

Elder Abuse

Dear

I'm a voter in your electorate and I'm writing to let you know that a key issue for me in the 2019 federal election is the treatment of older Australians. I'm one of them and I will vote for the candidate who best enables me and other seniors to be safe and supported.

I'm a member of National Seniors Australia. Through its advocacy and research, National Seniors fights to improve the lives of older Australians; older Australians just like me.

In this election, National Seniors is advocating for policies that reduce pension poverty, improve aged care, sustain retirement income, reduce energy and health costs, improve Centrelink and stop elder abuse.

Personally, I am most interested in the issue of elder abuse.

Elder abuse is a growing concern for all Australians. Financial elder abuse is the most common form of abuse and is a key factor in other forms of abuse. Financial abuse can occur because older people do not have the resources to help them protect themselves. Often mechanisms used to assist people when they get older, such as powers of attorney, are the same ones used to perpetrate abuse. This is because the current laws that govern the powers of attorney documents do not provide adequate protection.

I support National Seniors' campaign to better protect older people from abuse. I will vote for candidates who commit to bringing about changes that improve protections.

Specifically, I am asking for you to commit to championing the following recommendation from National Seniors.

Accelerate efforts to create nationally consistent Powers of Attorney legislation and a single national register for these documents.

A lack of consistency between states and territories is undermining legal protections for older Australians. While the banking and financial services sector is regulated nationally, states and territories make laws governing the use of powers of attorney documents. These documents can be used to appoint someone to

manage the financial affairs of a person who is not able to do so on their own. Creating nationally consistent legislation with stronger protections against misuse and a national register for these documents, will increase safeguards for older Australians, making it easier to detect and stop abuse.

While the federal government has recently announced a National Plan to Respond to the Abuse of Older Australians 2019 -2023, progress on this is too slow. We are calling on the federal government to work with state and territory counterparts to accelerate efforts to create nationally consistent laws and a single national register for powers of attorney documents as a priority. Doing so will reduce the risk of harm to vulnerable older people and demonstrate the government's commitment to tackling elder abuse.

I believe this initiative will better protect vulnerable older people, which is essential to their safety, security, quality of life and wellbeing.

I appreciate your time in reading this letter and welcome your reply.

Yours sincerely