

Dear Commission,

It has been claimed in some submissions that taxpayers who live in remote areas choose to do so. This completely discounts the majority of residents – they may have been born in a remote area, their parents may have brought them to a remote area as children and they have grown up and made their life in the same area; they may have been transferred there for work; they may be legally required to live remotely for visa conditions; they may live remotely for health reasons. And let's not even touch on Indigenous Australians and land rights!

So as one of the people who lives remotely, I would like to explain, using small words so it's easy for all to understand, some of the conditions we live with in my town:

- We cannot “shop around” for good value on many consumer goods – prices are higher in retail establishments due to the cost of shipping goods here; if we find a cheaper alternative online we then have to pay shipping anyway; we always have to wait to receive anything out of the ordinary that we need; lack of variety in retailers means that we have no alternative than to buy online and pay shipping. Do we not deserve this simple consumer right that most other Australian have?
- We have one power provider, one gas supplier, one reliable phone provider – we have no choice than to pay what they dictate – we cannot save on those like city folk can
- We have one public hospital here and no private one; if we need to see a specialist we can wait over a year for one to a) come to town and b) have an available appointment. Private health cover doesn't cover travel to see a specialist
- Thank God we all “choose” to live in remote areas – because all we hear from city slickers is how crowded the public transport is, how congested the roads are, how filthy and polluted the ground and air is; how expensive the housing is, and that there is a lack of it. Are they suggesting that we all abandon our remote locations and move to the cities?
- Trust me, if the Remote Zone Offset is scrapped then city-dwelling taxpayers aren't going to see the money – not in their public facilities, not in their pay packets or tax returns. Without all the taxpayers with real jobs paying real tax in remote zones and supporting the non-tax payers in remote zones, the government will have to spend more providing facilities and supporting them out of public funds!

In summary I believe that by removing the Remote Zone Offset as all taxpayers would suffer the repercussions of removing it. Or perhaps the Federal Government could remove it and announce a tax levy on all taxpayers to improve infrastructure based on population per square kilometre. The more populated the area you live in, the higher the levy. Sounds much more fair!

**“IT'S THE VIBE OF IT. IT'S THE CONSTITUTION. IT'S MABO. IT'S JUSTICE. IT'S LAW. IT'S THE VIBE AND AH, NO THAT'S IT. IT'S THE VIBE. I REST MY CASE.”**