

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

This petition of the National Union of Students (NUS), on behalf of the students studying higher education in Australia draws to the attention of the House:

Some shortcomings of the Social Security Act; the current level of student income support is inadequate as it falls well below the Henderson poverty line. Students living on income support are unable to cover their basic living essentials. Students are at university they should be able to focus on their studies and not have to do excessively long hours of paid work to escape the poverty trap. Furthermore many poor students are deemed ineligible to receive the student income support at all due to the current eligibility criteria and hence are unable to attend university.

We request that the House of Representatives:

Raise the level of student income support payments to the Henderson poverty line;

Lower the age of independence from 22 to 18;

Retain Start Up Scholarships;

Increase the parental means test threshold to the level of Average Weekly Earnings;

Reintroduce Centrelink counters on university campuses.