



# Parliament of Australia

House of Representatives

**Lisa Chesters MP**  
Federal Member for Bendigo

## MEDIA RELEASE

15 February 2017

### CHESTERS TO HOST COMMUNITY FORUM ON PAPER BILLING FEES

Next week, Lisa Chesters MP will host a community forum to discuss the local impact of the push to digital billing practices.

With Banks, Telcos and other service providers increasing pressure on their customers to switch to digital bills and statements, many Central Victorians are left footing the bill.

“More and more customers are being charged a fee to receive a paper bill in the mail. These ‘pay-to-pay’ penalties are hitting the most vulnerable in our community and are simply unfair.

“The ‘Keep Me Posted’ campaign is challenging corporations to remove these fees for paper bills and I know many Bendigo constituents will want to have their say on this issue,” said Ms Chesters.

Guest speakers at the forum will include Anthony Pavey from the Keep Me Posted campaign, Father Bob Maguire, Colin Ormsby from Fair Go for Pensioners and Gary Handley from the Maiden Gully and California Gully LPOs. Victorian Senator Kimberley Kitching will also be in attendance.

“Central Victoria is in a telecommunications crisis and there are many areas across the electorate without access to a reliable internet service.

“It is just not possible for many Central Victorians to avoid these fees as they cannot choose to receive their bills digitally,” said Ms Chesters.

Studies show it is the most vulnerable who are impacted the most with 57% of households earning less than \$40,000 not having access to the internet.

Further, senior groups are particularly impacted with 21% of Australians aged 65 and over having never accessed the internet and older Australians making up for 71% of those who have never accessed the internet.

Representatives from the community, charities, seniors groups, post offices and other stakeholders have been invited to discuss how these practices are affecting the community and what needs to be done.

“This is just another example of the disregard in which the builders of this great country are being held. These greedy, money-grubbing fees directly affect the most vulnerable in our communities, our aged and ageing, our disadvantaged, our young and our indigenous communities to name a few. The concept of pay-to-pay is as evil as it is wrong and must be stopped,” commented Colin Ormsby from Fair Go for Pensioners.

The forum is an open invitation to all members of the community providing an opportunity to hear about the impact of these fees and advice on how residents can ask for these fees to be removed.

“It is critical to raise awareness about the Keep Me Posted campaign,” commented Kellie Northwood, Executive Director

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of the Keep Me Posted campaign, “We want to hear the impacts on the community and understand how we can assist people with these concerns. Our commitment to all Australians is to bring your voice to those who can implement change for our communities.”

**Event Details:**

**WHERE:** Bendigo Trades Hall – 34 View Street, Bendigo

**WHEN:** 11am Thursday 23 February

**RSVP:** 03 5443 9055 or [shaun.rosaia@aph.gov.au](mailto:shaun.rosaia@aph.gov.au)

Tea, coffee and light refreshments will be provided.

**ENDS**

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