



PRIME MINISTER
CANBERRA

MESSAGE: COUNCIL ON THE AGEING OVER 50s

It is with great pleasure that I offer this message of support for the Council on the Ageing (COTA) Over 50s.

COTA Over 50s plays a key role in representing the interests of older people and has a proud history of serving Australian seniors since 1951. Strong and informed representation of the growing number and diverse voices of older Australians is an important role for COTA Over 50s. This role is recognised by the Australian Government's annual contribution of \$350,000. The funding enables COTA Over 50s to work closely with the government to represent the needs of seniors and an ageing population, make an important contribution to policy development and facilitate public education on national issues affecting senior Australians.

The fact that Australia's population is projected to age is a tribute to our success as a society and advancements in medical science. The Australian Government has invested significant funds to address the needs of an ageing population. For example, the number of community aged care packages funded by the government has grown from around 4,500 places in 1996 to almost 40,000 in June 2006. This recognises that most older Australians want to remain with their families and in their communities and continue their strong contribution to Australian society.

I congratulate COTA Over 50s on its service to older Australians and look forward to the continuing collaboration with the Australian Government to meet the needs of senior Australians.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John Howard". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

(John Howard)