

Dear Sir/Madam

**Senate Inquiry into the Private Member's Bill regarding Independent Youth Allowance**

We are the parents of a child who has been adversely affected by the changes to the Independent Youth Allowance. Our daughter will be in Year 12 next year and will be completing her TEE studies with a view to relocating to Perth for further study at University.

Changes to the eligibility criteria to receive the Independent Youth Allowance have meant that our address is classed as "Inner Regional", even though the University offering the subjects my daughter wishes to study to pursue her chosen career is approximately 300km (approx 3 hours drive) away! The other irony is that if we lived just 7 kms further away in Yallingup or Eagle Bay (the most affluent suburbs in the area), we would be considered "Outer Regional" and she would be eligible! Also, how the "average" hours for earnings is calculated, it would be virtually impossible for my daughter to meet the criteria. Living in a country town, it would be extremely hard to find work that sustains these hours over this period of time. If legislation is not introduced to rectify this inequity, it will place an extreme financial burden on our family.

Our daughter works hard at her studies and is achieving excellent results. She is prepared to work for 12 months of her gap year to earn the required amount under the former workplace participation criteria, as her older Sister has done. All we are asking for is that this inequity be rectified so that our daughter can pursue her dream of studying at university as other regional students are able to do.

Yours sincerely

Peter & Kathy Hughes