

From: Duniam, Jonathon (Senator) <Senator.Duniam@aph.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 27 August 2026 10:42 AM
To: Murray Harper <mlharper@bigpond.net.au>
Subject: RE: Submission on Private Health

Dear Mr Harper,

Thank you for your email and for forwarding the Tasmanian Association of State Superannuants' submission to the Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee regarding the Health Legislation Amendment (Improving Choice and Transparency for Private Health Consumers) Bill 2026.

I appreciate you taking the time to outline the concerns of your members. The experiences you describe reflect concerns I am hearing from many older Tasmanians who have maintained private health insurance for decades and are now worried about the impact these changes will have on their household budgets.

The Coalition is deeply concerned that Labor's proposal to remove the additional private health insurance rebate for older Australians will place further pressure on seniors already grappling with rising living costs. Older Australians on fixed incomes are often the least able to absorb additional expenses, and there is a real risk that many will be forced to downgrade or abandon their private health cover altogether.

As your submission highlights, this is particularly significant in Tasmania. Our state has the oldest population in the nation and already faces substantial pressures on public hospital services. If more seniors are pushed out of private health insurance, the demand on the public system will only increase, leading to longer waiting times and reduced access to care for those who need it most.

The Coalition believes that Australians who have contributed to private health insurance over many years should be supported to maintain that cover, not penalised at the point in life when they are most likely to rely upon it. For this reason, we are opposing these changes and have called for a Senate Inquiry to examine their full impact on seniors, patients and the broader health system.

Thank you again for bringing these important concerns to my attention. I value the advocacy undertaken by T.A.S.S. on behalf of retired Tasmanians and will continue to engage constructively on this issue as it progresses through the Parliament.

Yours sincerely,

Senator the Hon. Jonno Duniam

Shadow Minister for Home Affairs and Immigration

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