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Andren's new attempt to reform MPs super

Independent Member for Calare will again introduce a bill to give politicians the choice to opt out of the overgenerous and protected MPs' super scheme when parliament resumes next week.

"Ideally the polties' super scheme should be wound up altogether or replaced by a fully funded scheme. Apart from its generosity, it is completely insulated from the market forces that affect our constituents' superannuation," Mr Andren said.

"My bill gives Members and Senators the choice to get out of the parliamentary scheme – the PCSS – and have their super paid into a fund or retirement savings account of their own choice at the normal super guarantee rate of 9% rather than the current 69% notional employer contribution from the Commonwealth.

"For politicians it is an opportunity to reconnect with their electorates.

"The parliamentary scheme is an unfunded, defined scheme which basically means that it is paid by the Commonwealth, no matter what, at a percentage of MP salaries according to years of service.

"The market going up or down doesn't affect a politician's pension, and it is indexed to increases in members' and senators' salaries.

"An MP can qualify as soon as he or she is re-elected twice and then loses preselection before they next face the people. The scheme rewards losers way before long-serving members.

"The old arguments that members' and senators' salaries don't reflect the demands of the job, that MPs gave up higher incomes in private work and that post-parliament employment is hard to come by, just don't hold up.

"As evidence we only have to look at some of the recent highly paid consultancy work that certain ex-Ministers have picked up, along with their pensions.

"My *Parliamentary (Choice of Superannuation) Bill 2003* addresses all the concerns of expert witnesses at the Senate Inquiry into my 2001 Bill.

"There is no reason (except a wish to maintain an exclusive politicians' pension club) for the Government not to allow this legislation to proceed," Mr Andren said.