

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau  
Prime Minister of Canada  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

via email: justin.trudeau@parl.gc.ca

May 13, 2019

Dear Right Hon. Justin Trudeau,

I am writing on behalf of more than 5,500 members of the Confederation of University Faculty Associations of British Columbia who endorse the British Columbia Federation of Students' *Knock Out Interest* campaign ([www.knockoutinterest.ca](http://www.knockoutinterest.ca)). This campaign calls on your government to increase the affordability of post-secondary education by eliminating interest charged on federal student loans.

The rising costs associated with federal student loan debt are increasingly making life unaffordable in Canada, and disproportionately affecting students and families from low- and middle-income backgrounds. Over half of students in Canada graduate with student loan debt, and the average debt for students graduating with an undergraduate degree is over \$30,000. With tuition fees continuing to rise, that number will only increase in the future.

Your government's work on the Canada Student Grant Program enhances students' access to post-secondary education in important ways but does not go far enough to address the realities of rising costs in post-secondary education.

Your Budget 2019 announced a plan to reduce student loan interest to prime and prime + 2% on variable interest rate and fixed interest rate loans, respectively. This is a positive step to mitigate the ballooning of student loan debt; however, the prime interest rate continues to increase, meaning that the cost of student loan debt continues to rise regardless of your government's action.

The next step in supporting Canadians is to eliminate interest charged on student loans. By doing so, you will help to level the playing field for Canadians, making life more affordable for those who have to borrow money to access education. Eliminating student loan interest will also help newly employed graduates save money to buy a home, start a family, or work in a much-needed field even if it pays less than other options.

CUFA BC stands with the BC Federation of Students and its 130,000 members in its call to action to end student loan interest. We call on you, along with the following members of parliament who represent communities that include our member universities, to implement this much-needed change.

Sincerely,



Jacqueline Holler, PhD  
President

CC: Terry Beech, MP for Burnaby North — Seymour  
Nathan Cullen, MP for Skeena — Bulkley Valley  
Todd Doherty, MP for Cariboo — Prince George

Hon. Hedy Fry, MP for Vancouver Centre  
Stephen Fuhr, MP for Kelowna — Lake Country  
Randall Garrison, MP for Esquimalt — Saanich — Sooke  
Hon. Joyce Murray, MP for Vancouver Quadra  
Murray Rankin, MP for Victoria  
Randeep Sarai, MP for Surrey — Centre  
Bob Zimmer, MP for Prince George — Peace River — Northern Rockies