



Wednesday, February 19, 2020

Lucas Granger, Vice-President, External Affairs
University of Toronto Students' Union
12 Hart House Circle | Toronto, ON | M5S 3J9

RE: GO-TTC Co-Fare Program

Dear Minister Mulroney and the Metrolinx Board of Directors,

On behalf of the Executive Committee of the University of Toronto Students' Union (UTSU), and students at the University of Toronto St. George Campus, I am writing to you today to ask that the Government of Ontario and Metrolinx continue funding the GO-TTC Co-Fare Program. This discount is necessary for students who commute across the region, as transit is already prohibitively expensive for many students. As you may be aware, the average commuter saves \$780 per year through this program as it stands, and removing this discount will further harm student budgets.

From the U-Commute Survey¹ conducted by the UTSU in 2017, it was found that 9% of full-time undergraduate students live between 7km and 10km from campus, with a further 44% living further than 11km from the University of Toronto St. George campus. These students rely on a combination of both the TTC and GO Transit in order to attend classes, work, and extracurriculars. The survey also found that 84% of these survey respondents use public transportation for more than just commuting to classes. Further, of the nearly 10,000 respondents, 36.7% declared that they used GO Transit alone or as a subset of methods in order to commute to school.

The UTSU continues to believe that this \$1.50 discount should be continued. The cost of living in Toronto continues to increase, pricing many students out of rental locations close to campus. Many students choose to live with family, or rent further away from campus due to these high costs. As public transit costs increase, students may feel that renting closer to campus will be the cheaper option, even if these housing options are unsafe, predatory, or illegal. The University of Toronto St. George campus has over 61,000 students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, and all of them require methods of transportation in order to attend classes. This doesn't include the many students who attend Ryerson University, OCAD-U, George Brown College, and York University among the many other institutions in the Greater Toronto Area.

We urge the Ministry and Metrolinx to reconsider the decision to discontinue the GO-TTC Co-Fare Program due to the above outlined reasons. It is important that students are able to receive an education without the further financial stress of considering how they will attend classes.

Yours in service,
Lucas Granger | [REDACTED]

CC:

Associate Minister of Transportation, Hon. Kinga Surma
Parliamentary Assistant to Minister of Transportation, MPP Vijay Thanigasalam

¹ <https://www.utsu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/U-Commute-Survey-Results-UTSG-FORMATTED.pdf>