

MEDIA RELEASE

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Record Numbers Vote to Maintain Tuition Based Bus Pass program

LONDON, ON: According to results released by Elections Western on Saturday, March 14th, 2009, students turned out in record numbers to renew their support for the Tuition Based Bus Pass program. A total of 16,262 students voted in the referendum, with 15,272 voting in favour of maintaining the program, and 990 students voting against – in all, approximately 60 per cent of eligible voters turned out to the polls, with 93.5 per cent voting in favour of maintaining the Tuition Based Bus Pass program. The turnout well exceeded the quorum of 5,400 students necessary to make the results valid.

The voter turnout for this ballot is the highest on record of any election, referendum, or plebiscite organized by the University Students' Council (USC); it also shattered the results of the last Tuition Based Bus Pass Referendum, held in February of 2000, when 5,684 students voted, with 88 per cent endorsing the program's continuation, and 12 per cent voting against.

“Students' overwhelming support for the continuation of the Tuition Based Bus program demonstrates the central role that an affordable and high quality public transit system plays in their lives,” said Stephen Lecce, President of the University Students' Council. “Affordable and reliable public transit is important to students because it provides them with more freedom in choosing housing location, giving them wider access to employment, culture, and other services in the greater London community, and also allows them to live their values by pursuing more eco-friendly lifestyles.”

The USC has been a longstanding advocate of public transit in London, and the referendum result is a clear mandate from students to be an even stronger advocate of the London Transit Commission (LTC) into the future, particularly as the LTC moves forward with its Long-Term Growth Strategy.

“A high-quality public transit system is the life blood of a creative and vibrant city, and must be a key pillar in any strategy aimed at retaining more Western students in the city post-graduation,” continued Lecce. “We hope and expect that the City of London will build upon the increased public transit investments made in the 2010 Municipal Budget in future budget years, to help LTC make the vision articulated in their Long-Term Growth Strategy a reality.”

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