

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

12/7/09

Dear Sir/Madame

I am writing in regard to the proposed changes to eligibility to Youth Allowance as proposed in the last budget.

We are a family with 3 children of school or university age and we live in rural Victoria in Briagolong, 3 hours from Melbourne. Our children have all attended Maffra Secondary College.

All 3 children have had aspirations to study further and to attend university. Our oldest 2 children have taken a GAP year after Year 12 and have had to move away from home to find work for 12 months to qualify for Youth Allowance. This has been a difficult year for them but one which was worthwhile in that they both managed to earn enough money to successfully qualify.

Our oldest son has graduated from university and our daughter is working hard to gain her degree.

Our youngest son is studying Year 12 this year. He also wants to attend university and we were hoping that he would also be able to qualify for youth allowance in the same way as the older 2. The proposed changes will make this impossible for him. There is no work locally for him to be able to work 30 hours per week and the universities will not allow him to defer his course long enough to fulfil the requirement of working for 18 months.

The proposed changes are discriminatory towards rural families and we object to these proposals in the strongest possible terms.

Yours sincerely,

*J M Duncan*

Jacinta Duncan.

