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Pension reforms in lower house

PENSIONERS will get more money but will also have to wait longer to access it if legislation introduced to Parliament is approved.

The Government's proposed pension reforms were flagged in last month's federal budget.

Families and Community Services Minister Jenny Macklin introduced the bill into the lower house yesterday.

Under the draft laws, singles will get a \$32.49 a week rise in the pension, while couples will get an extra \$10.14 a week.

A new supplement for holders of a Commonwealth Seniors Health Card will replace the existing seniors concession and telephone allowance.

It will be about \$790 a year for singles and \$1190 for couples.

The pension rise will be shared with nursing homes.

Though, pensioners will have to wait to benefit from the reforms.

The qualifying age for the pension will be gradually increased from 65 to 67 years between 2017 and 2023.