



Hon Karen Struthers MP
Member for Algeester

Your reference: Petitions No. 1781-11 and No. 1815-11
Our reference: COM 15821-2011

**Minister for Community Services
Housing and Minister for Women**

16 DEC 2011

Mr Michael Ries
Acting Clerk of the Parliament
Queensland Parliamentary Service
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Ries

I refer to your letter dated 22 November 2011 attaching Petitions No. 1781-11 and No. 1815-11 received by the Queensland Legislative Assembly in relation to concessions for the use of bottled Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG).

The Queensland Government has a rebate to assist eligible pensioners and seniors who use reticulated natural gas in their homes.

The Department of Communities administers the Reticulated Natural Gas Rebate Scheme which was originally introduced to provide transitional assistance to users of reticulated natural gas who were experiencing considerable increases in fixed network costs and supply charges, not usage charges. The rebate did not extend to users of LPG for this reason.

The petitioners may care to note that the responsibilities of the Queensland Gas Commissioner include leading the annual Gas Market Review process in consultation with key gas market stakeholders and advising Government on the outcomes of these reviews.

The Commissioner is also accountable for progressing government actions in response to the reviews and facilitating discussion between Government and industry, as well as providing recommendations to Government on key gas market issues.

The Queensland Government is very mindful of the significance that concessions provide to people on fixed low incomes and is committed to ensuring that the range of programs provided are sustainable over the coming decades.

There are no plans to extend the qualifying criteria under the Reticulated Natural Gas Rebate Scheme at this time. However, I can assure the petitioners that concession programs are regularly reviewed and the issues raised will be given consideration in future reviews of the scheme.

The Queensland government offers a broader range of concessions for seniors than any other state or territory, including electricity, motor vehicle and boat registration, rates, water, dental, spectacles supply, medical aids, electricity life support, fishing permits and Queensland public transport.

To assist Queenslanders to locate what help and supports are available and to identify what they might be eligible for, the Queensland Government established the Every Dollar Counts website at www.qld.gov.au/everydollarcounts.

For Queenslanders who do not have access to the Internet, there is also a printed publication, *Every dollar counts: Concessions made easy* which is a convenient listing of the many concessions, rebates and subsidies provided by the Queensland Government.

This booklet is widely distributed through local and Commonwealth government offices, community health centres, public libraries, Queensland Government Agent Program offices and the department's regional offices. Copies of the booklet can also be obtained by phoning 13 QGOV (13 74 68). Information contained in the booklet is also available on CD for people with a visual impairment.

The Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation administers and monitors legislation affecting the Queensland gas sector. As issues relating to LPG fall within the responsibilities of the Honourable Stephen Robertson MP, Minister for Energy and Water Utilities, a copy of the petitions has been forwarded to that Minister for his information.

I thank the petitioners for taking the time to make me aware of their concerns.

Yours sincerely



Karen Struthers MP
Minister for Community Services and Housing
Minister for Women