



Association of Independent Retirees (A.I.R.) Limited
ACN 102 164 385

QUEENSLAND DIVISION

**PRE-BUDGET SUBMISSION
2022**

TO

QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT TREASURER

March 2022

The Association of Independent Retirees (AIR) is a national not for profit, non-political organisation that works to advance and protect the interests and independent lifestyle of Australians in or approaching retirement.

Queensland Division represents 6 Branches of AIR from Brisbane to Cairns.

INTRODUCTION

The Association of Independent Retirees (A.I.R.) Limited was formed in Queensland in 1990. AIR is now a National, not-for-profit, non-party political organisation. Members are Australian residents who intend to be or are fully or partly self-funded in retirement. AIR is the peak body representing the interests of retirees who have planned for a sustainable retirement, not wholly reliant on the Government.

Members of AIR have a wide range of views, however, they all expect Government policies to be fair and non-discriminatory. It is in the interests of both Federal and State Governments to adopt policies which provide incentives for all retirees to maintain a reasonable level of retirement income, to retain their independence, to contribute to the economic development of the nation and to avoid becoming a drain on the public purse.

Fully and partly self-funded retirees need assistance given escalating costs, the current low interest environment and the increasingly uncertain world political and health situation. These factors have impacted negatively on retirees, who often have limited opportunities to increase their income. Despite these factors, retirees continue to make a significant contribution to the nation as taxpayers, family supporters, volunteers for not-for-profit organisations and interstate tourists.

In preparing this Submission, the Government's difficult fiscal circumstances have been recognised.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics indicates that persons over 65 represent about 20% of the population eligible to vote in Queensland. The majority of these would be retirees. In addition, there is another 15% in the 55 to 65 cohort that are either retired or considering retirement. Statistics show that the percentage of older people in the total population is gradually increasing.

The Queensland Division of AIR welcomes the opportunity to provide this Pre-Budget Submission and requests that this Submission is given favourable consideration when Government prepares the 2022-2023 State Budget.

Should you require any further details in relation to this Submission or other matters, please do not hesitate to contact Margaret Mourik Tel: 0478 479 049, E mamourik53@gmail.com President, Queensland Division, Association of Independent Retirees (A.I.R.) Ltd.

ISSUES of Concern

ISSUE 1 — Cost of domestic electricity

Electricity costs need to be brought under control and reduced to manageable levels for home owners. Big increases in the cost of domestic electricity over recent years have been identified as a significant concern to retirees — particularly those on limited income from investments.

ISSUE 2 — Maintain concession funding for seniors

Continue the existing level and eligibility for Concessions currently available to Seniors Card holders and Pensioners.

ISSUE 3 — Provide a reduction in stamp duty when seniors downsize their principal residence

Allow a reduction in the rate of transfer duty for retirees over 65 who are downsizing accommodation for health, financial hardship or other reasons.

The Federal Coalition Government has taken the initiative by addressing downsizing by implementing a means of placing some of the proceeds into a superannuation fund.

ISSUE 4 — Stamp Duty was increased on insurance contracts

This move by the Government needs to be reversed as it has had a detrimental effect on industry and has placed an unfair burden on all involved. Insurance is an important issue with retirees.

ISSUE 5 — Increase the Patient Travel Subsidy for accommodation

The “commercial accommodation” component of the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme remains at \$60 per person per night and is a definite assistance to patients but requires reviewing in line with current accommodation costs.

ISSUE 6 — Provide Seniors with the same Queensland travel entitlements as Queensland Pensioners

Brisbane City Council is to be commended for introducing free off-peak travel on buses and ferries for all Seniors but Queensland Rail has not. Extend the concession entitlements Queensland Rail (QR) provides to Queensland Pensioners to Queensland Seniors Card holders. Also introduce off-peak discounts substantially better than the existing ones.

The State Government may consider subsidising local Councils to implement such a scheme.

ISSUE 7—Lifting the base rate for computation of Land Tax

There has been a base rate set by Governments over the years BUT while property prices have increased markedly over the years in Qld—and Australia, the Government has failed to revise the base rate and/or the tax rate bands and this has an impact particularly on retirees with investment properties.

□end□