

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?

Invest in digital economy, innovation, media - these are areas that generate huge revenue in similar markets - US, UK - but are relatively low-performing here in Canada. Take the BBC model, for example. The BBC in the UK produces world-class content that rivals that of much larger production powerhouses in the US, whereas the CBC languishes in budgetary constraints and ineffective marketing and content creation. Canadian musicians for example are world-recognized talents. Why the disparity between music industry and visual media? In the digital world, Content Is King. On many fronts, Canada is not producing enough.

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 can't compete in manufacturing anymore. Those days are gone. Where we can compete is creative works, digital works, and manufacture of goods that aren't easily imported. The thirst for digital content and digital goods like software is huge, and still growing, and the software industry remains a front that North American labour can compete in - but only with help from government.

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?

Immigration. Let young people from across the globe immigrate, as long as they don't have criminal records, and as long as they have either job skills or investment capital to bring with them.

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?

Better education and training. The money is no longer in menial jobs that require little education. To compete in the digital economy we need people with skills - people who are well trained and well educated, so that our workforce is capable of more than what foreign competition can accomplish. Skilled, educated, strong workforce. That's what Canada needs.

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?

Small businesses, not huge ones, are the backbone of our economy - nay any developed nation's economy. But for too long the advantages have all been stacked towards huge businesses. Why? They do not contribute, collectively, as much to the economy as small businesses and yet we treat them like gold. In an environment where only huge businesses flourish and the small business suffers, overall economic strength, diversity and the rate of innovation will continue to decline.