



*the voice of older Australians*

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Hon Wayne Swan MP  
Treasurer  
PO Box 6022  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

2 September 2008

Dear Treasurer

#### **REVIEW OF AUSTRALIA'S TAX SYSTEM – BREADTH OF INPUT TO CONSULTATION PAPER**

COTA Over 50s has welcomed the Australian Government's reviews into both pensions and the tax and transfer payments systems, and our organisation will be making written submissions to both.

The members you have appointed to Dr Henry's Review of the Australian tax system have proven expertise in dealing with the complexities of taxation matters, and COTA Over 50s is pleased that such eminent and capable people will be advising you in this crucial policy arena. We were, however, disappointed that such technical economic expertise had not been complemented on the Review panel by expertise drawn from elsewhere in the community. The tax system is of direct concern to all Australian citizens, and perhaps most of all to the families of ordinary working Australians and to older Australians trying to make ends meet as retirees and/or pensioners.

COTA Over 50s is pleased that employee and community groups are represented on Dr Harmer's Review of Pensions. We believe that such organisations could also make a valuable input into the broader Taxation Review led by Dr Henry. While we accept that the membership of the taxation review panel has been settled, we believe that it is important for members of that panel to engage directly with representatives of key national community organisations prior to the publication in December of the main consultation paper. Such direct engagement will allow the panel to clarify, confirm and prioritise the key issues covered in written submissions, thereby making the consultation paper more focussed and effective.

I would appreciate your feedback on this suggestion.

Yours sincerely

**Dr Geoffrey Bird**

Executive Director  
COTA Over 50s Ltd