

Dear Secretary,

I would like to object to the proposed changes to Youth Allowance.

My son, who is currently working in his "gap year", made his choice to defer uni till 2009, understanding that the current system applied. Half way through this year, he is threatened with radical changes.

This is unfair.

If the proposed changes go ahead, regional students would be radically effected. Because most regional students need to move to study and leave home, their parents would have to spend at least another \$250 a week for living support to their child, than they would pay if the child lived at home and studied at a local uni (as many city people do).

Under the current system, living support is given to students who have proven to be independent by a fair system. The new system has criteria too difficult to meet. There are simply not enough jobs, especially in the country, for school leavers to work 30 hrs per week.

Also, many university courses do not allow students to defer for more than 12 months, so working full time for 18 moths means that many would miss out on their placement. Many students simply would not go to university.

Support for tertiary education of Australians should be a priority for the government. Cost cutting should not result in discrimination to regional students.

Please reconsider any changes.

Your sincerely,

Margaret Kernahan

---