*Please use the following template as a guide to write your own letter to your local member of parliament. A well-crafted, passionate and personal message will have the most impact with your local MP.*

*Determine your local MP’s contact details by visiting* [*https://www.aph.gov.au/Senators\_and\_Members/Members*](https://www.aph.gov.au/Senators_and_Members/Members)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Dear <insert ‘Mr/ Mrs/Ms/Dr First Name Last Name MP’>,

As a local business owner in your electorate, I am seeking your urgent help to keep my debit card transaction fee costs down. My understanding is that a coalition of the leaders of a range of business organisations has also recently written to you on this issue.

As fewer people use cash, debit cards are Australia’s most popular way to pay – amounting to around 8 billion transactions a year. Use of these cards should be at lowest cost for businesses and consumers. Unfortunately, businesses like mine often pay higher fees than we should for debit card purchases because the lowest cost payment route (usually eftpos) is not the default option. These higher fees ultimately hurt all Australians, with small businesses and consumers impacted the most.

Nor do we have access to the lowest cost payment route if customers pay with their mobile phone or transact online. Finally, some banks are proposing to remove eftpos from their multi-network debit cards altogether. This would eliminate choice and force businesses to use Mastercard and Visa for their debt transactions. It would also mean consumers would no longer have access to services like cash-out at point-of-sale and real-time Medicare rebates.

The Reserve Bank is about to complete a major Retail Payments Regulatory Review. Its interim report acknowledges that shifting away from least cost routing and choice on debit cards “*would result in a significant lessening of competitive pressure in the debit market and would likely result in an increase in both interchange rates and scheme fees, impacting all merchants”.*

Despite stating its concerns, the Reserve Bank’s interim report falls short in terms of addressing them. As a local business directly impacted by high transaction fees, I need your help to ensure the Reserve Bank takes the necessary action or, if it fails to do so, then the Parliament intervenes.

To bring costs down, two specific actions are required:

* the lowest cost payment route should be the default for all contactless debit transactions – whether consumers tap their card, wave their phone or pay online.
* eftpos should be a choice on all debit cards so local businesses can access what is usually the lowest cost payment option and consumers continue to have access to services like cash-out at the check-out, and real time Medicare refunds.

Your constituents cannot afford higher prices for their everyday goods and services, neither can local businesses such as mine. Your support on this issue, which affects thousands of businesses in your electorate, is urgently needed. I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss.

Yours sincerely

<Insert name>

Proprietor, <insert business name>.