

For Immediate Release
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2022-2023 PROVINCIAL BUDGET LACKS SOLUTIONS FOR OUR FUTURE

KJIPUKTUK/HALIFAX- Today's provincial budget shows little support for students struggling with Nova Scotia's high cost of living and the country's highest tuition rates.

"Students are struggling to make ends meet and today's provincial budget does not give them much in the way of relief," said Kris Reppas, Chairperson for the Canadian Federation of Students-Nova Scotia.

This budget does include a new tax rebate program for people under age 30 working in skilled trades and \$1.3 million to support post-secondary students with accessibility needs. However, the 2022-23 budget expenses for Advanced Education fail to keep pace with inflation and its percent of the overall budget has decreased since last year despite 'Solutions for our future', including Education, being included as one of the pillars of Budget 2022-23. Decreased government funding as a proportion of post-secondary education institution operating costs has meant that costs have been increasingly downloaded onto students. Nova Scotia domestic undergraduates are currently paying the highest tuition in the country at an average of \$9,028 for the 2021-22 academic year, compared to a national average of \$6,693. Despite this, Budget 2022-23 provides investments for university buildings but not for student debt or tuition relief.

In addition to the challenge of affording tuition, students are also struggling to meet the increasingly high cost of living, including unaffordable housing, rising food prices, and health care and mental health services not covered by MSI or students' insurance providers. The provincial budget released today does little to address the high cost of living students and other Nova Scotians are facing.

"It is disappointing to see that, as we are all trying to recover from the pandemic, this government is not doing more to help students, renters, workers, and all Nova Scotians struggling to afford necessities," said Reppas. "Budgets are about priorities and from this budget it is clear that Tim Houston's government is not prioritizing the needs of students."

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The Canadian Federation of Students is the oldest and largest national student organization in Canada, representing over 530,000 college, undergraduate and graduate students across the country.

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