

1. CALL TO ORDER

Call to Order – 11:35 AM

2. TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We respectfully acknowledge that the SFSS is located on the traditional, unceded territories of the Coast Salish peoples, including the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Sk̓w̓x̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), Sel̓íl̓wítulh (Tsleil-Waututh), k^wik^wəłəm (Kwikwetlem) and q̓icəy̓ (Katzie) Nations. Unceded means that these territories have never been handed over, sold, or given up by these nations, and we are currently situated on occupied territories.

3. ROLL CALL OF ATTENDANCE

3.1 External and Community Affairs Committee Composition

VP External Relations (<i>Chair</i>).....	Samad Raza
Board of Directors Representative	Anuki Karunajeewa
Board of Directors Representative	Harry Preet Singh
Board of Directors Representative.....	Sude Guvendik
Board of Directors Representative.....	WeiChun Kua
At-Large Representative	Balqees Jama
President.....	Osob Mohamed
Student At-Large.....	<i>Vacant</i>
Student At-Large.....	<i>Vacant</i>
Student At-Large.....	<i>Vacant</i>
Student At-Large.....	<i>Vacant</i>
Student At-Large.....	<i>Vacant</i>
Student At-Large.....	<i>Vacant</i>

3.2 Society Staff

Campaigns, Research, & Policy Coordinator	Sarah Edmunds
Executive Director	Sylvia Ceacero
Executive Assistant.....	Shaneika Blake
Administrative Assistant.....	Kristin Kokkov

3.3 Regrets

At-Large Representative	Balqees Jama
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3.4 Absent

Board of Directors Representative	Harry Preet Singh
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4. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

4.1 MOTION ECAC 2020-06-01:01

WeiChun/Sude

Be it resolved to adopt the agenda as amended.

CARRIED AS AMENDED unanimously

4.1.1. MOTION ECAC 2020-06-01:01-01

Samad/WeiChun

Be it resolved to add regrets from Balkees Jama.

Be it further resolved to remove discussion item 6.2 Just Recovery for All from the agenda.

CARRIED unanimously

5. RATIFICATION OF REGRETS

5.1 MOTION ECAC 2020-06-01:02

Anuki/Sude

Be it resolved to ratify regrets from Balkees Jama.

CARRIED unanimously

6. DISCUSSION

6.1 TMX pipeline letter (Anuki)

- Committee members are currently working on a campaign against TMX.
 - A letter is drafted that states why this expansion project is bad in terms of the current context of the pandemic.
 - Coming out of the Covid-19 crisis, many people will be in financial crisis and the expansion project money could be put into the use of Just Recovery for everyone.
 - This expansion project endangers the people of the SFU.
 - The draft letter was sent to different student unions across Canada and US states.
 - The letter will send a message to the federate government.
 - There is a plan to submit the motion to the next board meeting to support the campaign against TMX.
- It was pointed out that the Board technically does not have to vote on that this year, because this has already been voted on last year.
 - The Board has voted to be opposed to both the tank and the pipeline.
 - There are letters that were written two boards ago.
 - Letters were written also to CER.
 - However, it was suggested that there may be some benefit in bringing it back to the Board this year.

6.2 Race-Based Data Collection

- It was pointed out that there should be a call for race-based data collection – the indigenous communities are suffering the most.
 - It was suggested that the SFSS could formally release a statement that the race-based data is necessary.
- It was brought out that there is a petition asking the government to collect the race-based data.
- However, it was also pointed out that the province already follows the data from who

identify as indigenous.

- It was suggested to look at the research.

6.3 Lobbying Registrar (Sarah)

- It was pointed out that there is a new act that the provincial government has introduced that requires anyone who is lobbying to register.
 - Everyone who does lobby the provincial government has to report that at the Lobbying Registrar.
 - Every month there is a report due to the 15th of the month.
 - Campaigns, Research, & Policy Coordinator would compile the report, and therefore it was asked to send her the list of all the meetings and lobbying activities.
 - There is no limit who can register, and it was suggested that all the committee members should register.
 - It was suggested to register as soon as possible.
- 15th of June is the deadline for the next report.

6.4 BC budget consultation

- The budget consultation has started already, and the submission will be sent in.
 - The president has already submitted three points:
 - Implementing 2% cap for international students' tuition hikes;
 - Increasing public funding for post secondary schools;
 - International student health fee.
- It was pointed out that these three topics were worked on also in the previous years.
 - There has not been any new developments and progress recently.
- It was proposed to take Covid-19 as a factor into account and rewrite some of the points.
 - It was suggested to push for the 2% cap for international students' fee.
 - There is a high chance that the international students fee will be made higher.
 - Post Covid-19 will be a recession, and this is not the time to profit based on international students.
- It was insisted that it is necessary to take immediate action on this, because both domestic and international students are going to be in trouble.
 - There are no subsidies coming for international students.
- It was pointed out that there is a need to shift from subsidizing models from international students to more self-sufficient model which means getting funding from the government.

6.5 Advocacy Initiatives Annual Plan (Sarah)

- The committees that have a budget, have their budget kept in the departmental coordinator's budget that advises the committee.
 - The UAA and ECAC have a shared budget.
- It was brought out that there is a need for preparing an annual plan for spending of the budget.
- It was suggested to think about what the committee wants to accomplish this year.
 - Budget consultations, both federal and provincial

- Fall Lobbying
- Spring Lobbying
- Federal lobbying
- There are past reports that could be used.
- This will be looked into further.

6.6 Student At-Large Application

- There are 6 opening for student at larges.
 - The UAA application will be similar to the ECAC application.
 - There will be Google document and the committee members can add thing there.
 - This will be sent to the Nominating committee
 - It was asked if the committee members would like to do interviews as well.
 - It was suggested to have the applications and see how many there are going to be.
 - Last year at the UAA there were no interviews because there were only a few applications.
 - If there are more than 7-8 applications, then there could be interviews to see who the candidates are.
 - The google doc will be shared with everyone.
 - By the end of this week the doc will be sent to nominating committee.

7. ATTACHMENTS

- 2020-05-06 Registering as a Lobbyist
- 2019 Provincial Lobbying Report
- SFSSBudgetSubmission2019

8. ADJOURNMENT

8.1 MOTION ECAC 2020-06-01:02

Sude/WeiChun

Be it resolved to adjourn the meeting at 12:19 PM.

CARRIED unanimously

BRIEFING NOTE

REGISTERING AS A LOBBYIST WITH THE REGISTRAR OF LOBBYISTS

BACKGROUND

The Office of the Registrar of Lobbyists of British Columbia (the Registrar) released a statement announcing a coming-into-force date of May 4, 2020 for British Columbia's Lobbyists Transparency Act (LTA). The new legislation incorporates recommendations made by the Registrar of Lobbyists to increase transparency in lobbying. Lobbyists may register as individual consultants, or as in-house lobbyists for an organisation.

The main changes are the) introduction of 1) a new Lobbyists Registry, making it easier for lobbyists to use and the public to search for lobbyists, and 2) monthly returns, which are monthly reports of organisational or consultant lobbying activities. Additionally, more organisations will have to register their activities as a result of the elimination of the exemption that permitted organisations that have lobbied less than 100 hours in the previous 12 months to not register with the Lobbyists Registry. As reported by the Registrar, many non-governmental organizations, societies, unions, and not-for-profit organizations that have not needed to register in the Lobbyists Registry in the past will now be required to do so.

The SFSS had four different registered lobbyists from August 2010 to November 2012 – the former Campaigns, Research and Policy Coordinator (previously called the Campaigns and Research Coordinator), and Board members, including the former VP External Relations. They were registered as in-house lobbyists. It is unclear if they met the 100-hour annual threshold.

CURRENT STATUS

A transition period from May 4 to June 15, 2020 has been provided for lobbyists to update their current registrations in the new lobbyists registry and to file their first monthly return for any lobbying activity. For lobbyists actively responding to the COVID-19 epidemic who may require more time, that transition period extends to September 15, 2020.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

1. As per the LTA, "lobby", subject to section 2 (2) of the LTA, means:
 - a. to communicate with a public office holder in an attempt to influence:
 - i. the development of any legislative proposal by the government of British Columbia, a Provincial entity or a member of the Legislative Assembly,
 - ii. the introduction, amendment, passage or defeat of any Bill or resolution in or before the Legislative Assembly,

