



## **Ontario Budget: Missed Opportunity to Support College Students**

*Tuesday, August 16, 2022*

**TORONTO, ON** - On Tuesday, August 9<sup>th</sup>, the governing Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario, led by Premier Doug Ford, introduced the 2022 Ontario Budget: *Ontario's Plan to Build* in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. The budget itself focuses primarily on the province's economic recovery and remains largely unchanged from its initial release in April before the provincial election. However much has changed since April with rapidly escalating inflation driving up the cost of living. The initial budget already lacked targeted investments supporting college students and post-secondary as a whole, its reintroduction without any policy addressing the cost-of-living challenges college students face is a significant missed opportunity.

"Ontario's college students already face serious challenges from being able to fund their education and quality of living to mental health, especially our northern and international students. With inflation driving up the cost of living, college students are being pushed into a more dire position," said Azi Afousi, Interim President of the College Student Alliance (CSA).

Ontario continues to have the lowest full-time equivalency student expenditures and one of the lowest college operating grants in Canada. As emphasized by the Ontario Auditor General's report on post-secondary, colleges are relying on significant increases in international student tuition. Currently, international student tuition provides half a billion dollars more in funding than the provincial government; a policy by the colleges that puts the entire sector at risk. Not only is this current funding model financially unsustainable for the sector, but it is also students who shoulder the burden of these costs. CSA urges the provincial government to increase operating grants to post-secondary institutions to promote a more viable sector.

"College students will be an essential part of the economic recovery of Ontario, these are our future professionals and tradespeople. The Government of Ontario must provide the proper support that will ensure college students can succeed," said Ms. Afousi.

To secure a strong economic recovery in the years ahead, it is essential that the Government of Ontario take actionable, evidence-driven steps to support college students.

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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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