

Submission regarding:

I am writing this submission from the point of view as:

A parent whose daughters have been and will be affected by existing government legislation AND

A Careers Adviser in a co-educational high school in regional NSW

As a parent

My elder daughter is a 2008 HSC graduate who took a gap year in 2009 and has just completed her first year at Macquarie University, over 400km from home.

During her gap year, she worked for five different employers to earn the required amount of money to become eligible for IYA. The amended legislation has seen her receive this but she did not receive the Relocation Scholarship.

A major anomaly is that any student who qualifies for IYA and moves to commence university studies in February before receiving the IYA in May of the same year does not receive the Relocation Scholarship of up to \$4000. Centrelink say that as she has already moved, she is not eligible. This is despite facing major costs in moving to Sydney to start university.

Her accommodation costs this year have been over \$15,000 at her university's residential college as we have no family in Sydney for her to stay with and she is the only student from her school to go there. Over the three years of her course this will be close to \$50,000. If we lived in Sydney or a regional centre with a university that offered the course she wished to do, we would not have this cost.

My younger daughter will sit the HSC in 2011. She is also looking at going to a university in Sydney for her desired course. She will also need accommodation for the duration of her course.

However due to the existing legislation she will be needing to take 18 months to 2 years to work before going to university in 2014 to qualify for IYA as we cannot afford another \$50,000 worth of accommodation and other costs. If we had not moved from Stirling Road in Moore Creek into Tamworth ten years ago, a distance of 15 km, she would have been regarded as Outer Regional and not Inner Regional despite attending the same high school and seeking work in the same town. She would have earned the required amount and not faced deferring for more than a year.

This is going to greatly reduce her university options. Currently only seven (7) universities will allow HSC students to defer an offer of a place for 18 months or more. Her desired university only allows deferment for one year.

As a Careers Adviser

My school has approximately 100 Year 12 students, many of whom seek a university education and are subject to the unjust Inner/Outer Regional area restrictions which affect

students applying for Independent Youth Allowance (IYA) to help finance their tertiary studies.

Quite a few students and their parents say that because of the family circumstances, it will be incredibly difficult for the student to qualify for IYA with the new work requirements of 30 hours a week for 18 months because of where they live. In Tamworth there are 7 high schools each with students seeking to qualify for IYA competing for jobs with those seeking full time permanent employment. Simply put, many will not meet the IYA criteria due to the lack of available jobs. It is not possible for all the graduating HSC students from all the high schools in Tamworth to find employment for 30 hours a week for over 18 months.

Unjustness of Inner/Outer Regional Classifications and the ASGC Remote Area Index
The existing legislation makes arbitrary decisions of the eligibility requirements of students seeking to gain Independent Youth Allowance depending on their home address. This alone determines whether students are required to work 15 hours a week over two years or earn \$19,532 over 18 months or the new requirement of working 30 hours a week for 18 months.

The ASGC Remote Area Index is being used to judge whether you are "Inner Regional" or "Outer Regional" and of the students who have previously qualified for Independent Youth Allowance 29% are regional students:

- 70 percent lived in major cities;
- 21 percent lived in inner regional Australia;
- 8 percent lived in outer regional Australia; and
- the remaining 1 percent lived in remote or very remote Australia

ASGC-RA is a geographic classification system that was developed in 2001 by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), as a statistical geography structure which allows quantitative comparisons between 'city' and 'country' Australia. It is used primarily for medical/health statistics. The purpose of the structure is to classify data from census Collection Districts (CDs) into broad geographical categories, called Remoteness Areas (RAs). The RA categories are defined in terms of 'remoteness' - the physical distance of a location from the nearest Urban Centre (access to goods and services) based on population size.. It was updated on 8 November 2007 after the 2006 census

This was NOT designed to affect the eligibility of potential university students to help finance their studies. It has been hijacked by the Federal Labor Government for the purpose of making illogical lines on maps for IYA eligibility.

Some of the anomalies due to the lines of the RA categories include:

Attunga with a population of 630 is 20 km from Tamworth. If you live in the village on the left hand side of Manilla Road you are Outer Regional and if you live on the right hand side (eg Garthowen Road) you are classified as Inner Regional.

Werris Creek has 1200 people and is 50km from Tamworth. Yet according the Labor

Government's classification for ascertaining which workforce participation criteria apply, the young people of Werris Creek have the same opportunities to find 30 hours work per week for 18 months – just like students in Tamworth, Bendigo, Albury and Gosford.

Students from an 'outer regional area', such as some parts of the area near Tamworth called Moore Creek and Attunga will stay on the former, less onerous rules, only needing to work 15 hours a week over two years or earn \$19,532 over 18 months. In some cases, students living in Moonbi Gap Road in Moore Creek are regarded as both Inner and Outer Regional depending on which end of the road they live at. There is a family who are regarded as being Inner Regional who can see from their house another home whose children are regarded as Outer Regional with vastly different effects on the students in those families seeking a university education and who parental income requires them to apply for IYA.

places quite close to Armidale, such as Invergowrie and Saumarez Ponds, are deemed to be 'outer regional'

Prime Minister Gillard's vision for education

Julia Gillard told Laurie Oakes on the Today Show on Sunday 15th August of her vision for Australia saying:

"I've got a vision for this nation's future. It's about prosperity and it's about making sure every child gets a great education". This is a quote from the transcript.

The reality is that she has made sure thousands of rural and regional students cannot afford to go to university but if they wish to do so, they will have to put aside 18-24 months of their life to qualify for Independent Youth Allowance – assuming they can find the employment to qualify. Also, as mentioned previously, their choice of university is restricted.

This is because in 2011, only 7 out of 18 universities in NSW/ACT will allow students to defer for the 18 months needed to become eligible for independent youth allowance.

(From: UAC 2011 book page 102-103)

According to the 2006 Census, 24.1% of families live in Inner Regional Areas and are potentially affected. This means that there are approximately 22,000 students and their families in Inner Regional Areas who are unjustly and adversely affected and many are potential voters.

Please do not allow the Labor Government's policy on IYA to continue. It is denying us future teachers, nurses, engineers, speech pathologists, and surveyors in rural and regional Australia as students who come from rural and regional areas are more likely to return there to work after their university studies.

It was intended to reduce a small number of families unfairly claiming IYA but has ultimately affected many more innocent rural and regional families who had dreams of a university education for their children.

I ask the Committee to take away the injustices and inequities facing students from all areas who will rely on gaining the Independent Youth Allowance to be able to enable

them to pursue a tertiary education and who need to move away from home to pursue university studies whether they move from Sydney to Armidale or from Tamworth to Sydney or Wollongong etc.

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Tamworth.