

I have been following with interest the series letters to the editor and articles in the Telegraph Journal concerning the conferral of degree granting status on the University of Lansbridge. I have also become aware of the fate of another private-for-profit institution, ITI. ITI has recently applied for bankruptcy and has informed their students that, unless a buyer is found, it will close its doors within a few weeks. This has left some students scrambling to find alternative programs in order to finish their education and others worried about whether or not they will lose their educational investment.

Before the announcement last week, in order to stave off bankruptcy, ITI made a request to the Nova Scotia government asking them to guarantee a \$10 million bank loan, this request put the Nova Scotia government in an awkward position. Do they risk tax-payers money - \$10 million that could be targeted for public education and health - to bail out a private-for-profit institution in order to protect the investments already made by the students enrolled at ITI? Or do they turn down the request? As everyone has heard, the Nova Scotia government turned down the request.

Whatever the final outcome, this is a definite warning for the future. Instead of conferring degree granting status to private-for-profit institutions as a quick-fix solution to allow a greater variety of choices for the student and little or no up-front expense for provincial governments, provincial governments should make sure there is enough funding given to the public educational institutions to allow them to increase the variety of degrees and diplomas they can offer! In this way, we can in the future, avoid the problems currently facing both the students of ITI and Nova Scotia government.

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