



Media Release

Date: 28 August 2009

Back Flip on Youth Allowance Not Clear Cut

Nola Marino MP, Federal Member for Forrest, welcomes Minister Gillard's back flip on Tuesday, pushing back the implementation date of the proposed Youth Allowance changes until 30 June 2010, which will allow some current gap year students to claim Independent Youth Allowance in May next year.

"The Government has been under enormous pressure from the Coalition, students, parents and families who will be affected by these proposed changes and it has taken three months for the Minister to finally acknowledge the problems she is creating for regional students.

"I welcome the Minister's announcement to push back the implementation date which was previously 1 January 2010, but warn South West students that the full details of the announcement have not yet been confirmed," stated Nola Marino.

"Pushing back the implementation date until 30 June 2010 is expected to allow an extra 5,000 students to access independent Youth Allowance, out of the 30,000 who are currently in their gap year. I encourage all current gap year students to contact Centrelink directly on 13 24 90 to determine their eligibility," stated Nola Marino.

"There are still issues with the proposed changes in their current form, especially relating to the workforce participation criteria. It is a tough ask for a South West student to find 30 hours minimum per week for an 18 month period. Tourism and agriculture are seasonal industries which employ young people and in the current economic climate, small towns and communities may not be able to offer the hours required," said Nola Marino.

"I will continue to pursue this issue in Canberra and keep South West students, parents and families informed," said Nola Marino.

Please contact Nola's office if you are having difficulty contacting Centrelink or would like to be kept up to date on this issue via email or post.

Ends