



Senator the Hon Anne Ruston

**Minister for Families and Social Services
Minister for Women's Safety
Senator for South Australia
Manager of Government Business in the Senate**

Mr Ian Yates AM
Chief Executive, COTA Australia
Suite 9, 16 National Circuit
BARTON ACT 2600

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Dear Mr ~~Yates~~,

Further to our recent conversation I would like to reassure you formally that the Coalition Government does not, never has and never will have a policy to require Age Pensioners to have their payment placed on to a Cashless Debit Card.

On 17 June 2021, I made a statement to Parliament to confirm "the Government has no plan to force Age Pensioners on to the cashless debit card, and we will never have such a plan". It is also of note that on 9 December 2020 when the Government passed the *Social Security (Administration) Amendment (Continuation of Cashless Welfare) Bill 2020* the Government supported an amendment put forward by Senator Rex Patrick which stated that "the Senate calls on the Government to provide a commitment that no recipient of the Age Pension or a Veteran or Service Pension will be placed on the Cashless Debit Card".

The Cashless Debit Card is a policy aimed at people of working age who are on social security payments to help them stabilise their lives, become job ready and, hopefully, get back into the workforce. Clearly, it is not aimed at retirees and our position is clear that it never would be.

I hope this statement of confirmation can be used to reassure your constituents of this clear commitment.

Yours sincerely

Anne Ruston

8/7/2021