

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?

Oommen

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?

1)Cancel NAFTA and stop signing secret deals to sign other trade agreements(ie with Europe and the Pacific (Why is there no debate or vote in parliament?). These so-called "trade agreements" give away Canada's sovereignty to corporations.NAFTA has killed Canadian jobs. We have lost skills. 2)Stop promoting the export of raw materials unless they are refined here (value added). Because of the increasing cost of fossil fuels and other forms of energy, 3)Promote a "liberal" education in school ie not a "corporate" education. Also promote education in practical skills (apprenticeship to support self sufficiency)(ie natural tanning, making leather shoes, boots and coats by hand, organic farming and animal husbandry, spinning and weaving of natural fibres, preservation of food for the winter). 4)Train people in alternative health work with conventional medicine to promote health using herbs not pharmaceuticals, exercise and fresh local food. 5)

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?

1)Expand training opportunities for more health care workers, to provide mostly direct care-giving in home care. (men and women, half and half). Develop seamless transition for the elderly between home - hospital - rehabilitation - convalescence - home - nursing home. Avoid admitting a person to hospital. Have a team to provide support for the transmission to send them home again, in the emergency department, or in the Primary Care Clinic. Goal. To enable that person to go back home immediately with appropriate support. Do not rely on doctors or nurses. Occupational therapists, physiotherapists and social workers and home care are the best people to organize this type of support. (If you want to save money). (I am an occupational therapist, retired) 2) Pharmaceutical drugs are expensive. Allow aging patients to use natural therapies and fund these cheap harmless alternatives through Medicare. This should be the choice of the citizens. These alternative therapies cost less than pharmaceuticals. Compare the price difference between chemotherapy drugs and radiation therapy, and the natural alternatives. You will save millions of dollars. Also, stress on caregivers in the hospital and families will be less and this reduces costs and prevents further illness caused by stress. 3)Hospitals are heavily reliant on oil and natural gas (heating, energy to run large diagnostic machines, lighting, plastic and

paper equipment etc. Transportation to take people and medical supplies to the hospital.) Also super-bugs are a problem. Decentralize. 4) Choose to set up small "health promotion" clinics in each community "manned" by both medical personnel and their partners in natural therapy - herbalists, naturopaths, massage therapists, chiropractors, reiki practitioners etc. Pay incentives to clinics which keep people well. Fine them when they are not successful in health promotion when their patients deteriorate, in spite of there being opportunities for improving health. ie exercise, and good nutrition (fresh, local food). Reduce consumption of sugar, salt and white flour, chemical additives in processed food, GM food and food and medicines with untested nanotechnology in them. 5) All food to be labelled if it contains GM or nanotechnology. Citizens need to be able to choose what they want to eat.

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?

Competitiveness is disappearing as we speak - Europe, China, USA, India, are all in retraction mode. This is because of reduced availability of energy. Productivity cannot rise if there is no energy and if all the manufacturing jobs have gone to the sweatshops in Mexico, China etc. "Peak everything" is upon us. If you look at the life of humans on Earth, the standard of living and health of the people improved exponentially between approximately 1850 and today. (Because of coal, oil and gas). Consequently there are too many humans on Earth. With less energy production, the planet can only support approximately 2 billion humans. This is a problem. The USA keeps fighting wars and stealing oil and coal, natural gas and shale gas from enemies and friends. The truth is that Energy Return on Energy Invested (EREI) in the near future is not going to be worth the investment. Why is it that no refineries are being built and refineries are being shut down? Why are pipelines not being maintained or repaired? Oil and gas companies know that they will not be needed for much longer. Canada is very lucky because we have vast resources and few people living here. 1) We need to allow more immigration of people willing and able to do jobs which do not need energy and which are practical in nature. (See the first question on Job Creation for a list of vital manufacturing jobs). 2) Immigrants who can provide caregiving and health promotion jobs. 3) We should open our doors to the radiation-damaged people of Japan and provide health care for them and help the children to have a less stressful and more healthy life in the future. 4) Canada needs to set itself up as an example for the rest of the world in sustainable living. Canadian citizens want to preserve and respectfully live with nature on Earth for generations to come. The citizens of the world, both indigenous people and others, are on the same wavelength. In Copenhagen they said no to continuing "globalization", promotion of fossil fuels, corporate control of governments, "free trade" agreements, and militarism, etc. Now they are speaking out against the manipulation of the monetary system, and the citizens of Iceland is daring to put banking executives in jail for breaking the law. Citizens demand that the environment is kept clean and healthy. 5) Re. "Productivity", and "competitiveness" are jargon words used by the "business model" by the corporations. I am sorry that Mr. Harper can only envision one "corporate model" world. Without energy, human societies will soon revert to a simpler life. There will be no other option. 6) Open minded, realistic, forward-thinking governments need to enable wise people in their country to educate citizens with regard to their expectations for the future. Australia did this several years ago. When citizens realize what their future will be like, they need to grieve for the loss of their comfortable lifestyles. There is a process to go through. What Canada needs to avoid is large numbers of angry citizens who do not understand what is happening. We must avoid the use of police, security guards and the military to "control" the citizens. The first people who need to be educated are doctors, church leaders of all religious groups, social workers, and healthy seniors. These people may be totally unaware of what is happening because their standard of living has remained the same. But they will be the ones

