

Senate Inquiry into Rural and Regional Access to Secondary and Tertiary Education Opportunities

To whom it may concern

I am opposed to the changes made to the eligibility of the Youth Allowance made in the May 09 budget

Our son made a decision to have a gap year on the advice of career advisors and all associated people at his school nearing the end of his Year 12 studies in Port Macquarie in 2008. The decision was not made in haste, and was based on what we all thought was the best thing for him.

To now discover the government has changed the eligibility rules **retrospectively** is an absolute disgrace.

If there had been information on possible changes to the Youth Allowance being distributed at the time of his decision we undoubtedly reconsidered the option taken.

It is a complete misuse of power that a government can make this apply to our young people who made a decision on their future career paths only to find them being double-crossed just when they are looking for support from a Government that purports to support the youth of the country.

Our son is an enthusiastic student who was looking forward to his studies in either Engineering or Physiotherapy in Newcastle commencing in 2010. He worked incredibly hard to attain his UAI and acceptance into university. He is very proud of his efforts. He, up till now, also has been very happy with his efforts in gaining casual employment during his gap year. This employment was gained through a number of interviews in fields that he had little or no previous experience. These efforts are not the ones made by someone who is looking for a free ride through university. He knows the financial burden that living away from home has had on his family, as his older siblings have been in the similar situation. The money he has saved would have been an enormous boost to his being financially independent and not a burden on his parents.

That is until now. He is devastated his plans may be in vain due to a poorly thought out piece of legislation designed to simply gain a headline, without the real impacts on the youth of ALL of Australia being considered.

I trust this submission is taken in the light it is intended. It represents a protest against deceit – the **retrospective** changes to the eligibility for Youth Allowance is a cruel and deceitful piece of work. I believe it needs to be seriously reconsidered

Yours faithfully
Paul Price