

Standing Committee on Finance (FINA)

Pre-budget consultations 2012

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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?

Federal funds injected into infrastructure building projects across the country, both social and physical infrastructure, that create jobs as well as improving our country. Support for renewable energy that will create jobs in new areas and for young people especially. A national childcare program to support young parents in the labour force and in their studies. Specific programs to educate and support First Nations and Metis youth in their labour force entry. Improvement to the tax structure to favor jobs-producing on the corporate side, and to support employed Canadians on the other. Reduction of spending on recent expensive increases to our federal expenditures to fund the above programs, including Elimination of the recent corporate subsidies of recent years, expansion of prisons, and new military purchases.

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?

My answer to the previous question also pertains to this one: Federal funds injected into infrastructure building projects across the country, both social and physical infrastructure, that create jobs as well as improving our country. Support for renewable energy that will create jobs in new areas and for young people especially. A national childcare program to support young parents in the labour force and in their studies. Specific programs to educate and support First Nations and Metis youth in their labour force entry. Improvement to the tax structure to favor jobs-producing on the corporate side, and to support employed Canadians on the other.

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?

Aging of the population: federal leadership for medicare to increase primary health care, electronic medical records, and national home care, long term care and pharmacare programs. These will introduce efficiencies and lower overall costs for the elderly population. Roll back the planned reduction of the age of pensions -- raising the age will increase health care costs. Skills shortages should be addressed with funding to post-secondary education, including special attention to First Nations youth where they are a significant proportion of the population. A national child care program would also allow many young parents to be more productive.

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?

Individual firms make too many decisions based on maximizing short term productivity, including shedding labour. We need to incentivize them to increase productivity by adding and improving their labour pools. Tax incentives are one way; regulations are another; support to social programs is a third (e.g. national childcare plan.)

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?

Social and economic inequality is increasing in Canada. The younger generation is not being provided with the support it needs. These challenges will continue to increase unless specific public policy measures are taken. Federal support to post-secondary education, childcare, affordable housing and public transit are key economic supports for the younger labour force.