

Australian Greens Media Release
Australian Greens Leader
Bob Brown,
Wednesday, 10 September 2008

Rudd must provide down-payment on pensions now

The Australian Greens would support a bill which raises the single aged pension by \$30 a week, but called on the Coalition to explain how it would get around the fact that it is in Opposition in the Lower House and, therefore, cannot get such a bill through either the House of Representatives, or the Senate.

"All of Australia is calling for a fair go for pensioners - but Mr Rudd is keeping his wallet in his back pocket and refusing to increase the pension, even when he acknowledges it is just too low to live on," Australian Greens Leader Bob Brown said today.

"The Greens have been campaigning for a pension increase of \$30 for more than a year, and we are delighted that support has accelerated dramatically in the past few weeks, including the Coalition's commitment today to introduce legislation into the lower house next week - a reversal of their previous opposition to this measure."

Senator Brown recalled that in August 2007 Labor and the Coalition had voted down two Greens' motions calling on the government to increase the aged pension by \$30 a week.

"In the face of snowballing public support, it is no excuse for Mr Rudd to say to pensioners they should wait another nine months until the Henry Tax Review reports its findings."

"Pensions will be indexed on September 20th and Mr Rudd can accelerate the process by providing a down-payment towards future increases for Australia's 1.2 million."

Senator Brown said a \$30 a week increase for single aged pensioners, who currently live on \$273.40 a week, would cost an estimated \$1 billion a year.

"This is far less than the \$3.5 billion in tax cuts for people earning over \$75,000 a year in this year's budget. The Greens were the only party to oppose the tax cuts," Senator Brown said.

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Senator BOB BROWN»

<<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;adv=yes;db=:group=:holdingType=:id=:orderBy=customrank;page=0;query=Content%3Apension%20Content%3A%22Bob%20Brown%22%20Date%3ALastYear%20Dataset%3Ajournals,hansards;queryType=:rec=0;resCount=Default>> (Tasmania) (Leader of the Australian Greens) (10:20

AM) (17 August 2007) -I move:

That the Senate-

(a) notes that:

(i) Australia is experiencing a period of record economic growth,
and
(ii) the 2007-08 Federal Budget provided tax cuts to those earning more than \$75,000, at a cost of \$3.5 billion per year; and
(b) calls on the Government to invest approximately \$3 billion per year to lift the aged pension by \$60 per fortnight.

Ayes: 8
Noes: 54