

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?

I want the federal government to increase income taxes on the wealthiest Canadian individuals, corporations and businesses so that no one in a business or workplace earns more than 6 times the income of the lowest paid full-time equivalent employee. Canada is wealthy enough that the well-off can easily support the public sector. I also want the federal government to restore social, environmental and scientific infrastructure programs so that hundreds of thousands of unemployed and underemployed Canadians can be sustained in their economic recovery, that our natural wealth is monitored and safeguarded against pollution and related climate change, and our scientific community is supported in retrenching reliable and public research data that public and private entities can use to plan for enhanced economic growth. I also want, specifically, the federal government to restore funding to the CBC/Radio-Canada to year 2000 levels, so that the public broadcaster can stop looking to ad revenues in an already competitive market, and pay for more diverse programming instead of re-runs, as well as restore radio documentaries, drama, and regional tv and radio news coverage and shows. Apart from providing jobs in the broadcasting sector, more money for CBC/Radio-Canada means more advertising for every sector of Canadian life, improving the morale of citizens beyond market-driven, American- and American-oriented private broadcasting content.

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?

I want the federal government to grow its infrastructure, not shrink it. Privatization and downsizing is not promoting job creation. Please refer to my previous comments.

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?

The federal government should return to tied transfer payments to the provinces to pay directly for post-secondary education, specifically providing enough funds for free tuition and grants for supplies and accommodations. In this way, provinces and territories will be required to spend on skills development rather than massing those funds into other priorities, as is now done with the Health and Social Transfer.

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?

The cuts to UI/EI benefits are NOT the way to make people work harder. Guestworker programs are NOT the way to increase productivity. These programs victimize, de-skill, and marginalize workers from Canada and abroad. Improved post-secondary training as outlined on the previous page, including support for apprenticeship programs, would allow workers to re-skill in line with industry requirements without risks that undermine the social fabric, like moving across the country away from family and community.

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?

Women are having the hardest time, since most of Canada's Job Strategy supports jobs that are massively dominated by male workers, and the ministry responsible for women has removed most programs for women to make court challenges of sexist government and business practices. An increase in jobs and the quality of jobs where women comprise the majority of workers would help women immensely. Considering that the majority of families are headed by single women, this would increase the general stability of the other group having the hardest time: children.