



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

TONY WINDSOR MP
MEMBER FOR NEW ENGLAND

Shop 5
259 Peel Street
TAMWORTH NSW 2340

All Mail: PO Box 963
TAMWORTH NSW 2340

Ph: (02) 6761 3080
Toll Free: 1300 301 839
Fax: (02) 6761 3380
e-mail: Tony.Windsor.MP@aph.gov.au

MEDIA RELEASE

29 May 2009

Student Petition on Youth Allowance changes presented to Parliament

A petition from 260 McCarthy College students protesting proposed changes to the Youth Allowance has been presented to the Australian Parliament by the Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor.

Mr Windsor congratulated the McCarthy students and was very pleased to be able to lodge the petition on behalf of the McCarthy students as he shares their concerns and will be seeking changes to the legislation to better assist students get the support they need to undertake their tertiary education.

“Congratulations to the McCarthy College students on their initiative to raise a petition on the proposed changes to the Youth Allowance.

It shows their understanding of our political and parliamentary processes but more importantly, it shows that they are prepared to act on matters that they believe will impact adversely on them and their fellow students.

By lodging their petition, the McCarthy College students are saying to the Parliament that they believe the proposed changes are wrong and they want their representatives to act to fix the anomalies,” Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor said that the McCarthy College students argue that it is unethical for the Government to change the rules for those who finished school in 2008 and are working towards qualifying for the Independent Youth Allowance.

“The McCarthy College students are requesting a delay in the introduction of the new rules until 1 July 2010 and I support their call.

They also argue that students, especially those from rural areas, finishing Year 12 from 2009 onwards and wishing to work towards qualifying for the Independent Youth Allowance, will be disadvantaged under the new guidelines.

They believe students will specifically be disadvantaged as a result of the increase in the number of hours needed to be worked in an 18 month period to 30 hours per week, the need to defer for more than one year to meet the new requirements – something only able to be done at one university in NSW and the ACT - and their belief that the linking of Start-up and Relocation Scholarships to eligibility for the Youth Allowance discriminates against all students from rural areas who must move away from home and find accommodation in order to attend university.

I will be seeking amendments to the legislation that address these concerns and thank the McCarthy College students for allowing me to lodge this petition on their behalf,” Mr Windsor said.

For further information contact Tony Windsor, Ph (02) 6761 3080 or 0427 66 8868