

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

1. A18. RICHMOND BRANCH

“That ICPA QLD lobby DET to improve the traceability of the departmental subsidy payments to rural and remote students.”

Carried

Explanation: Richmond branch is appreciative of these worthwhile payments. One small issue raised often at branch meetings is the difficulty in identifying payments. We would greatly appreciate more identifiable payment references.

2. A19. TAMBO BRANCH

“That ICPA Qld Inc. continues to lobby the Minister for Education that the drought subsidy component of LAFHAS continues during any period of drought declarations and continue on for an additional 2 years when drought is no longer declared to allow for the recovery period.”

Carried

Explanation: The drought subsidy package has been a huge assistance for families whose incomes are and have been severely affected by drought. The recovery period following a drought cycle break is of equal importance as it takes time for income to regenerate after a drought and having the support of the drought component in LAFHAS will assist families further during the time of recovery.

3. A21. ARAMAC MUTTABURRA BRANCH

“That ICPA (QLD) lobby the relevant bodies to ensure that all education allowances for geographically isolated students are automatically increased according to the education sub-index of the CPI so that rural students have access to affordable and equitable education.”

Carried

Explanation: That the Qld State Government education allowances be linked to the Education Sub-index of the Consumer Price Index so that geographically isolated families' monetary value in these allowances is not diminished due to the increasing gap between these allowances and the rising costs of education.

4. A22. MOONIE BRANCH

“That ICPA Qld Inc. lobby the Minister for Education and the Premier of Queensland for an immediate fund injection of an additional \$4000/per LAFHA recipient.”

Carried

Explanation: The average cost of tuition in 2017 was \$12,249 and the maximum LAFHA was \$5,296 meaning the parents were paying \$6953/child in tuition (less drought subsidy). It is an outrage that the Queensland Government is not assuming the responsibility for the cost of compulsory education, and the Minister of Education and Premier need to address Treasury on behalf of rural and remote families. The Qld Government would only need to allocate less than an addition \$5.3 million to the LAFHA budget if there were 1300 LAFHA recipients. Here are a few comparisons to put the economics in context:

The Commonwealth games opening and closing ceremonies reportedly cost \$46 million dollars.

Agriculture contributes approx. \$10 billion to the Qld economy every year
<https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industries/farms-fishing-forestry/agriculture/overview>

Queensland's resources industry contributed \$55.7 billion to the state's economy in the 2015-16 financial year, a report released by the Queensland Resources Council.

The Qld Government will charge a fee of \$3130/application for vegetation management so it appears that it does not consider \$4000 a significant business expense.

The last three dot points are solely related to rural Qld. To increase LAFHA to \$9300/recipient would not greatly affect the Qld budget but it would ease the enormous financial burden put on the families who are greatly contributing to the State economy. It would show some validation that the education of those outside the urban centres is vital to all of future Queenslanders. It makes economic sense

to keep the families in the bush and to encourage their children to return instead of losing them due to the expense of education. ICPA policy does not ask for any more for its rural and remote members than their urban cousins but we should not have to accept so much less either. LAFHA is not a welfare payment, it is to allow access to education. We believe all of Queensland would support the rural sector receiving an equitable education.

5. S9. BOLLON BRANCH

“That ICPA Qld Inc. continue to support ICPA Federal Council for ongoing increases in the Allowance for Isolated Children (AIC) to enable families in rural and remote Australia equitable access to education.”

Carried

Explanation: We would like to thank Qld ICPA Inc. for supporting ICPA Federal Council in lobbying for ongoing increases to the AIC and ask that the support continues. Members are appreciative of Government’s acknowledgement of the significant cost burden faced by rural families trying to educate their children and want to ensure that this acknowledgement continues by ensuring allowances are increased alongside boarding cost increases. The only option for many geographically isolated families to access an education on par with that of their urban cousins is boarding school and the average cost of this is well beyond the reach of many families. For example, tuition and boarding fees at typical Brisbane schools in 2018 are about \$35 - 40,000 per child and the median annual household income for 2016 was \$74776 (ABS, 2016 Census). Faced with these expenses, ordinary Australian families cannot afford to live in rural areas. We call for ongoing increases in the Assistance for Isolated Children and to align those increases with the Education Sub-Index of the Consumer Price Index, so the average family can afford to educate their children and remain living and working in rural Australia.

6. S10. BOLLON BRANCH

“That ICPA Qld Inc. lobby the Minister for Education and DET to review the Living Away from Home Allowance (LAFHA) and give special consideration to families with more than one child by increasing those families’ allowances so access to an affordable equitable education is within reach.”

Carried

Explanation: Members are appreciative of Government’s acknowledgement of the significant cost burden faced by rural families trying to educate their children. We ask Government to further acknowledge the increased cost burden to those families with more than one child by supplementing their allowances with added payments. The only option for many geographically isolated families to access an education on par with that of their urban cousins is boarding school and the average cost of this is well beyond the reach of many families. For example, tuition and boarding fees at typical Brisbane schools in 2018 are about \$35 - 40,000 per child while the median annual household income for 2016 was \$74,776 (ABS, 2016 Census). For families with several children these costs quickly become insurmountable and alternatives such as relocating become attractive, leaving rural Australia with a further diminished population. We propose another element be introduced to the LAFHA to help families meet these costs and remain living and working in rural Australia.

8. F6. CUNNAMULLA BRANCH

“That ICPA Qld Inc support ICPA (Australia) to lobby the Federal Government to review the Second Home Allowance.”

Carried.