- iii. the development or enactment of any regulation, including the enactment of a regulation for the purposes of amending or repealing a regulation,
 - iv. the development, establishment, amendment or termination of any program, policy, directive or guideline of the government of British Columbia or a Provincial entity,
 - v. the awarding, amendment or termination of any contract, grant or financial benefit by or on behalf of the government of British Columbia or a Provincial entity,
 - vi. a decision by the Executive Council or a member of the Executive Council to transfer from the Crown for consideration all or part of, or any interest in or asset of, any business, enterprise or institution that provides goods or services to the Crown, a Provincial entity or the public, or
 - vii. a decision by the Executive Council or a member of the Executive Council to have the private sector instead of the Crown provide goods or services to the government of British Columbia or a Provincial entity,
- b. to arrange a meeting between a public office holder and any other individual for the purpose of attempting to influence any of the matters referred to in paragraph (a) of this definition.
- 2. As per the LTA, "lobbying activity" means any of the activities described in paragraphs (a) and (b) of the definition of "lobby".
- 3. Infographic documents such as the one linked [here](#) provide a simplified flow-chart, clearly showing that if the SFSS engages in lobbying activity with the provincial government, they must register those employees or Board members engaging in the activity on the Lobbyists Registry as in-house lobbyists.
- 4. An in-house lobbyist, as defined in the LTA, is "...subject to subsection (4), a person who
 - a. is an employee, officer or director of an organization,
 - b. receives a payment for the performance of the person's functions, and
 - c. lobbies on behalf of the organization or an affiliate".
- 5. Per Key Consideration #4, SFSS staff and Board members engaging in lobbying activity would be in-house lobbyists.

OPTIONS

- 1. Register with the Registrar
- 2. Do not register with the Registrar

RECOMMENDATION

I recommend we register with the ORL prior the first meeting with an elected government official. The budget consultation may meet the standard of lobbying, depending on our requests. Reports are not needed until we officially lobby the provincial government.

NEXT STEPS

1. Determine which Federal, Provincial, and Municipal Lobbying and Advocacy Committee members will meet with government officials.
2. Discuss the provincial budget consultation meeting and/or video/written submission.
3. Register those attending.

Please see the transition guide for further details:

<https://www.lobbyistsregistrar.bc.ca/handlers/DocumentHandler.ashx?DocumentID=346>

FURTHER READING

Guidance Documents: <https://www.lobbyistsregistrar.bc.ca/lobbyists-transparency-act/guidance-documents/>

Guidelines for Organisations:

<https://www.lobbyistsregistrar.bc.ca/handlers/DocumentHandler.ashx?DocumentID=343>

Provincial Lobbying **FALL 2019**

simon fraser
student society

Federal, Provincial, Municipal
Lobbying and Advocacy Committee





OVERVIEW

The Simon Fraser Student Society (SFSS) visits the BC Legislature annually to advocate on behalf of the membership. Members of the Federal, Provincial, Municipal Lobbying and Advocacy Committee work community partners and local student unions to organize this annual trip.

This year, the focus of the provincial lobbying trip was:

- i. Student Financial Aid
- ii. International Students
- iii. Sexual Violence and Misconduct Policies

PARTNERS

This lobbying trip was a collaboration between the SFSS, BC Federation of Students (BCFS) and the UBC Alma Mater Society (AMS).



Student Society
of UBC Vancouver



STUDENT FINANCIAL AID

BC is the only province that does not offer up-front, needs based grants or forgivable loans. These two forms of financial aid provide the assurance needed by low and middle-income background students who are not able to take on large amounts of debt for their education.

According to public opinion polls collected by the BCFS, 68% of British Columbians are in support or strongly in support of the up-front, needs based grant program.



RECOMMENDATION: Increase non-repayable student financial aid options for students from low- and middle-income backgrounds through a up-front, needs-based grants program.

International tuition fees are not regulated and are increasing at alarming rates every year. Fees can increase by as much as 20% every year, which can significantly increase the financial burden on international students.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

There is no predictability in these fee increases and they are often rolled out with very short notice. International students that cannot gather these funds in time are at risk of being removed from their courses and the country.

RECOMMENDATION: Amend the Tutiton Fee Limit Policy to include the regulation of fees for international students to create fairness, predictability and consistency.



SEXUAL VIOLENCE & MISCONDUCT POLICIES

In 2016, Bill 23 was passed which provided a mandate for institutions to implement adequate reporting and resources to support survivors of sexual violence.

This mandate resulted in additional costs to institutions and many of them do not have the sufficient funding to implement the needed changes. This act also lacks the oversight and accountability procedures that are necessary to ensure it is effective.

RECOMMENDATION: Review the sexual violence and misconduct policies across the province and undertake a needs assesment to determine the funding lacks some institutions have. Additionally, develop an accountability mechanism for consistency.



