



The Committee Secretary  
Senate Standing Committee on Rural and  
Regional Affairs and Transport  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House.  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Sir,

The recent Budget proposals to change the Independent Youth Allowance will greatly affect country students especially those who are currently taking a gap year.

Most country students have no option but to leave home to pursue their chosen University course, there by increasing the financial burden.

Whilst some of the proposals may assist lower income families others are confusing, eg over 4 years the new Relocation Scholarship is 40% of the old Commonwealth Accommodation Scholarship. Also, all the proposed Scholarships are linked, if you don't qualify for income support you get nothing.

My major concern is the cynical requirement of working 30hrs a week for 18months to qualify as independent. After two years of full time work, few students would be motivated enough to take up University.

We have three children who have all taken a gap year and have greatly benefited from the experience. Our eldest has qualified in Law/Commerce, our second has two years to go in Adelaide and although they could have qualified as independent we have managed to support them so far. Ironically, as our circumstances change, we had planned for our youngest to qualify for Abstudy and other associated scholarships to reduce the financial burden next year. Many of her friends have likewise been caught out with the proposed changes and are having to re assess their plans.

If this measure is aimed at those students on Income support who still living at home then surely a concession could be made for students who do live 100kms or more away.

We note that many of the proposals will be introduced over a few years, why not this one?

We would ask the Committee to seriously consider the proposals and the effect they will have on our country students now and in the future.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Clare and Andrew Marriot-Smith".

Clare and Andrew Marriot-Smith