

SUBMISSION

to the

**SENATE RURAL & REGIONAL AFFAIRS &
TRANSPORT REFERENCES COMMITTEE**

**“INQUIRY INTO RURAL & REGIONAL ACCESS TO
SECONDARY & TERTIARY EDUCATION
OPPORTUNITIES”**



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About the Australian Parents Council Inc (APC)

1. The APC is a non-denominational, non-party-political federation of state wide Catholic and independent non-government school parents' organisations across Australia.
2. It was formed in 1962 primarily to safeguard the right of parents to choose non-government schools, to facilitate the exercise of this right, to promote the interests of children in non-government schools, to promote the role and advance the interests of non-government schools in the community and to achieve for all parents and children equity in access to schooling and the distribution of public funds for education.

The APC promotes and fosters a number of core principles including:

- Parents have the right to choose the type of schooling that best suits their children
- Governments are obliged to support parents' capacity to exercise their right to choice of schooling
- All students have a right to access and receive a quality education to enable them to attain their potential
- All students have the right to an equitable share of government funding for their schooling.

Comment

APC has been provided, in confidence, a final draft copy of the submission put to the Committee in respect of the current Inquiry by the Isolated Children's Parents' Association Inc (Australia) (ICPA (Aust)).

APC considers the submission provided by ICPA (Aust):

- Identifies the significant difficulties experienced by rural and remote parents in exercising their right of choice of schooling for their children and supporting their children's education aspirations
- Sets out the types of government assistance required by families living in rural and remote areas to enable them to access appropriate secondary and tertiary education within reasonable eligibility criteria
- Articulates the benefits to Australia that would flow if appropriate levels of government financial assistance were provided to support students from rural and remote areas to access a quality education to enable them to attain their potential



- Identifies the implications of the changes proposed by the Australian Government to the existing financial support regime, particularly those that relate to Youth Allowance
- Provides a compelling and merit worthy argument for the designation of particular rural and remote students, including those who don't have daily access to affordable and appropriate education, to be designated as a separate equity group.

Finally, APC does not believe that the Australian Government's legislation currently before parliament adequately addresses the issues put forward by ICPA (Aust).

The President and members of APC therefore commend to the Committee the submission made by ICPA (Aust).

Yours faithfully

Ian Dalton
Executive Director

7 August 2009