

Petition to the Minister of Human Resources and Social Development

We, the undersigned, residents of Canada, draw the attention of the Minister to the following:

THAT students who are forced to take out a loan in order to attain a postsecondary education (PSE) will pay considerably more for that education than those who can afford to pay upfront;

THAT chronic federal underfunding of core postsecondary education has led to soaring tuition fees and average student debt that is approaching \$25,000;

THAT Canada’s student loan system should be clear, fair, and responsive to students’ needs and circumstances; but instead it is currently a nightmare for thousands of student borrowers because of mishandled files, rigid and complicated processes, inadequate debt relief measures, abusive collection agencies, and other problems;

THEREFORE, your petitioners call upon the Minister to make certain that the review of Canada’s student loan system addresses and resolves the flaws in the system in each the following ways:

- Create a federal, need-based grant system for all Canada student loans in every year of study, by rolling in the budget of poorly targeted federal PSE programs and the expiring Millennium Scholarship Foundation;
- Reduce the federal student loan interest rate;
- Create a federal Student Loan Ombudsperson to help students navigate the loan system, objectively resolve problems and ensure that students are treated with fairness and respect;
- Provide better relief during repayment of student loans, including expanding eligibility for permanent disability benefits, interest relief and debt reduction;
- Create enforceable federal standards governing the conduct of government and private student loan collection agents, subject to the policy objective of helping students find ways to repay their loan;
- Amend the “lifetime limit” on student loans such that they are not repayable until six months after the completion of full-time studies, including doctoral programs and medical residency;
- Reduce the discriminatory ban on bankruptcy protection for student loans to two years;
- Address the recommendations of the Coalition for Student Loan Fairness and other student groups

	Signatures	Names	Addresses
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Return petition, postage-free, to your nearest NDP MP or to Denise Savoie MP, House of Commons, Ottawa ON K1A 0A6