

Standing Committee on Finance (FINA)

Pre-budget consultations 2012

Calgary Zoological Society

Responses

1. Economic Recovery and Growth

Given the current climate of federal and global fiscal restraint, what specific federal measures do you feel are needed for a sustained economic recovery and enhanced economic growth in Canada?

The Calgary Zoological Society is writing to endorse the important work of the Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC) and express our concern with the possible reduction of CTC funding in the upcoming federal budget. It is our strong recommendation that funding for the CTC should not be cut. As one of Alberta's most visited tourist attractions – more than 150,000 of our 1.3 million annual guests visit from outside Canada – the Calgary Zoo depends on our national marketing organization to provide exposure to international markets. In Calgary, \$1.3 billion is spent by visitors in more than 5,900 tourism related businesses that employ close to 70,000 Calgarians. The continuing strong role of the CTC is critical given the opportunities and challenges ahead. Increasing competition from other national tourism agencies is drawing tourists away from Canada; and of particular concern, the United States has launched a major international tourism marketing push that will undoubtedly pull travel away from Canada. Other the other hand, travel to Canada continues to benefit from the tremendous exposure of the 2010 Vancouver Games; and travel from China is starting to gain traction that the Calgary Zoo hopes to capture when we host two of China's giant pandas for five years starting in 2018. International tourism is built on long-term relationships. To pull back on marketing now may have consequences for the next decade. We need the muscle of the CTC to be successful. We kindly ask that you reinforce the fact that an investment in tourism is a high-return investment in Canada's economy by sustaining full funding for the CTC in the next federal budget. Sincerely, Clément Lanthier CEO, Calgary Zoo

2. Job Creation

As Canadian companies face pressures resulting from such factors as uncertainty about the U.S. economic recovery, a sovereign debt crisis in Europe, and competition from a number of developed and developing countries, what specific federal actions do you believe should be taken to promote job creation in Canada, including that which occurs as a result of enhanced internal and international trade?

3. Demographic Change

What specific federal measures do you think should be implemented to help the country address the consequences of, and challenges associated with, the aging of the Canadian population and of skills shortages?

4. Productivity

With labour market challenges arising in part as a result of the aging of Canada's population and an ongoing focus on the actions needed for competitiveness, what specific federal initiatives are needed in order to increase productivity in Canada?

5. Other Challenges

With some Canadian individuals, businesses and communities facing particular challenges at this time, in your view, who is facing the most challenges, what are the challenges that are being faced and what specific federal actions are needed to address these challenges?