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Statement by:

The Honourable Claudette Tardif

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THE SENATE

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POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I rise today to draw your attention to student concerns regarding post-secondary education in Canada.

On October 6, I had the privilege of meeting with two representatives from the Canadian Federation of Students, Michael Olsen of British Columbia and Katie Haig-Anderson of Manitoba.

During our meeting, the students shared with me the content of their report entitled: *Public Education for the Public Good*.

The report focuses on issues pertaining to post-secondary education in Canada, such as the increasing debt load of students, the lack of a national strategy on education and the need for strong leadership and commitments from the federal government.

The report also details five key recommendations that the Canadian Federation of Students wishes to convey to the current government. The recommendations are the following: develop

and implement a national vision for a high-quality and affordable system of post-secondary education; track success and measure results by increasing funding by \$10 million to Statistics Canada's branch for the collection and analysis of post-secondary education statistics; reduce student debt by increasing the value and number of non-repayable grants available to students and by redirecting funds allocated to education-related tax credits and savings schemes to the Canada Student Grants Program, and allow graduate students to qualify for grants under the program; meet Canada's obligations to fund Aboriginal education by removing the funding cap on increases to the Post-Secondary Student Support Program, and by ensuring that every eligible First Nations and Inuit learner is provided adequate funding to attend post-secondary education; and foster innovation by increasing the number of Canada Graduate Scholarships to 3,000 and distribute the funding proportionately among the research councils according to enrolment figures.

Honourable senators, I believe we ought to consider seriously the recommendations of the Canadian Federation of Students to strengthen post-secondary education in Canada to meet the needs of the students and to be more competitive on the world stage.
