



Government Cuts to College's Puts Tuition Burden on International Students

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TORONTO, ON – Ontario's Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk reported that due to decades long cuts from the Government of Ontario the burden of funding colleges has fallen on international students. International students, who make up about 30 per cent of the student body at Ontario's 24 colleges, provide 68 per cent of all tuition revenue. Their fees alone were worth \$1.7-billion last year, more than the colleges received in provincial grants. In addition to financial difficulties international students face significant barriers in terms of being limited in their ability to work by the federal government to overall systemic support.

"The funding cuts to colleges which span decades have caused the post-secondary sector to rely entirely on international student's tuition; this is unacceptable. Provincial support for college students in Ontario is the lowest in Canada, the reduction in funding has those within the sector referring to our colleges as "publicly-assisted" instead of "public." said Eli Ridder, President of the College Student Alliance (CSA).

The provincial government has been using increasingly troubling language when talking about international students and points to their awareness of what is occurring in the sector. In Bill 13, *Red Tape Reduction Act*, under the section, *Remove barriers to entrepreneurial activities for postsecondary educational institutions*, the government refers to international students as, "vital to Ontario's economy."

"Not only is this a problematic policy in terms of long-term funding for colleges, it's callous in its treatment of international students. At CSA we've seen that this financial burden has contributed significantly to negative mental health outcomes as well as created a whole economy that takes advantage of international students."

CSA believes that if college students are to be part of the post-pandemic recovery the solution overall is that per-student funding and support must increase, this means reducing tuition and providing OSAP grants not loans, returning our "publicly-assisted" sector back to "public" and provide overall stability to the sector.

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About College Student Alliance:

College Student Alliance (CSA) advocates on behalf of Ontario college students in partnership with student leaders. Through our member student associations, CSA represents the collective voice of Ontario's college students.



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