

February 28, 2012

Honourable Naomi Yamamoto  
Minister of Advanced Education  
Province of British Columbia  
P O Box 9080 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Yamamoto:

The presidents of British Columbia's post secondary institutions are writing regarding Budget and Fiscal Plan 2012/13 - 2014/15, tabled in the Legislature on February 21 by Finance Minister Kevin Falcon. As a sector, we take very seriously our commitment to fiscal prudence and financial discipline and appreciate that this is fundamental to Budget 2012. We look forward to the meeting to be convened by Deputy Minister, Cheryl Wenezenki-Yolland, with the institutional presidents to discuss this matter more fully.

We appreciate that the post secondary budget has not been reduced for the next fiscal year and that new funding has been provided for deferred capital maintenance, which is so important to maintaining the infrastructure of our institutions. However, it is critical for Government to understand that the \$70 million reduction to institutional grants over the last two years of the fiscal plan, combined with five years of unfunded inflationary pressures, creates a strain on the operations of post secondary institutions. This is exacerbated by the complexities of the co-operative gains mandate, which requires compensation increases to be funded internally.

We are very concerned that the Provincial Government is not aware of the measures the post secondary sector has undertaken in the last number of years in response to significant cost pressures and no increases in institutional operating grants. It is particularly concerning that in Budget 2012, the post secondary sector is the only social sector to receive an absolute budget reduction, with the inference that other sectors, such as health, have taken action where we have not.

Post secondary institutions can point to numerous expenditure management initiatives implemented over the past few years including administrative efficiencies and new revenue measures. Because of these pressures, we are always seeking and are open to new ways of creating cost-savings. However, we must be clear that it is unrealistic to assume that the reductions contemplated by Budget 2012 can be achieved without implications for service levels.

It is also important to recognize that during the past few years, many institutions have been challenged by the changing requirements resulting from the economic downturn, while other institutions have responded to increased student demand and provided more spaces than they are funded for. As government has acknowledged, this has been done while offering high quality education, resulting in higher employment rates for post secondary graduates.

We draw this to your attention because we have a shared commitment to a strong post secondary education system and we do not want to see a decline in a system that is seen as one of the best in the world. We would like to engage with you on how we can strengthen post secondary education to support British Columbia families, communities and the economy.

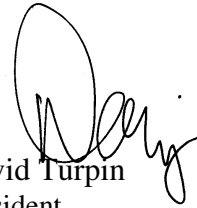
Sincerely,



Stephen Toope  
President  
The University of  
British Columbia



Andrew Petter  
President  
Simon Fraser University



David Turpin  
President  
University of Victoria



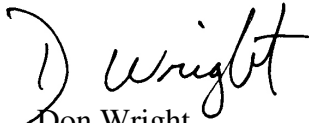
George Iwama  
President  
University of Northern  
British Columbia



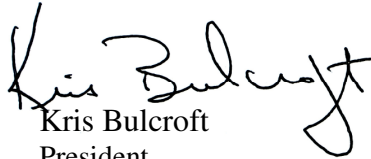
Allan Cahoon  
President  
Royal Roads University



Alan Shaver  
President  
Thompson Rivers University



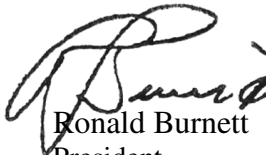
Don Wright  
President  
British Columbia  
Institute of Technology



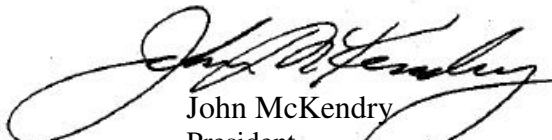
Kris Bulcroft  
President  
Capilano University



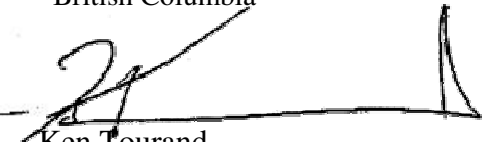
Jack McGee  
President  
Justice Institute of  
British Columbia



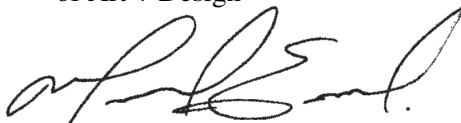
Ronald Burnett  
President  
Emily Carr University  
of Art + Design



John McKendry  
President  
Kwantlen Polytechnic  
University



Ken Tourand  
President  
NVIT



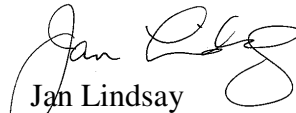
Mark Evered  
President  
University of the Fraser Valley



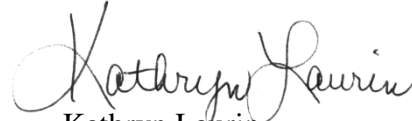
Ralph Nilson  
President  
Vancouver Island University



David Ross  
President  
Langara College



Jan Lindsay  
President  
North Island College



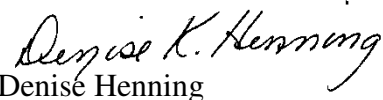
Kathryn Laurin  
President  
Camosun College



Laurie Rancourt  
President  
Northern Lights College



John Bowman  
President  
College of New Caledonia



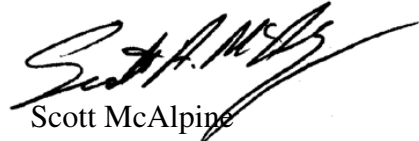
Denise Henning  
President  
Northwest Community College



Nick Rubidge  
President  
College of the Rockies



Jim Hamilton  
President  
Okanagan College



Scott McAlpine  
President  
Douglas College



Angus Graeme  
President  
Selkirk College



Kathy Kinloch  
President  
Vancouver Community College

cc : Honourable Kevin Falcon, Minister of Finance and Deputy Premier  
Cheryl Wenezenki-Yolland, Deputy Minister of Advanced Education  
Robin Ciceri, President, The Research Universities' Council of BC  
Jim Reed, President, BC Colleges  
Ruth Wittenberg, President, BC Association of Institutes and Universities