

Ref No 17.85.1/7 (OCR3)

6 December 2010

Committee Secretary
Senate Education, Employment and
Workplace Relations Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

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Branch Office

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Dear Sir/Madam

Re : Review of the Geographic Classification of Independence Criteria for Youth Allowance

As you are aware, Mount Gambier, the second largest City in South Australia, some 450kms from Adelaide, is presently classified as "Inner Regional" under the existing independence criteria for Youth Allowance. The District Council of Grant adjoins the City of Mount Gambier Council.

It is recognised that the parental income test arrangements have been increased which will benefit some students. However, it is understood that where the parents combined income is more than \$150,000 and a student lives in Mount Gambier, they will not be eligible for the Youth Allowance under the independence criteria until they have worked for an average of 30 hours per week in one or more jobs for at least 18 months in a two year period.

It is understood that students who live outside Mount Gambier are classified as "Outer Regional" and therefore where their parents combined income is more than \$150,000, would need to work only 15 hours per week in one or more jobs for at least 18 months to be eligible for Youth Allowance under the independence criteria. You only need to ask the students themselves to understand their plight. Accordingly, Council strongly considers that a review of the geographic classification of cities and towns classified as "Inner Regional" should be undertaken urgently to rectify this anomaly.

Yours sincerely



Russell J Peate
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER