

To- the Chairperson
Independent Youth Allowance Inquiry

I am writing to register my deep concern about the recent changes made to the Independent Youth Allowance eligibility criteria. Students who completed VCE in 2008 and deferred their studies to work and save to qualify for some income support are caught in the middle of this change. They started the year under the existing conditions and are working hard to achieve the income level. However, they will be subject to the new conditions. This has placed families and students in a very difficult situation especially when students are compelled to move away from home to continue their studies.

My son is one of these students. He has been accepted at the University of Melbourne to do a degree in Science. This course is not available in regional areas so we are forced to relocate him to Melbourne. We will not qualify for income support under the proposed changes but as we are just over the limit, we will struggle to find the required \$15-\$20,000 per annum needed to keep him in Melbourne. We have had no time to plan for this change and would have made different choices if we had known this was coming. Many, many other families are in the same position and I urge you to consider the implications for these VCE 2008 students who are caught in the midst of uncertainty for their future.

Yours Faithfully

Ms Leona Evans
DEECD