Youth Allowance Petition

To the Honourable President and members of the Senate in Parliament assembled:

The petition of the undersigned draws the attention of the Senate to the Rudd Government's changes to the workforce participation criteria for establishing independence under Youth Allowance by removing the following two eligibility criteria: that the recipient worked part-time for 15+ hours per week for two years or more since leaving school; and the recipient earned, in an 18-month period since leaving school, an amount equivalent to 75% of the maximum rate of pay (in 2009 this requires earnings of $19,532). The effect of this change is that eligibility criteria for the Independent Youth Allowance will retrospectively require participants to complete 30 hours per week over a 18/24 month period, compared with earning $19,532 over 18 months. This means a student who has complied with the previous rules but not worked 30 hours per week will have lost the credit for their effort and must start again, thus losing two years before being able to commence a University course.

This proposal further disadvantages young people whose place of residence is beyond daily commuting distance from a University and thus must fund their total accommodation costs over and above the other direct costs of such an education. Working 30 hours per week while attending University is virtually impossible in more intensive courses.

Your petitioners ask that the Senate change the criteria so that rural and regional students are not disadvantaged.

NAME	ADDRESS	SIGNATURE

Please return original (not faxed, copied or scanned) petition to: Senator Ian Macdonald,
PO Box 2185 Townsville Qld 4810 by 31 August 2009. Enquiries to (07) 4771 3066 or 1300 301 949.