



SAFFRON GROVE

Mrs. Marlene Newell

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

6th June 2016

The Secretary
Legal and Social Issues Committee
Parliament House
Spring Street
EAST MELBOURNE 3002

Dear Ms Topic,

Re Differential rates for retirement villages

As a resident for five years in a retirement village I am writing to voice my thoughts on differential rates on retirement villages units.

I understand there is an Inquiry into the Retirement Housing Sector coming before Parliament and I wish to lodge this letter to members of the Standing Committee on Legal and Social Issues to voice my concerns in the discrimination of local Government Rate Charges.

I believe that residents of retirement villages are bearing an unfair rate burden in relation to the services we use. The rates I pay help fund delivery of services and infrastructure maintenance. Local municipalities collect these rates from retirement village residents at an amount similar to the General Residential Rate.

Our Village comprises of 96 units over an area that would possibly be equivalent to 40-45 standard blocks, on this basis City of Casey is receiving twofold the amount of rates for little if any services provided. Our Council does not apply a differential rate to residents of retirement villages.

As a resident in independent living accommodation I thus pay a monthly 'maintenance fee' to my village to maintain the infrastructure of the village, e.g. street lighting, road construction and maintenance, landscaping and parking areas. We also have a community centre and recreational facilities with a swimming pool. Due to the imposition of full rates by the City of Casey I am being charged for the same services in the public sphere despite their low/non-use by me. As a result I am being taxed for the provision of services that I am not utilizing.

With these anomalies between ratable properties I urge the Legal and Social Issues Committee to recommend making a differential rate for retirement villages compulsory. This would of a great benefit to those people finding it financially difficult to pay for internal levies in addition to council rates.

I believe that a 25 percent discount differential rate for retirement village residents would be fair and equitable. I am currently aware of some municipalities which provide a differential rate of similar nature and would encourage you to give this rating policy reform serious consideration.

Yours faithfully

 A black rectangular redaction box covers the signature area. Above the box, the initials "M.N." are handwritten in blue ink.

(Mrs.) Marlene Newell