

## **Submission to the Senate regarding the Social Security Amendment (Income support for Regional Students) Bill 2010**

I wish to voice my concerns over the above matter.

We are from Mt Gambier and are five hours drive from a capital city, yet we are considered to be living in a regional area and our children are unable to qualify for Independent Youth Allowance, even though most of them have to move from Mt Gambier to attend University. If my family was to move five minute away in almost any direction, they would qualify for Independent Youth Allowance as almost anywhere outside the city limits of Mt Gambier is classified as Outer Regional.

We have three teenage daughters, with our eldest having to move away to study teaching, as she cannot study teaching in Mt Gambier. Unfortunately, she is unable to qualify for Independent Youth Allowance even though she has to move away from home. Our children who have to move away from home to study face many difficult problems. The first problem being the financial pressure that is placed on the students and their families. The second problem is the issues encountered by them having to move away from home and away from the family support they need at this time in their lives. The third problem is the additional factor of finding new employment in another city.

My other two daughters will have to move away to study also, as their courses are not offered in Mt Gambier. My second daughter will start University in 2012 and my third daughter in 2014. Our family income will enable us to qualify for some Dependent Youth Allowance, but I am not sure how we will manage this financially. If our children cannot qualify for Independent Youth Allowance, it is going to be extremely difficult. We may have to downgrade our home and use some of those funds to support them, or even move away ourselves so we are not paying for their accommodation, but that then creates additional problems with relocating and finding new jobs for my husband and myself.

**I urge everyone involved to do what they can to proceed with this Bill so all regional students can access university studies, not just those that can afford it.**