

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

A 30. TAMBO BRANCH

“That ICPA Qld lobby the Minister of Education for an immediate permanent increase in the Living Away From Home Allowance Scheme.”

Explanation:

It has been 5 years since the last permanent increase in the LAFHAS of 1.7%. Since then the percentage of total support has eroded from 53.4% down to 41.2%. The expenses relating to educating children away from home, where there is no viable alternative, continues to escalate. It is becoming more and more difficult for families to find the funds to afford to provide their children with secondary education away from home whilst remaining in the local community. The exodus of families from rural and remote areas continues unabated due to the costs associated with education.

Carried

A 31. MOONIE BRANCH

“That ICPA Inc. lobby the Minister for Employment, Small Business and Training, the Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries and the Minister for Education to substantially increase the Living Away from Home Allowance Scheme (LAFHAS) payment to attract more people to live in isolated communities.

Explanation:

Families choose not to seek employment in isolated communities due to a lack of access to adequate schooling for their children. Families hesitate to relocate to these areas due to dwindling primary school enrolments and the increased costs associated with boarding school fees.

The average cost to send a child to boarding school in 2020 was \$33, 532.18, excluding other expenses such as uniforms, textbooks, technology and extra-curricular activities. Increasingly, many rural and remote families struggle to meet these costs. Boarding school fees in 2020 rose by 8%, while in the last quarter of 2020, tuition increased by only 1.2%. An increase in the LAFHAS payment will give an incentive to families to migrate or remain in rural areas and encourage future generations to return to isolated communities.

Carried

A 32. CAPRICORNIA BOTA

“That the ICPA lobby the DOE to provide a user-friendly platform for all educational related financial assistance & agency support for easy reference.”

Explanation:

Currently, it is difficult for those who are not familiar with the system to access information relating to all of the financial assistance and agencies that are available to assist with education. It would be extremely helpful if this information was consolidated in one location and listed ALL assistance available for education for easy reference in times of need.

Carried

A 34. JULIA CREEK BRANCH

“That ICPA Qld lobby the State and Federal government departments for the introduction of a Home educator financial allowance package, “Distance Education Teaching Allowance”, paid to families enrolled in a state-based school program and educating their children at home via the distance education model, where distance education and/or home schooling is the only option due to geographical isolation.”

Explanation:

Currently children enrolled in distance education receive between 6 and 11 hours per week of online based contact with a centre teacher. A Home Tutor (used in this context to refer to a parent/guardian who supervises and instructs the student/s in their home based isolated classroom) or a governess (used in this context to refer to an adult employed by the family to supervise and instruct the student/s in their home based isolated classroom) is necessary not only for the supervision of students whilst on air with their centre teacher, but also to deliver the curriculum of all other KLA's that are not taught on air in some cases the SDE teacher is only teaching 1 subject e.g. English). Families have had to employ a 'governess' at their own expense, or one parent/guardian must relinquish a contributory financial position to supervise and teach their children for the school week. The role of home tutor/governess is vital for children in the isolated classroom to ensure children attend all scheduled online lessons and complete all other KLA work required. Children in the early years cannot be expected to manage their own time, nor can children in the older grades be expected to learn independently and unsupported.

Carried

F5: WESTERN DOWNS BRANCH

"That ICPA QLD lobby relevant authorities to expand the scope of application for the Remote Area Allowance (RAA) of the LAFHAS and re-evaluate the ineligibility of students receiving RAA to receive the Remote Area Travel Allowance (RATrA)."

Explanation:

Currently the eligibility criteria for RAA is for a child to be attending a state boarding school and undertaking an approved Ag course in lieu of Year 11 + 12. These students are then ineligible to receive the RATrA despite how far they travel to their school.

Since the closure of the Longreach and Emerald campuses there are at most only 2 State boarding facilities offering the Access to Ag program as an option for students in QLD. The RAA is therefore being paid to a very limited number of students which provides opportunity for the LAFHAS provisions of RAA and RATrA to be broadened to envelop all rural and remote students from years 7 to 12 travelling to and living in State Boarding Schools.

Carried