

To Whom ever it may concern,

I have recently been informed of the changes that have been set to be made to the eligibility criteria for gaining Youth Allowance from Centrelink and it has

raised some personal alarm.

I'm currently in my third year at Flinders University where I am studying a bachelor of Speech Pathology, in which without the assistance of youth allowance, I wouldn't be. Born and bred in the Riverland after graduating from Glossop Highschool, I moved to Adelaide to undertake my chosen degree and worked tirelessly throughout the year, while also studying to ensure that in the first 18 months after finishing highschool I would earn \$18,000 to be entitled to Youth Allowance the following calendar year. Meeting these demands

was stressful enough, but with this new proposed criteria I believe you are making it impossible for students to undertake tertiary study. I was lucky enough that my parents were able to support me in my first 18 months in Adelaide, however, some of my fellow peers are not as lucky. These people have

taken a year off and remained in the Riverland to work, to ensure that they are

able to move down eventually to follow their dreams of creating a sustainable future for themselves. They have been set back in their study an entire year already based on how difficult country kids are already doing so in trying to undertake tertiary study

From these proposed new rules it seems the government is out to significantly drop the number the numbers of country children at university. It is near to impossible for new highschool grads to acquire a full time job as no employer is going to put on and train someone to do a full time job that is moving to Adelaide in the preceding 12 months. I would really like to know who thinks that anyone will be able to receive youth allowance if you make these changes. I'm just finding it very difficult to understand why the government wishes to make it so difficult for the youth to receive this. I understand that it is not only country children who are affected by this and city kids will also have

the same issues with trying to get youth allowance, however these people do not

have to move hundreds of kilometers to undertake tertiary study. Moving out of

home is a huge financial burden, especially with the price of rent, groceries and petrol. Also with the drought, I'm sure you know that country people are doing it tough as it is, imagine if they had to support their child or children

while they undertake study.

If I wasn't able to undertake something that I love and enjoy at University I don't know what I would be doing. Of course there are jobs opportunities in the Riverland, but nothing like this. I knew when I was highschool that I wanted to challenge myself at university, chose something that would be financially stable as a career, would help others in the community and also a degree that I could possibly bring back to the Riverland and use. With Speech Pathology I can and I have and although the degree has been very challenging, it's the best choice I've made.

I'm just asking that you could please think about the huge impact these changes

will have for literally thousands of bright, talented and hopeful country kids wishing to further educate themselves and ensure a bright future.

Yours Kindly,

Mel Bauer