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Senate Committee: Education and Employment

QUESTION ON NOTICE
Supplementary Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016

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Outcome: Higher Education Research and International

Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ15-000713

Senator Simms, Robert asked on 21 October 2015, Proof Hansard page 84

VET FEE-HELP (25 per cent loan fee)

Question
Senator SIMMS: All right; I will move on. I have some questions around the deregulation model. I understand there has been a suggestion around the inclusion of a loan fee with all HECS-HELP loans, similar to the ones already in place for the VET FEE-HELP loans. Has the department looked at what effect a 25 per cent, or somewhere thereabouts, loan fee on all HECS-HELP loans would have on public revenue?
Ms Paul: The removal of the 25 per cent charge on VET FEE-HELP and FEE-HELP is part of the government's reform package for higher education, because students going to university and paying HECS-HELP do not face that 25 per cent charge. I think what you are referring to is probably a suggestion by someone in the sector to do that—
Senator SIMMS: Yes. That is right—Andrew Norton.
Ms Paul: where everybody would be on a different rate or whatever. We have already given evidence in the higher ed section which goes to the fact that, yes, we provide advice; we have not done particular modelling on alternative options but, yes, we provide advice broadly. So I would say to you, in that regard: the evidence is already on the record from the day earlier.
Senator SIMMS: That is fine. I am sorry if I missed that.
Ms Paul: That is all right; it was probably under 2.4—higher ed loan program.
Senator SIMMS: Just to clarify—and I can go back and look at the Hansard around that too—has the department been asked by the minister to look into that in any detail?
Ms Paul: Not that I am aware of. I could take that on notice. I think we were pretty clear, probably, on what we have been doing, and so on, under 2.4.

Answer

The Minister has not requested advice on this specific matter.