



SENIORS UNITED PARTY of AUSTRALIA INC.

REG NO. INC 2200946

"A Voice for Seniors"

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PRESIDENTIAL REPORT

October 2024

Dear Members,

2024 has been another difficult year for the party, but for different reasons than for previous years.

We lost two long serving executive members of the party, namely the president Bob Burdett from Western Australia and our secretary Rod Hoskins from Victoria. These two gentlemen gave 100's of loyal hours of service to the party and they have been missed. Their individual skills were used to do enormous amount of necessary administration work and the Party sincerely thanks them.

Bob Patrech our treasurer stepped into the additional roll of secretary, one he had carried out before, and he and the vice president John Williamson carried on with the administration work.

Again this year, like past years we thank Alex and Katerina Mortensen for filling vacant casual committee member positions and while Alex's advice was sought in regards to administration Katerina again used her graphic design skills to produce impressive documents for the party.

ACTIONS

Although our political activity had been significantly reduced during this last year with the executive resignations and the secretary also having the onerous task of moving house, members of the party did send a submission in on the Royal Commission into Aged Care as well as send a complaint to the Federal Ombudsman who also is the ombudsman for Australia Post. This was about Australia Post no longer accepting cheques for payment. In our case for our renewal of our post Office mail box.

Letters were also sent at a state level to the NSW Health Minister in regards to the new Eurobodalla hospital on the South Coast of NSW in relation to political distortion of facts and the closing of the Bateman's Bay hospital and emergency department. One example of factual distortion is the claim by ? Parts of the NSW Health Dept claiming wide consultation was sought in the community yet not one doctor, nurse, worker or patient associated with the Bateman's Bay hospital was consulted according to reports.

FEDERAL ISSUES :

NEW AGED CARE ACT

This year the biggest issue at a Federal government level was the New Aged Care Act being introduced to parliament.

The applause from so called senior advocate organisations should have been expected but in the end the government is still supporting profits before people as private corporations are the main supplier of aged care nursing home places and home care. While the government, or governments want private corporations to supply aged care and do not want the cost of supplying the services themselves they need to ensure the private bodies remain profitable. This was the major aim of the exercise.

Claims that many aged care organisations have been running at a loss should be looked at with scepticism as, firstly why would a private business continue to run at a loss, and secondly why has there been aged care multi-corporations from overseas come to Australia if there was no big profits to be made.

The much acclaimed star system for assessing aged care facilities is off having more work done to it because, if reports were true, the aged care providers themselves were making the assessments, which obviously had questionable accuracy.

The Labor Federal government had communications with the Federal Coalition before releasing the new Act so both support business profits before aged care recipients.

It has been claimed \$12.6 billion will be saved from aged care reforms over 11 years with new aged care recipients having to pay more, including part pensioners and self funded retirees.

The reforms will allow the Federal government to reduce its contributions to residential care by 3% and home care by 6%.

In this same year the Federal government's stage 3 tax cuts to workers earning over \$200,000 will be \$4,529. Under the Federal Coalition's original planned tax cuts they would have paid \$9,075 less in tax (Brendan Coates, Joey Moloney, Albanese's tax-cut plan: who wins and who loses, now and in the future.)

Aged care cost the Federal government \$32 billion last financial year (Jake Evans, Evelyn Manfield, Tom Crawley-Elderly Australians to pay more under aged care deal struck by government, ABC News) The stage 3 tax cuts are now estimated to cost \$105.7 billion over the current forward estimates period from 2023-24 to 2027-28. (<http://treasurygov.au>>file) . That's estimated to be \$35.23 billion a year!

In short, the Federal revenue lost on the tax cuts, costing \$35.23 billion a year, could have paid for the government's cost of aged care before the saving of the reformed New Aged Care Act which was \$32 billion !

Seniors in aged care will be paying for tax cuts to the wealthy and other workers, and under a Coalition government the wealthy would have got more !

One has to ask, how much do Federal governments care about aged care? They obviously care about looking after greedy aged care corporations !

ROYAL COMMISSION INTO DEFENCE AND VETERANS SUICIDE

The Royal Commission into Aged Care was not the only Royal Commission which shows the Federal government's contempt for ordinary Australians The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicides in the armed forces also shone a light on the Federal government protecting those untouchables in the hierarchy of the armed forces

Senator Jackie Lambie with the support of Senator David Shoebridge found a report within the documentation of the royal commission on a major review into the military justice system which was quickly removed after discovery

It was found there that there is a widely held perception that the military justice system is too closely linked to the Australian Defence Force's top brass It was found the military justice system could be weaponised against Australian Defence Force personnel with inference that there was rough justice, bullying, sexual abuse, inappropriate conduct and humiliation

No wonder there appears to have been more loss of life by the Australian defence forces at home from suicide than lost in the Afghan war

It appears those above the rank of sergeant were given legal protection when speaking at the hearings Hence the top brass are untouchable. How does the government remove the rouge elements to save lives from suicide?

One of our own former members of the Party has 22 claims not yet dealt with!

STATE ISSUES

RETIREMENT VILLAGE COSTS

In recent weeks the extraordinary high costs of leaving a retirement village has been aired on ABC tv 7-30 Report. This has to be cost gouging at its worst with contracts for residents being far too complicated for ordinary citizens and legal advice being a necessity There has been talk of people having to pay out \$100s thousands to get out of a retirement village which leaves people with insufficient funds to get into a nursing home

In 2018 an inquiry into retirement villages in NSW lead to the government organising an ambassador, Katherine Griener to represent the residents when the residents wanted an ombudsman with legal clout. It was a way the government protected the village owners and managers and definitely not the residents.

GOOD NEWS

On a brighter note nurses should now be seen in aged care home 24/7 and aged care workers were to see a pay rise Also the Victorian government is building government owned aged care facilities at Mansfield and Cohuna according to Australian Seniors News Why can't other states do the same?

ADVOCACY WEAKENED

In my time in the Seniors United Party of Australia Inc I have come to see how supposed senior advocacy organisations are compromised and their efforts to truly stand up for seniors are stifled because of it The compromises come about because they have to rely

on government funding and any loss of funding causes staff loses, or business advertising which includes reverse mortgages which we certainly do not recommend

We believe we almost stand alone without compromising our values, but in doing so we have no significant funding and rely on voluntary labour

With what has happened this year in regards to how the governments have treated seniors and other ordinary Australians a seniors party is needed now more than ever!

Produced by
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