

The Committee Secretary,
Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport
Parliament House

Dear Sir or Madam:

My son is one of the many students who has taken a Gap Year and now finds that his planning for further education has gone out the window.

How can government bodies change rules and regulations as important as this without giving due notice to those who it will most affect.

The government needs to take action now or there will be more professions like nursing, an aging workforce that faces major shortages. Victoria has doubled the number of University places, but only half have been taken up this last year.

It alarms me that rural students will be further disadvantaged by these new rules to qualify for independent youth allowance. For many rural students to be able to gain employment of 30 hours per week locally would be difficult, but now, extremely difficult with the current economic climate. It hardly seems worthwhile to cope with the pressure of Year 12, when young adults could leave school, work for the proposed two years, and apply for a place at University as a non year 12 student.

Currently, deferment is allowable for one year, with these new changes as far as I can find out, it is up to every individual University to make their own rules.

We are a farming family and our future is facing many uncertainties, our current income is based off farm. We would like to be able to support and encourage our son who has worked hard to obtain the place he desired at University. He has shown great determination achieving and planning to further his education, but is now seriously rethinking his position.

The uncertainty of this situation and the difficulty in finding out how the new "rules" will affect our family is placing a great strain on our family.

Yours Sincerely

Mandy Dusina

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