More information on our advocacy campaigns can be found at sfss.ca/advocacy.

TRIP COSTS

	Budget	Actual
Accommodations	\$660.00	***
Transportation	\$386.50	\$246.62
Food	\$270.00	\$212.41
Contingency	\$131.65	\$00.00

NOTE: The actual cost of accommodations will be determined once we receive the invoice from the BCFS. It is estimated to be the same as the budgeted amount.



We had a great experience preparing for this trip with the BCFS and AMS. Naturally, some of our top priorities were in alignment, and we were able to create a joint lobbying document that effectively communicated our recommendations.

OUR EXPERIENCE

Initially the trip was planned to include meetings with 73 Ministers and MLAs. This included a breakfast reception with the Minister of Advanced Education, and a lunch reception with the Liberal Opposition Critics. Unfortunately, the night prior to the meetings and reception with the BC Liberals, we were notified that 22 MLAs from this party were no longer available to meet and these meetings were abruptly cancelled. We followed up and tried to reschedule with the BC Liberals staff, however, we were told that rescheduling was not possible.

All of the advocacy work that we do at the SFSS and at our partner organizations is non-partisan, and solely for the purpose of improving the lives of students across the province. We were very disappointed by this incident and followed up by sending a letter to Eric Foster (Opposition Whip) and Andrew Wilkinson (Leader of the Official Opposition) that communicated our disappointment.

Aside from this, we had very positive meetings with the MLAs that we were able to meet with. Many of them indicated their support for the different recommendations that were provided. Premier John Horgan and Minister Melanie Mark specifically indicated that a needs-based grants program was something the provincial government is seriously considering for the near future.

We believe this lobbying trip was effective in strengthening our relationships with our provincial partners and building upon our lobbying efforts. We are also looking forward to the BC Budget 2020 release, and we are positive that we will see some of our advocacy efforts materialize in the very near future.



We would like to thank the BCFS and AMS for partnering with us on this lobbying trip. We look forward to collaborating in the future to strengthen the voice of students across the province.



simon fraser student society



sfss.ca



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[@sfss1](https://www.instagram.com/sfss1)



The Simon Fraser Student Society (SFSS)

**Maggie Benston Centre 2270
Simon Fraser University
8888 University Drive, BC V5A 1S6
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Submission to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services

2020 BC Budget Consultation

June 23, 2019

Contact:

Jasdeep Gill | Vice President External Relations

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Preface

The Simon Fraser Student Society (SFSS) is a student union representing 25,000+ undergraduate students attending Simon Fraser University (SFU) across three main campuses in Burnaby, Surrey, and Vancouver. We would like to begin by thanking the Government of British Columbia for the following investments:

- Allocating \$2.33 billion for advanced education, skills and training for fiscal year 2019/2020 in *Budget 2019*;
- Continuing to disburse funds from the \$450 million B.C. Student Housing Loan Program;
- Providing \$318 million over 4 years to eliminate interest on BC student loans; and
- Contributing \$3.26 million to fund open education resources (OERs), including open textbooks provided by BCcampus

The *British Columbia Labour Market Outlook: 2018 Edition* predicts there will be 903,000 job openings between 2018 and 2028¹. Nearly 80% of these projected job openings will require some post-secondary education, with 36% requiring at least a bachelor's degree (**Figure 1**).

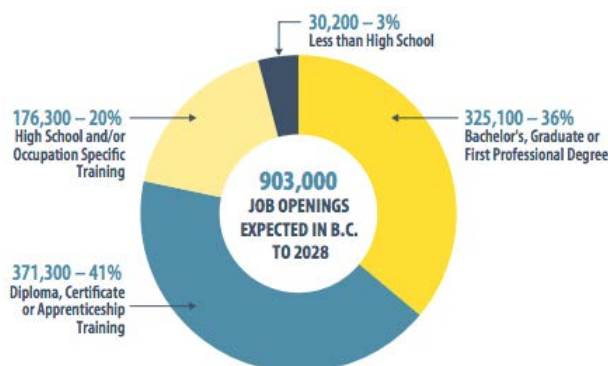


Figure 1: Predicted job openings from 2018 to 2028 by educational requirements

Additionally, the *BC Student Outcomes: The 2017 Highlights* report found that the majority of post-secondary graduates were successful in obtaining employment upon graduation, with 83% of baccalaureate graduates employed² (**Figure 2**). It is evident that investment in post-secondary education produces a workforce that is equipped with the knowledge and skills to succeed in and contribute to B.C.'s growing workforce.

