

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?

We must reduce the long-term economic risk associated with our sole focus on supporting the oil and gas industry and start to develop policies and programs that prepare us for the global trend towards transition to low-carbon energy sources. There is increasing evidence that the rest of the world is investing heavily in low-carbon energy sources and technology. These economies are growing their capacity to innovate and deliver products and services in this area while creating significant numbers of jobs. Although in the near future they will continue to need the carbon-based energy resources that Canada supplies, their current investment in alternative energy and focus on carbon regulation will ultimately reduce their demand for our carbon-based energy resources. At that point, if we continue to follow today's exclusive focus on subsidies for oil and gas while failing to drive innovation and investment in alternative energy sources, Canada will lack the technology and expertise in the low-carbon energy market. We will face economic hardship with the loss of jobs that are currently supported by the oil and gas industry and struggle to find the funds to support social services such as health care.

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?

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?

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?

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?

