using public transport much more lately, partly because the Opal card has made public transport more convenient, there are more people on the train in the middle of the day, so I feel safer and for some reason trains seem to be more reliable these days. So now that the system seems to be improving, do we want to sabotage it by making it unaffordable!! No! Please keep our public transport affordable!! This is not just an environmental issue - though of course that's important. It's also about promoting social and economic participation for the most vulnerable in our community including homeless young people, older people, the unemployed, and workers struggling to make ends meet. For example, we know that one of the biggest barriers to young people's access to training, jobs and services is the cost of transport. A price hike to public transport fares will only put more hurdles in the path of these young people.

We also know that keeping older people engaged and active improves their health and well being and keeps them out of institutions for longer. So why would we limit access to the \$2.50 senior fare?? Seniors use this benefit off-peak when most trains and buses have plenty of space. In fact, having more seniors using trains during the day increases the number of people on the train and promotes a sense of safety for other commuters like me. Access to affordable transport needs to be recognised as a whole of government preventative measure because its key to promoting social and economic participation and well-being. Please keep our public transport affordable!!”

“I find public transport expensive enough already & know many others do also - and I earn a reasonable wage, others struggle. Surely with further increases, more people will evade fares & end up with fines they can't afford.”

As a regular bus passenger I am AMBSOLUTELY DISGUSTED, that I am being forced to have a fare hike when my buses are regularly 15-30 minutes late and I have taken hundreds of screenshots of the routes I travel to prove this. It's almost a daily occurrence, and while trains are running much better, bus users are ignored and not having their needs meet by public transport. How about if a bus is 5 minutes or more late I GET FREE TRAVEL as this disrupts every aspect of my life which requires bus transport. Even my 7.20am 461 bus service runs from 1-10 minutes late and this is travelling OUT OF THE CITY to Burwood - how is this bus getting stuck so it runs late !!!! I am not getting a 8% increase in my pay, so why is it not set to real worker wage rises which are almost zero. 4% is bad enough over 3 years as my pay hasn't even gone up in real terms against the CPI - let alone an imaginary body that sets fares not based on service delivery - because buses would be free if they relied on how often the don't run to time. I am also disgusted that you are thinking of raising the daily fare \$3 in 2016 up to \$20 in 2020 - again if the service was impeccable I'd still ask why but the bus services which is what I use daily across many part so the city is absolute CRAP!!!! HOW DARE YOU say that the most expensive trips are the one you will choose. That is disgusting given I use to have a my multi 1 that I paid for weekly and got a lot of use from. This is just turning into a revenue raising exercise penalising people for doing the right thing and getting their own car off the road. my rego hasn't got any cheaper for me being on public transport given I don't use my car at all in the peak periods - yet in a real world if I could prove I was catching public transport IT SHOULD. It seems to me this is just an excuse to put people into cars, on already clogged roads, to bump up the toll roads and give their liberal mates and private company shareholders more dividends and pay so they can inflate their own pay checks and the political donations increase. I am disgusted at the plans not to make my bus trip as fair as a train trip by not bringing in off-peak bus fares, to match train fares current state of play. It's already a totally shitty state of play so why should I be compensated for the absolute woeful service - I wish IPART members would be forced to take public transport to see how they like it. I also would like the transfer trip removed completely. HOW DARE YOU charge me a transfer fare and include this as 1 trip when you charge me 1 hours after I get off a bus if I get on another one. As far as I'm concerned, ever different bus I take should be it's own individual trip. This 1 hours transfer - 1 trip is the biggest money making rort that needs to be removed. You are deliberately catching bus passengers who change to a train and visa versa out because we have to pay for the trip twice, yet it's only included as I trip for "accounting" so when you change to 10 trips, vs 8, I'm going to now pay for 2 extra trips at \$6 a pop.... really no incentive to use public transport is there - but that is the point.... you will privatise the network and sell it to the highest bidder and you're just fattening it up now to be in a good position to sell.....scumbags and shame on you IPART for allowing this to occur by stealth - you don't have the average workers rights in mind at all if you allow the changes to go ahead.... I also disagree with the changes to the sunday funday cap of \$2.50pp. This is such a good way for a family to have a family day out and just screams of people as the cashcow while poli perks keep getting more obscene and bloated.”

“I travel three to four days a week for university and have a minimum wage job to support lifestyle requirements such as travel and student fees. This increase of opal fees would mean that I might need to work more to support my travel fare, which is for university and as a result; unavoidable and unpreventable. I don't have sufficient time to do so as I work on my days off from university. I can't afford for opal fares to increase, I would be financially worse off.”



[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

"This will also increase the fare for transport to and from school for my 14 years old daughter since we lives within 2km from here school and not entitled to government free student transport scheme. Any increase to student travel cost will put more hardship on families."

[REDACTED]

"I'm a uni student and the fact that opal has made it cost cheaper to get to uni then before, is incredible. The fact that there is off peak savings gives me the ability now to go to Sydney on a regular basis is also incredible. The opal card is a excellent initiative put in place and if opal fares change it no longer will be an asset to the functioning of our society When I get thrown into the competitive work arena and no longer be able to use the student opal the fact that 'friday is free' allows me to look at jobs in Sydney as I don't live locally. I know people who choose the train over the car because of this scheme."

[REDACTED]

"I stopped driving to work (North Sydney - Bankstown) because it was cheaper for me to use public transport (Bus - Ferry - Train) each day. The current changes proposed will mean I will need to reconsider this as it will no long be an advantage for me to use public transport. As I am sure you are aware this will put further pressure on the road network as well as reduce income for the public transport system. Some trains run below capacity and encouraging people to use public transport will fill these trains generating more income. Create incentive for more people to use the system and don't penalise those who have no other option. "

[REDACTED]

"I am in my fifties and make a precarious living as a composer and choir director. I live below the poverty line and depend wholly on public transport. I already spend more on travel than I do on food and medicine combined. An increase in Opal fares would financially calamitous for me and for many others on low incomes. I urge IPART to show concern for the poor and for the environment by maintaining affordable public transport."

[REDACTED]

"I would like to know where the money goes. I leave in Wahroonga and recently found out that I am suffering from some form of muscles problems. I may end up using wheelchair! At the Wahroonga station the elderly, people with disability and those travelling with prams have no any form of access. "

[REDACTED]

Sydney claims to be a world class city. But its public transport system is not world class. It needs to be cheap, and effective. Raising fares will stop me as as a pensioner using our public transport less..so I will come to the city less often and spend less. Iscthat good economic sense?"

[REDACTED]

"The NSW government seems to want to run public transport down and make it unattractive to public transport users - trains are often crowded and buses are late. I commute by public transport to work. On the weekends I use public transport to visit friends and shop. Increasing fares (and Opal) will leave me with no choice but to explore alternates to public transport. "

[REDACTED]

"We already lost out on the discount we used to get with travel 10 tickets because my wife works part time. The promises of only a few being worse of than when using paper tickets was told not so long ago. The proposed changes will certainly make everyone worse off. Regarding student Opal; my son travels 1.5 hours to attend school and often has training commitments both at school and at other locations which the school considers mandatory. He leaves before 6:30am to make these commitments and therefore cannot use his student opal at those times or when he trains outside of school. The student Opal rules are too limiting and discriminate against those that live further out forcing them to pay and their tickets will be more expensive due to being further out. The removal of buses between Wynyard and Town Hall has already made the trip even more difficult and time consuming."



[REDACTED]

"I am 61 years old and not in regular employment. I am needed to baby sit for my two grandchildren in Newcastle and my one in Tempe. I rely on public transport to get me to these two places as I don't have regular access to a private vehicle. Without the gold opal card this will make it quite expensive to get to Newcastle especially if I travel in the peak hour. My daughter and daughter in law rely my help, as they need to work on the days that I am there."

[REDACTED]

I, couple of months back stopped using car for my commute to work and back and started using train. I would have saved @12 a week by just continuing the use of car. I opted trains just to reduce road congestion and pollution sacrificing 12\$ a week. Now if the GOVT increases the fares I would certainly rethink using public transport. I can not spend any more on my transport, as I am low income earner. Therefore, I strongly oppose any increase in fares to the public transport

[REDACTED]

Part of the selling point of opal was its flexibility and the savings. Hiking the fares by 8% and changing how the card works is unfair and will impact people who can least afford

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[REDACTED]

I recently did a survey where all the questions were trying to push people into supporting opal price increases and changes to how the opal card would operate. It would be interesting if this survey was being organised by IPART or the Baird Liberal Government and whether the NSW taxpayers were charged for this service. I think the current structure should remain without any changes. I mean IPART and the NSW Government were encouraging passengers to rort the system. NSW Minister for Transport Gladys Berejiklian has challenged Sydney Opal card customers to "find the savings" and "beat the system". Here's how: Sydney Opal card commuters travel for free after completing eight journeys in the space of a week, however, Berejiklian suggests there is potential to save even more money by employing a few discerning tactics, the SMH reports. "I want people to beat the system," she said. "I want people to find the savings because they are there to be had." After pushing pensioners towards a "Senior's opal card by removing paper tickets, Pensioners have been asked by the NSW Government and Ipart to pay more dollars per day to use public transport. How do you define the most expensive trips for example if travel to work during peak hour and pay \$4.20 and return off peak time and pay \$3.37 for the same trip in off peak is rather confusing tactic to force commuters to pay top dollar.

[REDACTED]

I work at the zoo. I need to travel by train, ferry and then bus to get to and from work each day across a 7 day roster. It costs me a fortune to get to and from work. Increases in fares will mean more out of my take home wage which I can ill afford. It'll mean more out of many peoples take home wage, and again, it will affect lower paid workers more as they are less likely to drive to work. Opal obviously had it's sums totally wrong about the price of their fares from it's implementation (or was duping us from the start and meant these increases once everyone was forced to join thinking it was a great deal - I actually don't find this at all unlikely!!!). This will drive people off public transport and back onto the already overcrowded roads."

[REDACTED]

"I already use off-peak fares because I need to save money, if fares must be increased make it for peak fares. Please keep weekend trips free, this allows us to travel around Sydney and its suburbs where we spend money to support the local economy. In the interest of the environment we need to get more people onto public transport by making it more affordable please."

[REDACTED]

We want fewer cars on the road to reduce emissions and to help the traffic flow which effects people in so many ways. If the cost of public transport becomes more expensive it means the cost for the ordinary person becomes prohibitive. I am a pensioner and appreciate the gold opal card but I would not appreciate an increase in the fare for those of us who do not earn a wage. I lived in Ireland for two years and in my second year I could travel not only in the city of Dublin but to distant places for NOTHING. Why can countries like Ireland do this and Sydney want always more?"

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“Why dis-encourage seniors from travelling by public transport when current costing make it a no brainer when it comes to choosing public transport over the car. I can easily add congestion to NSW roads if you prefer!”

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“I would like to see the NSW State Government come into the 21st Century and make Sydney a much more liveable city by increasing the use of affordable public transport. The best cities around the world are easy to get around. Think about it.”

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I would like to see a wage increase of my wages of 8% over three years but that is not going to happen so this would be a further loss of income for me. The loss of the 8 trips is just wrong and it sends a further message to people you are not rewarded for using public transport. Oh and I think WestConnex is a huge waste of are tax paying dollars too

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I'm a committed public transport user who sold his car recently and rely on public transport to get around the majority of the time. I think my fellow public transport users are doing the rest of society a service by not clogging up roads with cars and polluting our air with unnecessary emissions. A forward thinking state government should be thanking public transport users and not punishing them with higher fees. ”

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“I work full-time and catch the bus to work. Changing free travel from any 8 to the most expensive 10 trips means I will loose all discounts even on a full 5-day working week. how about making it the 8 most expensive trips? People who commute to work on a daily basis will pay the same for most of their trips so increasing the cut off to 10 trips is unfairly penalising them. As for the Sunday daily fare cap, we often use this for an outing with the kids to the city as it is cheaper than travelling in our own car on toll roads and paying parking in the city. If it is increased and kids will also have to pat \$7.50 for the day this will likely mean not just my family but lots of other will take the car. this will lead to overcrowded roads on Sundays. Both changes seem very counterproductive in times of climate change as they removes incentives to use public transport, whose users should increased and subsidied rather than penalised.”

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Increase in fare prices will adversely affect those who are vulnerable and financially disadvantaged. Many pensioners, young people and families from low socio-economic backgrounds will be unable to access public transport. This will impact on their social mobility and access to social resources (e.g. health care, employment, education). For vulnerable communities, public transport is a significant means of accessing resources which pave the way to a better future and can break the cycle of poverty. For these reasons, Opal fares should not be increased for social justice reasons

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“Although as a pensioner I won't personally be affected by the proposed changes, with all the social, economic and environmental benefits of public transport, the NSW Government should be making it easier to use for everyone, not more difficult.”

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“As a pensioner, I am not going to be directly affected by the proposed increased fares, but with all the social, economic and environmental benefits of public transport, the NSW Government should be making it easier to use for everyone, not more difficult.”

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“Public transport needs to be as cheap as possible to make it the preferred mode of travel for as many people as possible. As a senior citizen, my use of public transport has been made much easier and affordable by the introduction of the Opal Card. Studies have proven that affordable public transport is a contributing factor to the general well being of the senior members of the community because it facilitates physical activity and social interaction. Removing the eligibility for the \$2.50 Opal fare from senior citizens, who are not in receipt of the aged pension, will have a serious impact on their use of public transport because it will cease to be an affordable option for many self-funded retirees. It is also imperative that people of working age can travel to and from work by public transport without the accompanying fares being a significant proportion of their take-home pay. ”

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“My partner have chosen not to have a car, as it's expensive but it's also a big toll on the environment. I work all over the Sydney Metropolitan Area and rely on affordable public transport. There are lots of things that you can complain about Sydney public transport but so far Opal has been fantastic. The 8 trips incentive is the main reason why I continue to use public transport and avoid the car. This extreme price hike effectively punishes people who are doing the right thing and using public transport. ”  
 “Rather than increase fares cut the management the amount of money wasted by Syd Train management can be used to keep fares low.”

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Already Opal charges take a considerable part of my after-tax-and-house-rent income. Its increase could be a disaster for me. I take my family of 4 to resorts in Sundays by Family Funday tickets which I would not be able to take them if fares increase such crazily. This should not happen. This is not fair

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“I wish to express my concern for lower income people living further away from the city and appropriate jobs being unable to afford these increases in transport costs. Coupled with an ever increasing network of tolls, the second most unaffordable housing in the world, electricity and gas prices that have gone ballistic.... these transport costs are simply unfair and will lead to greater stress and cost within family units. ”

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“I am a pensioner who has severe auto immune problems, and for me the fare increase would be just crippling”

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We are in a world where we need to do everything we can to reduce global warming. A huge part of that is public transport. Increasing opal fares will mean more cars. A backwards move Personally two of us in our household use opal gold. We use public transport a lot. It will have a big affect on our use of public transport and our household expenditure

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“Some more points: I'm affected by the loss of the weekly and quarterly rates. The Opal card was pushed on us and for the initial presentation the 8 trip cap gave some compensation, especially with the advantage of not having to be for the same route. It's disgusting that they removed the weekly & quarterly tickets and now plan to take away the maximum of 8 paid trips. If they want to choose the longest 8, that is one thing, but don't take away the limit. Until our wages and pensions go up by 8% there's no justification for the travel going up by so much. Add the planned loss of weekly cap, and the increase is even greater than 8%. ”

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“To travel independently I am totally dependant on public transport as I'm ineligible for a driver's licence because of my epilepsy. ”

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Public transport should be encouraged with affordable fares. Increasing prices makes me reconsider using the train on a daily basis. Unfortunately many people use the train as their only option. With wages not rising as fast as inflation, how will people living in Sydney continue to cope?”

[REDACTED]

When Opal card was introduced I talked with Gladys the Transport Minister at that time and she assured me that the pensioners fare will not increase in future. I am a pensioner and do a lot of volunteer work like teaching English to the refugees and new migrants, organise harmony day, organise refugee week, an ambassador for peace, President of a community organisation, Justice of the Peace, member of Sydney Alliance, member of CALD communities councils of Holroyd and Fairfield council areas and many other NGO and government organisations. I will have to quit doing volunteer work if I have to pay more for my travel as I normally use public transport.

[REDACTED]

I elect to use public transport as my primary mode of transport and consequently have chosen to no longer own a car. I have made this choice for many reason that include my support for public infrastructures, public health, community collaboration, environmental and economic pressures. I am proud that my environmental foot print on Sydney treads gently. As a motivated Opal Card user increasing the price of PT and removing the incentives is not the way to go to encourage people to use public transport

[REDACTED]

Opal fares are already quite high compared with petrol prices. I have a 20 year old son whose friends prefer to drive places together than get public transport together because when they put \$20 worth of petrol in the car they already feel they get far more "bang for their buck" than all separately paying opal fare prices. For the sustainability of our city and climate, we need to redress the cost balance such that public transport is always a more cost effective option

[REDACTED]

I am a senior working less than 20 hours a week. With less income the Gold Opal has made it much more feasible to get to the city and return or make journeys further afield. It is getting harder to make ends meet and these increases will be really difficult for myself and my friends/family who wish to use public transport. life will be more confined. We need to encourage people away from pollution and towards transport that helps the planet. Please don't bring in these rises. My mother who is 86 and a pensioner may be hesitant to afford visits to doctors etc if these dramatic price rises go through. It may literally affect her health. It is false economy to save in this area and cut down on the numbers using the service - we need more users not less!"

[REDACTED]

As a low-income student who is unable to claim concession, fair and cheap fares are important for me to be able to travel to and from study or work. The current fare structure is already quite dear for many trips I take and a price increase would make transport unaffordable for myself and many others. Please consider the students, families, older persons and everyone who relies upon the public transport network to get to and from work and study and be fair with your fares!"

[REDACTED]

"Sydney transport is already so expensive! If any price changes take place, they should be moving towards making public transport cheaper so that it is more accessible and more attractive."

[REDACTED]

"I work with refugees and know people on pension. Using public transport to go out for the day or to go to doctors etc is one way they manage to maintain some level of mental health. if this becomes too expensive for them it will increase their isolation and mental health issues. "

[REDACTED]

Sad very very sad if these changes happen I have a senior opal but am not a pensioner yet...having. undergone a total knee replacement with very limited income I have always taken pride of being able to go to places where my \$ 2.50 can take me ! If the changes happen it will take away lotsssssss of fun which is therapy for some of loneliness of being stuck & am sure lot of people my age can relate too I love those days that myself with a few senior friends travel around & we explore Sydney. & surround for the day Also am thinking of my son who does volunteer work at uni on Sundays & uses his opal card... will hit him hard!!"

[REDACTED]

"Discounted public transport on weekends makes it affordable for me to get out of the house to attend Sunday Mass in churches near and far, and to help me stay connected to a wider group of people outside of my immediate neighbourhood. Abolishing the current Sunday daily fare cap of \$2.50 means I can no longer afford to travel to many church and community activities further afield. Please keep the Opal fares low!"

[REDACTED]

Please don't take away the free fare after 5 trips it is a great incentive for me to use public transport on the weekends.

[REDACTED]

Affordable public transport makes our City global, allows for fair access to all parts of our City and connects communities. By increasing the difficulty to access of public transport we would be doing our city and its population a great disservice! These price increases may not seem much to privileged populations (certainly not to those making the recommendations) but will disproportionately affect lower income earners AND dis-incentivize commuters (more cars and more traffic). Is this really what Sydney wants? I doubt it.

[REDACTED]

being a student mean i cant afford to pay higher fares, and live in Sydney.

[REDACTED]

I don't agree with fare increases. Being a full time volunteer, I travel four days a week on the public transport system and it is already a large chunk out of a small purse. Having lived and worked overseas our prices are already so much higher than other countries. How can they still keep increasing?

[REDACTED]

"Sydney is already struggling with traffic, sydney is also famous for having one the worst public transport system within developed countries. Making public transport more expensive and removing incentive to use it will turn many people back to using their cars which would increase traffic, waste resources like petrol and increases pollution. People who do not have their own transport will have to cope with increased prices which can hurt lower income families. Sydney is already an expensive city to live and commuting to and from work is not a cost which families can avoid! We all have to get to and from work!"

[REDACTED]

I support public transport and want to use it as much as possible. I use public transport as I want to live in a city that is not polluted by car fumes and less traffic which is more peaceful for all commuters. I take advantage of cheaper Sunday fares and there is currently incentive for using Opal travel. if these changes come into place I will have second thoughts of using public transport. Sydney is already an expensive city and this increase will be another financial stress. It is unfair to burden public transport users with a price hike.

