



March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022

The Honourable Jill Dunlop  
Minister of Colleges and Universities  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor, 438 University Ave  
Toronto, ON M7A 2A5

**Re: International Students Need Immediate Support**

Dear Minister Dunlop,

Ontario's Public Colleges and Universities play an essential role in developing a highly skilled workforce needed to support the economic and social development of Ontario's communities, critically underpinning Ontario's recovery from the pandemic and beyond. Unfortunately, since 2018, Ontario funding transfers to Public Colleges and Universities have dwindled to record lows, and currently Ontario has the lowest provincial grants & tuition-relief funding, as well as the lowest full-time expenditure (FTE) student funding, in the country. This historic underfunding has forced many Public Colleges and Universities to heavily rely on increased international student tuition in order to remain financially sustainable.

Since 2013, international student enrolments for Public Colleges have grown 342%, and as of 2020, 30% of all 348,350 students enrolled at Public Colleges in Ontario were international students. Similarly, international students at Public Universities now represent 21% of total enrolments, up 175% since 2015. Unlike for domestic students, Public Colleges and Universities are freely able to increase international student tuition levels. As a result, for Public Colleges in 2020/21 alone, international student tuition fees surged up to \$14,306 per year, an 8% increase over the previous year; representing 68% of colleges' total tuition fee revenue. Public Universities in Ontario have the highest international student tuition in the country, averaging \$42,185 in 2021/22, up 178% since 2013. Unfortunately for many institutions, revenue collected from international students now outweighs provincial funding. For example, Public Colleges in Ontario receive over half a billion more from international tuition fees (\$1.7 billion) than from the Province (\$1.1 billion).

This overreliance by Public Colleges and Universities on international student tuition not only poses risks to Ontario's economy and long-term growth, but also adds tremendous financial pressures that are having devastating psychological and physical impacts on Ontario's international students, leading to housing and workplace exploitation, abuse, and, sadly in many cases, suicides.

International students are a vital part of Ontario's economy and post-secondary sector, reflecting the high-quality education offered by our Public Colleges and Universities, and Ontario's international reputation as a multi-cultural, safe, and welcoming environment. International students contribute \$10.8 billion towards Ontario's GDP, supporting 118,206 jobs in 2018 alone. There is a clear economic advantage for the Ministry to provide the necessary supports needed to ensure international students remain a vital contributing asset to Ontario's economy.

We write to you, as provincial student associations representing over 540,000 post-secondary students, requesting that you implement an immediate international student tuition freeze, establish a \$1000 emergency tuition relief fund for students in need, and commit to increasing the base operating grant funding for Public Colleges & Universities. We look forward to receiving a response from you with details of further action.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Eli Ridder' in a cursive script.

Eli Ridder  
CSA President



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Eunice Oladejo' in a cursive script.

Eunice Oladejo  
OUSA President



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Kayla Weiler' in a cursive script.

Kayla Weiler  
CFS-O Representative

MPP Laura Mae Lindo  
Critic for Colleges and Universities

MPP Taras Natyshak  
Critic for Job Creation & Economic  
Recovery; Ethics and Accountability

MPP Doly Begum  
Critic for Citizenship, Foreign  
Credentials & Immigration Services

MPP Peggy Sattler  
Critic for Labour

MPP France Gélinas  
Critic for Health

MPP Monique Taylor  
Critic for Mental Health & Addictions

MPP Sol Mamakwa  
Critic for Indigenous & Treaty Relations

MPP Suze Morrison  
Critic for Urban Indigenous Issues

MPP Joel Harden  
Critic for Accessibility & Persons with  
Disabilities

MPP Rima Berns-McGown  
Critic for Poverty & Homelessness

MPP Terence Kernaghan  
Critic for LGBTQ

MPP Jill Andrew  
Critic for Women's Issues

MPP Lisa Gretzky  
Critic for Community & Social Services

MPP Marit Stiles  
Critic for Education

MPP Jessica Bell  
University-Rosedale

MPP Chris Glover  
Spadina-Fort York

MPP Teresa J. Armstrong  
London-Fanshawe

MPP Percy Hatfield  
Windsor-Tecumseh

MPP Sandy Shaw  
Hamilton-Ancaster-Dundas

MPP Jennie Stevens  
St. Catharines

MPP Peter Tabuns  
Toronto-Danforth

MPP John Vanthof  
Deputy Leader of Official Opposition

MPP Dave Smith  
Peterborough-Kawartha

MPP Faisal Hassan  
York-South Weston

MPP Andrea Khanjin  
Deputy Government House Leader

MPP Judith Monteith-Farrell  
Thunder Bay-Atikokan

MPP Michael Gravelle  
Thunder Bay-Superior North

CC: Hon. Christine Elliott, Minister of Health & Deputy Premier

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