

I wish to voice my concerns in regards to the proposed changes to the higher education support amendment to the budget. I am involved in education and have been for over 30 years. This involvement has been in country areas of South Australia, and I feel that this proposal has not had any deep thinking into the implications for country families-it has a metropolitan headset. I am also a parent with experience in the implications of having my child doing tertiary study in Adelaide. I have another child who is doing a 'Gap Year' this year prior to taking up her deferred university placement next year. We are more fortunate than many other country families as we are wage earners within the Government system and have not had our income affected by the drought conditions or the economic down turn. This proposal if successful will make it impossible for many families to afford to send their children onto further study in Adelaide. This is not an equitable situation and is definitely not furthering us developing as a 'Smart Country' when we decrease the numbers of our youth who can access higher education. The support that country students receive at the moment still does not alleviate the financial strain on some country families but is a help to most.