

29 November 2010

EWAR

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to you to ask you to please approve Senator Nash's Social Security Amendment Bill re Youth Allowance.

The current system in place is so unfair to regional students. As we live in an "inner regional" area in Young our daughter is not entitled to any youth allowance payments at all. We do not qualify for the dependent youth allowance. Our daughter chose to have a gap year. She has been working for 30 hours a week and will have completed 15 months work by the end of February. But under the current rules for independent youth allowance, she will then be required to continue working for a further 3 months when she starts university in February, to make up a total of 18 months worked. How is she supposed to work 30 hours a week and attend university I ask you? I would not put this kind of pressure on any person. She will be forced to have another semester or year off uni to complete the 3 more months of work if she wants to get any help from the government to move to the city and attend university.

The cost of moving to the city to attend university is \$20,000 a year or more. We have 2 other children at school to support and hope to give them too, the opportunity to attend university.

"Outer regional" students get a start up payment to help with the cost of moving. They also get rent assistance because they have to move! We have to move too, but we get nothing!!!!

We only live 5 minutes from town in Young. But friends of ours live 5 minutes from town on another road and they are classed as "outer regional" and will receive the youth allowance. Their kids only have to earn \$20,000 in an 18 month period. Our children attend the same school, the same sporting clubs and are a part of the same community. How is this fair? We both will have a huge outlay to move our children to university in the city, but only one family gets help from the Government and not the other. Why, just because they are on the other line of a map?

Shouldn't we be encouraging the youth of regional towns to further their education? After all its usually the children that have grown up in the country that are the ones that return to the country later in life to work. Aren't we screaming out for more doctors and mental health workers in the country??

This is not acceptable for Australia. This is unfair and greatly disadvantages regional students! All regional students should be able to claim independence by working for 12 months.

Please pass this Bill and make it fair for all children in regional areas.

