



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Government must guarantee services provided by UNE Student Union**

With legislation coming before the Federal Parliament to abolish compulsory student unionism, Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor is calling on the Federal Government to guarantee the services provided by Student Unions.

Using the University of New England as an example, Mr Windsor pointed to the many services offered by the UNE Student Union.

“The UNE Student Union has been very proactive in developing services and facilities for students to assist in making the gaining of a degree at UNE attractive and rewarding.

The UNE Student Union is responsible for providing non-academic services such as entertainment, cultural activities and commercial services for its members and does an excellent job in providing these services.

At this point in time, all students automatically become members of the UNE Union upon paying their GSF (general service fee) and as a member students have access to all Union facilities, both on and off campus and discounts in many locations which helps to stretch the limited budget of students,” Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor has had discussions with many groups over the last few years in relation to the matter and told the last Parliament that he is very supportive of retaining the status quo, particularly in light of the benefits to students at regional universities under the current arrangements.

“The student union issue is of concern in terms of the services and the jobs that are delivered to students through the union.

I know that in Armidale, for instance, there has been an enormously successful student union business activity that has branched out into many activities in the community and employs in those jobs well in excess of 100 people, most of them being university students,” Mr Windsor said

Mr Windsor said he did not see student unionism in the same light as some people who see student unions as being some sort of trade unions.

“I think Student Unions are completely different, particularly in regional circumstances where they make an enormous contribution to the operation of some of the other facilities at universities.

I make it quite plain to my electorate and to the parliament that I will be opposing the legislation on voluntary student unionism and I call on the Government, should it be successful in passing the legislation, to guarantee the services provided by Student Unions will continue at at least the same level,” Mr Windsor said.

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