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## Regan: Students Will Pay More



(Halifax, NS) Liberal education critic Kelly Regan says the O'Neill Report on the university system in Nova Scotia warns that students will soon pay more for their education.

"The report calls for deregulation of tuition fees, and that means higher costs for Nova Scotia students," said Regan. "We already have among the most expensive tuition in the country and the highest debt rates for students - how is jacking up tuition going to make Nova Scotia more competitive?"

The O'Neill Report points out the Memorandum of Understanding with universities needs to be renewed. The report gives only three options for universities to improve their financial position: increased provincial government assistance, higher tuition fees or cutting costs.

"The report ignores the fact that the federal funding formula for universities works against Nova Scotia because it funds on a per capita basis and not a per student basis," said Regan. "It doesn't take into account that students from elsewhere in the country are being subsidized by Nova Scotia taxpayers. The Dexter government and this report have not addressed this inequity."

The report points out that "deregulating" tuition fees must go hand in hand with increasing student assistance programs.

"Tim O'Neill admits that such programs only assist those in the lowest economic bracket. Middle class working families will once again be expected to carry the load," Regan said.

"In opposition, the NDP spoke out against high tuition costs. They seem to have forgotten that since taking power."