[REDACTED]

"Increasing the cap on Seniors Gold Opal Card fares will deter me from using public transport. I currently travel by Public Transport frequently and have the incentive of the free fares after the first 8 journeys in a week to use it whenever possible. All Seniors should be eligible for the concession fares not just Pensioners. The Seniors who do voluntary work in so many places and would not be able to afford to continue with their volunteers services if they had to pay full fares as proposed. eg This could include the many hours worked by Pink Ladies and other volunteer workers in the Health sector. Taking grandchildren out on Sunday is affordable with the Family Funday fares but should the fares increase then using the car may appear a more attractive proposal. All forms of transport should offer off-peak travel concessions. "

[REDACTED]

I use the trains every week for work related trips, instead of an office car, basically on environmental and ethical grounds. An increase in Opal fares will reduce the incentive to take the train, after all, what's the point of catching a train if it's going to be relatively so expensive? I am also concerned about the negative health impacts, because we need more people to walk to public transport, as it adds to their daily physical activity, this is a positive health impact. When public transport becomes more expensive it acts as disincentive for users, hence the health impacts become negative as users take to their cars. An increase in car usage will also trigger an increase in congestion too, bad for Sydney's economy as congestion is already a huge economic problem for Sydney

[REDACTED]

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physical activity, this is a positive health impact. When public transport becomes more expensive it acts as disincentive for users, hence the health impacts become negative as users take to their cars. An increase in car usage will also trigger an increase in congestion too, bad for Sydney's economy as congestion is already a huge economic problem for Sydney

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"please keep fares fair Majority of users are already paying full fares at least twice a day - they are taxpayers "

██████████

"This would majorly effect how often I can afford to use public transport to get to and from work. It would be far more economical for me to drive my scooter into and out of the city for work. I know for a fact many people would start using their own means to get from point A to B - I also would minimise using public transport on the weekends, that is just ridiculous and I would urge all my family and friends to just use their own private vehicles. Or uber!"

██████████

I live on the NSW Central Coast and have to commute into the city everyday. Increasing Opal fares and removing the incentives to use public transport will unfairly hit those of us who have to travel long distances everyday. The daily cap as well as the free trips after 8 make using public transport worthwhile for em and my family, removing and increasing these will put pressure on an already stressed budget but make us consider whether we shouldn't drive at least a few days of the week - surely not something our city needs!"

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"Under the existing Opal scheme, I finally started using public transport, instead of driving to work. In particular, trips being free for the week after 8 trips; encouraging my friends and I to use public transport, even on the weekends. However, suggestions that this may be abolished will mean I will go back to driving everywhere again, and I guess so will many other NSW residents. Which I envision will only cause more issues, given our already congested traffic problems."

██████████

"If these changes go ahead, it'll be cheaper for me to drive to work. Isn't the aim of public transport to get more cars off the road. You're removing the incentive!! Big fail!"

██████████

This change to fares will negatively affect me and my whole family. I live over 20 Kms from my workplace. I cannot afford to drive (tolls are more than \$20 per day + annual parking fees, car maintenance and fuel etc). I chose to live where I do because of family nearby and good public transport connections. I want to use public transport for mental and physical health and sustainability reasons. I am also more productive and can make the best use of my workday (use my laptop and read on the train). I encourage my whole family to use public transport -- my parents use the gold card, and my extended family uses the opal card to get around, especially for regular travel to work and school, and outings on the weekends. Such a large increase in fares would impact our household budget and mean that I would spend less on other things, such as education, food, and outings. Sydney has a great public transport system and introducing a card like Opal was a great step forward for commuters. Why make it harder to use for everyone?

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"As a pensioner I use the train to go to shopping centre, and for movie. To go by car is stressful, and costly because of the parking costs. The increase to \$4 would put a strain on this. I think it is healthy (mental and physical) for older people to get out for a train ride and maybe a ferry. I think it would be fair for senior non pensioners to pay more than \$2.50 but not \$18 Families of four need all the support possible, a hike from \$10 to \$14 virtually means don't go out. "

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I've only recently embraced Public Transport again, since the Opal card commenced. This has meant that I'm using my car less. With all the positive outcomes that comes with this change in my behaviour and that of many Sydney- siders who are doing the same thing, I would think Government would not put the price of the Opal card up. I may have to return to my old ways. What a shame!"



[REDACTED]

“Message re Opal Card proposed increases. There is another petition on Change.org, which is also not gaining much support: <https://www.change.org/p/ipart-nsw-opal-card-for-seniors-to-rise-in-price-to-9-00>? Personally, I put in a submission along the lines of the comment I wrote for the petition above. Mainly to do with the Gold Opal Card. You can see a copy of the submission put in by The Centre of Volunteering: <http://www.volunteering.com.au/> in the 'Latest News' section. I believe the lack of publicity in the media is a problem. I also heard that school children will not be able to use it for extra curricular activities after school. Businesses do not appreciate that their business will slow, a/c people will be spending more money on fares, hence less on that cup of coffee, sandwich, etc. Being cynical, the NSW Government has to clog the roads with more traffic, to justify their expenditure on new roads.”

[REDACTED]

“As a self funded retiree just above the income at which I would be eligible for a part pension, an increase of this order would keep me at home far more, instead of participating in community activities. With chronic back pain and no car, my social engagement is almost entirely dependent on public transport. Please make it easier, rather than harder for people to move around.”

[REDACTED]

“I'm an undergraduate student at the University of Sydney, currently living from home in the Blue Mountains. This means I rely on public transport to get me to and from uni each day, 5 days a week. I top up my Opal card at the start of each week with \$30, leaving only a few dollars left at the end of each week. I relish in the fact that I get my Friday trips free. It makes uni feel all the more worthwhile to go each day of the week. I'll lose both this incentive, and the already substantially costing train fares if this change goes ahead.”

[REDACTED]

“Opal cost me more than my yearly ticket. having no travel incentive and forcing me to pay for 5 days will just encourage driving or are evasion ive made the most of the weekend travel too. reducing this wil s top me travelling by pt on weekend and likely stop me travelling to nsw destinations at all ”

[REDACTED]

The government should not increase the Opal Card fares, especially not for pensioners, who it impacts most.”

[REDACTED]

When one analyses in depth the background and ongoing saga of the criminal farce entitled Westconnex the only valid conclusion that can be drawn from the punitive fare increases is that the nature of commuting in this state is still a plaything of the the roads lobby / tollway companies . Despite sporadic disingenuous statements that all forms of transport are to be given equal status , the disproportionate funding given to the RMS makes it clear that the growth in popularity of public transport is seen as a threat to the motoring status quo and hence must be dealt with by such means as fare increases designed to discourage public transport usage.This is a government with a 1950's mentality

[REDACTED]

For starter, I use a train and bus to travel from home to work and back each day. I pay two fares (maximum \$15 each day), but they are counted as one. I am disadvantaged because I do not have another way to get to work. My colleague travels further to work than me and yet pays less weekly because she uses one mode of transport. If this government is about fairness, where is it for people who need to use two modes of transport for their daily need. In order for the trips to be counted as a separate trip, I need to waste an hour between using each mode of transport. If I am heading to work and back, why would I use an hour drinking coffee or walking through the shops in order for each trip to be counted separately . Finally, the cost of my trip to and from the city has increased by almost 40% since early last year. Further increases to the cost of transport will impose more burden who have to travel to get to work. This government was meant to be about c hoices, but obviously my only choice is to use the Opal and bear the cost, use my car and put up with the daily traffic or leave work. What a choice?????”

[REDACTED]

it is too expensive for me to pay the fare for me to go to work. Even though the distance in only 10 km, i have to catch two buses and it works out really expensive. So far, the drivers just let me on but i know i will get caught. Even if i get caught, i have calculated that the fine will equal about ten days of not getting caught- seems worth it to me. In comparison, i caught a train from Bomaderry to Central and it was around \$3. How is that fair?????”



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No need to take away one of the only benefits seniors get

██████

“Probably will not take public transport. It will be more expensive than ridesharing! ”

██████████████████

“Like most self-funded retirees, I worked hard to save for retirement. There were no holidays, new cars, private education or eating out in my family. In recent years where record low interest rates have barely kept pace with inflation, my income has in fact been lower than the pension. I cannot afford a car now and may not be able to keep my licence as I get older due to health reasons. Therefore, affordable public transport is essential for me and thousands of other seniors to continue to be able to access services and contribute to the community. ”

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“All incentives towards increasing the use of public transport are vital for managing an increasing population who already have to deal with major traffic problems. These recommendations are ridiculous. ”

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Public transport is essential for our family - we rely on it for work and leisure related travel every day! Making it affordable and accessible should be a priority. So it's important to not implement IPART's recommendations to raise Opal fares as already public transport costs are a significant portion of our weekly budget. ”

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To the Independent Pricing and Review Tribunal - regarding an increase in Opal card fare costs: Dear Madam/ Sir, It is of great concern to me as a gold opal card user, over 60 with a very low income but not a recipient of a government benefit , that the price of the Opal Card remain as it is at \$2.50 per day. I am a Senior who has limited savings which are not increasing with the cost of living. I need fares to be capped to make them affordable, so that I can get around and make use of the wonderful and affordable resources and facilities the city provides. If fares increase, it will be at the expense of my demographic, who will be confined to their homes in increasing numbers, as it becomes unaffordable to travel. This is discriminatory and short sighted, as a reduction in the number of users of public transport will inevitably lead to a further need to raise fare prices to balance costs! It is a way of honouring the contribution made by people of my generation that the community assists them in older age by making certain activities affordable and comfortable, and public transport is an important aspect. I have a dependent child, who also needs to use public transport. Fare increases that affect his ability to travel will flow back to my own capacity to pay an increased amount, and this is untenable for me. There needs to be a lot more thought given to the goal in sight, rather than a short sighted approach to filling a shortfall now. If the goal is to encourage usage of public transport, then one feature is to keep fares affordable. The important feature of a healthy public transport system is to keep it affordable for the majority of people to both encourage usage and also to reduce the number of cars on the roads. The Bureau of Statistics states the average income in the last Census was below \$70,000 per year which does not leave much disposable income to spend on transport. The number of people at the higher income end is about 10% of the population. This is a very small percentage of the whole population, who could afford the price hikes, but it makes no sense to make it harder for the average earner or pensioner to pay more than is manageable. In addition, if we are trying to discourage workers from using their private cars and to take up public transport, it makes logical sense to encourage them by keeping fares affordable and attractive. Affordable fares will go hand in hand with greater number of users, especially as the public transport of Sydney is improved. We need to keep the focus on improving public transport and keeping it affordable. Yours sincerely, Jenny van Proctor

[REDACTED]

I use the train everyday, it has become a very reliable mode of transport, a much better option than driving. I also use the bus to travel to UNSW after work. Affordable transport makes sense and will encourage more people to use it. This directly helps our climate crisis and builds the capacity of our community, and enhances our overall quality of life. The prices must be kept at a reasonable level, to encourage more not less use.

[REDACTED]

"I travel to work which day from Campbelltown to the City which is more than \$60 per week, I just finished university, working as a youth worker and just bought a house if the price of the opal card increase I will not be able to afford to keep my job, please don't increase public transport!!

[REDACTED]

"I have 5 children and no car, so the last thing I need to hear is that transport is going to cost more! Unlimited Sunday travel at \$2.50 has been the only way we can afford to consider taking the kids anywhere, so changing this will probably mean we don't do outings. It's likely that even more mundane trips will have to be reconsidered with higher costs, and it may mean that essential trips will become impossible at times. Day to day activities that other people take for granted will have to be weighed up and considered for us, and no doubt many times decided against. Apart from my personal situation, we need to commit to a change to public transport as a nation, for the sake of the environment. This means expanding public transport and offering incentives to use it, not shrinking it and making it prohibitively expensive. We should be offering incentives for people to commute by public transport!"

