



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

Paul Manly

Member of Parliament
Nanaimo-Ladysmith

January 21, 2020

The Honourable Chrystia Freeland, P.C., M.P.
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Minister Freeland,

We are writing today to advocate for increased federal investment in post-secondary education and students.

A post-secondary degree is now the required level of education for many employment opportunities in Canada. High tuition fees are leaving too many students unable to access an affordable education. This is increasing student debt and causing economic hardship.

The pandemic has not affected all students equally; it has exacerbated existing socioeconomic inequalities, further marginalizing low-income students, students with disabilities, Indigenous students, and newcomers.

The Green Party has long advocated for Canada to follow the Northern European model and make post-secondary tuition free for all Canadian students. We continue to encourage the government to implement free tuition for all. For current and prospective students who are struggling financially, free tuition should be provided now.

In the absence of free tuition, we have been [advocating for an extension on the six-month federal student loan and interest repayment moratorium](#). As announced in the Fall Economic Statement, the government's intention to eliminate interest on repayments for the 2021-22 year is a welcome start. However, we also urge the government to extend its commitment to loan repayments, as agreed to by unanimous consent on November 24 in the House of Commons.

We also encourage the government to boost investments to support post-secondary institutions and academic research. Post-secondary institutions did not receive pandemic funding, and have adjusted their budgets to reflect the new norms of increased workplace safety protocols, remote working, and reduced enrolment. Academic research has declined significantly, with 66% of academic staff reporting delays or a complete halt to their work.

Finally, we would like to express our support for the recommendations brought forward by [Undergraduates of Canadian Research-Intensive Universities \(UCRU\)](#) and the [Canadian Association of University Teachers \(CAUT\)](#) in their respective 2021 pre-budget submissions. These organizations are calling for greater federal investment in students, institutions, and research, in order to reduce inequalities, improve access to education, protect jobs, and accelerate research.

Thank you for your consideration and time on this very important subject.

Respectfully,



Paul Manly, MP
Nanaimo-Ladysmith



Elizabeth May, MP
Saanich-Gulf Islands



Jenica Atwin, MP
Fredericton

cc:

The Honourable Carla Qualtrough, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion