

Luke Scully

5 August 2009

The Secretary
Senate Rural & Regional Affairs & Transport References Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Sir/Madam

Rural and Regional Access to Secondary and Tertiary Education Opportunities

I write in relation to the above matter which was referred to the Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee for inquiry and report by 29 October 2009.

My decision to make a submission stems from the concerns I have about the proposed changes to the Youth Allowance laws. These changes will have a severe impact on many Rural and Regional students, including myself.

The current changes proposed by the Government will, if passed without amendments, cause a significant number of Rural and Regional students to miss out on the opportunity to study at tertiary level.

I completed my HSC in 2008 and elected to defer university study as I could not afford to commence university in 2009. By working for a year I proposed to save for university and satisfy the youth allowance criteria for an independent student.

Like many students from regional and rural areas my parents are not in a position to support me financially at university. Equally the course of study that I wish to pursue is not available at a regional university. These facts require that I attain independent student status prior to commencing study.

The changes proposed to Youth Allowance threaten these plans and would require me, and many other potential university students, to work for a minimum of an additional six months (which in practice would mean another year), and which is something not provided for in my deferral application.

Therefore, I urge the Committee to oppose these changes and to recommend that the Parliament reject them because of the disadvantage they would bring to students from regional and rural areas.

Thank you for the opportunity to bring my concerns to the attention of the Senators.

Yours sincerely

Luke Scully