



Gladys Berejiklian MP

STATE MEMBER FOR WILLOUGHBY

PO Box 311 Willoughby NSW 2068
280 Willoughby Road Naremburn NSW 2065

tel 9439 4199 fax 9439 9299 email gladys.berejiklian@parliament.nsw.gov.au

16 November 2009

Dr Michael Keating AC
Chairman
Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal
PO Box Q290
QVB Post Office NSW 1230

Dear Mr Keating

I am writing in relation to the Review of Fares for Metropolitan and Outer Metropolitan Bus Services 2009 by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).

The NSW Liberals & Nationals believe the recommendation to increase metropolitan and outer metropolitan bus fares by an average of 14.8% over a four-year period¹ is unjustified for a number of reasons.

Firstly, there is no evidence of any service improvements. A recent Independent Transport Safety and Reliability Regulator (ITSRR) Survey of Sydney Metropolitan Bus Users, once again exposed the State Government's failure to address massive problems with overcrowding and a lack of reliability throughout the metropolitan bus network. Commuters also continue to put up with a clumsy and outdated ticketing system.

Some findings of the survey included:

- 40% of bus users think buses are too overcrowded in the peak²
- 30% of bus users do not get a seat³
- 26% of bus users say it is not easy to get information on tickets and fares⁴
- 26% of bus users said buses do not connect with other transport modes⁵

Secondly, the amount of the proposed increase is unwarranted given substantial increases in fares in 2009. Ten months ago in January 2010 bus commuters in

¹ IPART Fact Sheet, Review of fares for metro and outer metro bus services from Jan 2010, p1

² ITSRR Survey of Metro Bus Users 2009, p17

³ Ibid

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Ibid

Sydney, Wollongong, Newcastle, the Central Coast, Blue Mountains and the Hunter were asked to pay on average an extra 5.5% for their bus tickets.⁶

Thirdly, it is unfair to increase fares at a rate considerably higher than the Consumer Price Index with no assurance of service improvements.

The rate of patronage growth in public transport in NSW is far behind other Australian jurisdictions. For example, bus patronage in Perth soared by 11.9%,⁷ in 2008/09, by 9%⁸ in Melbourne and 8.6%⁹ in Brisbane, compared to Sydney's miniscule 0.8%¹⁰ increase.

It is absolutely essential there are incentives to use public transport in NSW, not disincentives.

For these reasons, the proposed bus fare increases are not justified.

Yours faithfully



Gladys Berejiklian MP
Shadow Minister for Transport

⁶ IPART Media Release, Bus Fares to Increase, 16 December 2008

⁷ WA Minister for Transport and Disability Services Email, Ministerial Liaison Officer (Chris King), 14 August 2009

⁸ Press Release, 'Patronage Up as Transport Plan Reaches Key Milestone, Lynne Kosky, 19 August 2009

⁹ Press Release, 'Record Tumble on Public Transport Network,' Rachel Nolan, 5 August 2009

¹⁰ Press Release, 'Vote of Confidence in Public Transport – Passenger Numbers Up,' Nathan Rees, 6 August 2009