

Chair:
Professor Gerard Sutton
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Our Ref: I-01-036

22 August 2007

Mr John Carter
Secretary
Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education Committee
Department of the Senate
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600
eet.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Mr Carter

Committee Inquiry into the Higher Education Endowment Fund Bill 2007

Universities Australia welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the Senate Committee for Employment, Workplace Relations and Education Inquiry into the provisions of the *Higher Education Endowment Fund Bill 2007* (the HEEF Bill).

Universities Australia was formed out of the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee on 22 May 2007 as the peak industry body promoting the value and widespread benefits of higher education and ensuring Australia's continued prosperity and reputation as a highly innovative and educated nation.

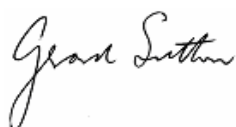
It is understood that the Committee will report by 5 September 2007 and in doing so will have taken into consideration all policy on which the legislation is based and any anticipated consequences.

The Higher Education Endowment Fund (HEEF), once operable, will signify a considerable investment in the sector and thereby in Australia's future. Universities Australia supports the Government's commitment to establish the HEEF and the spirit and intent of this legislation.

Universities Australia notes that the legislation does not set out in any detail the rules by which funding is to be distributed under the HEEF. However, it is understood that the Department of Education, Science and Training is developing a set of Guidelines and Administrative Information which will outline those details. Given the significance of the HEEF to the higher education sector, it will be important that this associated information reflects the highest possible levels of transparency and fairness.

Universities Australia would be pleased to provide further evidence to the Committee if required. Please do not hesitate to contact me on 02 4221 3932 if you wish to discuss the matter further.

Yours sincerely



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Chair

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