



Older Australians

Australian Christians recognizes that our older Australians have contributed significantly over their lifetime to make Australia what it is today: a prosperous, stable and enjoyable society which remains the envy of many overseas nations.

In view of their past contributions to the development of our nation, older people deserve special support and recognition. As they age and many become weaker physically and mentally, we believe extra effort should be made to ensure that all our senior citizens are protected and cared for in love.

The Australian Christians does not support changes to the aged pension, particularly using the value of the family home to assess eligibility.

Many aged people live in a modest suburban home that remains their primary family residence.

Aged retirees should not be penalized for the fact that they own homes that are worth disproportionately more than the initial purchase price and should not be forced to sell their homes in order to receive the aged pension.

- Our policy recommendations would also seek to develop legislation in the areas of taxation, transport, housing, education and health that provides support, rather than increased hardship, for our older citizens. Broadly we believe all legislation should be measured against a family impact statement as part of our commitment to Family Centred Economics.

We recognise the real challenge for the government but with our focus on the well being of the family we would recommend a different approach to address provision for our senior citizens.

While the aged pension is the largest direct welfare spending component, rather than making it tough for pensioners we believe there is a lot of room for the government to tighten its own belt and cut some of the enormous amount of government bureaucracy and corporate welfare before tightening up elsewhere.

The government cannot tell the public they have to face cuts while they are promised benefits for life. As a party we are concerned about the wild government spending and waste of taxpayer's hard earned money and believe it is time for the government to put their own house in order rather than force hardship on the citizens they are elected to serve. We especially think this is true when it comes to our pensioners who have been taxpayers all their life and in the main have, kept a tight reign on their own spending. We need a culture change in this area of spending to assist, not punish, those most in need of our support.

Further, we need to bring down the cost of living so that retirement income can stretch further. This includes the high cost of running your home with council rates and the double dipping of GST and Stamp duty on insurances.

We also suggest considering pensions be adjusted by a special Pension Price Index rather than CPI as retirees have different spending patterns to other Australians.

Australian Christians believes there is merit in the recommendation that the Commonwealth Seniors Health Card give senior Australians who do not receive a pension, access to cash payments and concessions and discounts on certain products. “The Commission recommends that the Commonwealth Seniors Health Card be maintained as part of Australia’s retirement income system, but that changes be made to improve targeting to those most in need by adding deemed income from tax-free superannuation to the definition of Adjusted Taxable Income used for determining eligibility for the Commonwealth Seniors Health Card.”

Australian Christians will develop legislation in the areas of taxation, transport, housing, education and health that provides support for our older citizens.