



Isolated Children's Parents' Association
Northern Territory State Council Incorporated

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Dear Senate Committee,

03/10/2015

The Northern Territory Isolated Children's Parents' Association would like to support our Federal Council's request in asking for a more generous means testing for youth payments.

We would also like to see removal of the family assets test as this is penalising outback families, who have to purchase large assets to work their land and make a life of it, often very sacrificially. This usually means that although some families seem to be rich in assets, these assets are not luxury items but generally machinery and the like that is necessary to carve out a life from the dust in this outback land, usually these very families have very, very little general funds or available cash flow to live on week to week, and to say they go without is putting it mildly.

The pressure on families is becoming too great in terms of giving their children a decent education and many are choosing to leave the land, they have sacrificed so much already and are not willing to go broke as well to educate their children.

The other issues to be brought to light that would greatly benefit our rural and remote students and families are the alignment of the parental income test exemption for Youth Allowance with existing arrangements for Family Tax Benefit part A and provide that, where a family has a dependent child who receives an individual youth payment that is parentally income tested and younger siblings who qualify for the Family Tax Benefit that the family pool for the youth parental income test will include all children who are eligible for the Family Tax Benefit.

To have a more generous approach to these areas would greatly benefit these remote students and we thank you in advance for your careful consideration of expanding the remote and rural areas by loosening the reins so to speak, so that they can continue on and not just get through but to actually begin to flourish, as you know the Outback generates billions of dollars in tourism each year, tourists come to see these families in operation and love to be included on the land in Outback Musters and such like. Please see the potential in these families and recognise what they do also for the tourism industry by putting something back into them as they are pouring out into this land and if they leave because it is too hard, who will remain as the Outback heroes and heroines for these tourists to see?

Many thanks in advance for your time given to this.

Kind regards

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"Equality of access to education for all rural and remote children"

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Kindly supported by NT Dept of Education