



Senator
Steve Fielding
Leader of Family First



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FIELDING KNOCKS OUTRAGEOUS YOUTH ALLOWANCE CHANGES ON THE HEAD

The Rudd Government wanted to treat rural and regional students as second class citizens with its changes to youth allowance, Family First Leader Senator Steve Fielding said today.

“The government’s solution to the youth allowance mess they created was to cut funding to scholarships – that doesn't make any sense,” Senator Fielding said.

“A clever country would be making its easier for its kids to get to university not harder.”

26,000 students will be worse off under the Rudd Government’s changes to youth allowance, while another 13,000 will get nothing at all.

“The Greens have tried to sell out the bush by siding with the government on these ridiculous changes to youth allowance,” Senator Fielding said.

“The Rudd Government needs to come back to the negotiating table and work this through so rural and regional students are not disadvantaged and put two years behind their city counterparts.

“The Rudd Government has got to stop treating the senate like a rubber stamp and accept commonsense changes that help country kids get to uni.

“The government is more than happy to spend millions of dollars on pink batts, but when it comes to giving our country kids an education it turns its back on them.

"It's time the Rudd Government stopped pennypinching when it comes to education of our children.

“The Education Minister already admitted the government got their original youth allowance reforms wrong when they were forced into exempting this year’s gap-year students from their proposed restrictions.”

Under the Rudd Government’s proposal, students would need to work for 30 hours a week for 18 months before they would be eligible for the full rate of youth allowance.

“The government’s changes were unfair and would have put rural and regional students two years behind their city counterparts,” Senator Fielding said.

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