



STEPHANIE KUSIE, M.P.
CALGARY MIDNAPORE

April 9th, 2020

Dear constituents:

I continue to hear from parents and students concerned about how COVID-19 will affect them in the short, and the long-term. My colleagues are well aware that there are gaps in the benefit packages the Liberal Government has offered to date, and most post-secondary students find themselves currently unable to obtain employment while also being ineligible for any financial assistance.

Earlier this week, the Official Opposition wrote to Ministers Qualtrough and Chagger to point out these gaps and ask what the government plans to do to address them. The text of that letter is below.

“[As] you know, post-secondary institutions across the country are urgently soliciting cash donations to provide emergency bursaries and loans to students unable to afford basic needs like food, medication or access to the internet to attend online classes as a result to the COVID-19 pandemic. We also know that students expecting to work summer jobs will not be eligible for the Canada Emergency Response Benefit.

- 1. What is the government doing to provide meaningful support to students and young people who are unable to make ends meet during this crisis?** The government’s 6-month Canada Student Loan deferral program announced on March 18, 2020 will not help students currently enrolled at a post-secondary institution as they do not have to repay their Canada Student Loans until they graduate. Further, students who have completed their studies have benefited from a six-month interest-free grace period for 25 years.
- 2. What is the government’s plan to assist full-time students unable to find employment to fund their education?** Thousands of post-secondary students planning on returning to school in the fall rely on employment provided through the Canada Summer Jobs Program (CSJP) to help them pay for books and tuition. As a great many of the applicants to that program are businesses and non-profit organizations that will not be operating due to the pandemic, there needs to be communication to all MPs on how this program is going to change. Thus far, all we have heard is it will be business as usual and the start date is unchanged.
- 3. What is the government’s plan for the Canada Summer Jobs Program?** [We have received an update from the government that a revised version of this will go ahead, however we have not been lists of approved organizations so we are left unsure if these

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groups – who applied before this pandemic hit – will be able to adhere to the new regulations. See question 4, below.]

- 4. Has the government contacted all non-profit organizations and small business CSJP applicants to determine if they are still operational and able to participate in the program?**
- 5. What support will the government provide to organizations seeking to hire more young people in in-demand areas like the charitable sector?**
- 6. Will the government reopen the program to new applications that may be more appropriate in our current crisis, such as providing grocery delivery to those stuck in their homes?**

While we have not received a formal response to these questions yet, my colleagues and I will continue to work with the Liberal government so we can help as many Canadians as possible get through this unprecedented situation.

Please continue to stay safe and keep your families healthy.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Kusie, MP