

# PETER DRAPER

INDEPENDENT MEMBER FOR TAMWORTH

## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Self-funded retirees deserve equal access to concessions on costs of living**

*28 October 2004*

Member for Tamworth Peter Draper has asked the State Government to recognise the contribution of self-funded retirees by awarding them the same access to concessions on basic charges as pensioners.

Mr Draper was contributing to a notice of motion on self-funded retirees raised in the NSW Parliament today by Independent Member for Port Macquarie Rob Oakeshott.

"I am frequently approached by members of the Tamworth branch of the Association of Independent Retirees regarding concession equity," Mr Draper said.

Mr Draper said self-funded retirees work hard and pay taxes all their working lives with many living frugally in retirement to ensure their savings last the distance.

He said the only service the State Government offered self-funded retirees was the Seniors Card which gave concessions on public transport, entry to museums and art galleries and some private businesses. The Federal Government provides a Senior's Health Card but this was means tested.

"Pensioners on the other hand get discounts on electricity, water, gas, ambulance services and motor vehicle registration which are not available to people who aren't eligible for the pension," Mr Draper said.

"Self-funded retirees aren't asking for special treatment, they are asking for fair treatment. They ask only to procure the same benefits, rebates and concessions as those provided by Government, health organisations and commerce to pensioners.

Mr Draper said the Federal Government has offered to help address the imbalance by offering states and territories a 60/40 split in the cost of extending Federal and State funded pension type concessions to self-funded retirees.

"The Federal Government's offer of \$75million per annum would assist with a range of state and local government charges to Commonwealth Senior's Health Card Holders.

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“This offer could save card holders an average of \$700 a year on their rates, car registration, electricity charges, water and sewerage,” he said.

“Western Australia and Victoria offer concessions to their Senior Health Card holders and I believe NSW should consider coming to the party.

“It’s only fair that all retirees of pensionable age are treated equally by all levels of government. I have urged the NSW Government to recognise the lifetime of contribution to taxes self-funded retirees make and stop penalising them.”

**End Release**

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