



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**Federation Chamber**

**CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS**

**Hume Electorate: Scholarships**

**SPEECH**

**Wednesday, 12 February 2014**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## SPEECH

<b>Date</b> Wednesday, 12 February 2014	<b>Source</b> House
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<b>Questioner</b>	<b>Responder</b>
<b>Speaker</b> Taylor, Angus, MP	<b>Question No.</b>

**Mr TAYLOR** (Hume) (10:52): Last week, I was privileged to attend presentations and events in my electorate in Goulburn and Yass at which local school leavers were granted scholarships to support their studies beyond school. The recipients are the beneficiaries of the work of their local education foundations. In 1993, a group of Boorowa locals got together to support and encourage their local school leavers to pursue their tertiary studies. The Boorowa Education Foundation started raising funds and, in their first year, they raised \$5,000 for scholarships for five students. The idea soon spread to the nearby communities of Yass, Cowra and Harden, all towns in the Hume electorate. In 2003, the Country Education Foundation went national and CEFA has since grown to a network of more than 40 local education foundations across Australia. I am grateful that there are a disproportionate number in my electorate.

From little things big things grow. This year, CEFA has given out over 400 grants to disadvantaged regional youth across Australia. The grants totalled nearly half a million dollars and the number of grants given out is on the increase. Based on a simple decentralised model, CEFA helps regional communities to establish their own local education foundation. It is funded by the private sector and receives no government funding. Communities raise funds in the best way they see fit. For example, on one occasion in Yass, the Great Rat Race was held. Every two years, the Goulburn community conducts an art exhibition and an auction in their historic woolshed, raising tens of thousands of dollars. I cannot think of a better example of a community organisation designed by regional people for regional people and addressing, in most practical and hands-on way, the needs of regional people—in this case our young people.

In many rural areas, there are very serious barriers to youth both commencing and completing tertiary education. For young rural people, the transition from school into the next stage of life is often more significant and more fragile than for their city cousins. For these young people, community and family support can be just as important as financial assistance. Mr Nick Burton Taylor, the inaugural president of the Boorowa Education Foundation and now national chairman of CEFA, says the real aim was to show the local young people that their community believed in them. I commend CEFA and the local education foundation for recognising the value of education and for helping to ameliorate the significant barriers to young regional people at this make or break point in their lives.