



November 2, 2005

Mr. Lorne Mayencourt, M.L.A.
Vancouver Burrard
East Annex, Parliament Buildings
Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X4

Re: Loan Reduction for Successful Graduates of Programs/Courses of 52 Weeks or Less

Dear Lorne,

Thank you for making time to meet with us last week. It was good to see you again and to spend some time in the Legislature.

At a reception last Tuesday evening, Nicholas Simons said that he would work with you to do what he can to support you in bringing the issue of first year grants to the attention of the Finance Minister.

In the past, loan reduction served as an incentive to students to take short, intensive courses leading to jobs. Without the loan reduction, students who are in courses of over two years may have less student debt than someone in a one year course.

One of the reasons cited for not providing one-year students with BC Loan reduction was that there is a high drop out rate in first year; but, because BC Loan Reduction is only given to those who successfully complete, this doesn't seem a valid reason. Another reason given was insufficient funds to help these students.

As we approach the looming skills shortage, it would seem desirable to have students move from Income Assistance or low wage jobs into post-secondary studies to acquire job and other skills. A large number of students with families can only afford to be in school for one year. The prospect of a \$22,000 debt after taking a one-year program may be deterring some students from even considering access to post-secondary education.

If you would like us to arrange a meeting with some representatives from VCC to discuss this further just let me know. I look forward to hearing from you after your meeting with the Honourable Carole Taylor.

Yours truly,

VCC Faculty Association

Lizz Lindsay
President

401.402 West Pender Street
Vancouver, British Columbia V6B 1T6

TEL 604.688.6210 FAX 604.688.6219
vccfa@telus.net www.vccfa.ca