



NEW INQUIRY

The Higher Education Legislation Amendment (Student Services and Amenities) Bill 2010

The Committee has been asked by the House of Representatives Selection Committee to inquire into the proposed legislation called The Higher Education Legislation Amendment (Student Services and Amenities) Bill 2010. The inquiry will examine the possible implications and consequences of the Bill.

The explanatory outline of the proposed Bill is as follows:

The Bill will amend the Higher Education Support Act 2003 to allow higher education providers to charge a compulsory student services and amenities fee. The fee will be capped at \$250 per student per annum (indexed to \$254 in 2011, and thereafter indexed annually). The Bill provides for the establishment of a new component of the Higher Education Loan Program (HELP): Services and Amenities-(HELP), which will provide eligible students with an option to access a loan for the fee through SA_HELP if they wish. In addition, the Bill will require higher education providers that receive funding for student places under the Commonwealth Grant Scheme, to comply with new benchmarks from 2011 onwards, for the provision of information on and access to basic student support services of a non-academic nature; and requirements to ensure the provision of student representation and advocacy.

“The House Standing Committee on Education and Employment includes both government and opposition members from across Australia. We will be working co-operatively to examine the possible consequences of this Bill to ensure that the best possible outcomes are made possible for higher education students,” Committee Chair, Amanda Rishworth said.

“The Student Services and Amenities Bill is one of the first bills referred to a House of Representatives Committee under new arrangements of the 43rd Parliament. The Committee will seek to report back to the House in time to allow this important measure to be considered by Parliament this year,” Ms Rishworth said.

Interested persons and organisations are invited to make written submissions to the inquiry by **4th November 2010**.

Further details on the inquiry, including the terms of reference, background documents, membership of the Committee and advice on making submissions can be obtained on the Committee’s website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/ee> or by contacting the committee secretariat on (02) 6277 4573 or emailing ee.reps@aph.gov.au.

For media comment, please contact the Committee Chair, Ms Amanda Rishworth MP, (08) 8186 2588
For background information, contact the Committee Secretary, Glenn Worthington on (02) 6277 4579