

Dear Senators,

My 18 year old son worked himself into the ground at a country high school in 2009 to get an ATAR of 94. With that mark, he just scraped into the uni course of his dreams, industry leader, UTS Sydney. The new rules (making outskirts of Armidale "inner regional") make his only options for uni the much lower quality offerings at UNE. After one year of paying his way in SYdney, about \$600 per week just for food, transport and accommodation our family cannot support him any longer. Even if he dropped his dreams for another two years, to earn money to get youth allowance, your rules would force him to quit the uni where he has finished (with distinctions) his first year of study and consign himself to another course, at a third rate university. Why? Because he happens to be a RURAL Australian, not an urban one. No wonder Labor is getting the reputation for dividing the nation!!! Here is a young man who is prepared to work, has proved himself able and talented, wants to get on with his studies and make a contribution but because his family are short of funds (due to 10 years of drought in rural Australia which has ripped guts out of our farm business), and rural, he has very little chance of actually keeping the place he has earned at an Australian university. Well done Canberra!!

sincerely  
Margaret O'Connor