

Dear Committee,

I would like to address the following terms of reference by a personal story.

the development of opportunities for Australians  
to improve themselves and increase their life,  
education and employment prospects, and  
iv.

The delivery of services and programs to support  
regions, communities and disadvantaged individuals  
to access education, training and skills and,  
through them, a pathway to further education and  
employment;

My son in law arrived from Ecuador with very poor English and a very basic education. But he had a strong will to work, intelligence and a desire to better himself in order to support his family - my daughter and his two daughters, my granddaughters. He was forced to work at a number of low paid labouring jobs for years to do this.

Then he began courses on massage and fitness training at TAFE and did extremely well, coming top of his class. He discovered his own talent and skills during this process. He worked night and day to study and earn money but in the end he passed his courses in TAFE and it was that which enabled him to pull himself out of financial difficulties and do very well at a profession. When he finally received his certificates it enabled him to immediately get a wellpaid job. His confidence and happiness have been increased markedly and he is planning to study at sports training and nursing at university part time.

If you multiply this wonderful result by tens of thousands you will see that TAFE is a blessing for Australian society and enables people who can't afford university education to become highly productive members of society. It has been shown in many studies all over the world that it is only education that enables people to rise above poverty and as it is, Australia has a very low educational uptake for people on low incomes.

It is a false economy to cut funds for TAFE and is based on a cruel ideology- in the end the cost of unemployment, poverty, social misery and the loss to society of people who can contribute if they're only given the opportunity is far greater..