



Office of the
Conflict of Interest and
Ethics Commissioner

Commissariat aux
conflits d'intérêts et
à l'éthique

CONFIDENTIAL

July 3, 2020

Sent by email to: Michael.Barrett@parl.gc.ca

Mr. Michael Barrett
Member of Parliament for Leeds–Grenville–
Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes
Wellington Building, Room 565
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

Subject: Examination under the *Conflict of Interest Act*

Dear Mr. Barrett:

I am writing to you in response to your letter dated June 28, 2020, in which you request that I examine the conduct of the Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P., Prime Minister of Canada, in relation to the administration of the Canada Student Service Grant.

In your letter, you allege that on June 26, 2020, Mr. Trudeau publicly announced the government's decision to have WE Charity administer the Canada Student Service Grant. Given Mr. Trudeau's close ties to the organization, and his spouse's involvement in the organization, you allege that Mr. Trudeau has contravened his obligations under the *Conflict of Interest Act* (Act).

Specifically, you allege that by announcing the decision that WE Charity would be administering the Canada Student Service Grant, Mr. Trudeau contravened subsection 6(1). This provision prohibits public office holders from making any decision or participating in the making of a decision that furthers their private interests or improperly furthers the private interests of another person. You also allege that, given Mr. Trudeau's family's involvement with WE Charity, he had a duty to recuse from any discussion or decision relating to the organization, in contravention of section 21 of the Act.

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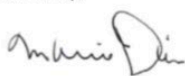
You further allege that, given the existence of other national volunteer organizations, Mr. Trudeau afforded preferential treatment to WE Charity when he publicly stated that it is the only organization qualified to run the Canada Student Service Grant, in contravention of section 7 of the Act.

I have considered your request and am of the view that it satisfies the requirements set out in subsection 44(2) of the Act. I am therefore commencing an examination under subsection 44(3) of the Act into a possible contravention of subsection 6(1) and sections 7 and 21. I have informed Mr. Trudeau accordingly.

In your letter, you have also raised other provisions of the Act, including sections 5 and 9, as well as subsection 11(1). On the basis of the information provided, there are no reasonable grounds to pursue an examination of these provisions at this time and I have so informed Mr. Trudeau.

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention.

Sincerely,



Mario Dion
Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner

