

## Standing Committee on Finance (FINA)

### Pre-budget consultations 2012

## Joyce Majiski

### 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?*

Put more money back into the economy-I think you should restore the National Parks system-and encourage Canadians to get out and enjoy our Parks....it will increase health/well being and fitness and an interest in the outdoors and our natural resources. This has long term benefits to the health care system as well. We should be encouraging and supporting more small local business and secondary industry in Canada. Why are we continuing to send our raw materials to other countries and buying back cheap breakable items? We should be growing more of our own food- support small farms, sustainable businesses and innovators. Fund more locally driven arts organizations and producers. This is a great way to celebrate and support our arts/culture and expand our cultural industries. Supporting cultural industries has proven repeatedly to yield a high return for the investment. I think you should not only restore funding to CBC radio and TV but increase it. We are known for our excellent documentaries, both radio and TV as well as programs that link us across the country. Our film industry professionals have headed to the south which is a shame. We need to support our artists in Canada and encourage the telling of Canadian stories to Canadians and to the world. Artists should also be consulted as they are well known for thinking "outside the box" and would provide a valuable think tank that isn't currently be tapped into. Stop building or buying F-18 fighter jets for billions of dollars AND repeal Bill C-10, the Ominous Crime bill. Both are a waste of taxpayers money. Crime stats show that crime is down in Canada. Why spend more money on institutions? Why incarcerate more people who are first offenders? Rather than continuing to cultivate a culture of fear in Canada (bigger borders-more fear tactics about fear of attack from other countries--why else build fighter jets?), spend more money on programs to educate low income and first offenders. There are so many proven programs that could be resurrected. Fund programs that bring Canadians together in a spirit of understanding and community and support us supporting each other.

#### 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?*

Create national transportation systems like trains- which will reduce the number of personal vehicles and give people jobs all across the country. This will help to reduce the rampant stress on our global and national resources. You could create an economy and jobs around construction/maintenance of new trains-repairing, upgrading Lines, building infrastructure: creating a string of local businesses to provide services, restaurants, hotels. Encourage train travel, vacation travel by train. Encourage the innovators of new technologies including those as an alternative to non renewable resources for fuel. We have the opportunity to be leaders in the world. Restore funding to the environmental agencies and scientists that act as a voice to protect the environment and monitor industry from depleting the country of our resources. Industries have to be held fully accountable for all clean up costs as a cost of doing business.

They should be forced to compensate those experiencing long term job losses and poor health due to industrial pollution and accidents. The polluters should pay for the damage they are responsible for creating. We need to balance consumerism with the message that sometimes we actually often have “enough”. Encourage more Made in Canada products of better quality. It is better to have slower, reliable growth based on conscientious stewardship than extravagant growth within a culture of greed and recklessness. Better well being is not based solely on economy. A well educated population is more likely to be a competitive one, find ways to reduce costs of secondary education and educate more of our youth. Many countries in Europe fund University education- why aren't we compared to that model?

### **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?*

It is a good idea to plan for demographic changes. However, it is not appropriate to increase the age for eligibility for Old Age Security. I have read reports that say these cuts are not evidence based. Restore the Long Term Census while there is still time. Reliable long term knowledge is money in the bank when it comes to demographics and the economy. if you have no stats, how can you back decisions? We will need REAL solutions to increased pressures on health care. Consult the health care professionals in the field. Changes need not be more expensive; just smarter. This government should put aside its well documented aversion to knowledge and expert advice that cripple its ability to come up with effective solutions. By working with, rather than intimidating those employed in the health sector, it is possible that we can come up constructive plans.

### **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?*

In remote and smaller communities, employees that have government jobs are important cornerstones of those communities. Cutting jobs to Parks was very shortsighted! In the Yukon this will affect tourism (no staff ) and therefore the economy of most towns and the city of Whitehorse. In many cases, cutting Government jobs means having to hire consultants at a higher rate--NOT very wise in the long run. Restore those jobs lost in Parks Canada. We are being panicked into behaving in ways that may have negative long term consequences. Productivity isn't necessarily tied to rampant expansion and reckless depletion of our resources. Modest steady growth is a better goal. Sometimes Enough is indeed Enough. I most definitely would prefer to live in a country with modest growth that is democratic and sustainable. It is not unreasonable to ask that our government serve rather than manage its citizens. I would also encourage a discussion around alternative growth models, business practices and small companies that involve more local initiatives. Fund more cultural and socially responsible businesses.

### **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?*

The current conservative government needs to start consulting a broader range of interest groups and the demographic of people that are most likely to be affected by changes to legislation or funding. The current government doesn't seem to be consulting with anyone at all, let alone those that oppose their positions or has information that counters current conservative viewpoints. This has to change. We are supposed to be a democracy. I believe scientists need to have the freedom to do and report on their

work. Restore cuts to Research Canada, maintain the Polar Environment Atmospheric Research Laboratory and the Experimental Lakes Laboratory and research stations like the Kluane Research Station. Lets foster innovation and invention and alternatives for energy, business and ways to exist in our cities. Continue current fresh water and ocean fisheries research and also Restore the National Roundtable on the Environment and Economy. Their contributions are invaluable. Omnibus budget bills are an undemocratic way to push through policies that wouldn't pass otherwise. Given this government's past behaviour; are we to expect unwarranted attacks on women's rights, human rights, the arts, privacy, seniors, the CBC and who knows what in the next omnibus budget bill?. Cut the communications staff in the Privy Council, the Prime Minister's Office and ministries by half. In the Privy Council alone, the number of employees working in communications and media are now twice as large as they were under Jean Chrétien. If the government were transparent; they wouldn't require so much spin. Special interest groups such as the petroleum industry, foreign multi-nationals and the Conservative Party should pay for their own advertisements. I would ask this government to behave better- respect views other than your own--not only your political constituents, but all Canadians, and respect the ideas of other party leaders. I am very concerned that this government is behaving more like a dictatorship than a democracy.