

**For immediate release
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Student Association Condemns Rushed Post-Secondary Review

Burnaby, B.C. – The Student Association of BCIT ('BCITSA') is deeply alarmed at the announcement of what appears to be a rigged process to overhaul the entire postsecondary education system in British Columbia, based on a plan so rushed that no reasonable person could ever take it seriously, and with terms of reference that shield the government from any accountability for their own neglect of the system.

“For decades, the provincial government has consistently underfunded postsecondary education in BC, relying on an unsustainable flow of easy money from international students to hide their neglect. Now, they are launching a rushed review of the system that forbids public funding of education from even being part of the discussion. This means that today’s students will be told once again to pay more to get less. It is nothing short of a betrayal of students,” said BCITSA Vice-President External Shervin Laghaie.

While the government insists it is committed to consultation with students, it is impossible to take this commitment seriously. The government has abruptly provided two weeks’ notice for consultation with students, meaning that students will have to prepare for the most consequential decision in a generation while they are in the middle of exams, a decision reflective of unprecedented callousness towards students. Further, this sham consultation excludes every single student association not aligned with a broader lobbying alliance, all but one that is – UBC’s Alma Mater Society.

While we have serious doubts about this process, the idea that the voices of so many students, including the over 43,000 students of BCIT, would be excluded from consultation is unacceptable. This is made even more worse considering the fact BCIT trains more tradespeople than any other institution in the province, trains one hundred percent of BC’s specialty nurses, and is the only postsecondary institution in this province with a specific strategic mandate for workforce readiness.

BCITSA stands in solidarity with our members and with students across BC in opposition to this slapdash exercise. We call on the Government of British Columbia to put a stop to this process immediately, and consult with all stakeholders to design a process that treats students with respect rather than disdain. The credibility of this Government, and the future sustainability of the postsecondary education system requires nothing less.

For additional comment, please contact:

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