

Delia Jenkins

Sunday 5th December, 2010

RE: Senate Inquiry – Independent Youth Allowance.

Dear Senators,

I would like to congratulate the Senate on revisiting the Independent Youth Allowance issue, as it is clear to me that by having this enquiry you are acknowledging that fact that not all is right with how Independent Youth Allowance currently stands.

I am a parent of three wonderful young Australians. My eldest is just completing his second year as a primary school teacher (Primary Teaching at ACU – Ballarat), my second has just completed her degree in Exercise and Sport Science (University of Ballarat) and my youngest has just accepted his deferred place into PE and Outdoor Education (Latrobe University – Bendigo).

All three of my children have deferred their place at University for one year to be able to qualify for Independent Youth Allowance (IYA), my first two were successful in gaining IYA and with a small part-time job and living away from home allowance, were able to manage their finances with support from home for text books, fees, clothing etc.

My third child however is in danger of not qualifying, simply because of the change to the rules about where we live. My sons chosen career path is Community Outdoor Education and there are only two Universities in Victoria where he can achieve this goal, Monash University (Frankston, Melbourne – 4 hours away) and La Trobe University (Bendigo - 3.5 hours away).

During his gap year, my son has worked full-time to complete a traineeship and had a part-time job to earn the required income to secure IYA however, unless the 'home address' requirements are changed back to allow students in regional areas access to IYA he won't qualify.

This is going to put a huge stress on our family and we will probably have to borrow money to help him realise his goal.

Educating our future has to be a priority for any country and by discriminating against regional students and families by not allowing them access to an education based on where they live, seems to me to be very archaic and unjust stance to be taking. You are inferring that only students that live in metropolitan areas and those with enough money to pay their own way have a right to the education of their choice.

As citizens of our great nation and educated members of our society, I am confident that you will see the injustice being done to students in regional Australia and will right the wrong by reinstating the original qualifying rules, allowing students in Regional Australia access to Independent Youth Allowance and the education they deserve.

Yours sincerely

Delia Jenkins