



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



THE SENATE

**HIGHER EDUCATION LEGISLATION
AMENDMENT (STUDENT
SERVICES AND AMENITIES, AND
OTHER MEASURES) BILL 2009**

In Committee

SPEECH

Monday, 17 August 2009

BY AUTHORITY OF THE SENATE

SPEECH

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Page 5088
Questioner
Speaker Nash, Sen Fiona

Source Senate
Proof No
Responder
Question No.

Senator NASH (New South Wales) (9.33 pm)—I will just make a few remarks about Senator Fielding's contribution. He obviously spent some time studying the arts when he was at university. Given his attire this evening, it has obviously stayed with him! But he may not have been listening while we were making our remarks earlier. While I understand the obvious enthusiasm and passion in his comments earlier, it is quite simple. I think if Senator Fielding had been listening he would have heard the three Nationals senators make the point that the amendment does not cover all of those fields and is not perfect. But, quite interestingly—and simplistically—if you take the burden of funding off the university in a particular area that is creating the most funding difficulty, it stands to reason that that funding is going to be freed up for those other areas. So we are not saying those other areas should not be accounted for—of course they are very important areas. We recognise that this amendment is not across the whole lot, but we have considered all of those areas and we believe that on balance this is the best way forward.

I take on board Senator Hanson-Young's remarks. This attitude of, 'Well, it's only going to sporting facilities, and not everyone plays sport', is interesting. Look at local council areas in regional communities. We all get hit with rates for specific things. We are not all using all of those specific things, but those rates are charged for the good of the whole community.

I will finish up with some comments that the minister made earlier about the \$250 and reducing the amount. I think a very quick look at the issues that we are talking about, and some very simple mathematics, would show that of course you would not charge \$250 simply for the area of sporting facilities—and on a pro rata basis, it certainly does make more sense.

Question negatived.