

Dear Sir/Madam,

I write this submission as a private self-funded retiree, which I hope you will consider in your continuing review of superannuation and tax issues generally.

With all the current attention being paid to those unfortunate individuals who have either lost their jobs, or who feel that their jobs are under threat, we should really pay some attention to those 90% or more of working individuals who are enjoying what I feel are the best conditions for working families for some several decades.

Consider this: tax levels are lower, house prices are reduced, interest rates on loans are at a historical low, petrol prices have stabilised, mortgage rates are at or near an all-time low, wages in general have kept pace with inflation and food prices have stabilised. In addition to any Government hand-outs, young families may have access to first-home grants and "baby bonuses".

But those of us who have saved for retirement, the difference is stark. Retirees are unlikely to benefit from low mortgage rates, low petrol prices are unlikely to be of much interest, interest on bank savings has dropped dramatically, and accrued superannuation has declined to the point where many of us feel we must attempt to return to the workforce. Yes, there has been a Government bonus, but that was a one-off payment. Retirees are most unlikely to benefit from first-home grants, reduced PAYE taxes or "baby bonuses".

Yet we are told that one of the few "benefits" for retirees, the Commonwealth Health Card, will now be much more difficult to obtain due to changes in the income definition (and the cut-off limit has not been indexed since it was introduced).

I do not write this as one who tries to get the most personally from tax and super changes. My concern is that the Government should attempt to achieve balance between those who are working and those who have, with on-going Government encouragement, tried to prepare themselves for their retirement with minimal assistance from the Government.

Indeed, it is my contention that those of retirement age should, as a minimum, be in receipt of assistance for on-going living costs similar to those on a Government pension. After all, it the current retiree cohort who have contributed very significantly to the relatively sound financial position of the economy during their working lives.

I'm not suggesting for one minute we should emulate the pension situation in the UK (and I believe New Zealand and Canada), where full Government pensions are available to all, but I believe that the pendulum has now swung too far in the opposite direction.

Thank you for accepting my submission.

Yours Sincerely

John M Waldie