

**TO THE HONORABLE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF
THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTITIVES**

This petition of Launceston citizens draws the attention of the House to the proposed amendments to the Youth Allowance and Independent status requirement as outlined in the *Universities, Innovation and Education Revolution (UIER), May 2009*.

1. 18 months is an **unreasonable** time frame for students, as universities do not allow deferment beyond 12 months
2. In this economic climate 30 hours a week is an **unreasonable expectation**.
3. **Rural and regional students** are heavily disadvantaged, as many if not all need to relocate to attend university
4. Education should be about merit, not financial situation
5. The **Rudd Government** was elected on promises about support for “**working families**” and an “**education revolution**”, these amendments **undermine** both promises
6. As 18 year olds are adults in every legal sense (tried as adults, able to vote, pay tax etc...), to tie one adult to another adult’s income is **unjust**.
7. We believe that in these times, **our best hope for the future** is in the education of our youth
8. These amendments reflect **short term thinking**.
9. These laws undermine the “**equality of opportunity**,” referred to in the Rudd Governments *UIER* document.
10. **Present and future year** 12 students will be equally **disadvantaged and excluded** from accessing tertiary education, the pathway to enhanced life chances.

We therefore ask the House to withdraw this proposal as we feel it disadvantages and disenfranchises Australia’s youth, especially those from rural and regional areas, as well as those in working families who are classed as “middle income earners” (above \$42,559 p.a.).