[REDACTED]

As a mum of 2 if the fare increases go ahead instead of travelling on the weekend with my family to Sydney we would be forced to drive into the city as the parking stations and fuel cost would be cheaper than the train system. Our children will never know the novelty of travelling on a train when the price of going on one is too expensive for a family. The children's grandparents would never do the day trip with the kids up to the city on the train and catching the ferry across to the zoo, manly or to luna park

[REDACTED]

"The increase in cost will put pressure on an already tight budget! Especially for the elderly."

[REDACTED]

I regularly use public transport to travel to and from work every day, this is due to the fact that parking at my place of work is very expensive (about \$16) per day and then calculating the cost of petrol etc. However, by using public transport I am saving myself an average of \$1 every day (without calculating the cost of petrol) and then I have a free travel day on Friday which is saving me an extra \$15 every week. If the cost of public transport increases, then I would not have an incentive to use public transport and I will instead use my car more frequently, I am sure I'm not alone in this and so if we are trying to decrease the morning/afternoon rush, then I am sorry but this is not the most suitable way to go about doing it.

[REDACTED]

"I find it duplicitous that the Baird Government promised that the Opal card would bring cheaper fares and now they are increasing them. The Government should not be increasing fares. It should be encouraging people to use the trains. I hate the Opal Card because it means job losses for railway station staff - who are part of my community. I feel for railway staff who must be constantly feeling the threats of insecure employment."

[REDACTED]

I say no to an increase in public transport fares as it is imperative that people should be encouraged to use affordable public transport. For individuals on a higher income an 8% increase over 3 years may not seem to be a lot of money but for the average person increasing costs is an unnecessary financial burden. Public transport should be made accessible & encouraged with affordable fares

[REDACTED]

"Increasing the cost of public transport will put more people back in cars and add to the road congestion in Sydney. It also affects the poorest in our society the most. The social, economic and environmental effects will be profound and make this proposal a reckless one with little thought being given to how to make Sydney a city that is easy to get around for residents and visitors. Have vision, have imagination! Make Sydney a city that leads the world in clean, fast, safe and environmentally responsible public transport!!"

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“As a self-funded retiree on a limited income I am very worried about the possibility of changes to Senior Opal card fares. I depend almost entirely on public transport because my partner uses our one car for work, and even on weekends we prefer to use PT for city travel rather than take the car. Additionally, as I do a lot of volunteer work I need to use PT to fulfill my obligations eg. to Lifehouse Hospital, to 2RPH ( Radio for Print Handicapped) several times a week. If fares for non-pensioner Seniors rise to full fare I will be unable to readily access my volunteer sites, and will need to resort to driving when my partner is not at work. This would be cheaper for me than full fare travel; would put another car on Sydney's already congested roads unnecessarily and will contribute additional greenhouse gases to the atmosphere. As a retired senior person who has paid significant tax over my 42 year working life and claims no age pension, I consider any change to make non-pensioner seniors pay full fare is actually penalising me and thousands of others who had the forethought to forward plan for a retirement which does not burden today's taxpayers. It amounts to ageism and discrimination against senior Australians.”

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I am disability pensioner who lives in the Blue Mountains and I rely on the train to get me too and from my specialist appointments. As it is I struggle financially and any increase id a disaster for me. I would have to cut back on visits to these drs and that may effect my health and mean I spend more time in hospital costing the state more. Think about what you are doing PLEASE

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“I am currently on a very low income and looking for more work. Making ends meet is really hard when you work two days a week and have Sydney rent to pay. Raising public transport fares will make it harder. If fares go up, my already curtailed social life will be even more limited. It will also cost more to get to work and job interviews. My life will be harder if costs go up. It will also discourage people with cars from choosing public transport. That's not the way we need to go.”

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Last year and this I've made an effort to co-ordinate my travels with the timetables. However, If the fares go up I will be opting out of public transport use and will be back to the convenience of using my car every day instead. The fare hike will make it too expensive - just not worth it! My car is cheap to run and I feel good about using public transport for the good of the environment but if there is a fare increase it will have a reverse effect on my goodwill and that of the public and my contacts and circle of friends. The result will be fewer people on the trains, buses & ferries - instead of rush hour traffic there will be a significantly longer period of congestion - is that really the objective or is it greed. I say hold the fares where they are and encourage more people to use what we have!”

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“This increase in fares will impact on those least likely to be able to afford the increase. Is not the goal of government in providing public transport not to make money but to provide a service that would otherwise be unavailable to tax payers?”

██████████

“Public transport in Sydney is already one of the most inefficient and expensive services to the user when compared to other global cities, further to that the current government has assumed a massive cost by shifting to the Opal card system. Opal has proven to cut out a huge chunk of revenue from the budget, with public transport fare revenue falling 3% based on factors like malfunctioning Opal swipers and the cost of rolling out such a poor quality system that allows for so many malfunctions. The government is simply looking for ways to recoup the loss on their poor decisions by shifting it to those who have no option besides taking public transport.”

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even though I get the Pensioners opal fare I would like to say last saturday i was stranded at mortdale during the the storm on the train as power was cut and due to the Light rail tram works dep point streets have been changed and I was not told of this I was waiting for a 311 bus in elizerberth st Town Hall not realizing the bus stop route for this bus had been relocated to park and pit st town hall People with Intelctraul Disability will suffer if the opal fares were increased and during peak period there are no seats on the train on those basis I oppose any fare increase untill we get better service for our money and their are no luggage racks for bags so people are using the isle and seats to house their bags and the same with buses”

[REDACTED]

“Due to recent take over of the RPA Hospital car park and increased car parking costs , limited parking spaces, and also moving back to the Central Coast but still continuing to work at RPA I have been using public transport. The increase cost of transport will only add to the headache of working.”

[REDACTED]

I don't like these changes tp opal card as thepublic transport system is not worth that much of a hassel to ctch transport. if the changes went through ill will be going be ca u loose out ill be putting my opal card in the bin and will walk no worries .and the transport late most of the time already fed up

[REDACTED]

I travel daily by bus with 3 children. It is already expensive. I already have to think twice about taking short trips to save fares. My husband also travels daily. It would be more cost effective to take the car , if bus fares increase. Public transport should be affordable and accessible for all. Some seniors rely on their \$2.50 pass to get out and about. Don't ruin that well deserved perk of getting older.

[REDACTED]

“Uni students + transport price increase = very angry.”

[REDACTED]

“I am a self funded retiree depending on my super for an income. I am a senior and hence rely on the Seniors Opal card to get around. I am 63 years of age and hence after several years of looking for work i have been unable to gain employment I have been unsuccessful being continually told that I am over qualified and that I would not be content with a manual job. I am too young for the pension. If the the \$2.50 Opal Card was to be discontinued I would find it hard to get around having to revert to my car and the costs associated with that both to myself and the community. As a person on a reducing fixed income I find it difficult to cope with continuing news about my supper being eroded daily due to the global economy and then reports that the GST is going to increase and my transport costs being increased. These reports may not be reality but they come so frequently that they become my reality. It is hard to get up everyday and stay positive.&r dquo;

[REDACTED]

“It's alright to have the opal card I do get confused by the various transaction show on the card I have got used to it now. The cost of a small rise would be O.K. I go out 3-4 times a week sometimes more spending \$10+ a week the rise would increase my spending by \$10 it all adds up I keep tabs on my spending so it would stop me using the card as much.”

[REDACTED]

“Please no increases! I commute to the city each day from Wollongong and spend \$60 a week. My salary is small and i truly cannot afford an increase. Why do we have to make everything more expensive when the services are remaining the same and salaries aren't increasing! No increase!”

[REDACTED]

“I think the proposed public transport fares proposed increase outrageous. A city like Sydney needs to make public transport an attractive option by having affordable ticket prices. Affordable fares encourage car owners to use public transport while makng it possible for those on low incomes to buy tickets. As a nearly-60 year old retiree I have been happily anticipating my seniors card only to realise that this affordable travel option will be denied to me. An affordable and extensive public transport system is the only sensible option for Sydney in the face of the ecological challenges facing us all.”  
One could be excused for thinking this is very sneaky. It will impact the most vulnerable- as usual. As a senior card holder I use public transport thereby lessening pollution & congestion for those who MUST use the roads. Abolishing the \$2.50 will put me back on the road most of the time. Self funded retirees are a significant force in the community & we vote. Why not raise the fare to \$4 rather than scrapping it all together. Blessings Ian Kilminster

[REDACTED]

What a regressive idea! Public transport is one of the best ways we have of decreasing pollution and increasing social interaction. I live in the inner city and do not own a car because I can use my train and bus. The older residents in my street do the same and it gets them out and using the City, and able to keep contact with their community. Dry up a vital social network and you dry up the City. For the mental and physical health of our citizens, make it easier and cheaper to use public transport because it is a social

[REDACTED]

good, for all citizens

[REDACTED]

I rely on public transport heavily due to the inefficient and heavily clogged road system in and around Sydney. Due to a lack of affordable housing in Sydney I have been forced out to the outer northern suburb of Berowra. We have very few shops and public facilities here and no local high school and few local employment opportunities so getting out and about for both school and education means we rely heavily on transport. Most families living in this area work in or around the CBD to afford their housing and many have young families so also have to finance childcare. A further rise in public transport costs will increase the financial burden on young families and force them out of employment. People will opt to use their own cars which will increase the already 'crisis point' pacific highway. There are many Schools and businesses along that road which will increase the risk of accidents to the public and school children. If I and others are forced to use cars to an unreasonable hike in public transport costs the inevitable delays caused by the inadequate road system in Sydney will lead to loss of productivity. If fares go up as planned, it will be cheaper for me to buy a car, pay for parking, registration, maintenance etc, given how long it takes to get anywhere from where I live. We are woefully underserved, it can take up to 3 buses to get to neighbouring suburbs and services to the city are usually packed to capacity, which makes it impractical to travel with a stroller or shopping when you need to battle through/with the older and disabled public transport patrons for space! I use public transport to commute part time, and socialise and buy essentials after work. Fair rises are not in line with pay rises and will help to make Sydney an even more difficult, inequitable city to live and work in than it already is. "

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

"As someone on a carers pension I rely on affordable public transport to make ends meet while still being able to travel to appointments and shopping etc. "

[REDACTED]

"Sydney needs MORE people on public transport - not less. We need better public transportation options, more extensive networks and fair pricing to encourage people to use it. "

[REDACTED]

I use public transport every day and it already costs a not insignificant proportion of what I earn each day. I value public transport in Sydney and see it as a critical part of this wonderful city. Increases in the price of travel by public transport impact me and I can't imagine how much it impacts other people, such as those without a stable income, those who are elderly, those who are carers and people in low-income jobs. Public transport should be affordable - please keep it this way."

