

To Whom it May Concern

Due to the changes your government introduced in July 2010 regarding youth allowance, not only will it make it harder or possibly impossible for me as an individual to qualify but also for the greater part of my school mates that I have grown up with.

I live in the South West of Western Australia, which under your new system is classed as "inner regional", even though we are located over three hundred km's from the tertiary institution I am enrolled at, resulting in me moving away from home to study. Including the amplified cost of living away from home, regional students also face significantly increased costs associated with relocating for study.

To qualify for Independent Youth Allowance because I am currently residing in an "inner regional" area, I must now work an average of 30 hours per week for a minimum of 18 months out of two years. School leavers that are currently undertaking a gap year are not able to take just one year, but instead are forced to take 18 months or two years to qualify for independent youth allowance.

The new legislation introduced in July does not take into account the seasonal employment that a country town, such as the one I live in, survives on. This adds to the difficulty of finding steady, all year round employment.

Under the proposed legislation of Nola Marino, meeting the conditions and being eligible to receive youth allowance is made more achievable for regional students who are currently classified as "inner regional". I believe that if more students are able to receive youth allowance without having to take up to two years gap, this will increase the number of regional students who undertake higher tertiary studies.

Yours Sincerely

Jamie Williamson
From Yoongarillup, 6280