



MEDIA RELEASE

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**Attention: Education and
Political reporters
For Immediate Release**

Student debt hits \$9 billion and mounting

Concerned students from all around the country are today voicing their concern at student debt reaching a staggering nine billion dollars.

“Student debt continues to climb and the Labour government’s promised increases in allowances haven’t occurred” said Joey Randall, Co-President of the New Zealand Union of Students’ Associations.

A significant proportion of student debt is due to the simple fact that most students need to borrow in order to live, pay rent, eat and turn up to class.

A recent OECD report acknowledged that “the current system does not address to the full extent the financial barriers students face in accessing tertiary education”.

While it reported that student support was the highest in the OECD this was due to government loans being 407% the OECD average, money that will mainly be repaid.

Student allowance funding dropped from 15.5% of Government Tertiary Education spending in 1999/2000 to on 10.2 % in 2004/2005. During this time loans spending increase from 22% to 26.8%.

NZUSA calls upon the government to immediately deliver on their election promise to increase access to allowances to 50% of all eligible students and to progressively introduce a living allowance for all students.

Ends

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