

Students launch international campaign for future students to boycott NSW

Today the newly formed *Cross-Campus Concessions Coalition (CCCC)* launched their campaign to urge new international students to boycott NSW until the state government grants all students equal access to travel concessions. This action is in direct response to the Minister indicating he will legislate himself out of the current discriminatory actions rather than putting an end to the discrimination itself.

Ruchir Punjabi, CCCC Spokesperson and International Student Officer of Sydney University SRC said "We have a responsibility to warn future international students that the NSW Government discriminates against them. Over the coming weeks we will be writing to consulates, embassies and international media urging them to communicate to students considering studying in Australia that they should boycott NSW."

"After the offensive and misleading comments by NSW Transport Minister, John Watkins, in the Daily Telegraph and his failure to end the discrimination after the Administrative Decision Tribunal found the decision to not grant international students travel concessions in breach of his own Government's Anti-Discrimination Act, we have no choice but to alert future students about the current situation."

"International students can't vote at the ballot box but they can vote with their feet" he added.

Jenny Leong, CCCC Spokesperson and President of Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association said: "It is unacceptable for the Minister to respond to the finding of discrimination by the ADT by changing words in the legislation rather than changing the act of discrimination. The win in the Tribunal finally legitimised this campaign, now the Minister is deliberately seeking to undermine it."

Shehbaz Singh, CCCC Spokesperson and Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations International Officer said: "The 59,000 international university students in NSW make a significant cultural and economic contribution. It would be a great loss if international students decided to study in other states, but given the current discriminatory practices of the NSW Government we have no choice but to tell new international students to boycott NSW."

"Some international media has already picked up on the Minister's appalling comments. We feel sure they will be interested in the Minister's intention to legislate himself out of the recent findings of the Tribunal" he added.

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The *Cross-Campus Concessions Coalition* includes student representatives from the University of Newcastle, University of NSW, University of Technology Sydney, Macquarie University, University of Sydney, University of Western Sydney, University of Wollongong. The Coalition was formed after the Administrative Decisions Tribunal found the NSW Minister for Transport, the Ministry of Transport, the State Rail Authority and the State Transit Authority in breach of the NSW Anti-Discrimination Act by not granting international students access to transport concessions. This decision can be accessed at: <http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/adtdgments/2006nswadt.nsf/367cac199eaa00eca2570ec0018a6d8/e6f099f13210a370ca257138001e4fc6?OpenDocument>.