

To Whom It May Concern

We feel the proposed changes to Youth Allowance will only broaden the gap between isolated and rural students and their city based counterparts due to accessibility to educational facilities, both secondary and tertiary. City or even large town based students can have very little, if any impact, on the transition from secondary to tertiary due to local access to higher education in comparison to their rural and remote students.

Why can't the government use the postcode theory. Isolated and rural based students have postcodes that represent isolated living, therefore, anyone with that postcode is exempt from the new proposals. That seems a bit simplistic, but it could be a base to be used.

It would be impossible for our son (4th son to go through secondary schooling at a boarding school away from home due to isolation) who finishes Yr 12 in 2009 to find local work for the amount of hours being proposed. We live near a very small country town in central nsw and there would not be the work available for him. He doesn't own a car, we would be needing to find accommodation, upfront rental bond, enough money to live etc. etc. etc. We would not be able to do it financially as we would have to support him, no way would he make enough money to live off. Also, how many businesses are going to employ a student straight out of Yr 12, especially with the economic downturn at the moment. Not all universities have mid semester intakes, so it could mean some students have to wait for two years before entering uni. if at all and then it could jeopardise their place at uni.

Having to be out of school for the two year period would prevent many students from going onto further education, it is too long away from study routine.

If I understand the proposal correctly, this is just another slug for the rural and remote people of Australia who are actually the backbone of the country. With the ongoing drought this puts a terrible burden on parents of children who might desperately wish to attend university and the parents will not be able to help them. Yours sincerely

Suz Nicholls