

To: The Hon. Dan Tehan, MP  
Minister for Education  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister Dan Tehan,

To be frank, the proposed increase in Social Work course fees is extremely concerning. It appears that Social Work has been very incorrectly categorised in the higher education funding reform package. Social Work graduates have a 95.3% labour force participation rate; a strong future growth rate of 29% over the next 5 years; and Social Work services are already struggling to meet client demand, with 60% of services reporting an increase in the amount of clients their service could not support during 2019 (Save Social Work Australia 2020).

The Job-Ready Graduates Higher Education Reform Package 2020 notes that Commonwealth Subsidy for Social Work will drop from \$10,821 to \$1,100 and student contribution will rise from \$6,684 to \$14,500 per year. Not only is this an absolute 'kick in the guts' to Social Work students, but to the vulnerable people in which we service. People already vulnerable and marginalised will be even further disadvantaged by your government's irrational and egocentric actions.

How will you explain to the women fleeing abusive and life threatening situations; to the suicidal persons on month-long hospital waiting lists; to the already socially isolated elderly and CALD (culturally and linguistically diverse) communities; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; people living with physical and intellectual disabilities; and people without a roof over their heads that there is no one that can help them?

A world in which vulnerable are undervalued and forgotten is a scary world that I do not wish to be a part of. I beg you to protect the future of Social Work and in turn the future of our most marginalised.

Regards,  
Tayla Dudley