

Tuesday 4th August, 2009

To Whom It May Concern,

I write in relation to the Senate Inquiry into Rural and Regional Access to Secondary and Tertiary Education Opportunities.

I am the parent of a student who has taken a deferral year this year, in order to earn enough money to gain independence status and therefore be eligible to receive Youth Allowance next year, when he is due to begin his studies. He has taken this deferral year in good faith and finds now, that with the proposed changes in legislation, that he is unlikely to be eligible.

This will put a huge burden on this family, as we expect it will cost approx. \$20,000 per year for living expenses alone, for each of the 3 years of his degree study!

It seems that the government does not understand the cost involved for a student from a regional area, forced to relocate, in order to pursue their chosen course. The pathways that they were advised to take by teachers and career officers in Year 12 (2008), have become virtually useless.

I find it hard to believe that the Federal Government has made these proposed changes in the best interest of regional students as so many will be seriously disadvantaged!

To my knowledge, there are no universities that will accept a 2-year deferment. My son's certainly won't, so he is potentially caught in a very difficult financial situation.

If this legislation should go through, there will be a huge number of regional students unable to follow their plans of university study and therefore regional communities will suffer in the long run. With government support for students, regional communities will have the chance to prosper when these students return.

I implore you, as our voted government NOT to bring this new legislation into reality. My son needs a fair go.

Yours sincerely,

