



Media Release

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Youth Allowance Legislation Introduced but Amendments Still Needed

Minister Gillard has introduced her Youth Allowance legislation that will see hundreds of regional South West students miss out on university, according to Nola Marino MP, Federal Member for Forrest.

“The Minister’s changes are contradictory of the Government’s claims that they want to increase higher education participation from all sections of the community. The Government will actively discourage rural and regional students from attending university – a point made by a Victorian Labor Parliamentary Inquiry into this very issue,” said Nola Marino.

“Two weeks ago, after enormous pressure from the Coalition, students and parents, the Government backed down and pushed back the implementation date for the changes to 30 June 2010, from 1 January 2010. This may allow certain current gap year students who must relocate to pursue a higher education to still be eligible for independent status. I encourage all prospective students to check their eligibility.

“The Minister’s changes will have a particularly harsh impact on students from regional and rural communities who are currently preparing for their year 12 exams. At the very time when they are supposed to be studying hard to get in to the course of their dreams, the Minister for Education is taking their Youth Allowance pathway away from them – unless they can first find 30 hours per week of paid employment for 18 months,” said Nola Marino

Nola Marino MP will stand up for regional and rural students from the South West and do everything in her power to amend the current proposed legislation so South West students will not be worse off under this Government.

“I will represent each and every student, parent and families concern in Federal Parliament next week when the legislation is debated. If the Minister is serious about improving the system of Youth Allowance for all students, and not just those in the major cities, she must listen to the concerns of those directly affected,” Nola Marino concluded.

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