




Speech By
Hon. Charis Mullen

MEMBER FOR JORDAN

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Seniors, Cost of Living

 **Hon. C MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety, Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (10.21 am): This morning many of our seniors will have woken up—probably very early—to hear that pensioners and eligible seniors will get more than \$1,300 off their electricity bills from 1 July. It means the majority of seniors who are feeling the weight of rising cost-of-living pressures will not pay one cent for electricity in the next financial year. We are meeting the expectations of our key senior stakeholders—the Council on the Ageing and National Seniors. Both asked for more government support for electricity rebates, and that is exactly what we are delivering.

The electricity rebate is an absolute boon for seniors on top of the practical help available through this new Miles government, and we do have a lot on offer. In fact, there are 18 concessions, rebates and discounts available to eligible seniors. As well as the most substantial electricity rebate now, there are subsidies for rates, water and medical aids, including hearing aids. Seniors can get free spectacles and dental treatment at our public dental clinics and hospitals. There are concessions on car and boat registration and public transport in Queensland and in other states, including long-distance train travel. There are fishing permit discounts and cut-price tickets for many of the shows and reduced entry fees at our wonderful art galleries and museums. All of this is only possible because of our increased coal royalties from big mining companies, because we own our energy assets and because we are keeping those assets in the hands of Queenslanders—Queenslanders who, like our seniors, have worked hard for our state and deserve more support when they retire.

How do our seniors find out about what is on offer? They can go to one of our very popular Seniors Expos or Seniors Savings Pop-Ups, which are up and running for 2024. In the past three years, more than 16,000 senior Queenslanders have attended one of these events. These pop-ups and expos give seniors the chance to meet a Queensland government cards and concessions specialist. They can chat with these friendly specialists about what they are entitled to through savings, concessions and rebates. The need for these expos and pop-ups has never been greater. We have Seniors Expos coming up in Bundaberg, Bribie Island, Surfers Paradise and Townsville. I encourage older Queenslanders to find one near them and make sure that they are accessing all of the rebate services and supports to which they are entitled. Queensland seniors deserve our respect and they deserve the practical cost-of-living support that they are getting from our Miles government.