



QUEENSLAND SENIORS' ELECTION PRIORITIES

22 October 2024

National Seniors Australia (NSA) has released its priorities for Queensland seniors ahead of the state election with a focus on housing, cost of living, and energy.

“National Seniors Australia has been active in the lead up to the election, using our state budget submission as a centrepiece for meetings with candidates from both sides of politics,” NSA CEO Chris Grice said.

“The seniors vote matters, and with one third of Queensland voters aged 60-plus, they may well determine the outcome of the election on Saturday October 26th.

“National Seniors Australia’s election platform contains nine key policy recommendations. Each of these policies has been carefully calibrated to provide responsible support to older Queenslanders and we ask all candidates to consider the merits of these ahead-of and post October 26th,” Mr Grice said.

“When it comes to housing, older homeowners are interested in downsizing as they get older but the exorbitant cost of stamp duty restricts their ability and willingness to move. NSA is calling for Queensland to fall in line with other states including the ACT, Tasmania, and Victoria and offer a senior’s stamp duty concession to make downsizing into more age friendly accommodation more affordable.

“When it comes to cost of living, concessions can be incredibly valuable, especially when every dollar counts. After 12 years of sitting at \$120 per annum, NSA is calling for the annual water subsidy to increase to \$150, again in line with, but still modest compared to other states that provide subsidies of up to \$359.

“Tied closely to cost of living is energy. NSA is seeking a commitment to ban complicated demand tariffs. These charges can result in customers receiving much higher energy bills, even during peak times when they are not using excess electricity.”

A list of our election priorities is below with full details [here](#).

Housing

NSA has asked all parties to prioritise ideas to help the housing needs of older people and is calling for:

1. **A seniors’ stamp duty concession** (just like in the ACT, Tasmania, and Victoria) to promote downsizing to more suitable age-friendly housing in later life.

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2. Construct **more seniors friendly housing** in areas where older people already live to provide downsizing and rental options and
3. Establish **nationally consistent and strengthened legislation** to protect older people from predatory pricing practices **in retirement villages**.

Cost of living

Many older Queenslanders are feeling the pinch. NSA has identified three practical policies to ease pressure on household budgets and is calling to:

1. **Increase the pensioner water subsidy** from \$120 to \$150 inline with other states (\$177 in Victoria and \$359.70 in SA) and extend the scheme to people in regional areas and to low-income self-funded retirees.
2. **Continue the 50c public transport fares** and improve the frequency of public transport services to enable seniors to access even more affordable transport and
3. Queensland and Federal Government to work together to **introduce a targeted pensioner concession card** to deliver additional supports to those most in need and reduce pension poverty.

Energy

While recent energy rebates have been welcomed, ongoing relief from energy costs are also important. There are three key energy policies we want candidates to support in this area:

1. **Oppose demand tariffs by energy retailers** – demand tariffs are based on energy use in a single point in a billing period, even if your use is lower at other times. Customers should continue to have access to *flat* tariffs and not be forced onto these when they do not understand how they work.
2. **Remove the cost of the Solar Bonus Scheme from network charges until the scheme expires in 2028** to help reduce the cost of energy and
3. Give Solar Bonus Scheme **participants the option to install a battery with an appropriate feed-in tariff**.

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