

Petition to the House of Representatives Parliament of Australia

Increase the Work Bonus providing Aged Pensioners incentive to re-enter the workforce and ease the current skills shortage at no cost to Government, without disadvantaging those unable to work.

Why:

The current Work Bonus system discourages Pensioners to return to the workforce.
A Pensioner earnings gained from work over \$150 p/week is reduced by 50%, this has not changed since July 2019.
Reduce a black cash economy.

Australian average wage 2009/10 to 2024	88% increase
Pension Sept 2009 to March 2024	66% increase
Work Bonus Sept 2009 to March 2024	20% increase

The \$4,000 Work Bonus Cap increase had an actual one off value of \$2,000, not enough to entice Aged Pensioners to change their lifestyle.

70,892 Aged Pensioners earned at least \$250 in the last fortnight of March 2023. This number would increase to 99,691 if pre-covid levels were restored.
Increasing the threshold from \$300 to \$500 p/fortnight and restoring participation to pre-covid levels could realise a saving to Government of \$2,880,000 or \$70 Million including GST on additional spending.

AIM:

To immediately change the Work Bonus system providing Aged Pensioners incentive to re-enter the workforce and ease the current skills shortage at no cost to Government without disadvantaging those unable to work.

Action Required:

- 1 - Increase Work Bonus Threshold from \$300 per fortnight to \$500 per fortnight.
- 2 - Index Work Bonus Threshold in line with Aged Pension review every March and September.
- 3 - Consider combining Couples Work Bonus balance