who will have to explain what is happening to society and support people who will be dying off because of different circumstances.

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?

Challenges being faced by individuals, businesses and communities. (Including provincial and municipal governments) What can the federal government do to help? a) There is a lack of awareness re. reasons for breakdown of the "business as usual, corporate model, (reduced energy production, high price of energy etc.) b) Citizens believe their standard of living and opportunities for making money should be higher. (Expectations are unrealistic). Teens expectations are unrealistic. College and university graduates are resentful. (No job, high debt) Citizens are becoming angry (they need the facts and they need to grieve) c) Centralization of services (ie large hospitals and schools) are no longer appropriate and will soon become obsolete. We need to de-centralize and build self-sufficient small communities with basic services with a selection of experts/professionals. d) Citizens are losing confidence in banks and the monetary system, governments, corporations, the media, etc. They want honesty and crooks punished. e) Citizens can see that "they are the last to know" when decisions are made by the federal government and provincial governments. (ie there is no debate in parliament or in the legislatures re. secret "trade agreements", oil and shale gas exploration, etc., the building of pipelines, the selling off of natural resources, etc. Citizens are concerned about the potential pollution of water, earth, air and plant life by corporations which don't clean up afterwards. f) Parliamentary democracy is not working to the satisfaction of the citizens, in its present form. Citizens want participatory democracy, not representative democracy. Citizens want respect from the government (ie the "public servants"), not scorn and false accusations of being "against Canada". Citizens want an end to the "first past the post" electoral system- they want proportional representation. Citizens want clean elections, not lawyer's quips. g) Provincial governments need a respectful partnership with the federal government and discussions re. health care funding and sharing of national funds. Citizens need to ensure that both the federal government and provincial governments are sharing the "Equalization Payments" due to deserving small counties, ie in Nova Scotia (see NSEF.ca for details. Halifax should apply the law correctly according to the Canadian Constitution, supervised by Ottawa. h) "Out migration" suits corporations in Western Canada but cause social problems in society. "Have not" provinces and counties need to start to build positive self-sustainable villages which will be running efficiently as people return home to stay in the long run. i) Small business creates more jobs than large corporations. ie Governments should stop supporting large agricultural corporations which are reliant on oil and gas. Governments should subsidize small food producers as this creates jobs and produces healthy local food which contributes towards good health and provides food security j) Governments must stop subsidizing fossil fuel corporations. Governments must subsidize the creation of free, renewable energy (ie geothermal energy can use "fracking" technology. Free heat for Canadians in winter!) k) The shameful and archaic Indian Act must be scrapped by the Federal Government, and a new act written by First Nations people and the Crown. Land claims must be settled and Reservation lands extended, so that First Nations people can choose to live on Reservation lands if they want to. Municipal governments will be encouraged to work with First Nations people in their counties, so that each group will benefit from the partnership. (" the duty to consult" is to be respectful at all levels of government, before deals are signed with corporations.) I trust that you found this interesting reading. If you have any questions, please contact me. There are some different ideas which may be useful. With best wishes for Canada. The most special country. Frances

