

It is disconcerting that changes in policy on Youth allowance will affect the ability of country families to support their children; particularly students currently in their gap year who are expecting to qualify for Youth Allowance next year.

Already they are faced with high rental charges, and parents have to heavily subsidise their children's living costs. Many country parents will be unable to meet these costs without the subsidy. Many students will need to defer their studies further or abandon their ambitions altogether. These changes will effectively discourage regional students from higher education.

Many Country students are already disadvantaged in their education, having to travel long distances by bus each day or find board in larger towns away from their family to complete year 12 and TEE. They need Youth Allowance to support themselves while furthering their studies.

It is essential that they be given extra help to take advantage of the opportunities that city students enjoy.

Stephen & Mary Rice