

16 September 2020

Senator the Hon Anne Ruston MP  
Minister for Families and Social Services  
PO Box 6100  
Senate  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister

### **Disability Support Pension and Carer Payment**

We are writing to appeal for an urgent review and increase to the Disability Support Pension (DSP) and Carer Payment (CP).

People with disability and their carers are experiencing additional and unforeseen costs, facing extreme financial hardship and are being plunged into deeper poverty during Covid-19. The current rate of both the DSP and the CP is vastly inadequate to support people with disability and carers through this unprecedented crisis.

For the first time in the history of income support payments in Australia, both the Disability Support Pension and the Carer Payment are lower than the JobSeeker Payment. People with disability generally require more income support because of the additional costs and barriers they experience in the community.

The decision by the Government to exclude the DSP and the Carer Payment from the \$550 fortnightly coronavirus supplement has magnified the economic insecurity of many Australians receiving these payments.

While the decision to increase other income support payments is commendable, the decision to deny the same increases to the DSP and CP is grossly unfair and inequitable. The rate of DSP had always been set higher than payments like JobSeeker in acknowledgment of the additional financial costs people with disability experience.

Over 90% of people with disability have reported increased expenses during the pandemic. Increases in utilities, delivery costs, and medical costs has meant many people are perilously close to financial impoverishment and living below the poverty line. Furthermore, many people with disability have lost their jobs in the wake of this crisis, as many work in casual jobs or in the gig economy.

Council asks that the Australian Government act urgently to increase the current rate of the DSP and Carer Payment to an appropriate rate that will guarantee people with disability and carers are able to have the economic security they deserve.

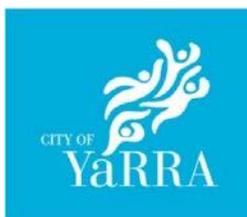
Yours sincerely,



**Moreland**  
City Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Tapinos'.

**Lambros Tapinos**  
**Mayor**  
Moreland City Council



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Misha Coleman'.

**Mayor**  
**Misha Coleman**  
City of Yarra



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karen Egan'.

**Karen Egan**  
**Mayor**  
Nillumbik Shire Council