

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?

Investment and encouragement in high-return sectors, which generate good jobs here: cultural productions, cinema, and so on. Investment in employees, rather than concrete: more money for doctors and nurses, less for mega-hospitals. And the end of direct and indirect grants and subsidies for non-renewable industries (forestry, gas, oil) that belong to the large non-Canadian multi-nationals: we export our wealth for short-term (and private) profit in the name of job creation at the low end, which will be cut the moment there is less profit for the operators.

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?

We should focus on non-exportable jobs, invest in education, cultivate a knowledge economy... and keep the transformation and exploitation of our raw material in Canada.

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?

There is no skills shortage: it is that we are trying to make ourselves accept wages that have been lowered by supposed global competitiveness: it is a temporary effect, the abused workers in the third world will end up demanding better wages... if we have nothing to spend here, we cannot keep our own economy running. And we do not need to force our seniors into retirement if they are in jobs where their knowledge is still useful (doctors, teachers, researchers, and so on). There has been a shameful pattern in the past few years, in the name of budget rationalization.

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?

Invest intelligently in areas that create the maximum of wealth here, rather than export the profits. Invest in infrastructures, roads, trains, but better division of the cost burden: overweight trucks should pay more to use public highways, for example; otherwise, it is a disguised subsidy that puts the train at a disadvantage. More honest transport fees would be fairer for local production, be it agriculture or manufacturing.

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?

The middle class. Taxes need to be better distributed (on corporations, for example) and help with free education, infrastructures... and block abuses by banks, PPP parking companies... in fact, all forms of PPP should be stopped: by definition, if there is a profit (private) involved, we will not give the fair value to taxpayers.