

To the Clerk of the Standing Committee on Finance:

I was sent a letter from my local MP, as an invitation to be part of the process of gathering ideas from around the country about what we as individuals believe is important to be heard in preparation for the 2012 Budget.

One of the first things that came to mind was government duplication. I know that there are many provincial/federal items that would be better managed at a local level. Without going into specifics, provincial and federal jurisdictions are often blurring each other's lines, which creates confusion, and mainly, excess cost. Governments need to clearly define jurisdictions, and keep to them.

Another area where I believe too much money is being spent is towards political parties. I believe that no government should be giving money back to parties for what they spend in elections, or for how many votes they received. Although I happen to be a treasurer for a certain political association, and I realize how helpful the money is, I also see how much we do receive from Elections Canada during elections. When you start doing the math, and figuring out all the different political parties, and all the ridings in the country, it adds up to quite a bit!

My third and last point has to do with how much money is being spent on the revolving door system, aka, our Justice system. We have to hold criminals accountable for their acts, and in doing so, rehabilitate. I agree that there are a lot of cases of criminals "getting their act together" and making something of their lives once they leave imprisonment. There are many more, however, that keep on doing the same thing over and over and over again. I have had some discussions with people who are employed by a federal prison, and they all say the same thing. "They are released and you send them off into the world... but you know darn well that they'll be back again." Sadly, this is so true. I believe our government needs to ensure that prison is actually a deterrent, and that more is being done to convict our young offenders who often "get away with murder". I believe our Youth Justice Act is far too soft, and we need to nip these soon-to-be-adults in the bud, when they commit their first crime. Not wait until they escalate.

Thank you for the opportunity to address only a few of my concerns!

-Cheryl Armishaw

Stonewall, Manitoba