



State cuts seniors' cost of living rebate

THE Barnett government has halved its cost of living rebate for seniors, citing commonwealth cuts to concessions. West Australian Premier Colin Barnett said the annual cost of living rebate for single seniors had been reduced to \$82 and to \$123 for couples, saving the state \$21 million. The cut will affect 306,000 West Australian seniors. Mr Barnett said it was a regrettable decision to have to make but the federal government had left the state "holding the baby". Mr Barnett said cutting the rebate was the simplest change to make administratively and would have the least effect on seniors and pensioners, who were more concerned with concessions for utilities and rates. "So we've left all of those benefits and concessions in place," he told reporters. Mr Barnett said he had sent a letter to the federal government about the concession funding that it "whipped away from us ... with no prior notice".

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