

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?

Investments in job creation, skills development, and social infrastructure. Specifically investment that will stand Canada in good stead when recovery occurs, e.g., 'green' jobs, development of green technology; investment to mitigate and adapt to climate change as well as reduce inequality and enhance gender equity, e.g., investments in affordable housing and investments in childcare to assist provinces to develop their child-care programs.

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?

No comment

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?

Don't put all the eggs in one basket. Look at aging issues but also at stresses on all ages. Increase investments in healthcare and services sector directed to aging population (home-care; long term care); increase investments in skills development programs and in higher education generally to reduce student debt; reduce childcare, housing and education costs to families to help them to have the number of children they want to have and thus increase fertility in Canada; increase support for immigrants to find work and adjust to Canadian society; encourage foreign students to stay in Canada

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?

Encourage corporate sector to spend the money they are hoarding, especially on investment in infrastructure; green technology etc. Increase investments in higher education and skills development.

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?

Many rural communities in Nova Scotia are facing challenges due to declining population, while HRM faces challenges associated with increased population (urban sprawl and rising house prices); low income people face difficulties finding affordable housing, especially in cities and large towns. Food costs are increasing due to extreme weather (affects of climate change?). People on low and fixed incomes are feeling the effects of increased in energy costs. Low and middle income families with dependent children are under stress. Assist rural municipalities to adjust and deal with the challenges of declining and aging populations, old infrastructure, declining tax base; increase investment in affordable housing (we need a national housing strategy); subsidize shift from fossil fuels to green energy to reduce costs to consumers; encourage investment in local food production; increase transfers to provinces to assist the poor living on income assistance; reduce stresses in families with dependent children by increasing investment in childcare; higher education.