



Warren Pitt MP
Member for Mulgrave



**Queensland
Government**

MC08.4057

**Minister for Main Roads and
Local Government**

8 DEC 2008

Mr Neil Laurie
Clerk of the Parliament
TableOffice@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for providing me with a copy of the wording of petition number 1110-08, lodged with the Legislative Assembly of Queensland, regarding the rates levied on the Moreton Bay Islands and the mainland of the Redlands area.

I have responded directly to the principal petitioner (Mrs Gertrude Joyce Webb) and a copy of my reply is attached for your information.

Yours sincerely

Warren Pitt MP
Minister for Main Roads and Local Government

Att.

Level 18 41 George Street Brisbane
PO Box 15031 City East
Queensland 4002 Australia
Telephone +61 7 3227 8819
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COPY

Mrs Gertrude Joyce Webb
Principal Petitioner
199 Railway Parade
THORNSIDE QLD 4158

Dear Mrs Webb

The Clerk of the Parliament has forwarded me a copy of the wording of your petition, lodged with the Legislative Assembly of Queensland on 11 November 2008, regarding the increase in rates levied on the Moreton Bay Islands and the mainland of the Redlands area.

Local governments are elected by their communities to represent those communities. Councils set rates to raise the income to provide services to their communities. Each council decides how much income it needs to provide services and facilities. Councils also decide the best rating system for their area.

Councils have a range of rating options available to them. They also have a range of concession powers that include:

- remission of rates – a concession where a person does not pay the full amount of a rate;
- composition of rates – an arrangement for unpaid rates such as making regular payments to pay off an outstanding rate debt;
- transfer of land in settlement rates – if the land for which unpaid rates are owing is free of encumbrances, the council may accept a transfer of the land in full or part settlement of an owner's liability for the rates; and
- deferral of liability to pay rates – an arrangement to defer payment of a rate until a specified time or to defer for the lifetime of an owner (if owned by a pensioner).

Many local governments, including Redland City Council, offer pensioner rate remissions. Council's Budget Report 2008/2009 details all rebates and concessions and any limitations that apply.

Concessions to pensioners, seniors and veterans are also a major commitment of the State Government. They include fares on public transport (local rail, bus and ferry and long-distance rail travel within Queensland), car and boat registration, electricity, and a variety of health services and rates. The State Government's Pensioner Rate Subsidy Scheme (PRSS), administered by the Department of Communities, offers a 20 percent reduction in gross rates and charges up to \$180 per annum.

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Whilst I appreciate your concerns regarding Council's rating strategy for 2008/2009, it is one for determination by the elected Council. In the circumstances, it is suggested that you make representations to one or all of the elected members on your Council in an endeavour to have your concerns addressed.

I trust this information is of assistance to you. Should you require any further information in relation to this matter, please contact Ms Kara Salmon of the Department of Local Government, Sport and Recreation on telephone number 3381 7585.

Yours sincerely

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

Warren Pitt MP
Minister for Main Roads and Local Government