

## CAPA slams Federal Government's VSU betrayal

Att: Education Journalists  
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For Immediate Release

"The Federal Government's plans to introduce voluntary student unionism legislation is the latest example of their short-sighted approach to higher education 'reform' and must be opposed by all who claim to represent the interests of higher education," said CAPA President Stephen Horton today.

"Apparently the promises given to the 4 independent Senators - Meg Lees, Brian Harradine, Shayne Murphy and Len Harris - that VSU was off the Federal Government's agenda was merely a cynical exercise to get the initial phase of the Nelson package through the Senate last year. This pattern of lies and broken promises is what we have come to expect from the Federal Government, and I hope the 4 independents will see this in future," said Mr Horton.

"It is often argued by the Federal Government that VSU represents freedom of choice when in reality it takes it away by denying an independent student voice from being heard," Mr Horton continued. "We have to view this as merely the latest attempt by the Federal Government to silence critics of its draconian higher education package," said Mr Horton.

"VSU will threaten the very survival of many of CAPA's affiliates, and as such we regard any attempt to impose VSU legislation on student organisations as a declaration of war," Mr Horton concluded.

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CAPA is the national peak body representing Australia's 226,612 postgraduate students.