

Question on Notice
No. 975-2022
Asked on Thursday, 1 September 2022
Answer Due: Tuesday, 4 October 2022

975 **MR S KNUTH** ASKED THE MINISTER FOR SENIORS AND DISABILITY SERVICES AND MINISTER FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PARTNERSHIPS (HON C CRAWFORD)

With reference to the ineligibility of Queensland pensioners who hold a Commonwealth Seniors Health Card to apply for the electricity rebate for pensioners and seniors program despite struggling more than ever with the rising cost of living after 2 years of COVID—

Will the Minister commit to fighting for our pensioners in Queensland to change eligibility for the electricity rebate for pensioners and seniors program?

Answer:

The Queensland Government provides a significant range of concessions, subsidies, discounts and rebates every year which help reduce transport, housing, healthcare, education, water and energy costs for millions of Queensland households. In 2022–23, the value of these concessions is \$6.786 billion, an increase of more than 10 per cent from 2021–22.

This includes a total of \$385 million in 2022–23 to support all Queensland households with a \$175 Cost of Living Rebate. Since April 2018, the government has allocated a total of \$1.185 billion to provide households with a total of \$575 in direct financial assistance through electricity bill rebates.

Any Queenslander who is 65 years or older and who works less than 35 hours a week in paid employment is eligible to apply for Queensland Government Seniors Card.

In addition, any 60–64 year old Queenslander who holds a Commonwealth Seniors Health Card and who works less than 35 hours a week in paid employment is eligible to apply for a Queensland Government Seniors Card.

Applying for a Queensland Government Seniors Card is free and the process is simple. Apply online at www.qld.gov.au/seniorcard or by calling 13QGOV (13 74 68).

Queensland Seniors Card holders are eligible for the Electricity Rebate Scheme which provides an annual rebate of \$372.20 on their electricity bill.

The Queensland's Seniors Card has relatively less stringent eligibility requirements than the Commonwealth Seniors Health Card; therefore, it is likely more people will access the electricity rebate sooner by holding a Queensland Seniors Card.