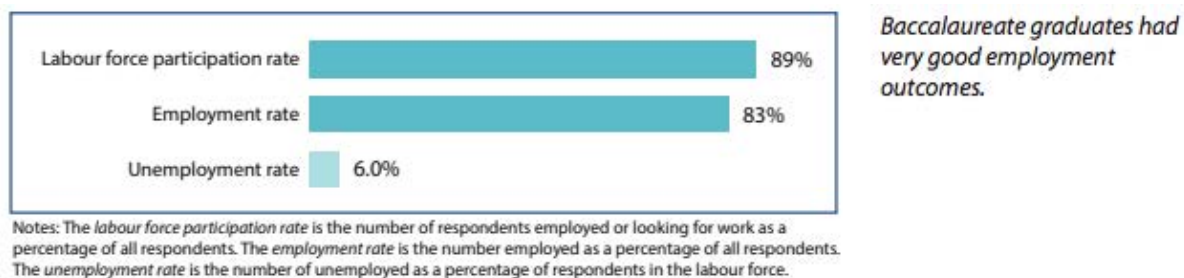


Figure 2: Number of baccalaureate graduates surveyed in 2017 in the labour force

¹ WorkBC. "British Columbia Labour Market Outlook: 2018 Edition." 2017. <https://www.workbc.ca/getmedia/00de3b15-0551-4f70-9e6b-23ffb6c9cb86/LabourMarketOutlook.pdf.aspx>

² BC Student Outcomes. *BC Student Outcomes: The 2017 highlights*. Victoria, BC: The Queen's Printer. 2018.

Introduction

In the *Report on the Budget 2019 Consultation*, the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services (the Committee) included recommendations put forward by the SFSS and other student unions. These recommendations were to:

4. Eliminate the interest on provincial student loans.
7. Review and evaluate “completion grant” and “up-front needs-based grant” models with the aim of ensuring post-secondary students have access to the most beneficial and impactful support.

The SFSS recommendations for *Budget 2020* are as follows:

1. Introduce an “up-front needs-based grant” as opposed to increasing the disbursement available through completion grants.
2. Distribute a portion of the \$450 million from the B.C. Student Housing Loan Program to affordable, on-campus rental housing at SFU.
3. Revise the Tuition Limit Policy to mandate post-secondary institutions to provide the cost of tuition over a four-year period for all students, ensuring predictability and stability for both domestic and international students.
4. Revise the campaign promise of providing a \$400 renters' rebate to provide renters with a rent rebate geared to income.

Recommendation 1

Introduce an “up-front needs-based grant” as opposed to increasing the disbursement available through completion grants

Background:

In order to finance post-secondary education, many students turn to government financial assistance in the form of loans or grants. Grants are preferable to loans, as a higher loan-to-grant ratio correlates to a high student debt ratio and high loan default rates³. During the 2017 election, the NDP proposed introducing a \$1,000 completion grant. Currently, B.C. has two completion grants provided by StudentAid BC. The B.C. Completion Grant is a grant provided to full-time students after completion of each year of their studies, based on assessed financial need and B.C. student loan amount. This grant is automatically applied to students' StudentAid BC loan accounts. The B.C. Completion Grant for Graduates delivers a maximum loan reduction of \$500 available by application to students who graduate from post-secondary programs that support jobs that are in high-demand. Completion grants are designed to target students on-track for graduation who have unmet financial need⁴, while up-front, needs-based grants are based on financial need and are provided over the course of a degree⁵. B.C. remains the only province in Canada without an up-front, needs-based grant program since repealing the pre-existing program in 2004⁶.

Rationale:

Studies on the value of completion grants are limited, and have largely been undertaken by American post-secondary institutions. Furthermore, most completion grants, such as the Home Stretch grant at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis⁷ and the Panther Retention Grant at Georgia State⁸, are provided by universities rather than the government. The value of up-front, needs-based grants for undergraduate students, on the other hand, is well-documented. Many studies^{9,10,11,12,13} show a positive correlation between receiving a needs-based grant and student persistence (staying enrolled) and degree completion. Receiving needs-based grants can moderately temper the negative effects of low parental income and a high drop-out risk¹⁴. For minority students, those that receive non-grant financial aid have a higher risk of dropping out

³ Commission on Post-Secondary Education. *Advantage, New Brunswick: A Province Reaches to Fulfill Its Destiny*. Fredericton, N.B.: Commission on Post-Secondary Education. 2007.

