

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?

- measuring Canada's natural capital and the opportunity cost of failing to manage it sustainably (e.g. sustained economic recovery and enhanced economic growth cannot be sustainably through unsustainable natural resource management); - investing in training, development, and employment programs to mitigate the strain that many Canadians are experiencing with under/unemployment (e.g. a strong workforce leads to a healthy economy with sustainable economic development and trade); - putting reasonable caps on tuition and investing in student loan forgiveness and student/recent graduate employment opportunities (young adults, the future of tomorrow's economy, are shackled with rising tuition and student debt... thus require debt relief in order to expedite their investment into local economies and consumer spending; - granting incentives and tax breaks to corporations, small business, the education sector, and private sector who adopt environmental and socio-economic sustainability in their operations - thereby encouraging initiatives that will expedite Canada's sustained economic recovery and growth (e.g. promoting innovation that saving green [\$] by going "green", thereby promoting economic development); - strengthening pensions and retirement programs/plans so that the seniors of today and tomorrow can invest towards Canada's economic growth as well as their own well-being.

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?

- Invest in Second Career, Summer Company, and entrepreneurial programs; - Invest in employment training programs and work-study/internship programs that connect students and workers with tangible employment opportunities and sustainable livelihoods; - Create and strengthen internship opportunities that lead to tangible long-term employment; - Provide incentives that promote local Canadian economies and thus local job security (e.g. higher tax on products and services from overseas, thereby encouraging Canadians to "buy Canadian" and create jobs within Canada to produce Canadian goods and services in Canada); - Refuse to undervalue Canada's natural capital, while investing in eco-tourism to attract others to Canada's beauty (e.g. reduce the selling Canada's natural capital and natural resources to unsustainable multi-national corporations, while exploring how tourism into Canada's national parks, biosphere reserves, and conservation areas can be of greater benefit to Canada's brand and economy); - Provide easier access to federal job creation and training services; - Create sustainable financial incentives that support Canadian farmers over imported produce that competes with local agriculture and job security; - Promote international trade with multi-national corporations which adhere to strict environmental and socio-economic sustainability and do not risk local economies and job security (e.g. create a reliable and rigorous evaluation process that promotes economic trade and development for Canada's benefit while also weeding out unsustainable multi-national

corporations/entities that risk Canada's local, regional, provincial, and national socio-economic growth and environmental sustainability.

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?

- Strengthen retirement programs and health care for seniors with drug benefit programs, increasing universal health insurance coverage, etc.; - Invest in youth-to-senior mentor programs that promote successive generational learning to develop skillsets of a younger generation while facilitating sustainable livelihoods for those nearing retirement or who have retired yet still require an income. - Invest in Second Career, Summer Company, and entrepreneurial programs; - Invest in employment training programs and work-study/internship programs that connect students and workers with tangible employment opportunities and sustainable livelihoods; - Create and strengthen internship opportunities that lead to tangible long-term employment; - Invest more funds and human resources into HSRDC programs that target skill shortages among communities and demographics at risk, e.g. persons with disabilities, under/unemployed, youth, Canada's Indigenous/Aboriginal/First Nations/Metis communities, new Canadian citizens, etc. - Strengthen pensions and retirement programs/plans so that the seniors of today and tomorrow can invest towards Canada's economic growth as well as their own well-being.

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?

See answer to question #4

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?

Those facing the most challenges at present include... Canada's Indigenous/Aboriginal/First Nations/Metis communities, e.g.: - Inadequate and consistent access to sustainable potable drinking water, comparable to the rest of Canadians; - Inadequate and consistent access to sustainable sources of capacity development opportunities; - Marginalization and exclusion from mainstream governance (greater consultation, collaboration, and participatory governance must exist across all scales of governance); - Marginalization and exclusion from benefiting from certain natural resource management initiatives (some are facing less financial returns and employment opportunities in comparison to non-Indigenous Canadians within the same geographic communities); - Risk of the extinction or extirpation of some traditional languages and cultural practices due to the ramifications of residential schools (some ways to mitigate this is to ensure just compensation for surviving families and funding and promoting programs that revive these at-risk languages and cultural practices, while also promoting learning and understanding these languages and cultures across all Canadians – just as it is done with French); Marginalized and “at-risk” communities: - Face continued hidden and overt prejudice and discrimination due to racism, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, homophobia, sexism, ageism, and assumptions of socio-economic class. - Cultural competency training must be emplaced in all

government offices and services, and this should be encouraged across Canada – along with resources to provide such services.