

**TO THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF
THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

This petition of families; students and friends of those who will be affected by the Government's proposal to change Centrelink's criteria for Independent Status Allowance to University students.

Draws to the attention of the House: the Government's proposed budget to discontinue paying Centrelink's Independent Status Allowances to tertiary students who have earned \$18,500 between the time of finishing high school and commencing university.

We therefore ask the House to consider the pleas particularly of those students who must leave their family homes to commence tertiary study at a University away from their home town; particularly those students currently working a gap year to earn the \$18,500 criteria for payments of \$370 per fortnight. These kids should not be deprived the opportunities their city cousins take for granted; in acquiring a tertiary education. Your new proposal of 18 months' full time work will equate to 24 months to comply with uni starting semesters; will possibly discourage kids starting uni at 19/20 years of age with young High School Graduates. Furthermore, regarding your intention that these kids work 18 months (i.e. will actually be 2 years); where do you propose that each year's High School Graduates will work when the previous year's High School graduates are holding the positions for an extra 12 months?

You are willing to invest more in overseas students studying at our universities. What can there be to gain from this; when surely the majority take the expertise and knowledge gained here; back to their home countries?