



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Media Release

26 February 2007

Windsor welcomes \$5.5m funding for UNE

The announcement of nearly \$5.5m in funding for the University of New England by the Minister for Education Science and Technology Julie Bishop has been welcomed by the Independent Member for New England.

\$5m of the funding from the “Voluntary Student Unionism Transition Fund” will be used to build a new multi-purpose hall, refurbish the gym and upgrade its equipment as well as upgrading the swimming pool.

The other \$491,000 comes from the “Support for Small Businesses on Regional University Campuses Programme” and will be used to assist small businesses operated by the University of New England providing services to its students

Mr Windsor is pleased that the University of New England has fared so well.

“I am very pleased that the University of New England’s Sport UNE has been granted what is the highest amount of any university in Australia from these funds.

It will help Sport UNE and the broader UNE to better cater for the needs of its students and enhance its relationship with the broader community of Armidale and district following the introduction of VSU.

I congratulate Steve Griffiths, CEO of Sport UNE for his efforts under very trying circumstances and wish him and the University well as they continue to make UNE an attractive location for students to undertake their tertiary education.

Facilities and services for students along with the quality of education are very important factors in the student decision-making process of where they will study and this funding will help towards enhancing the UNE infrastructure,” Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor said that the money comes from the fund established by the Commonwealth Government after it legislated to introduce voluntary student unionism (VSU) thereby reducing the funding stream for on-campus services and facilities.

“The University of New England like other regional universities has been particularly hard hit by the VSU’s impact on their income and therefore their ability to provide facilities and services to students.

Sport UNE has had to reorganise its staffing structure and how it goes about catering for students’ needs without having a service fee on students to contribute to their funding.

Whilst the Minister indicates in her announcement that ‘This funding is on top of the \$160m the Australian Government has put back in the pockets of students who can now choose the services they want to support’ it also means that Universities are beholden to the Government for an amount that is much less and will come to an end once the ‘transition’ period is over.

It will be interesting to see what happens then,” Mr Windsor said.

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