⁴ Anderson, B.C. & Steele, P.E. *Foiling the Drop-Out Trap: Completion Grant Practices for Retaining and Graduating Students*. New York: High Ed Insight, 2016.

⁵ Castleman, B.L., & Long, B.T. “Looking Beyond Enrollment: The Causal Effect of Need-Based Grants on College Access, Persistence, and Graduation.” *Journal of Labour Economics* 34, no. 4 (2016): 1023-1073. doi:10.3386/w19306

⁶ CBC News. “B.C. NDP Calls for Bank-Funded Grants for Students.” *CBC News*. September 11, 2011. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/b-c-ndp-calls-for-bank-funded-grants-for-students-1.1122487>

⁷ Nietzel, M.T. “College Completion Grants: The Financial Aid Every College Should Offer.” *Forbes*. January 1, 2019. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/michaelt Nietzel/2019/01/01/college-completion-grants-the-financial-aid-every-college-should-offer/#c089a0a377b5>

⁸ Anderson, B.C. & Steele, P.E. *Foiling the Drop-Out Trap: Completion Grant Practices for Retaining and Graduating Students*. New York: High Ed Insight. 2016.

⁹ Castleman & Long, *Looking Beyond Enrollment*

¹⁰ Dynarski, S. “Does Aid Matter? Measuring the Effect of Student Aid on College Attendance and Completion.” *American Economic Review* 93, no. 1 (2003): 279-288. doi:10.3386/w7422

¹¹ Chen, R., & DesJardins, S.L. “Exploring the Effects of Financial Aid on the Gap in Student Dropout Risks by Income Level.” *Research in Higher Education* 49, no. 1 (2008): 1-18. doi:10.1007/s11162-007-9060-9

¹² Fack, G., & Grenet, J. “Improving College Access and Success for Low-Income Students: Evidence from a Large Need-Based Grant Program.” *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 7, no. 2 (2015): 1-34. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24739032>

¹³ Horn, C., Santelices, M.V. & Avendaño, X.C. “Modeling the Impacts of National and Institutional Financial Aid Opportunities on Persistence at an Elite Chilean University.” *Higher Education* 68, no. 3 (2014): 471-488. doi: 10.1007/s10734-014

¹⁴ Horn, Santelices, Avendaño, *Modeling the Impacts*

than white students, while those that receive large government grants have lower dropout risks than their white peers¹⁵.

It is evident that while there is a significant lack of credible research on the value of completion grants, up-front, needs-based grants are positively correlated with student success. As students are more likely to drop out in their first year¹⁶, an up-front, needs-based grant program can help retain and graduate B.C.'s most vulnerable students. Ensuring these loans are provided primarily to low- and middle-income students and students with permanent disabilities or dependants¹⁷, as well as minority students, will provide the greatest benefit.

Cost:

It is estimated the cost of this program will be \$420 million* plus administrative costs. However, some of this cost can be subsidized by moving spending on the current B.C. completion grants to this program.

*This cost estimate is based on the total cost of grants disbursed to low-income students as part of the Ontario Student Assistance Program in 2017/2018, divided by the factor of the Ontario population to the B.C. population (\$1.225 billion/2.86) = \$420 million

¹⁵ Chen, R., & DesJardins, S.L. "Investigating the Impact of Financial Aid on Student Dropout Risks: Racial and Ethnic Differences." *The Journal of Higher Education* 81, no. 2 (2008):179-208. doi:10.1353/jhe.0.0085

¹⁶ Dwyer, McCloud & Hodson, *Debt and Graduation*.

¹⁷ Employment and Social Development Canada. *The Government of Canada provides Canada Student Grants to over 1 million students*. Calgary, AB: Media Relations Office, Employment and Social Development Canada. June 24, 2015.

Recommendation 2

Distribute a portion of the \$450 million from the B.C. Student Housing Loan Program to affordable, on-campus rental housing at SFU

Background:

Canadian undergraduate students that rent accommodations off-campus spend, on average, 40% of their annual income on renting¹⁸. As Metro Vancouver is consistently ranked as one of the least affordable places to rent in Canada, this proportion is likely much higher for SFU students that live on their own. An on-campus, a pre-existing one bedroom apartment at SFU Burnaby campus costs an average of \$843 per month¹⁹. On-campus rents on UBC campus and SFU Burnaby campus are priced, on average, 25% below the rental market rate for their respective locations.