[REDACTED]

As a pensioner I would not be travelling as much on public transport if fares increases to \$4. Train is my only option to come in to the city. travelling by car would be much too expensive as I live over 50 km from city. Also my family would not be able to come in to the city as we usually go on sundays. with several family members it would be too expensive

[REDACTED]

I work for a not-for-profit organisation and need to catch 3 trains to work (both ways). The price increase makes a significant increase to my general living costs for the week, and may mean (in combination with all the other price increases) that I may need to look for other work outside of the much needed community services

[REDACTED]

"I am a self-funded retiree so I am not a pensioner. I also have a life-long severe physical disability. As I am over the age of 65, I am not eligible for assistance through the NDIS - even though I acquired my disability through contracting polio as a baby. I therefore have to pay for all my disability needs myself. Removing my eligibility to use the Opal Gold card would add yet another financial burden."

[REDACTED]

The adverse mental and physical health effects of long commutes are well documented. There are also significant health impacts from vehicle emissions, as well as environmental effects. For these and many other reasons, most advanced cities are improving their public transport infrastructure and ensuring that services and costs encourage increased usage. The proposed cost increases to Opal are a major backward step."

[REDACTED]

"I can barely afford opal as it is, and I have to think twice about going to events because of transport costs. Often it's about the same price to uber into the city as taking the train with my partner from my house in the inner west. This is terrible for the environment. Opal needs to be affordable."

[REDACTED]

I live in the Macarthur-Camden region and I work in the Sydney CBD in a junior role (there are very few jobs outside of the Sydney CBD). I travel to work every day via the train, with my commute just over an hour. Sydney road traffic is horrendous so I know I'm doing my part to alleviate this problem by catching public transport. The peak hour trains are usually packed because so many people use the system. This hike in prices will dramatically affect my budget, as a significant proportion of my income already goes to transport fees. Public transport is integral to this city and to my life personally. We need to encourage more people to use it and get them off our roads, and you would only steer more people away from public transport with the increase in prices.

[REDACTED]

"I believe the government and IPART have got this all wrong. Public transport should be FREE and levied on everyone, that way, everyone pays for it and everyone has the option to use it when ever they need. Sure some will benefit, those who use public transport often or as their only means of transport, but that's the beauty of the levy, if you pay it you would be more inclined to use public transport thereby reducing the amount of vehicles used unnecessarily on the roads."

[REDACTED]

How can the most expensive 10 trips be counted? A weekly ticket roughly added up to 8 trips before it was replaced with the opal(\$35 approx - bexley north - city). After opal was introduced fares came down to \$33.60 a very minor decrease. However if 10 trips are to be counted it would cost me \$42 a week to catch the train to and from work 5 days a week. This would be an \$8.40/week increase which is effectively a 25% increase in price?????

[REDACTED]

"My husband is 78yo & I am 68yo; we live on part pension + self funded income. We do not have huge resources. We live on the southern outskirts of Sydney. We use public transport to travel any distance for safety, financial as well as environmental reasons. We appreciate the service offered by our public transport system; please do not price it beyond our means. We should be encouraging its use by older people to enable them to socialise, exercise, leave the car at home, stay healthy. These savings alone should offset the cost of travel subsidy. Please not price it out of our reach."

[REDACTED]

"I just take public transport to work and back. Sometimes I think of driving to work as parking is about \$10 a day but avoid it thinking of free Friday. With this increase, I'd be more tempted to drive to work instead of taking the public transport."

[REDACTED]

"This is just pure greed. Public transport should be affordable to everyone. The increase in prices won't make affordable anymore."

[REDACTED]

I get a bus and train to work and back daily - I already find this VERY expensive - particularly compared to public transport in other states - I pay high rent and cost of living is high- working in the community sector my wage is modest"

[REDACTED]

I am a lady who needs to use public transport in order to go to work every day and the public transport's fee is high for me as it is. I am not able to afford to pay more for bus and train tickets. It has a huge impact on my budget



One of my children (who is now 28) lives in Sydney with his fiancée. I travel up by bus from Canberra regularly to see them and to work and attend volunteer activities of various kinds. I use public transport most of the time when I am in Sydney. I think it is crucial, in the forthcoming period of our world, that we encourage low carbon transport usage as much as we can and encourage people to use public transport as often as possible. This is a key measure to make our cities more environmentally sustainable. I also have a strong interest in social equity - both as someone who is approaching retirement, faced with low interest rates on my superannuation and the reduced options for work after one turns 60, and from a social justice perspective more broadly. For many people who use public transport, the high costs of parking and of owning a car are prohibitive. Our cities still are not designed in a manner where work and living occur in the same area for most people. Those who live furthest away from their workplaces often live there because accommodation is more affordable. Price hikes that increase the costs for those who must take public transport to distant places to work will significantly disadvantage those who need it most. I have also observed that older people in Sydney use public transport a lot. Making this less affordable is most likely to lead to increased social isolation for others, as is also the case for people with disabilities or illness, which make car use impossible. In particular also, fares are already a disincentive for many country residents, who might otherwise use Countrylink services. Those who live in rural or country areas already often pay a premium for services compared to Victoria, for example. I normally have used a private bus company rather than the train to get to Sydney, because of the price relativity. I have only just moved to catching the train up, as the prices are now almost equivalent, but if the price of tickets for trains go up then it's likely to change the economics for me when I am visiting Sydney. Train is my preferred mode of travel, but as I move towards a fixed income, these costs all add up. When I need to go to see my husband's family in Melbourne, I travel V-line all the time, and first class. Instead of the extraordinary difference in costs of NSW Country Link tickets between economy and first class of more than \$25, it's only \$8 more to go first class by train in Victoria. The normal economy fare by NSW bus and train Countrylink service from Canberra to Melbourne is \$15 more than the Vline ticket, and first class it's \$31 more expensive to go by Countrylink. I welcome the new \$45 no refund fare and will be availing myself of it in future, but increasing these costs will reduce down my incentive to use the Countrylink service. There should be no increases in the costs to consumers to use public transport in NSW

"I have chronic illness that requires a lot of travel to and from Sydney and Newcastle to doctor and specialist appointments at hospital. At present I struggle to manage to afford to attend all the appointments I need to via train with my pensioner excursion ticket and the cost of my medications (not covered by the PBS is a large part of my weekly expenses). The disability support pension does not increase the same rate as the proposed travel increases so HOW IS THIS FAIR? How am I supposed to be able to attend the appointments I need to when I struggle now and have had to postpone appointments now as sometimes travelling 8 or 9 times to Sydney a fortnight and around Newcastle via public transport means I spend over \$30 a fortnight of my pension on pensioner excursion tickets? I would like to see the executive managers and people proposing these increases to walk in my shoes and manage my budget for a month and then tell me that the increase is reasonable and affordable and NOT going to disadvantage people like myself who have no other avenues to support themselves or cover the rise in costs."

I commute everyday to work & would be seriously disappointed to lose the discount! I'm already on a low wage & the loss of the discount would impact me. Also, I'm not far from being eligible to senior fare & am aghast to learn that pensioners would be forced to pay full fare

The cost incentive to take public transport will no longer be strong enough meaning I will be much more likely to consider switching to driving. If I change my hours to travel at a less congested time of the day (I commute via millitary rd) there is no financial incentive, meaning the incentive to drive becomes even stronger! Elderly people can be scary drivers (my grandfather went the wrong way around a round-about and still got passed the next time he sat a driving test!), particularly when they are out of their usual area, the discounted concessions are to encourage them to take public transport - a massive boost to road safety for everyone else. The \$2.50 Sunday cap encourages many more people to take the train/ferry to the beach/other popular recreation areas on the



weekends - reducing congestion and improving enjoyment of public spaces for everyone. This has strong implications for mental health - particularly for job seekers doing it tough financially. I'm soon moving to manly - if the 8 trip max is discontinued, the fast ferry will be the cheaper option for my commute to work - how does that make sense when its 12 minutes faster? Felicity

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"Since I've been getting the seniors discount on my Opal card, I've travelled more on public transport. It's been a real blessing because I'm finding driving in city traffic increasingly stressful. I retired early due to health reasons, but I'm not eligible for the aged pension. Paying full fares on public transport will force me back to driving most of the time."

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"I live in Western Sydney in an area poorly serviced by rail, but we can reach rail by bus links. A trip to the central city is prohibitive for my family of 5, and to travel further to reach beaches on the other side of Sydney is just too expensive. Fair go for all, please! We rely on the capped fares to be able to enjoy our city."

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I am on parenting payment as I am home educating my children. Since bring forced to go onto the opal gold card, I cannot purchase a family ticket for my children to travel with me ie paying for one child only (with the other travelling free). Each child now needs an Opal card or paper ticket. This has already significantly increased our public transport costs. We are in western Sydney and a home educating family. This has dramatically changed how we go out and learn in the world and attend social social activities. Any further increase will be too difficult to absorb

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"Good public transport eliviates the building of more roads. Keeping public transport affordable makes it more appealing to most people. "

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"Good public transport eliviates the building of more roads. Keeping public transport affordable makes it more appealing to most people. "

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"I am a part time worker in the community sector with limited income and I am therefore reliant on public transport. Even a small increase in fees will have an impact on my finances. I am also concerned that my clients, who are largely dependent on government benefits, will be detrimentally affected by any rises in public transport costs as the current costs are already a financial burden on them. "

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"I currently work with families who have very low incomes and are struggling to pay rent and buy food. Several of these families rely on public transport to access the community. I have observed that current costs are another expense these families cannot afford. If the costs were to rise these families will not be able to afford to leave their local area and this will have large consequences for their social and emotional well being as well as their ability to function as regular families do. Please do not put the transport fares up, this will have devastating affects for many lower income families!"

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I was encouraged to use public transport by the incentives offered by the Opal card. It is still by no means cheap for me on a weekly basis. These changes will force me back into my car. And the cynicism displayed by the government forcing pensionners to use the card and then increasing the fare dramatically is offensive and will affect my vote without a doubt."

