

Transport Affordability Amendment Bill 2026

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As an engineer, I always try to look objectively at a submission and consider the facts, the intent of the bill, and the benefits of what has been proposed.

Unfortunately, there is only one way you can consider this bill - it is a political stunt, designed to wedge the government and be used for political points at the next election.

Sections 76, 77 and 78 give no consideration of how the petrol station industry actually operates. There is not one coordinated price rise across the state, there is a gradual occurrence of sharp price rises across a region, until most service stations hike their prices to the 'high' part of the cycle. With this in mind, giving motorists 12 hours' notice of a service station putting its prices up is hardly going to change attitudes. If one service station hikes its prices, people will go to the cheaper one around the corner or down the road. Real-time pricing apps like those produced by Motormouth and the RACQ already do an excellent job of driving price competition. A government regulator will only add more red tape - the compliance cost of which will be passed through to the consumer - without actually driving any improved competition. Further, there is no evidence that such a scheme will drive down prices.

Section 79 would end the fuel price cycle as we know it - a price cycle which, when used effectively, allows families to get ahead by purchasing fuel during the 'cheap' part of the cycle when it is often sold at a discount or a loss. Ending price hikes wouldn't keep prices low - it would keep prices flat, at one fuel price, forever, with gradual increases according to international oil prices, and retailers reluctant to drop prices lest there be price shocks. Further, it is typically 2-3 weeks before price rises on Oil markets hit our petrol stations - so this section would not even stop fuel price shocks, and it would discourage retailers from passing through savings when they occur.

Finally, Part 5 Clause 17 is nothing but a stunt to claim the incumbent government is against 50 cent fares. The current Cubic system would require several weeks' notice to reprogram the system for increased fares anyway. Particularly in a unicameral parliament like Australia, if the government wanted to raise fares, it would do it. Executive power, like the setting of fares, should remain part of the executive, and not be delegated to the parliament simply for the reasons of conducting a cheap stunt.

I am disappointed this bill has been put forward by the Member for Aspley, and I hope any opposition from the government to such economic madness is not weaponised by the Member for Aspley as a way to say that certain MPs do not support "cheaper fuel", as it would be intellectually bankrupt to suggest this bill does anything but drive up fuel prices at the petrol pump.