The provincial government is providing the University of Victoria (UVic) with \$123 million to build and upgrade on-campus student housing, with \$98 million coming from the B.C. Student Housing Loan Program²⁰. This housing will accommodate an additional 728 students, or 3.5% of the school's population. Given that 43%²¹ of SFU undergraduates indicated that they would be very likely or likely to live on-campus if rentals were priced lower, there is a clear demand for affordable, on-campus housing at SFU.

Rationale:

The Government of B.C. as well as student advocacy groups (e.g. the B.C. Student Housing Working Group) have argued that the provision of more affordable, on-campus residence and housing for students would have the following benefits:

- Helps students to graduate with less debt and complete their studies.
- Enables students to work fewer hours while they are in school and focus on their studies.
- Contributes to freeing off-campus places, easing the existing pressure on the local rental market.
- Reduces congestion on the overcrowded transit routes that service post-secondary institutions as students can use active transportation to get to class (e.g. walking, biking).
- Helps build campus culture.

Cost:

The SFSS is asking for a loan on behalf of SFU Residence and Housing of **\$124 million*** from the B.C. Student Housing Loan Program.

*This cost estimate is based on the cost of the UVic project. With a population of just over 25,000 undergraduate students, 3.5% the SFU undergraduate population would be 875 students. Based on the estimated cost of the UVic project per student and number of SFU students, plus the cost premium of renting in Burnaby (\$110 million + 12.9%) = \$124 million

¹⁸ Brown, M. "The Cost of a Canadian University Education in Six Charts." 2018. <https://www.macleans.ca/education/the-cost-of-a-canadian-university-education-in-six-charts/>

¹⁹ Simon Fraser University. *SFU Residence and Housing Master Plan 2015-2035*. Burnaby, B.C.: Simon Fraser University. 2015.

²⁰ Office of the Premier. *Hundreds of New, Affordable, Student Homes Coming to UVic*. Victoria, B.C.: BC Gov News. 2018.

²¹ SFSS 2019 Advocacy Survey

Recommendation 3

Revise the Tuition Limit Policy to mandate post-secondary institutions to provide all students with the cost of tuition over a four-year period, ensuring predictability and stability for both domestic and international students

Background:

International undergraduate tuition in B.C. rose by an average of 34% from 2014/2015 to 2018/2019²². Comparatively, domestic undergraduate tuition rose 11% in that same period. Domestic student tuition increases are capped at 2% per year as per the provincial Tuition Limit Policy, whereas international student fees are not covered by provincial funding or regulations. Thus, international student fees are set by individual post-secondary institutions “in the context of the competitive global market”²³. Tuition fees provide over 40% of B.C. universities’ operating revenue, up from just 10% in 1979²⁴. In 2015, tuition surpassed provincial government funding as the number one source of revenue for SFU, and in 2018, international student tuition outpaced domestic tuition as SFU’s greatest source of tuition revenue²⁵. These funding decreases coupled with a lack of government policy to keep international tuition in line with inflation is making post-secondary education in British Columbia increasingly unattainable for foreign students.

Rationale:

In 2016, international student spending contributed over \$3.7 billion to the B.C. economy, 21.6% of B.C.’s GDP for that year²⁶. Across Canada, they contributed \$2.3 billion in tax revenue in 2015. International student enrolment even benefits domestic students – for example, at North Island College on Vancouver Island, revenue from international students allowed them to enroll an additional 688 domestic students in 2017²⁷. However, both the province and post-secondary institutions are currently economically vulnerable, as institutions would lose a major portion of their operating revenue if international student enrollment dropped, and the government would lose their large contributions to the economy. For example, when international student enrolment dropped in 2009 due to the global financial crisis, SFU ran an operating deficit. A comprehensive strategy that creates both cost stability and predictability for international students and ensures international student enrollment can benefit institutions, local communities and the B.C. economy is necessary.

Providing an undergraduate fee schedule for the duration of a student’s degree allows for greater predictability, and more precise planning and budgeting. The Tuition Limit Policy should be adapted to include a requirement for post-secondary institutions to provide a four-year cost estimate of tuition and fees for both domestic and international students. For international students, it could provide the stability and predictability they need to pursue education in Canada.

Cost:

The cost of policy evaluation and implementation is unknown.

