



August 5, 2016

House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

Attn: Honourable Wayne Easter

On behalf of Scout Environmental, I am submitting the following comments as part of the pre-budget consultation process.

Executive Summary

The purpose of these comments is to outline our ideas and recommendations as to funding priorities for 2017 and beyond as part of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance pre-budget consultation process. The comments below focus on two key areas:

- 1) Indigenous Waste Management
- 2) Climate Change

I suggest that meaningful funding for capacity building around sustainable waste management in northern and remote Indigenous communities and climate change adaptation and mitigation are critical, and should be considered for inclusion in the 2017 federal budget.

About Scout

Scout Environmental (www.scoutenvironmental.com) is a not-for-profit organization that specializes in the development, delivery and management of creative programs that engage people on issues related to the environment. Particular issues of concern are product stewardship and waste management, environmental health, and climate change, with a focus on engaging northern and remote Indigenous communities. Our comments are informed by Scout's concern for these issues.

For over fifteen years, we've pioneered local and national programs engaging business, government and individuals to make better choices for our environment and health. We are B-Corp certified and are pleased to have been recognized and awarded for our culture, people and numerous environmental programs. I'm proud to say that we have had a long-standing and very productive working relationship with various Ministries over the years on initiatives ranging





from accelerated vehicle retirement, mercury switch collection and projects to clean up waste sites in the far north.

Comments

INDIGENOUS WASTE MANAGEMENT

Waste management is an ongoing challenge in northern and remote Indigenous communities; economic challenges as well as limited and costly transportation options lead to few options for managing waste in these communities. Bulky items, such as end-of-life vehicles (ELVs) and appliances as well as hazardous wastes are particular challenges, though a lack of access to recycling facilities also leads to pressure on landfills. Even in cases when provincially regulated stewardship programs are in place, access to these programs is often reduced or non-existent in remote communities due to the higher than average costs of delivering the program in these regions, or lack of information and support for communities about how to participate.

While the commitment of \$409 million dollars over 5 years that was identified in the 2016 budget is promising, more specific measures related to training and building capacity on the individual and community level and developing sustainable solutions are necessary. For remote communities, building properly engineered landfills is a good start, but is not, ultimately, a sustainable solution; these landfills will reach capacity, and new sites will have to be developed. The Government of Canada should fund programs in remote communities that aim to provide the same diversion programs as are available in more accessible communities, working to decrease the amount of material that winds up in the landfill.

Following are our suggestions to the House Finance Committee as it develops the 2017 budget:

1) INDIVIDUAL CANADIANS

The Government of Canada should provide more funding to support training and capacity building initiatives for Indigenous peoples, particularly in northern and remote regions where employment opportunities are limited.

More training opportunities conducted within remote Indigenous communities would be particularly beneficial, allowing for capacity building without requiring people to leave their homes and families. Closing gaps between training and hands-on experience will be critical to the long-term success of any training program. Hands-on training to remediate legacy waste issues and transition to sustainable practices will build community capacity as well as creating tangible and lasting improvements in communities.





2) BUSINESSES

The Government of Canada should engage in partnerships with local and regional governments to share responsibility for legacy wastes and developing sustainable strategies to move forward. Many waste stockpiles have been accumulating for decades, and include significant volumes of waste that were not generated by the community itself but rather by government funded projects or third-party contractors. A financial commitment to addressing these legacy wastes sites would be an incredibly valuable contribution to regional waste management strategies.

Often, local and regional governments have a strong interest in executing waste management initiatives, but face funding challenges. Access to funding for capital investments for equipment such a metal crusher would improve the feasibility of remediating dump sites, and would take the pressure off of new landfill sites by eliminating a bulky waste stream. This metal waste could then be backhauled in a much more cost-effective way, and sent to appropriate recycling facilities.

3) COMMUNITIES

Dumps can negatively affect individual and community health in a variety of ways, including water contamination and poor air quality from dump fires. By supporting the remediation of legacy dumps and moving towards sustainable waste management practices, the Government of Canada can support improvements in community health. Funding to remediate old dump sites and abandoned waste sites in and around the community would eliminate health risks while also creating local jobs.

Scout's *Tundra Take-Back* program focuses on solving northern waste management issues through tailoring educational resources to the northern context, transferring practical skills to local community members and connecting communities with the resources they need to get the job done. The over-arching goal of *Tundra Take-Back* is to enable northern community members to effectively manage dumpsites on an ongoing, sustainable basis.

With a particular focus on decommission end-of-life vehicles, appliances and heavy equipment and managing other bulky scrap metal, this hands-on training program generates tangible results. Since the pilot in 2014, training has been conducted in 5 communities in Nunavut, Nunatsiavut, and northern Ontario. Over 150 tonnes of pollutants and scrap metal have been recovered and responsibly managed. Ongoing funding to scale this program up to a National model would have an immediate and significant impact on Indigenous communities across Canada. Scout has had excellent successes working with community and regional governments; support from the Government of Canada would dramatically increase the reach of this program.





Climate Change

Climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies have become increasingly important for all Canadians; northern communities are particularly impacted by climate change through changes to sea ice conditions and melting permafrost. Funding for specific climate related initiatives should also be a critical component of the 2017 federal budget.

1) INDIVIDUAL CANADIANS

We suggest the Government of Canada enable and facilitate individual and community leadership and action by supporting organizations that have the capacity and experience to deliver at scale: To achieve significant greenhouse gas reductions in the coming years, Canadians need to understand and be engaged in programs that change daily behaviour and longer-term choices. Further, the Government of Canada should be directing those investments to organizations with the proven capability to leverage external funding from the private sector and deliver programs cost-effectively at a national scale.

2) BUSINESSES

Finally, there is a perception among business, industry associations and some environmental stakeholders that the Government of Canada has a fractured and piece-meal approach to policy and program development, financing and implementation. It is our view that the policy and programmatic measures under consideration by the Government of Canada should build on successful initiatives underway at the Provincial/Municipal level as well as leverage investments from the private sector on climate change to deliver programs at scale.

Businesses want programs that are national in reach in order to cost effectively invest marketing and operational resources critical to success. Creative and flexible third party delivery models and private-public partnerships are one of the most effective ways of engaging the market to reach millions of Canadians with innovative programs. Our ability to structure and deliver on these engagement models is what differentiates Scout Environmental from other environmental not-for-profit organizations in Canada.

3) COMMUNITIES

At the community level, the need for funding related is particularly acute in northern and remote Indigenous regions. The House Committee on Finance should consider funding that supports remote communities in moving away from reliance on diesel. Developing renewable energy





infrastructure will be critical, but in the shorter term, implementing energy efficiency programming to reduce demand is an important step.

We suggest that the Government of Canada work with the provinces and territories to establish and/or incorporate existing conservation targets into a national plan for electricity, oil (transportation and equipment fuels), propane and natural gas. It's essential that the Government of Canada avoid duplication of existing policy approaches/programs but rather builds on/leverages effective efforts already underway. Establishing clear targets and timelines with the appropriate policy mechanisms and incentives will support the transition to a cleaner economy. By getting the most energy out of existing fuels, we will use less fuels. Energy efficiency is part of the pathway.

I appreciate the opportunity to share our comments with the House Committee on Finance through this pre-budget consultation process, and look forward to working with the Government of Canada in the future to build a sustainable future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J Court". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Jennifer Court
Senior Director, Scout Environmental
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