

Submission

to

Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education
References Committee

Inquiry into student income support

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Organisation:

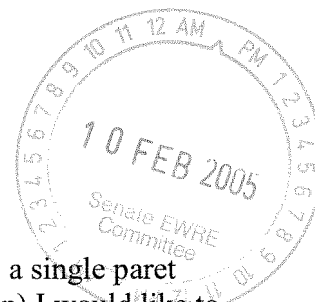
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From: Jodie Parsons [<mailto:jodie.parsons1@students.vu.edu.au>]
Sent: Wednesday, 9 February 2005 4:15 PM
To: EET, Committee (SEN)
Subject: One or two thought on senate inquiry into student income



Hi All

I just recently recieved a flyer from Senator Natasha Stott Despoja. The flyer asked for views or experiences regarding student income. As a single parent studying fulltime (and the president of Victoria university student union) I would like to bring to the attention of the committee hardships which many single parents face while studying.

Many single parents have no spare time to hold down part time jobs and therefore relie solely on Government assistance. While they eligible for PES (~\$63.00 a fortnight) for find this does not even cover the cost of transport costs. The ~\$200 single parent recieve at the beginning of the year to help with education costs is insulting. As a science student I can assure you this does not even purchase 2 text books.

Single parents are an under represented group, we dont have time to make noises, many are struggling to turn up to exams etc.. let alone organise Government protest. Most reports into the incomes of students assume students do not have families to support. From my own experience at university I have meet many young single mothers like myself who have found it difficult to survive on Government assistance, some have even given up their students. Which as you are aware may lead to further reliance on Government support.

Many single parents studying miss out on oppurtunities to attend their childrens classrooms and help out because of study committements. They are often tired and over worked yet perform just aswell if not better than students who do not have parenting responsibilities.

A whole society benefits when single parents are able to move from Government assistance to being financially independant.

As a single parent I do not want sympathy I just would like the Government etc.. to acknowledge that we are capable memebers of society. We do have something to contribute and as such provisions for our eduaction must not be over looked.

Regards
Jodie Parsons
President
VUSU Inc