

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 believe that many of the cuts already made to the cultural sector have seriously damaged the local economy. I also believe that it is the government's responsibility to support small- and medium-sized cultural businesses that are active in theater and dance and that employ a very large number of performers and stage technicians. These people play an important role in raising Canada's profile nationally and internationally.

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?

Grants to cultural businesses should be increased.

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?

Improve family support programs, particularly by making changes to maternity benefits, as was done in Quebec with outstanding results. Offer more financial support through such measures as tax credits for families with more than one child, and financial support to municipalities to help them maintain sports and cultural facilities for children. It costs a lot to raise a family and if couples had better financial support, perhaps they would have two or three children rather than just one. In any case, it takes a broad-based plan if we want to change demographics.

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?

I don't know.

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?

Education is experiencing financial difficulties, mainly because of the bureaucracy established by the school boards. Far too much money is wasted, but education is a provincial responsibility and I don't know what the federal government can do to address the situation. The cultural community has definitely suffered greatly at the hands of the federal government for several years. Cuts to cultural grants have inflicted significant damage, and this sector is finding it difficult to stay vibrant. Investments in culture produce short-, medium- and long-term benefits both socially and economically. The federal government has the moral and political duty to get fully involved in cultural development by re-instituting grants to cultural businesses across the country.