

25 July 2009

The Committee Secretary,  
Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport,  
PO Box 6100,  
Parliament House,  
Canberra ACT 2600.



**Re: the impact of the government youth allowance measures. Please see my responses below:**

- a. the financial impact on rural and regional students who are attending metropolitan secondary schools, universities or TAFE;

**My concern is it will be much more difficult for rural students to attend University. I reside in Kingaroy, over 200 km to the nearest University.**

- b. the education alternatives for rural and regional students wanting to study in regional areas;

**Rural students will have to accept that University is only for the city and wealthy people. A step back 100 years.**

- c. the implications of existing and proposed Government measures on prospective students living in rural and regional areas;

**I believe all students from rural areas should be eligible for Youth Allowance on enrolment at University/ FE. The current system disadvantages rural families and these proposed measures will make it even more difficult for rural students to access premier tertiary educational facilities so creating a divide between wealthy city people and uneducated poorer rural people.**

- d. the short and long term impact of current and proposed Government policies on regional university and TAFE college enrolments;

**Rural students are those most likely to return to rural areas after graduation. With a lot less of these students attending universities will drastically reduce the number of graduates willing to locate in rural areas. The shortage of qualified professionals in rural areas will escalate hugely.**

- e. the adequacy of Government measures to provide for students who are required to leave home for secondary or post-secondary study;

**Only those whose parents are on benefits will be eligible for youth allowance and the typical hard working two parent families in rural areas will not be able to support their children at University. Most students will not be able or willing to work for two years to obtain youth allowance to attend university.**

- f. the education needs of rural and regional students;

**These are the same as for metropolitan students. All young people should have equal access based on academic merit to attend tertiary education. These measures will create an inequity of access for rural students.**

g. the impact of Government measures and proposals on rural and regional communities

**The step goes back 100 years. Students from rural areas are those most likely to return to rural areas after graduation. With less of these students attending university then the rural communities will have declining levels of education.**

Please contact me if you require further information.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rosamund Heit', with a large, sweeping flourish extending from the end of the name.

Rosamund Heit