

5th August 2009

To the Rural and Regional access to Secondary and Tertiary Education Opportunities Committee,

My name is Ben Newell and I am currently completing Year 12 in Mount Gambier in the South-East of South Australia. The proposed changes to the Youth Allowance scheme would create a new poverty trap for those wishing to further their education in tertiary institutions. This change is an unfair change for it discriminates against rural and regional students. Australia, I believe should encourage every able person to complete tertiary education, with all the assistance they need to fulfil this goal. The Government is misguided to attempt to save money by punishing rural, regional and middle class families, is actually placing a new burden on future generations to find those qualified Australians which will be needed to fill the careers of the future.

The proposed changes outlined for a young person to be considered independent of their parents is that they must work 30 hours for 18 months within the past two years and during a recession this would be exceedingly difficult for many young people to attain.

I urge the committee to reject the changes to the Youth Allowance and instead aim to making it more available to more young people. It is essential for young students to receive all the assistance they can get when attending university.

Yours sincerely,

Ben Newell