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Coming from a small country town, we dread driving our car in Sydney. Apart from high traffic volume, fast speeds, narrow lanes, we are every time, we visit Sydney, shocked by the extremely high parking fees. If that is going to be topped up with higher public transport fees, we will reconsider strongly, if we plan a stay in Sydney or rather avoid it all together. When our children were young, we used to take them nearly every year to Sydney, visiting the Botanical Gardens, the Aquarium, the Zoo, a ferry ride, Harbour walks, Drive in the Monorail..... All that was in itself already costing heaps for a family of 4. Abolishing the current Sunday daily fare cap of \$2.50 for everyone and replace it with a weekend cap of \$7.20 in 2016, increasing to \$8.00 in 2018. This would increase the cost of taking a family of four out for the day from \$10 to a potential \$32 in 2018. With all the social, economic and environmental benefits of public transport, we should

be making it easier to use for everyone, not more difficult! For Sydneysiders affordable public transport should be the main goal and achievable. Changes to Opal Gold card eligibility arrangements, which would see older people who are not pensioners forced to pay full fares for travel (rather than the \$2.50 cap that all seniors currently pay); Increases to the Opal Gold card cap – from \$2.50 up to \$4.00 by 2018; Increase the daily fare cap – which is currently \$15 for full fare travel – to \$18 in 2016, with further cap increases of \$1 per year thereafter. This will see the cap go up to \$20 by 2020. This has flow-on effects for concession card holders. Instead of getting free travel for the rest of the week from the first 8 trips, IPART recommends it be after the 10 most expensive trips in a week. What does that mean? If you commute every weekday you lose the “free Friday” discount (and therefore much of the incentive to travel via public transport every day). Rejection of proposal to extend off-peak travel concessions to bus commuters.

[REDACTED]

Even at the current rate of 2.50 I combine several trips to stay within this rate. I am involved in community and church activities which is travel to the city often, also I love going to the theater and movies. If the price goes up I won't be able to afford travel, I will become a useless old person staying at home. Give me a break Mr Baird - I've served the country well

[REDACTED]

“Complete lack of thought demonstrated in the proposal”

[REDACTED]

Public transport is the main way that I get around in Sydney I am also a community sector worker, which means money is tight. These increases would make public transport unsustainable for people like me. In addition, I worry about the giant increase in pensioner ticket costs. Why hurt people who are already vulnerable? We should be encouraging public transport use in our congested city - not making it less affordable!”

[REDACTED]

Not just me, but my family will be affected: I am a Senior/Pensioner. The travel concessions make using public transport an attractive option for people my age. Please don't force more of us back on the road or make us have to stay home watching tv most days. The cheap fares do wonders for our wellbeing. A fare rise to \$3 for the day would be acceptable; any more would strain the budget. My daughter works part-time and has found the Opal card has added \$10 a week to her fares already. The idea of a weekend cap, rather than just a Sunday one is great. It's marvellous to see the change that family concession on Sundays has brought to our city. Parents can actually take their children out for the day without great expense. Just feel the atmosphere at Manly, Darling Harbour or Circular Quay. However, its price can't be raised without curtailing this enjoyment. Public transport needs to be cheap and efficient. That way more people will use it and the Department of Transport will have additional income “if all the incentives and caps are gone, the fare would have increased by a lot more than 8% in real terms, making life even harder for all commuters. that would result in more people driving instead of commuting, making the already overloaded road system even more overloaded, meaning more and longer hours in traffic jams, air more polluted with more cars on the road. the whole idea is just crazy and not realistic.”

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Opal is already way more expensive. My trip to central from Dee Why used to cost \$3.40 on a travel 10. Now its over \$7!

[REDACTED]

“The Opal Gold card is one of the good things about growing old. I am beginning to loathe driving in Sydney traffic. Now that I'm retired, I use public transport often. However, if I lose eligibility for an Opal Gold card or if the cap is removed and I become liable for full fares, I will revert to driving most of the time. I'm sure there are many others in my situation. We should be encouraging the use of public transport, not trying to find ways to minimise it.”

[REDACTED]

Please don't remove eligibility of seniors for the Gold Card. We have participated all our lives to the tax system and have funded our own retirement without calling on the Govt for support. Lets us have our simple pleasure of \$2.50 capped excursion tickets. It's not much too ask

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“Our family is already paying almost \$100 per week for transport (myself, my wife and my 8 year old who no longer qualifies for free school bus because he's in year 3). We have twins who will be starting school in 2 years so I have have 5 people who have to pay for public transport. Please don't increase the fares!!!!”

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Opal fares should be positioned to encourage more usage of public transport. Increasing Opal fares directly discourages patronage and brings hard-felt disadvantage the poor and those with few transport options. WestConnex and other road-focused projects and planning confer very heavy financial and social disbenefits to Sydney's citizens (congestion, loss of productivity, delays, health costs, inactivity burden ). Public and active transport alleviate these burdens, and yet these \$-benefits are not factored into public transport provisioning and public transport fares. Bring in transport planners of acumen so that our city may prosper. Any simple analysis of the real costs and benefits of roads and public transport will resolve that Sydney needs to take ALL measures to INCREASE public service patronage. This includes making it cheaper not, more expensive, for people to use public transport.

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“All people need physical activity. Recent UniMelb research shows that the walking trips AS PART of all public transport (PT) journeys are a critical part of how much physical activity our citizens get each day in out time-poor lives. please keep fares as they are and - anything that detracts from PT usage will undermine the amount of physical activity our society gets!”

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“I do not have a car and use only public transport. I do not want the daily fare cap increased as I use public transport for all of my travelling. This has been a deliberate choice as I believe we need to remove as many cars as possible from our streets to increase pedestrian safety, counter pollution and congestion and the stress that is caused by driving in these conditions. I want public transport to become the first option people choose when travelling around Sydney - the OPAL card has been enormously successful and has helped to begin this change in attitudes. This is mainly due to the built in rewards in the system- free travel after 8 trips and \$2.50 Sunday travel. Removing these rewards removes the incentive to use public transport. If this happens we will continue to be a polluted, congested and angry city.”

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Whilst the transport system improved significantly with the starting of the Opal Card system, and whilst my services to Campbelltown during peak hour are faster and we are getting new trains, I am a little surprised that prices would go up still, since there seems to be less actual staff members now since Opal is primarily electronic and doesn't seem to require staff. Additionally, I do not see security at night like we used to. If anything, the prices in my view should be going down. If the government wants to change things, then what should happen is a rorting of the system. It was a nice incentive system, but I think most good people will see how unfair it is. Some other pricing scheme should be worked out, not simply upping fees. I think too that the \$2.50 cap for elderly is a good idea and should not be raised. My grandma is on the pension and does struggle with her finances. It's not something I'd have hoped for for my grandma, and certainly now w hat I want for myself in my retirement years.”

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“Honestly, this is ridiculous. Public transport in Sydney is very lacklustre (and so only poor people generally use it, since they don't have access to a car). And now they want to charge more for it! As usual, hit the poor again and force more people to use cars....”

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The existing senior's fare of \$2.50 allows me to travel without considering the cost on my budget. If the fare were to be increased, I would use public transport less and use my car more as it would prove cheaper than paying the full fare. The result would be that the trains would still be running but with fewer passengers

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Proposals to increase the fares on Sydney's rail system are a serious break with long term pricing policies, and if implemented would act as a deterrent to travel by rail, as well as negatively affecting low income earners and potentially reducing their ability to maintain or gain employment or the skills that would make them more employable, as well as contributing to social isolation. I worked for the NSW Railways (PTC and SRA) from 1977 to 1991, and am aware that the purchase of a weekly ticket cost the equivalent of 4 return trips. The current pricing regime mirrors this practice. While weekly ticket buyers are not discriminated against under Opal, those who purchased monthly or yearly ticket now pay more, so in effect the Government gained revenue. Of

course by effectively eliminating ticket sellers at most railway stations there has been a very large saving to Sydney Trains, and of course there is much less work in back of office auditing and accounting required as well. Going back over thirty years now the State Government has also introduced a range of "family fares", and moves to eliminate or remove these fares is not only socially regressive, but may have the effect of creating social isolation among some families, with the attendant, and very costly problems this can create. While on the surface the current system of offering free trips after four return journey's looks generous, the larger question is how many people make use of this, and what is the cost to Government? Since Opal was introduced I have only enjoyed only one "free" journey (I work part time). As I've noted, having worked on the railways for many years it is easy to see how many fewer passengers travel on the weekends compared to Monday to Friday. No doubt there is data around, but I'd expect the number of "free" journey's to be a small, though important minority. The incentive to use public transport should be retained. The proposal by IPART to increase fares rather begs the question however of where the efficiency is? Is it efficient for more people to travel by car? I think we know the answer to that is no, and any number of business groups will tell you that including the Committee for Sydney. We need to reduce road congestion, and making public transport more accessible to all is a central part of that. Indeed it is economically rational to encourage people to use rail wherever and whenever possible. Using pricing to facilitate this is anything but radical, rather it is the essence of sensible. Lastly I am concerned that the pricing model being proposed by IPART looks a lot like pumping up the fares in preparation for the sale or lease of the rail network in whole or in part through the provision of a higher income stream such as happened with the electricity network. This is the opposite of a "market" solution, and represents little more than rent seeking by monopoly operators who gain profit by government regulation and protection. The key role of Government and IPART should be to run the system for the public, not putative private operators. In closing I ask that IPART take into account the social and economic costs of changing the fare pricing system and make no change from long standing practice nor reduce the current incentives to use the system. I request that IPART provide a formal written response to my submission.

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"I work in social housing. The majority of our tenants are pensioners and struggle to make ends meet even with subsidised rent. The ability to use public transport at a reasonable costs helps to ensure they are not isolated and remain independent. Please don't increase fares."

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"Because I'm a student who has little spare time to work and it's hard and expensive enough to live in this once vibrant, international city without having to fork out exorbitant fees for a below par public transport system! "

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I don't earn much money , it is very hard x

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"With the proposed fare increases and current low petrol prices there won't be any reason for me to catch the train. There has always been at least one free day a week (on a weekly ticket) and changing this policy will cause disaster on the roads. The policy will be particularly bad for Blue Mountains residents, many of whom do travel more than 60 km to work, at least partly because housing is too expensive closer to the city. I can only think that this proposal involves an intention to make it seem like people don't want to catch trains so the public transport system can be shutdown and sold off in yet another example of this government's short-sighted stupidity. Last week I drove to work twice and on each day there was a serious traffic situation on the M4 that had me moving at walking pace on the way home. More traffic will make this worse no matter how many extra lanes are added (the lanes just encourage more traffic and soon fill up again). We need more, faster, and better public transport!"

[REDACTED]

I do not have any direct public transport from my home to my workplace so I have to drive- but the rest of my family use public transport almost every day. I work in the Westmead area where 11,000+ people come each day- most by public transport. It is already a struggle to cover these costs which are necessary to my family for work and study. I know from listening to so many people who are staff, students, patients or family how the cost of living is already causing them to struggle- not to mention the change from Westmead being a key stop on the rail line to people having to go into Parramatta and then change trains to get to Westmead! This increase in fares adds to the essential costs of rent/mortgage, electricity/gas/rates, health, insurance costs to the point where we are already struggling to buy food all of the time, and are often juggling money to pay bills. PLEASE do not add this to us as well- it needs to be seen as a service to others rather than a profit making machine. "

[REDACTED]

"Low income families can barely afford PT at the moment. Increasing fares will make it even less possible for us to use PT. A price hike on the weekend means our Sunday excursions will no longer be possible."

