

The Committee Secretary,

Im writing to you about the governments intended changes regarding the Independent Student Changes to Youth Allowance Payments.

My son lives in Parkes and completed the HSC at Red Bend Catholic College, Forbes in 2008, and is now working this year (2009) whilst deferring his University place for 12 months to become a independent adult. This will enable him to earn the amount needed to access the above payment.

With the intended changes the government is talking about we are extremely worried how this will affect the tertiary opportunities for my son as this is discriminating against country kids who are supposed to endure 30 hours minimum work per week for 18 months prior to being eligible for this payment. As you can only defer your uni position for one year, my son will have to relocate from home, resign from his employment and move from Parkes to Newcastle (6 hour drive). He would then have to obtain employment whilst attending Newcastle University full-time. How is this physically & mentally possible?

My son has been working since Dec 2008 to fulfill the current requirement (earning \$18000 in 18 months prior to attending Uni), these new changes will extremely jeopardise his already planned future.

I hope this email can help identify to the "powers that be" that these proposed changes would severely discriminate not only my son but the 2008 graduating students that are already adhering to Government policy undertaking a gap year of work under the proviso that they would be eligible for this payment.

I look forward to hearing from you regarding this matter.

Thanking You

Leone Stevenson