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## MEDIA RELEASE

# TASMANIA UNIVERSITY UNION AND UTAS CLASH OVER GOVERNMENT PROPOSED FEE HIKES.

In his submissions to a recent Senate inquiry, UTAS Vice Chancellor Rufus Black claimed that the government's proposed overhaul to University fees was largely 'aligned with our strategic direction.'

That statement was at odds with the feedback the government received from other Australian universities. Dr Spence of the University of Sydney noted that the overhaul had been 'developed without careful consideration of the evidence,' while UNSW Vice Chancellor Ian Jacobs also described 'deep concerns' in relation to the bill's impact on current Year 11 and 12 students.

State President of the TUU, Braydon Broad said, "the support the University has given to the government on this matter may well end up being decisive given the current composition of the Senate."

"And what has our University extracted from the government in return for its support? A bill that would pull 5.8% of current federal funding per University student across the sector. In what world does that align with any University's strategic plan."

'Worse still, this 'Job Ready Package' doesn't actually align with key characteristics of the Tasmanian economy. The University knows that UTAS graduates remaining in Tasmania are more likely to find employment in fields that are now having their fees increased.'

This bill is particularly cruel to students currently completing Year 11 and 12. Imagine having selected your pre-tertiary subjects - having nearly completed all of them in many cases - only to find that the course that you have been aiming for will now cost more than double what you thought it would. It's not like these students can go back in time and take Chemistry or Math now.'

'All of this is not to mention the equity concerns that students have about this bill. Do we really want to construct a system in which only those from wealthy families can afford to study law, economics and arts?'

'We would call on all students, whether they support this bill or not, to reach out to their elected members and voice their opinions. These changes are too important for us to merely be passengers along for the ride.'

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