[REDACTED]

"When i worked in Portland Oregon they have free light rail travel on the inner city ring and it was only \$2 (now \$2.50) from the city to the airport. Why is Sydney so expensive, the government shouldn't be trying to make profit on public transport. Please dont raise the cost which will just force more people into their cars on the road and make the traffic worse."

[REDACTED]

"My wife travel from Belmore to Chatswood 5 days peek time and current fare is quite high, any further increase will force her to quite the job and find job close by where she can use her car for travel instead of train/public transport. Making it expensive with only get people away from using public transport and will increase traffic on roads along with decreasing revenue for government. Public transport should be cheaper to attract more people to use it."

[REDACTED]

As an advocate for young people and disadvantaged communities, these proposed actions are making access to services, facilities and positive relationships more restrictive

[REDACTED]

I use public transport a lot, and I have a gold seniors card. I don't have much income, but I don't qualify for a full Centrelink benefit card. That means this fare rise will hit me financially. I also volunteer and run a non-profit organisation - this will hit our volunteers as well. IN the larger picture, I'm concerned that a significant effect will be to make people go back to cars with an increase in air and greenhouse and pollution.

[REDACTED]

"Please do not increase the price of Opal fares. I am on Youth Allowance as my main support of income and cannot afford any increases in price. Groceries and rent are expensive enough as is, and with petrol prices starting to go down, more people will turn to driving rather than taking public transport."

[REDACTED]

The Gold card Seniors discount is essential for Seniors. Apart from anything else, it encourages people out of cars and onto public transport. Not only is this safer as drivers get older, it keeps cars off the roads and helps keep seniors mobile and fit. Seniors are generally travelling out of peak times and using transport that has plenty of room anyway. Wealthier seniors don't tend to use public transport and are unlikely to even apply for a Gold Opal card. This move to limit access to Gold Opal cards discriminates against self-funded retirees, who are often subsisting (like myself) on an allocated 'pension', much like the Commonwealth pension. It is also a social justice issue; seniors may not be able to afford to maintain a car. This is true of many members of the society and there should be a meaningful cap on fare rises for public transport, rather than increases which will only serve to put more people off using public transport. We do not want patronage to decrease as that will lead to a reduction rather than the needed increase and improvement of public transport services. Catching public transport is extremely important to me - it keeps me engaged in the community, enables me to attend events, often as a valuable volunteer contributor, and enables me to get far more exercise than I would were I to drive. I also suffer from early macular degeneration and find that this effects my ability to drive as safely as I once did, especially at night. I cannot afford to catch taxis and I am committed to supporting the

provision and use of public transport wherever possible. My adage is: 'Use it or Lose it!' There would be a significant decrease in patronage were you to discriminate against seniors in this way. I will encourage National Seniors to campaign against any proposal to cut access to the Gold Opal concession card for seniors

[REDACTED]

I can drive a car and do, when my destination is outside current public transport possibility. But my preference is for train, bus and walking to wherever I go - which makes up my majority of trips by far! Why? Environmental, economic, health and social benefits are my personal reasons. I find it dumbfounding, that such benefits, which so obviously serve the COMMON GOOD will, with fare changes, become unavailable to many users for whom public transport is not just a preference, but their only option! My husband & I are self-funded retirees and holders of Senior Cards. While we own a card, its use is limited to long distance journeys and not for short trips around the city. This helps alleviate Sydney's traffic congestion and saves us the cost of petrol from our modest weekly budget. We are fortunate to have a regular bus service almost at our front door and take advantage of the discounted \$2.50 fare. A major increase in this fare will force us to use our vehicle, thus contributing to the environmental and ever growing traffic chaos in our city. Furthermore, a recent Transport Department survey found that the over 70 age group is more likely to be involved in traffic accidents so it makes no sense to discourage this group from using public transport by increasing fares. I urge the NSW Government to consider the impact of fare increases on low income earners and the longer term issues of road safety, pollution and congestion." "Unfair Unfair for workers, family & elderly. Major problem for very old. "

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Some of the changes are reasonable especially the seniors proposed increase as it will not make too much difference from 2.50 to 4.00 but its important not to increase the free travel after 8 trips and the increase of 8% is too savage

[REDACTED]

My Father has Parkinson's disease. He has a lot of trouble walking, falls over frequently and cant possibly drive. He is 62 and has had Parkinson's for more than 20 years. My mother is his full time carer. She gets a small carers allowance from the government. They didn't get a chance to prepare financially for this situation so they rely on what they have. This means the only opportunity for them to take day trips is via public transport. The increase in Opal fares will have a huge impact on their ability to take these trips and consequently on their quality of life. Please don't increase the fares. Before raising the cost of public transport they should improve the quality of transport and provide more transport options. Currently, I'm paying \$40 a week to wait for buses that never arrive at their advertised time or don't stop because they're full. When I do eventually get a bus there is no indication of where the bus stops or which stops are coming up. They are not user friendly. As I mostly use buses I can only speak on my experience with this area of transport but currently there is no justification for increasing the price of a poor service that does not deliver the services it advertises. Additionally, we should be looking at creating incentives for people to use public transport to reduce the stress on infrastructure and reduce carbon emissions. Price hikes are not conducive to these goals. Finally, public transport should not be a source of revenue but a public service. We pay taxes, now provide

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

I am a carer for a person with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and Bipolar. He is on a Disability Support Pension (DSP), but he hopes to return to paid work in the next year. For him to become well enough to endure the stresses of a workplace, he needs to do everything he can to recover. He needs to mix socially. When he feels stressed it is good for him to connect with nature, go for a bushwalk, or meet some friends for a meal. He cannot drive because of the medications he is on. Therefore, he relies on Public Transport. With the proposed fare increases, my friend will not be able to afford to travel on public transport so often. That means that his recovery will be delayed, and he probably won't be ready to return to work this year. He will be forced to remain on the DSP for a longer time. Increasing the Opal Card fares will cost the government more money because my friend's recovery will be delayed. Please resist the urge to make short-term savings wh ich lead to long-term budget blowout!"



[REDACTED]

When the imperative is to expand public transport and accommodate more and more citizens to use it, could the State Government please explain how making it more and more costly achieves this. regards Brian Davies

[REDACTED]

Public transport should be free. It cannot be called public transport as long as the incompetent fools that run Cityrail profit from commuters rather than investing that money back into the infrastructure as it should be."

[REDACTED]

"I will be driving my car on Sundays now. Just needed an excuse. Thanks!"

[REDACTED]

Don't increase the Opal fair, it will deter people from taking public transport and I HATE having more cars on the road because people in Sydney are shithouse drivers, the roads in Sydney cannot cope with the urban development and traffic already, and it will increase road rage related accidents and violence

[REDACTED]

"This is ridiculous. This fare increase is not just a tiny increase to see a huge profit, it's a JUMP to see everyone struggle to just get to work. "

[REDACTED]

"I work in the Sydney CBD, Monday to Friday and commute to work by train from Oatley. I currently pay \$4.82 per trip. Under the current system, I pay for my first 8 trips, which totals \$38.56. Without the "travel free after the first 8 trips" discount, my weekly travel cost would be \$48.20. The discount of \$9.64 is a great incentive to me to use public transport and not travel in my car. Under the proposed system, I will be required to pay for all 10 trips, which will cost, applying the proposed rates effective July 2016, 10 x \$4.74, which totals \$47.74. According to the IPART's proposed credit scheme, at the end of the week, I will be entitled to a travel credit equal to the higher of: (i) my total expenditure on Adult Opal fares in that week minus the cost of my 10 most expensive journeys in that week [ie. \$47.74 minus \$47.74 = \$Nil], or (ii) my total expenditure on Adult Opal fares in that week minus a weekly cap amount (currently proposed to be \$65) [ie. \$47.74 minus \$65.00 = -\$17.26, which I have assumed means \$Nil]. There is now no monetary incentive for me to continue to catch the train to work. There will be a significant number of people in a similar situation to me. "

[REDACTED]

I am travelling 25 km everyday at the age of 60. This new increase is simply money grab from the older generation and poor ones. I am completely against it.

[REDACTED]

"Public transport should be affordable for public and not unaffordable. Why the fares are increasing when economy is going in deflation and not inflation. I havnt had any pay rise in last 3 years and am sure there are many more in same boat. "

[REDACTED]

"With all the social, economic and environmental benefits of public transport, we should be making it easier to use for everyone, not more difficult. The Sunday funday tickets is something that is bringing families of all walks of life together. The trains and buses just run empty on Sundays without \$2.50 Sunday Funday. "

[REDACTED]

While I'm disappointed with all the proposed price hike, I feel particularly angry about the rise of fees for older people and pensioners. In my home town Guangzhou, it's been 10 years since they abolished all fees for public transport for retirees. Anyone who is above 60 can take public transport absolutely free, any time they want. I'm shocked to hear in 2016 the state government is doing exactly the opposite of a developing country has been able to afford doing for so long."



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“Kindly don't increase the fares so abruptly for the daily commuters as we will be hard hit. Also with a family of 4 taking away the weekend 2.5 cap will make sure we use our cars to commute for leisure.”

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I drive to work and with the advent of the Opal card I was thinking of using public transport instead of the car. My experience today does not support this decision. I had to attend RPA Hospital and chose to use public transport, after my appointment I waited for a 461 bus to travel towards Burwood from 0915 to 1005. In that time five 440 buses came past, one 438 bus and at least four buses with Not in Service or Chartered signs on them came past the stop at the intersection of Missenden Road and Parramatta Road. I subsequently used a taxi service. Now I understand that fares are to be increased for a service which already fails to meet its schedule. I will retire in a year or so having worked full time and paid taxes all my working life. The provision of public transport should not be relying on full funding by users or for profit it is by its nature a social public service. I will be a self funded retiree who cannot have a car factored into my retirement plan, I am depending on the Gold Opal being available to me as a senior which in turn assists control of cars and reducing pollution from traffic. How can anyone plan to do anything that would rely on the use of the current public transport system

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“Increases in fares and removal of incentives will mean that commuters, families and all travellers will use their cars - this is bad for the environment and also the road system will be more overloaded than it already is. The changes will mean that some Gold card holders will not be able to afford to travel. The Opal Card system was forced on Sydney commuters and the only palatable thing about having it shoved down our throats was the 8-trip incentive. It was presented as saving commuters money. Now the incentives are being removed and the system is there to make as much money as possible, rather than to transport people from A to B. Please don't pretend that these changes are improvements 'for your convenience'. These changes amount to nothing more than an attempt to make money.”

