

February 23, 2011

The Right Hon. Stephen Harper, P.C., M.P.  
Prime Minister  
Office of the Prime Minister  
80 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, ON  
K1A 0A2



Dear Prime Minister Harper,

I am writing on behalf of the National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE) and our members who work as faculty and support staff at publicly funded community colleges and institutes across Canada.

Our members are aware that the current arrangements for the Canada Social Transfer (CST) and other major federal transfers expire on March 31, 2014. As you know, the revenue from federal transfers plays a vital role in ensuring the provinces and territories have the ability to support economic growth and deliver quality public services. Specifically, the CST transfer is a significant source of revenue for the post-secondary education sector.

It is our understanding that discussions are currently underway at the federal, provincial and territorial levels in regards to the renewal negotiations that will take place in 2014. Our members would appreciate an opportunity to learn more about and provide input into these discussions. They are concerned that, in the context of the economic downturn and deficits, the negotiations may result in a drastic reduction in the CST transfer.

This is exactly what happened in the mid-1990s when the federal government balanced its budget by making severe cuts to federal transfers. In turn, the provinces and territories implemented a wave of cost-cutting measures that eroded the quality and accessibility of post-secondary education and training. In fact, the sector still has not fully recovered from the cuts of the mid-1990s, with both students and staff still feeling the impact in terms of skyrocketing tuition fees and increasing workloads.

The public system which educated and trained most Canadians is in large part responsible for the wealth and quality of life that we enjoy as a country today. Our nation and our economy were built on the skills and knowledge gained through a public system based on accessibility, affordability, quality, and accountability. The way to build our future as a nation is to strengthen and enhance that public system in order to provide even greater numbers of Canadians with the skills to succeed.

NATIONAL UNION OF PUBLIC AND GENERAL EMPLOYEES / SYNDICAT NATIONAL DES EMPLOYÉES ET EMPLOYÉS GÉNÉRAUX ET DU SECTEUR PUBLIC

15 AURIGA DRIVE / NEPEAN, ONTARIO / CANADA / K2E 1B7 ■ (613) 228-9800 / FAX (613) 228-9801 ■ [www.nupge.ca](http://www.nupge.ca) ■ [national@nupge.ca](mailto:national@nupge.ca)

JAMES CLANCY National President / Président national ■ LARRY BROWN Secretary-Treasurer / Secrétaire-trésorier national

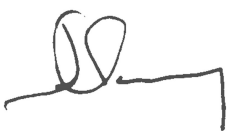


The renewal discussion and negotiations are a pivotal moment for Canada. The goal for all levels of government must be to ensure stable, predictable, and adequate funding through the CST for post-secondary education in the years ahead.

We would appreciate an opportunity to meet with federal officials to discuss the 2014 renewal negotiations. More specifically, we would like to learn more about what the stage the negotiations are at and what the federal government's position is in these negotiations.

I look forward to receiving your reply.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Clancy', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

James Clancy  
National President

cc. Hon. Jim Flaherty, Finance Minister