

## ISOLATED CHILDREN'S PARENTS' ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA



### 2021 FEDERAL CONFERENCE TERTIARY PORTFOLIO MOTIONS

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#### **A45. Katherine Branch (NT)**

**CARRIED**

“That ICPA (Aust) advocates for the removal of the parental threshold from the Independent Youth Allowance for students applying under rural and remote work criteria.”

#### **Explanation:**

Rural and remote students can be eligible for independent youth allowance before they turn 22 if (i) their parental home is in an inner regional, outer regional, remote, or very remote area (ii) they need to move away from your parental home to study and (iii) they have worked since leaving secondary school. Students also need to have either: earned 75% or more of the National Training Wage Schedule rate in any 14-month period or worked at least 15 hours a week for at least 2 years.

Katherine Branch thanks ICPA (Aust) for its advocacy and the Minister for Families and Social Services for raising the parental threshold from \$150,000 to \$160,000 from 1 January 2019 and taking into account other dependent siblings. However, these rural and remote students who qualify for Independent Youth Allowance under the above conditions must surely be considered Independent full stop. Parental income should not enter into consideration at all. Rural incomes are so fickle, even being given three financial years of parental income to choose from cannot always give these students a fair assessment of the ability of this family to support a tertiary or training student. These students clearly demonstrate independence through working for a least a year and leaving home to study. They take a gap year because they need to be financially independent but that can also place them at risk of being one of the statistics: students who take gap years are less likely to continue to further education. Any hurdles to these rural and remote students qualifying for Independent youth allowance, such as Parental income thresholds, threatens their tertiary education.

#### **A46. Walgett Branch (NSW)**

**CARRIED**

“That ICPA (Aust) request the Federal Government to change the criteria for the Relocation Scholarship to include all students from remote or rural areas relocating who do not qualify for Dependent Youth Allowance.”

#### **Explanation:**

Relocating is a costly exercise when moving long distances. Students who do not qualify for Dependent Youth Allowance who have worked since leaving school for the year but have to start university in the February are missing out.

We have found due to COVID that online learning is isolating and lonely and campuses need to be filled. Towns have suffered greatly, and the influx of rural and remote students is important to our universities. These young adults need financial help as their savings they have collected through the year dwindle rapidly with the cost of moving away. It gives them the opportunity to move and settle and commence studies before looking for employment.

**S10. Tasmania Branch (TAS)****CARRIED**

“That ICPA (Aust) requests the Federal Government review the criteria of the Tertiary Access Payment (TAP) to ensure all rural and remote tertiary students are able to fulfil the course of their choice”

**Explanation:**

The Tertiary Access Payment commenced 1 January 2021 and is available to eligible students:

- who have to move away from home to study at a tertiary education provider providing it is more than 90 mins away from your home by public transport
- who start their study straight after year 12 or equivalent
- who are studying at least 75% full time study load of a higher education course or Vocational Education and Training course, certificate IV or above
- who are from an outer regional, remote or very remote area, and
- whose parents or guardian’s income is under the current combined parental income limit of \$250,000.

Our branch is extremely appreciative and thank the Federal Government for the commencement of the TAP. We believe there is a need for some additions to the existing criteria which are consistent with ICPA (Aust)’s longstanding lobby for a Tertiary Access Allowance. This includes the need for the TAP to be equivalent to the Relocation Scholarship in order to truly reflect the costs of living away from home to access a tertiary education. There needs to be assurance that the Tertiary Access Payment becomes a permanent payment available to all rural and remote students who fulfil the criteria, and the numbers are not capped. This will ensure students whose course commences in the second or later semester, do not miss out.

**S11. Tasmania Branch (TAS)****CARRIED**

“That ICPA (Aust) request the Federal Government permanently implement the measure that was put in place during the COVID-19 lockdown for rural and remote tertiary students and Australian apprentices applying for Youth Allowance: initial confirmation of identity can be attended through a student’s myGov account.”

**Explanation:**

Many rural and remote students have difficulty in proving their identity because of the requirement that they must present their identity documents at a service centre and that is problematic for many due the vast distance many of them live from a service centre and attending during opening hours. These students cannot start or proceed with their application for Youth Allowance until these documents have been sighted.

During COVID -19 Youth Allowance applicants were able to confirm their identity online through their myGov account allowing them to start their claim online and avoid delays in their application process. For rural and remote students this provision should continue and could have the requirement that original documents be presented at service centre for confirmation, or the uploaded documents be certified before their payments commence. For many rural and remote students their identity has already been proven through previous Centrelink payments such as AIC and this should be able to be recognised when applying for Youth Allowance.

**S12. Tasmania Branch (TAS)****CARRIED**

“That ICPA (Aust) implores the Federal Government to implement the recommendations from the *Education in remote and complex environments Report* relating to tertiary students.”

**Explanation:**

The Federal Government commissions reviews in response to issues and inequities and must be held accountable to respond to the recommendations. The *Education in remote and complex environments Report* recommended that the Government announce an implementation plan for the recommendations and actions from the *Independent Review into Regional, Rural and Remote Education* (Halsey Review) and *National Regional, Rural and Remote Tertiary Education Strategy* (Naphthine Review).

The implementation of all the recommendations would see measures introduced and being available for rural and remote students including:

- improved availability of accommodation
- improved information on accommodation and income support
- improved access to affordable, reliable, high speed internet services
- improved VET programs in rural and remote areas and
- greater flexibility in qualifying pathways for Youth Allowance

To achieve equity for rural and remote tertiary students, these above measures, in addition to the measures that have already been implemented previously must be implemented. The previous measures have benefited members to date and have been greatly appreciated by rural and remote tertiary students. Possibly the most significant is the introduction of the Tertiary Access Payment. Others have included the expansion of the Rural and Regional Enterprise Scholarships and the Regional Study Hubs, and improvements to the Fares Allowance.

### **S13. Tasmania Branch (TAS)**

**CARRIED**

“That ICPA (Aust) thanks the Federal Government for the measures put in place for rural and remote gap year students impacted by the COVID-19 lockdown.”

#### **Explanation:**

The measures that supported working gap year student affected by the impacts of the COVID-19 lockdown on their ability to fulfil their working criteria when trying to prove their independence for Youth Allowance and ABSTUDY have been greatly appreciated and continue to be throughout 2021 with the measure which allows a working gap year student to earn \$15000 through agricultural work between 30 November 2020 and 31 December 2021 to fulfil their working criteria.