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Sydney's public transport fares already rate among the most expensive in the world. Mobility is a basic aspect of human wellbeing that should be prioritised in city planning. While 'accessibility' has been an alternative paradigm that some planners champion, accessibility does not take into account the immaterial goods that accrue to those who can easily access the city itself- a local shopping centre just does not have the employment opportunities or cultural infrastructure that a city has. Well funded and accessible public transport is the best way to make mobility available to people of all ages and incomes. In Sydney, gentrification of the inner city over the past few decades means that those with the greatest urban amenity and public transport access tend to be the richest. Household income and wealth tend to decrease as distance from the city increases. This is unjust. While there is some cross-subsidisation in Sydney fares, those who commute from long distances pay the price two ways: in higher fares and in lost time from their families and their work. Opal fare increases will only make this situation worse, and will lead to more people who commute from Western Sydney and the Central Coast opting to engage in less participation in society due to the toll these commutes have on their budgets and their well being. I am a PhD student, just finishing up my thesis, with no income as my funding has run out. I travel on the train regularly from Parramatta to university. I travel off peak and on a concession, however my partner who is also a student does not qualify for concession because he is from overseas. This has made him more inclined to stay at home during the day and less regularly attend the events that I do. I can only imagine the impact for people in similar situations who live on the outskirts of Sydney.”

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I am 78. My husband is 85. We walk a lot to keep ourselves fit and independent, but need public transport to access doctors and other professionals outside our daily walking goal of 5 kilometres. In our case, it's not a matter of one increase in fares, but of two. This will impact severely on our resources which are diminishing in this low interest climate. With other increases and proposed health impositions for various services, we'll be eating even less, going nowhere that's not in walking distance, doing less voluntary work and generally "closing down". There would be many in our situation as it is an ageing population, and I ask: Would it be cheaper for the State to look after the elderly as they deteriorate through inactivity, or to allow them affordable public transport? Already the system is discouraging because of the long distances between stops in the city and the changes to routes that create hardship for the elderly and

others. But who cares? It's all about the bottom line which you politicians can't seem to manage, but you expect us to be frugal, give generously and practice self-mortification. You don't really have any empathy at all for the people you expect to keep you in office. If you did, you'd realise how cruel these measures will be

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"Getting more people onto public transport, not less, is vital because: \*Sydney is already clogged with cars \*cars contribute to global warming. I am a pensioner and have just got an OPAL card so now I am locked in and they now want to slug me more for that privilege. This will also effect Families badly. Somehow i always felt this government's philosophy would lead us into this, IF they think it would be politically painlessly They will have to think again. It is underhand and makes them appear sneaky."

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"Less cars, less petrol more public transport. Any disincentive is bad for our health and for the planet. Our PM knows this. Show some leadership, Mr Turnbull. Private consumption culture is a passing fad. Let it go! We can't all afford to move to Mars"

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We do not support any increase in transport cost around the CBD. Some states encourage people to use public transport to ease traffic congestion in the city and offer public transport for free . Most importantly we do not want the government to Hijack these decisions with the use of OPAL cards and to disadvantage the Seniors and those most vulnerable in our community.

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"1. I work full-time & find the cost of the public transport I use significant. I have assumed that the cost system used is 'fair' & on this basis am happy with the present service. I particularly think that the daily cap & the free travel after 8 trips encourages people to get out & about & spend their disposable income. This is good for well-being & the economy. 2. Gold card eligibility should not change - it will disadvantage many people if this occurs. 3. The \$2.50 Sunday fare cap should be maintained. It is great encouragement for people to go out - it is good for people's wellbeing & the economy."

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"I am a self funded retiree. If the \$2.50 concession is removed it will have a significant impact on my ability to get to the hospital. I have a rare medical condition and have to attend a city hospital regularly. As a senior this is the only benefit I receive after working all my life and paying taxes. I pay for all my medication. Let's stop this. "

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"I think Sydney transport is far below average and much more expensive than most public transport in other countries, specially those ones that offer a much better service to consumers. It is very expensive and it is very unfair that we are not entitle to get a good transport for reasonable price. I usually send complaints to Sydney Transport for the delayed buses and trains and always get an standard answer. You can't expect people to pay the already super expensive fares when you don't even offer a good first world transport. Instead or increasing the fares NSW transport should think to increase the quality of it. I used to work in Disability Employment Services and people often couldn't get a job because they couldn't use a reliable public transport to get to work. During the weekends everyone prefer to stand the horrible traffic instead to stand with the even worse service that the public transport offers. It affects people's wellbeing in many ways and it is very unfair that you are thinking about raising the price. It is shameful."

[REDACTED]

I am cranky about the increase in Opal fares and the way in which it is calculated because I already feel like we've lost incentives for commuters. I used to buy bi-monthly tickets which worked out cheaper than weekly tickets but no longer have that option. The "free trips" after 8 journeys just makes my last day of work a "free trip", which was \*still\* more expensive than a bi-monthly ticket. That a tiny minority of people are taking advantage of this is not reasonable to penalise the majority who are already paying more to travel on overcrowded services. Not good enough

[REDACTED]

Increasing fares will make travel more difficult for less affluent people who rely on public transport, and less attractive for those who see a car as an alternative. Sydney should be making public transport more attractive, to encourage people away from cars

[REDACTED]

What is the point of raising public transport costs? Trying to save money? What's your agenda? If anything you should be lowering prices to encourage more people to use it and get more cars off the road. Or do you get more revenue when people drive from petrol excise and the like? I catch the bus 3 stops on the T Way and it is \$2.10. That's \$21 a week. It's cheaper to drive and that is a joke. Please don't increase fares

[REDACTED]

"I would be most affected if the the Opal Gold Card increased it's cap from \$2.50 to \$4.00 because I'm mainly a voluntary and casual worker. Such an increase would deeply affect an already limited budget during the week and a change in the Sunday current cap will be a further attack on my lifestyle. It will mean less opportunity for some quality leisure time out with my husband, who is also a Senior. "

[REDACTED]

"I am seriously mobility-compromised & currently manage 15 medical conditions today.I struggle to remain connected to the community & lead a life worth living.I am on so much medication that sometimes I have to choose between drugs & food.If fares increase it will ruin my life more than it has already been ruined.Please do not increase Opal fares."

[REDACTED]

"Affordable public transport fares keep me connected with the world - I use it frequently for any journeys that are not suitable for walking or cycling. Being able to travel safely and affordably by public transport means you are not dependent upon a motor car. Sydney is being choked by cars - pumping out noise, noxious particles and greenhouse gases that are bringing disastrous consequences for our climate and our health. Investment in affordable public transport is essential. Keep the fares low. "

[REDACTED]

Make public transport more effective, frequent and less complicated with cheaper pricing - look at big cities like London - hardly any traffic in the city centre. I personally object to the Gold Card Opal price rise as most seniors/pensioners travel outside of rush hours - those trains and buses run empty so let the oldies utilise this transport. Better transport = less cars on the roads

[REDACTED]

"I'm a student and this makes everything so much more inconvenient. "

[REDACTED]

"Any fare increase for Pensioners is totally wrong. I am a 70 year old War Vet Pensioner who has never had a drivers license or car, so I am completely dependent on Public transport and use buses and trains in every instance. I would be lost without them and on those days I need to attend hospital for reviews I make up to 4 or 6 trips that day."

[REDACTED]

"No to very expensive changes."

[REDACTED]

"being force to use OPAL card from paper card, they promise this will be cheaper and more convenience then not this is the only way to commute on public transports and they increase the price in will. Increasing from 8 to 10 trips just a rip off. Also for y parents they only go out on Sunday because of the \$2.5, this is the only day of the week for them to explore sydney . If they change to \$7.5 I will guarantee that they wont go out at all, they may not want to go out on both day so \$7.5 is just deter them to use the public transport. "

[REDACTED]

No income from any sources and totally we are dependent on children as we are living with them.”

[REDACTED]

“I am very pleased with decision to move to the Opal card system and the efficiency at which it has been implemented is commendable. Currently the cost for me to commute to work by train is only just on par with using private, which is the only viable alternative. The proposed increase in price and changes to the free travel after the first 8 trips will force me to stop commuting by train for financial reasons. Also the changes to the Sunday fair will make our family reconsider using public transport on weekends.”

[REDACTED]

“Living in the blue mountains and travelling into Broadway for work, this will make it cheaper to drive. I thought we wanted less cars on the road?”

[REDACTED]

“Please DO NOT increase any opal fares. Currently they are fair and should remain as is. Instead, lower the salaries of the executives earning over \$100,000 per year.”

[REDACTED]

Fares are already expensive and I have 3 children, so for us to travel it can cost us a lot. We are at the point already where we would wait for Sunday to do our travel as a family. The last thing our family needs is something else to get more expensive. Sydney is already crazy expensive...no need to make it harder on families to function

[REDACTED]

“I will be affected by this as i travel too and from work and make additional stops into and out of the city. This will cost me significantly more money on a weekly basis due to the free trips i normally receive. Also I have been taking public transport a lot more on Sundays when there is a cap. I will not venture out via public transport on weekend if there is an increase and i may just start driving to work as its much more economical.”

[REDACTED]

this is not fare, please look after seniors and pensioners

[REDACTED]

“The public transport system should keep reducing fees for everyone to use them more and more... Why ? Because of Sydney as first level city in world must keep saving energy, reducing car-using, wising Opaloperation without pollution, environment risk... with ones' health-wealth for work. Thank you for everyone to think Large View!! ”

[REDACTED]

Simply put, an increase in Opal fares would have a massive impact on me, and many people I know, as students. An increase of \$3 a week equates to \$156 a year. I typically don't spend \$15 a week given the 8 paid trips cap, but increasing that to 10 trips will cost a significantly greater amount in the short term. Combined with the long term cost increase of the \$18 a week cap, this is a significant financial impact that I will struggle to pay for weekly. As a university student studying in the city, but living in the western suburbs, public transport is essential to me, and an increase in prices, apparently for no reason other than to increase government revenue, will have a significant impact on my regular travel

[REDACTED]

“Dear Sydney Alliance, I've not lived in Sydney now for some years, but when I left almost 10 years ago, the city itself was literally breaking down. Traffic congestion, and a public transport system that was broken. Frankly, every time I go back to Sydney, the transport is still broken in comparison to other cities in Australia such as Perth and Melbourne. The city itself still does not function, and traffic is still at a standstill. Public transport is a just that. Public. It's not there to make a profit, it's there to service the community and to ferry as many people as possible as quickly as possible to their desired destination. If governments were actually really serious about encouraging public transport, wanting a greener and more sustainable Australia - you'd make the public transport free 24/7. Perhaps turn your heads to countries such as Singapore and

Hong Kong, . Both have absolutely fantastic transport systems that is world best, efficient and extremely cheap to use as a consumer. The transport is also extremely reliable and prompt. If these countries produce world class transport systems, with higher land costs, and higher housing costs, why can't Sydney? Frankly, Sydney transport is a joke in comparison to other countries within the Asia Pacific region. You want to charge top prices, well you need to have a world class transport system. Sydney definitely doesn't have this. Kind Regards"