

## Standing Committee on Finance (FINA)

### Pre-budget consultations 2012

## Maryellen Symons

### 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?*

We need increased revenue, through increased taxes on the highest incomes and elimination of tax cuts and tax expenditures that do not lead to investment and job creation or directly benefit lower income Canadians.

#### 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?*

Companies that create decently paying, stable jobs should receive tax benefits, but only when they demonstrate that they have actually created jobs. Companies should also receive tax benefits for research and development, but again, only when they demonstrate that R&D are actually being carried out. Companies should also receive tax benefits for actual, demonstrated training programs that increase the skill of their employees.

#### 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?*

Companies should receive incentives, probably in the form of tax benefits, for instituting skills training programs for their employees. The federal government should encourage young people to study skilled trades, through grants and through a publicity campaign - call it propaganda if you wish - to promote the idea that skilled trades are as respect-worthy a way to make a living as professional and managerial occupations.

#### 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?*

Immigrants with needed skills should be welcomed and assisted to quickly find work in their area of skill and expertise. Proactive retraining programs should be set up for people working in industries that are in transition, so that they do not suddenly find themselves out of work with no saleable skills. This would require setting up a department that gathers information on industrial trends and advises on what training is needed, and where, to enable workers to transition to different employment.

## **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?*

I believe young people in their late teens and twenties are facing the most challenges because many of them cannot find jobs that pay well enough to let them support themselves and establish an independent life. In my previous answers, I have indicated federal measures that could encourage companies to be innovative and to take responsibility for improving the skills of their workers. I think such measures would help.