

MEDIA RELEASE

OLDER AUSTRALIANS WELCOME PRIME MINISTER'S COMMITMENT

Australia's peak older persons' organization, COTA Australia, today warmly welcomed Prime Minister Julie Gillard's speech this morning on the government's commitment to older Australians.

"We have heard far too much doom and gloom about our ageing population" said Ian Yates, COTA Chief Executive, "It's such a breath of fresh air to have the Prime Minister of Australia declare that it's a good thing lots of people are living longer!".

"We warmly welcome the PM's recognition that older people contribute years of volunteering and caring, and of continued learning; that they are major providers of care to their own families – young and old; and that they don't want to be written off and left behind but have contributions to make and the right to choose how and when and where that will happen" Mr Yates said.

"COTA has welcomed the panel on the economic potential of senior Australians and looks forward to government considering innovative approaches to supporting and enhancing the major economic contribution older Australians already make to this country, but which could be more if there wasn't so much ageism."

Ian Yates said that COTA is also looking forward to next Monday's release of the final report of the Productivity Commission inquiry into Caring for Older Australians.

"We anticipate the report will recommend measures to give older Australians

- greater choice and control over their aged care
- fairer and more sustainable funding arrangements
- much more support and care at home
- higher quality services that are actually designed to meet their assessed needs

"Contrary to some scare mongering less people will have to sell a family home and all people will have greater choice about how they make a fair contribution to aged care costs" Mr Yates said.

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