

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

To the Members of the above Committee may we submit our strong protest against the changes and further proposed changes to the Independent Youth Allowance.

We are grandparents - on behalf of our family members and many others with whom we have and are in contact in this regard, we wish to submit that these changes will be very unfair to our young people.

Especially to the Youth in our area the South West of Western Australia (but on behalf of all Youth outside the major Metro areas) it will make it very hard to attain the conditions you intend to bring into being.

It is already hard for the youth to obtain employment for the gap year and attain the required amount.

In disallowing them to use that system they will have to take two years off and during that time it would be highly likely that they will lose interest in their intended course they were seeking to follow or may be lead into other employment or even lose interest in further education completely.

In our family case, our grandson is endeavouring to follow a Medical path for which we were all very grateful as our area, the South West, is very short of medical staff in all areas.

You must appreciate that they are required leave their parents home and have to find housing for their period of study along with a way of getting to their place of study, They are unable to travel to and from their normal home to their regular place of study due to long distances unlike their metropolitan counterparts who are able to use public transport or their own. and in many cases are able to remain living in their family home or maybe live with a relative closer to the Uni/College.

Overall, we just feel that it is very unfair to penalise our young people at the commencement of their higher study.

There is also the point that in the previous system it gave "Country" (or anyone outside the Capital cities) youth a year plus to become a part of the adult community, form relationships with other youth outside their school friends, obtaining work and mixing in social activities, remembering that they will be facing leaving their family home, learning to look after themselves away from home and adjusting to a large city - where you have youth from the outer country areas. These are all areas in their lives that they will have big changes in making the adjustments necessary to fit in with a new life of study and living away from their immediate family and home.

The "gap period" prior to the commencement of their study also gave them time to prepare to leave home - i.e. finding accommodation, purchasing items needed to take with them the next year, enrolling and preparing to commence study etc. All these things can be spread over a longer period during that gap year. Also - if they have to go straight from their TEE year (year 12) it is a very busy time around Christmas etc for their parents to be helping them. This is if they have to go straight into study and are unable to have the year off.

I hope I am explaining how we feel but mainly, it is just very unfair to change the system as we feel it was a good way to prepare the youth (having to join the adult workforce is a growing experience in itself) giving them time to move their place of abode and study and allowing them to become independent young people.

Please seriously consider leaving the old way as it was!

What about the old system of Bonding - when their study is complete they are required to work in their field for a certain period of time at a place and time set down by the "bonding" authority - - in conjunction with the administrators of the type of qualification they have obtained/

Thanks for reading my petition.

Regards,
Don and Jeanette Cross.
42 Cranbrook Way Bunbury 6230