



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Media Release

17 October 2008

Pensioners air issues at Tamworth Rally

Another Rally to be held in Inverell - Nov 6

Pensioners aired their issues at a Rally at the Tamworth Town Hall this morning organised by the Independent Member for New England Tony Windsor and pensioners in the north of the electorate will have the opportunity to have their say in Inverell on Nov 6.

About 150 pensioners turned out to tell Mr Windsor of their experiences and suggest solutions to addressing the problems that they face.

Mr Windsor was very pleased with the Rally and will convey the feedback from attendees to the Government through the Parliament next week.

He said pensioners were relieved after the Government's announcement of an extra payment before Christmas but they wanted to make sure that the ongoing pension was adequately adjusted to meet their weekly living needs.

"Pensioners deserve a better deal and whilst they have received a boost last week, they still have concerns about their future treatment in the next Federal Budget indicating that they need the regular pension increased and not have to rely on bonuses.

This is one of the messages that I will be taking back to the Government," Mr Windsor said.

Some of the issues raised by attendees at the Pensioners Rally included access to health services that bulk bill, dental care costs, medical prescription costs, costs of accessing trades people for little jobs, high fuel costs, rental assistance, council rates, fresh food needs, single pensioners having the same cost as couples but just being on the single pension, travel costs, private health insurance cost, electricity charges increasing and all of these things to be covered before putting food on their table.

Some of the solutions suggested by attendees included bulk billing requirements placed on some medical services, GST concessions for pensioners, breaking the connection between a rise in the pension and automatic rent increase, higher council rate assistance and better travel concessions or subsidy extended to country pensioners.

"There are ways for the Government to make life for pensioners and carers better.

I will be making a submission to the Harmer Inquiry Review of the pension based on the views expressed at this rally and I look forward to working with the Government to enable our pensioners to live a fulfilling life in their later years or live with their disability and not just survive.

How we treat our pensioners is a measure of our society and I for one want that measurement to be high," Mr Windsor said.

The Inverell Pensioners Rally will be held at Flanders House on Thursday 6th November from 10.30am.

For further information contact Tony Windsor, Ph (02) 6761 3080 or 0427 66 8868