

RE: PROPOSED CHANGES TO YOUTH ALLOWANCE

Country education has disadvantaged our son it would seem, because to gain a higher standard, would require great expense to us by sending him to boarding school. Also subjects taught are not necessarily taught by the relevant subject teacher. Top education comes at a high price with children having to leave home at a young age and of course, costly to board to achieve the higher level of education.

Our son, having completed Year 12 in 2008, is now studying at TAFE, having begun his full time course in Architecture at the start of 2009.

To achieve this he has had to leave his home in the country town of Moora in Western Australia, which is about 180 kilometres north of Perth. His goal is to pursue studies to fulfil his ambition to become an Architect.

As this is a full time course, it is very difficult to find work, let alone 30 hours per week as would be required by Centrelink. It is vital to have a high percentage of study and research time.

All our son wants is to make something of his life (become an Architect) and not be a burden on society. So Government assistance for 5 years would surely be more affordable to the Government than a life moving in and, maybe, out of the Centrelink system, for who knows how many years. The tax he would pay, once fully qualified and employed would far out-weigh the Government assistance we think he should be entitled to.

It seems to us, that being responsible parents is disadvantaging our son greatly. Recently when at a Centrelink office, we were told that he would get assistance if he came from a home where he was neglected. So it seems to us that the 'system' looks after children, who come from a non-caring family, not simply from the country trying to better themselves.

In closing we are not asking for everything, just a fair go. To receive Rent Assistance, at the very least, would make a world of difference, emphasising the time frame is set by the length of time required to complete his architecture studies and for the Government he would become a 'tax payer' sooner rather than later. Please realise too the expenses associated with his studies and living away from home are astronomical, thus making this an unfair battle, being a child from the country.

Kind Regards

JULIE THOMAS