

MEDIA RELEASE

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Student equity and income support must be given priority

Innovative Research Universities (IRU) supports Universities Australia in calling on the Australian Parliament to resolve its differences and do the right thing for all current and prospective Australian university students by passing the *Social Security and Other Legislation Amendment (Income Support for Students) Bill*.

Director of IRU Ms Lenore Cooper said the failure of the Senate to pass the Bill last night will mean that more than 150,000 Australian university students, including financially disadvantaged and rural and regional students, will miss out on vitally important income support in 2010.

“The Parliament has had ample time to debate the legislation and the government has negotiated with other parties and independents to agree amendments which address the concerns of many Senators, so the package should now be passed,” Ms Cooper said.

“Australian university students will otherwise be denied access to both old and new scholarship schemes, placing the study plans of many young aspiring Australians in serious jeopardy,” she said.

“Student equity and income support must be given priority. The Senate should pass the legislation before the end of this Parliamentary sitting,” Ms Cooper concluded.

Contact:

Lenore Cooper
Director, IRU
M: 0408 760 592

www.iru.edu.au