



## *Isolated Children's Parents' Association – Queensland Inc.*

REF: KEH:YA

Mrs Kate Twist  
Secretary – ICPA Qld Inc  
Juandah Downs  
MUNGALLALA Q 4467

6<sup>th</sup> October 2015

Members,  
Senate Community Affairs  
Legislation Committee

Dear Committee Members

The Isolated Children's Parents' Association Qld Inc (ICPA Qld Inc) is writing to you in relation to the ***Social Services Legislation Amendment (More Generous Means Testing for Youth Payments) Bill 2015***, which was presented to Parliament on the 10<sup>th</sup> September 2015, and to your Committee for inquiry and reporting.

ICPA Qld Inc applaud the proposed changes to the legislation, and believe that the changes will provide a more equitable base for students in rural and remote regions, who have no choice but to leave their home to undertake tertiary studies.


One of the greatest inhibitors to rural and remote students undertaking tertiary studies is the cost involved in relocating to attend university. Removal of the family assets test and the family actual means test from the youth allowance parental means test arrangements that will take into account actual family and business circumstances and a family's ability to pay when operating businesses in an asset rich but income poor environment, will more realistically respond to the needs of families needing to access Youth Allowance. This will also mean that more rural and remote students will be able to access the Dependent Youth Allowance and be in line for the relocation scholarships to help with setup costs and ongoing expenses for students living away from home. More students from rural and remote areas will be able to undertake their studies in the first year after leaving school, rather than having to defer their studies to work to gain their independence.

These proposed changes will improve access to tertiary education for more students from rural and remote areas; a demographic who are under represented due to logistics and disadvantage by their location. ICPA Qld Inc believe that all children should be able to reach their full potential no matter where they reside or their socio-economic status.

Well educated children from small rural and remote communities are essential to the continuing vitality of these small towns. These students may be the professionals and leaders of the future who provide essential services and contribute to the wellbeing of their community. It is paramount that they be able to access a tertiary education in order to gain what is needed to bring their knowledge back and be true citizens in their communities.

ICPA Qld Inc implore you to look favourably on the proposed changes to the legislation, including the removal of the Family Asset Test and Family Actual Means Test and the simplifying of the Parent Income Test, so that many more of Australia's regional and remote students who have the ability, motivation and ambition to succeed are able to pursue their goals.

Yours sincerely

 Kate Twist  
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