

## Standing Committee on Finance (FINA)

### Pre-budget consultations 2012

## Victoria Serda

### 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?*

Remove subsidies for energy production, on fossil fuels in particular. Reduce red tape and taxes for SMEs. Increase government funding for services that alleviate poverty and help people find good paying jobs. Support businesses who develop jobs at a living wage. Raise the minimum wage. Invest in environmental research, particularly on climate change mitigation and adaptation. Invest in sustainable community development practices, including cultural tourism. Provide incentives for energy conservation as a tool for saving money. Increase penalties for tax fraud and environmental degradation. Continue funding the National Round Table on Environment and Economy and ask them for solutions. Support municipalities creating long term jobs. Develop long term sustainable funding plans from the federal government for non-profits and charities.

#### 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?*

Decentralize services to the municipal level through sustainable and predictable funding transfers. Increase predictable funding to the non-profit sector to start competition for services that are needed. Give incentives to companies who are hiring skilled workers permanently. Shift the culture of the federal government to be more pleasant and accountable on the world stage~eg. sign back onto the Kyoto Agreement. Increase funding for sustainability practices and innovative in business. Give 6 month notice on NAFTA and stop other Free trade agreements, since they lessen the sovereign abilities of Canada to promote business in Canada to Canadians.

#### 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?*

Be more open to immigration and accepting refugees. Fund further successful programs to integrate immigrants and refugees into our communities. Develop further programs to give incentives for SMEs to hire skilled workers. Introduce more education for the public on essential business skills like project management. Increase funding to universities and colleges for skills projected to be needed. Strongly consider recommendations from professors and non-profits doing studies and reports for the federal government. Have focus groups and open forums to ask community members for advice.

#### **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?*

Increase funding for education, particularly on project management and skills needed for competitiveness through non-profits, colleges and universities. Increase funding for sustainability practices, as they eliminate waste and make businesses more effective and productive.

#### **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?*

Climate change is the biggest challenge facing all Canadians. Action: create targets to reduce carbon emissions, implement a carbon tax, join Cap & Trade, increase funding to municipalities for infrastructure stress from freeze/thaw cycles & natural disasters, increase funding to farmers for irrigation infrastructure and pond development, increase funding to training youth in basic skills to run community-based projects, create programs to showcase sustainability practices in businesses, corporations and communities, stop all subsidies and funding for fossil fuel-related activities.