

## Standing Committee on Finance (FINA)

### Pre-budget consultations 2012

## Edward Steers

### 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?*

I feel too much emphasis is being placed on Alberta tar sands development. Specifically, I believe foreign take-overs and acquisitions of Canadian energy companies and developments by Chinese State owned companies is harming our economy. This gold rush mentality I feel is artificially fuelling the over value of our Canadian currency and contributing to lower productivity and harm to the manufacturing sector of our economy in the rest of Canada, particularly in Ontario. Instead of building pipelines to export raw bitumen, why are companies not encouraged to process bitumen into finished petroleum products for domestic use and export, creating jobs at home instead of abroad.

#### 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?*

A National Auto policy that promotes reciprocal trade between countries, instead of unrestricted access to our market as enjoyed by countries like Korea and Japan that do not buy products we make in this country other than unprocessed raw materials. The United States has employed a Buy American procurement policy that has helped revitalize their domestic industries, often to the detriment of our own. Why does our government not employ a similar strategy, to help Canadian industries.

#### 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?*

So many young Canadians are in low paid precarious jobs as a result of the Canadian Government's neo-liberal economic policies of freer trade and globalization. Yet this government's answer to this question is employment insurance reforms that have made it harder to qualify for benefits, blaming workers for losing their jobs instead of addressing the above mentioned government policies that allow capital unrestricted flow across international borders. Give up the dream of CETA and give us FAIR TRADE, RECIPROCAL TRADE. Have a vision for the future where all Canadians can leave a better future to their children, instead of this race to the bottom you currently have us engaged in.

#### 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?*

Decreases in productivity statistics in relation to GDP are misleading. The focus on Alberta tar sands development and the amount of energy required to extract one barrel of oil, plus the capital and search required to find new energy sources is the reason for this countries low productivity statistics. Canadian

industry, especially auto are more productive than ever, and are only in precarious positions as a result of government inaction on National Auto policy and over emphasis on resource extraction and foreign investment creating an overvalued Canadian dollar, destabilizing the Canadian labour market. Disengage us from this race to the bottom.

## **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 Canadian middle class is disappearing as a result of this government's involvement and assistance of Canadian and Multinational Corporations War on the middle class. Your attacks on Unionised workers is a disgrace, particularly public service unions, at a time in our history when unions are needed more than ever. The short sightedness of this race to the bottom will have detrimental consequences to the future of this country for generations, when our government chooses to aid the economic health of Multinational Corporations over it's own citizens. I fear for the future, as a result of this governments actions and the damage that may never be undone.