



## Sid Sidebottom MP ... for a fair go in Braddon

**Media Release**

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### **Sid, Wynyard gap year student attend Youth Allowance Roundtable with Julia Gillard**

Federal Member for Braddon Sid Sidebottom said he was pleased to host Wynyard gap year student Alan Nicholas in Parliament House as he raised his concerns about the proposed changes to Youth Allowance with Education Minister Julia Gillard today.

Mr Nicholas, 18, was part of a group of gap year students and their local MPs from across Australia who attended the Student Roundtable held at Parliament House in Canberra today. Mr Nicholas is a gap year student currently working in the snowfields and plans to move to Melbourne to study Industrial Design next year.

"I was very pleased the Minister took time out to hear directly from Alan as to his concerns with the proposed changes, and the affect they will have on him as he completes his current gap year, Mr Sidebottom said.

"Should the changes take affect from this year it would leave Alan in limbo."

Mr Nicholas said he was very happy to be given the opportunity to represent the views of the region's gap year students.

"I think overall the policy is really positive," Mr Nicholas said.

"It's was great to have my point of view heard – it is only the timeframes for the changes for gap year students which I am worried about."

Mr Sidebottom said the proposed changes to the Youth Allowance scheme would benefit more than 100,000 students across Australia. Changes to the Parental Income Test threshold will mean that many students will no longer be encouraged to take a gap year in order to be eligible for assistance.

Mr Sidebottom has said that the raising of the Parental Income Threshold will mean many more students on the North West Coast in particular, and in Tasmania more generally, will be eligible to receive financial support to continue their higher education.

"I have made no secret about my concern with the proposed timing of these changes, and I have lobbied my Federal colleagues hard to reconsider delaying the introduction of the new provisions so that current gap-year students can commence their university studies in 2010, as planned.

Mr Sidebottom has met personally with Minister Gillard to discuss these concerns on a number of occasions.

“Minister Gillard said today’s discussions were helpful and would help inform the Government about any changes that might be needed before the legislation was introduced into the Parliament in September,” Mr Sidebottom said.

**For more information: Eliza Young**

**0439 342 159**