



COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC
SECTOR UNION

SPSF GROUP NSW BRANCH
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In Reply Please Quote **AK: ndef CN 133505**

27 August 2020

The Hon Kevin Hogan MP
61-63 Molesworth St
LISMORE NSW 2480

By email kevin.hogan.mp@aph.gov.au

Dear Mr Hogan

Re: Higher Education Support Amendment (Job-Ready Graduates and Supporting Regional and Remote Students) Bill.

The Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU NSW) is the union that represents professional staff in the NSW University sector including all non-academic staff, ranging from administrative assistants, gardeners, technical and laboratory staff, librarians and student advisors.

The CPSU NSW is writing to seek that you reconsider support of the *Higher Education Support Amendment (Job-Ready Graduates and Supporting Regional and Remote Students) Bill* (the Bill). Not only will the Bill see, if passed, an increase in some course fees but will see a further reduction of \$700 million to \$1billion funding to the university sector. At a time when Australia should be investing in skills and knowledge to rebuild a post-Covid economy, we find this projection alarming.

The university sector is in crisis, but it was under pressure long before COVID-19. A lack of proper investment and a cap on domestic student numbers since 2017 has made the sector fragmented and over reliant on international students. Universities have been turned into businesses and in doing so exposed them to market vulnerability. Consequently, many have become highly dependent on revenue from international students and are now cash strapped.

In 2020 all ten NSW universities are struggling to reconcile funding shortfalls, with many resorting to large job losses, as explained in the following table.

University	Funding shortfall	Redundancies/Perm jobs to go
Australian Catholic University	\$20 million (2020)	
Charles Sturt University	\$80 million (2020)	110 (phase 1)
Macquarie University	\$80 million	Putting out EOI soon
Southern Cross University	\$40 million (2020)	92 EOIs for VRs. Assessment results by Sept 9 2020. More cost saving measures workforce & job losses to come.
University of Newcastle	\$58 million (\$35million recurring)	Approx. 120 staff
University of New England	\$20 million (2020)	Anticipate 150+ staff
University of New South Wales	\$300 to 400 million	UNSW asked for EOI for 493 VRs.
The University of Sydney	\$470 million (2020)	
University of Technology, Sydney	\$125+ million (2020)	200+
University of Wollongong	\$70 million (2020)	200
Western Sydney University	\$90 million (2020)	None at this stage

Regional Universities will be particularly affected. Regional Universities are often the largest employer in a region playing a significant role in the communities in regional NSW. They significantly increase regional economy with increase in quality job opportunities and the generation of revenue to other industries through the purchase of goods and services in those regions.

The CPSU NSW requests that the Federal Government urgently provide additional funding, to the higher education sector, that will enable them to continue to play their vital role in our community. In particular, that the cap on domestic student numbers be lifted and that because all Universities has been impacted by a reduction in revenue because of COVID-19 that the JobKeeper Scheme be extended to them. We would be happy to organise a meeting with staff representatives from your relevant Regional Universities and yourself so you can hear their concerns first-hand.

Please contact CPSU NSW Senior Organiser, Anne Kennelly on 0499 499 504 or akennelly@psa.asn.au to arrange a meeting.

Yours faithfully,



Troy Wright
Assistant Secretary, NSW Branch
Community and Public Sector Union (SPSF Group)