²² Statistics Canada. “Canadian and International Tuition Fees by Level of Study.” 2019.
<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3710004501>

²³ Simon Fraser University. *Budget and Financial Plan 2019-20*. Burnaby, B.C.: Simon Fraser University. 2019.

²⁴ Ivanova, I. *Paid in Full Update: Who Pays for University Education in BC?* Vancouver, B.C.: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. 2012.

²⁵ Simon Fraser University, *Budget and Financial Plan*.

²⁶ Statistics Canada. *Economic impact of international education in Canada – 2017 update*. 2017.
<https://www.international.gc.ca/education/report-rapport/impact-2017/index.aspx?lang=eng>

²⁷ Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services. *Report on the Budget 2019 consultation*. Victoria, B.C.: The Legislative Assembly of British Columbia. 2019.

Recommendation 4

Revise the campaign promise of providing a \$400 renters' rebate to provide renters with a rent rebate geared to income

Background:

For Canadian students living outside of their parents' home, annual costs of living are, on average, 50% higher than those that live with their parents²⁸. In 2017, the average monthly rent for a purpose-built, one bedroom apartment in the neighbourhoods in which SFU campuses are located was \$1520 in downtown Vancouver, \$1171 in North Burnaby and \$908 in Surrey²⁹.

B.C. Housing provides two rental assistance programs – one targeting low-income families and one targeting seniors³⁰. As the majority of post-secondary students in B.C. do not fall into either of these categories, they are left paying unaffordable rents without reprieve. As an estimated 599,360 of the 1,881,970 private households in B.C. are rented³¹, nearly a third of the population could potentially benefit from the rebate.

Rationale:

Students that live off-campus and not with relatives are more likely to live below the poverty line than their peers³². Living in poverty has a physiological impact on the brain that hinders academic success. Students living in poverty are often unable to afford supplies necessary for academic success such as books or computers, leading them to drop out. A rent rebate could alleviate some of the stress associated with student housing insecurity for low-income students.

Rent rebates serve as a safety net for renters and help maintain housing affordability, particularly for households that experience a sudden income decrease³³, which commonly happens to students as they pay tuition and wait for the release of financial aid. To address concerns about landlords and tenants taking advantage of these rebates and pushing up the cost of housing, it is suggested that a rental-rate cap to the rebate, similar to the former B.C. homebuyers' grant, should be established³⁴. This measure would prioritize low-income renters, instead of offering all renters \$400 annually (a maximum of \$400 annually would be allocated to the renters in greatest need). Additionally, these rebates could be distributed through a rent bank system, similar to the idea proposed by the British Columbia Rental Housing Task Force. Using a central "bank" ensures landlords receive the rent rebate directly, decreasing the cost the tenant pays and ensuring the rebate is spent on housing³⁵. HousingHub could be a useful administrative tool for this purpose.

Cost:

The total cost of the rent rebate program would be roughly **\$200 million** annually.

²⁸ TD Economics. *The Future Cost of a University Degree*. Toronto, ON: TD Bank Financial Group. 2009.

²⁹ Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. *Rental Market Report - Vancouver CMA*. Ottawa, ON: CMHC. 2017.

³⁰ BC Housing. 2018. *Rental Assistance Programs*. <https://www.bchousing.org/housing-assistance/rental-assistance>

³¹ Statistics Canada. "Census Profile, 2016 Census." Statistics Canada. 2019. <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=PR&Code1=59&Geo2=PR&Code2=01&Data=Count&SearchText=British%20Columbia&SearchType=Begin s&SearchPR=01&B1=Housing&TABID=1>

³² US Department of Housing and Urban Development. *Barriers to Success: Housing Insecurity for US College Students*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Publishing Office. 2015.

³³ Priemus, H. & Haffner, M.E.A. "How to Redesign a Rent Rebate System? Experience in the Netherlands." *Housing Studies* 32, no. 2 (2017):121-139. doi:10.1080/02673037.2016.1181721

³⁴ Dyck, D. 2017. "BC NDP Proposes Annual \$400 Rebate for All Renters in the Province". *Globe and Mail*.

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/british-columbia/liberals-blast-ndps-promise-of-annual-400-renters-rebate-in-bc/article34688703/>

³⁵ Priemus & Haffner, *How to redesign a rent rebate system?*

Conclusion

We thank the Committee for taking the time to consider these recommendations. If there is anything the SFSS can do to be of service to the committee throughout this budget consultation process, please do not hesitate to contact us. We are willing to provide further details and assistance if required to fulfill any or all of our four recommendations.

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