



*the voice of older Australians*

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **OLDER AUSTRALIANS KEEN TO BE GREEN**

There are high levels of support for environmental sustainability among older Australians, and they know that Carbon Pollution Reduction is a key element of preserving a future for their grandchildren. Today's Green Paper is a major new feature on the policy landscape for both the environment and the economy. Older Australians welcome both its thrust, and the assurances that pensioners, carers and other seniors' benefits will be increased to meet the overall increases in the cost of living flowing from the scheme.

"Many older Australians are already hard pressed to cope with the rapid increases in the cost of living", said Dr Geoffrey Bird, Executive Director of COTA Over 50s. "I'm pleased that the government has promised increased payments, above automatic indexation, to prevent that situation becoming even worse. Seniors are very willing to play their part in achieving a sustainable future, but it would not be fair if they had to bear proportionately bigger cost impacts. The reduction in fuel taxes will help, too, but greater investment in public transport remains a major issue for pensioners."

"The government has also stated that every cent raised from the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme will be used to help Australians - households and business - adjust to the scheme and to invest in clean energy options. Older Australians respond well to that sort of approach, when specific, targeted benefits flow from the costs that arise. We'll be keeping a close eye on how this actually plays out."

"We also note that the Government has said its review into Australia's Future Tax System will consider the interrelationships between the tax and payment systems and the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme. This is of considerable importance to those on fixed incomes such as pensions. Our submission to that review will reinforce the need to manage those interrelationships."

"Older Australians want to take practical steps in their homes and communities to reduce their carbon footprint, so it is vital that the Government is very proactive in providing consumer information to help households take action to reduce energy use and save on energy bills. All of our COTA organisations are well-placed to assist in getting that sort of information out."

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