



Council of Alberta University Students
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Students call on Albertans to speak out about the importance of affordable PSE

Edmonton, Alberta – Through a Metro story published late Wednesday evening, students learned that Premier Jim Prentice and the PC government are floating yet another trial balloon in advance of the budget, this time to gauge reaction on the elimination of the tuition cap. The cap, which limits tuition increases to the rate of inflation, is widely supported as a fair and predictable means of increasing the cost that students contribute towards their education.

“The idea of eliminating the tuition cap is an incredibly short sighted move that would affect not just students but all Albertans for years to come,” said Navneet Khinda, Chair of the Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS). “It is for this reason that we are calling on students and citizens alike to speak up about the impact an accessible, affordable post-secondary education system has on the future we hope to see for our province.”

The potential for elimination of the tuition cap comes on the heels of a decision made by the government in December to approve 25 differential tuition increases across the province, resulting in students paying an additional \$21 million. Alberta students already pay nearly \$1.1 billion in tuition and fees annually. A complete elimination of the tuition cap along with the potential for further market modifiers and mandatory non-instructional fees, could see uncontrolled increases in the price of tuition.

“Alberta’s post-secondary institutions and their students, staff, and graduates are unequivocally the best hope that our province has for breaking the current boom and bust cycle our dependence on oil revenues continues to see us ensnared by,” explained Khinda. “It is time for the Government of Alberta to recognize that university students are the future of this province, not a source to backstop budget shortfalls. We’re calling on all Albertans to speak up about the importance of maintaining an affordable post-secondary system.”

During summer 2014, the government brought together post-secondary stakeholders in a working group to discuss changes to the Tuition & Fees Regulation. Representatives from CAUS have been working as active stakeholders in this process, but we have yet to see results from these working groups – results that were expected before January 2015. Despite our repeated requests, Don Scott, Minister of Innovation and Advanced Education, has not met with elected student leaders since October 2014.

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The Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS) represents the interests of students at MacEwan University, Mount Royal University, the University of Alberta, the University of Calgary, and the University of Lethbridge

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