

Law School Tuition Fees

BACKGROUND

- Canadian Medical Association (CMA) approached the CBA to join a group of professional associations concerned about rising tuition and deregulation of tuition fees in some provinces in September 1999. Young Lawyers' Conference (YLC) took on this initiative on behalf of the CBA.
- CMA hosts meetings in Ottawa and provides administrative support at no cost to member associations. Member associations share incidental costs.
- Participants include CBA, CMA, Canadian Nurses Association, Canadian Dental Association, Canadian Pharmacists Association, Canadian Physiotherapy Association, Canadian Federation of Medical Students, Canadian Federation of Students, the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association, and the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada.
- University of Toronto announced that tuition for law school could reach \$22,000 in a few years in December 2001. Other universities indicated they would follow suit.
- In August 2002, CBA passed a resolution urging governments to reconsider deregulation of tuition fees and to increase student loan funding, called on law faculties to adopt tuition policies that ensure access, asked law societies to take action against high fees, urged members of the profession to contribute to law schools to alleviate financial need, and affirmed the CBA's commitment to the objectives of NPACT.
- NPACT submission regarding tuition fees submitted to Commons Finance Committee as part of the pre-budget consultations in October 2005.
- In 2006, Standing Committee on Equity reviewed recent Canadian studies assessing the impact of higher tuition fees on law school accessibility, which raised concerns with the apparent impact of increasing tuition fees on access to legal education for Aboriginal and racialized groups, persons with disabilities and other equity-seeking groups.

CURRENT STATUS

- CBA passed a resolution in August 2006 on student loan repayment for professional programs. It urges the federal, provincial and territorial governments to consider articling periods and bar admissions programs as part of the period of studies, where interest does not accumulate and payments are not owing on student loans. The resolution also encourages governments to expand student loans to cover the actual cost of training and to initiate funding programs to lessen student debt and facilitate access to professional programs. ([see separate note](#))

NEXT STEPS

- Ongoing follow up on 2006 resolution.