

To whom it may Concern about the Changes to the Youth Allowances

My husband and I have four children all whom we have put our world life into raising and making them into upcoming responsible citizens. We have both worked very long hours in our own private small business and as a teacher, weekend cleaner, fruit-picker in the holidays and swimming instructor to get our kids the best opportunity. We live in rural South Australia, the Riverland, and contribute to our local community in whatever way we can. As we both wanted our children to have the opportunity to go on and study at university we started when they were very young telling them that was the way to get ahead and not to have to always struggle as we have. We don't own motor bikes, flash cars, caravans, boats or any other major luxury items but instead put all our savings into the opportunity for our kids to go to boarding school so they could be offered a wider range of subjects to chose from and pick the career of their choice. This meant great hardships to keep them there and huge borrowings to achieve this dream. They have only been given the opportunity for the last three years of their secondary career as that is all our income dictates.

I find it quite unbelievable that we then have to struggle again even when they do get to university, and they get penalised for having to leave home and set up a often poverty based mode of existence and living to survive. These children all work as often as they can to pay the rent, clothe themselves, put food on the table, pay their transport to and fro from lectures and jobs, pay medical bills etc. They have no time to go out and enjoy the city attractions as they are either too broke, too busy working or too busy studying.

They very rarely get back to the loving home we have for them as the time, distance and money is too much a burden for them to stay ahead in their area of study. We the parents get penalised for trying to get our children to achieve their basic rights and dreams, work hard all our lives, rarely go on holidays or ever waste any money on luxuries and are not eligible for support- not that we want it- we want it for our kids so they can get ahead.

Why can children of my friends get benefits and still be living at home in the city, get dropped off to their venues or just hop on and off the public transport, pay no rent, have all the luxuries and mod cons of living at home and get patted on the shoulder for being so clever. Do you not think there is real inequity in the system? We have many clever students coming out of our Australian schools both private and public, who go to Universities and then drop out due to the pressures put upon them to achieve this terrible strain and again we get the less gifted students in the system and these poor exhausted children flock home, after quitting courses or unis, never to be put under these pressures again. We then fill our positions at Universities with pay up front international students, who I am going to say also need opportunities to achieve their best, but they too finish their degrees and go back to their own countries taking with them the valuable skills they have gained from Australia, never to return. Surely keeping our dedicated students from Australia achieving the dream would be a better option.

I appeal to you better sense of judgement in this regard and ask to thoroughly look into all the issues we are faced with. It is vey heart-rending to have to send your children away at the tender ages of 13, 14 or whatever, when a teenager needs the guidance of their parents and their rules, to boarding school and allow others to in still all the values you believe in. We then are penalised again financially for the rest of our lives, to help our treasured offspring. Please follow this up. I would be more than happy to further discuss this and issues we have in our community which is so like other communities around us.

Yours sincerely, Catherine Beech and Robert Beech

