

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?

Review personal income tax rates & consider changes: increase the earnings floor at which ANY income tax is paid. Offset the tax revenue thus lost by increasing the tax rate on the highest income levels. This revenue neutral approach will put desperately needed funds into the hands of Canadians who will in turn almost certainly commit those dollars to expenditures on housing, food & clothing thus having the effect of enhancing economic activity.

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?

Commit federal dollars to infrastructure which will improve Canada's ability to ship goods, and services to market: ALL fuel tax dollars to be directed to highway construction & improvements. Increase investment in our ports, both sea (including arctic) & air, especially including those in the more northern communities so as to be able to handle trade increases.

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?

Continue to make legislation that tends to facilitate the involvement of older workers: eliminate mandatory retirement age whether 65, 67 or other. End discrimination of health benefits for workers older than age 65. Continue the move to increasing the age at which pension benefits accrue from age 65 to 67 & then next to age 70. Include CPP, QPP & OAP benefits. Increase the dollar amount of earnings that allow the age credit - presently set at approx \$33,000 for age 65 at the same time the age is increased to 67. Retain the 10 year residency eligibility requirement for OAP & GIS benefits.

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?

Provide incentives to organizations making capital investments that are intended to improve productivity.

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?

In my opinion, this country could take a big step forward by ensuring high speed internet & cell phone service to all rural communities. Our country used to be amongst the leaders in communications but now appears to have fallen far behind in wireless services for all Canadians. Also, the intriguing future economic possibilities of Canada enhancing it's northern presence leads me to suggest building icebreakers & increasing navigational infrastructure together continuing to improve cold weather coast guard & military capabilities will best serve Canada. A further measure to deal with financial services will show Canada intends to remain on a sound fiscal base: national securities regulator with adequate enforcement powers.