

Hello my name is Nick and I come from Mount Gambier, a country town that will be one of the hardest hit if the newly proposed youth allowance changes are allowed.

Living in a country town and having to move to Adelaide like I am looking to do after my gap year this year is hard enough without the burden of being financially stable while away from home. Moving away from your family and friends is hard enough without having to add the stress of coming up with the hundreds of dollars needed each week for food, rent, and basic everyday living necessities. Even if this money was attainable a part time job would not easily be stumbled upon especially with today's financial crisis. Even if a job could be found balancing work and university could be unhealthy act especially with courses which require more hours of contact time like physiotherapy the course I am enrolled into next year requires. Majority of my time will be spent at university, then what's left of the time I have will be dedicated towards homework and maybe if I have any time left hopefully be able to continue to train and play football, but if the proposed changes come through this time will be spent working and taking away time that would usually be taken up with exercising and enjoying myself by playing the sport I love (that's if I can even find work up in Adelaide). The sacrifice of playing football is nothing compared to sacrifice of not even going to university and giving up a further education and dreams which some of my friends have had to make along with many more still unfortunately having to make due to the support that was previously provided to university goers. I undertook this gap year in order to help gain what support youth allowance gave me, I have planned my future around the decision to undertake this gap year and now the rug has been pulled out from underneath my and many of my peers feet due to the proposed changes. Youth Allowance is the only way many people are even able to achieve a university degree and better their lives and the fact that this years' and future university goers are being shunned is disgusting. The proposed changes don't seem to have been thought through and their effects even considered. Country students will be hit the hardest and the proposed changes are disallowing thousands of students, the very future of Australia their chance to further their education and contribute towards their country in the future.

The solution is to not change the youth allowance scheme and allow myself and the thousands of others to put our full focus on study and not on worrying about having enough food to eat or paying rent bills. This is what youth allowance does, allows a better focus on study and a piece of mind that there will be a form of support to assist in living needs. I beg you to reconsider the changes and hope that you will see the devastating effects they will have on the future of so many lives.

Thankyou for your time,

Nick Flood