

**Don't slash PTPTN loans, Guan Eng tells Putrajaya  
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BY EILEEN NG**

Penang chief minister Lim Guan Eng wants the Education Ministry to reconsider its decision to slash the quantum of the National Higher Education Fund (PTPTN) loans by between 5% and 15%, describing the move as "short-sighted".

Following reports in some media that the ministry is looking to cut the loans by 5% for public universities' students and 15% for those studying at private universities, Lim expressed concern that it would affect tens of thousands of students who depended on the loans for their tertiary education.

"I appeal to the ministry to reconsider its decision. With rising cost of living, they should increase the amount or at the very least, maintain it instead of reducing the amount," he said at a press conference at the Parliament lobby today.

Expressing his shock over the move, the Bagan MP said he was considering making up the shortfall if the state budget permits.

"I will look at Penang finances to see if we have enough funds and may consider to meet the shortfall. But, this is only for Penang students.

"This may be announced when the state tables its budget on Friday," he added.

In replying to points raised by MPs during the Budget 2015 debate, Education Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said the matter was still under consideration.

"We are still mulling this, it is not a final decision," he said. – November 3, 2014.

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