

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?

Reduce hidden and outright subsidies to big business, and particularly big oil.

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 research and development, especially in green technology and alternative energy.

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?

The aging population - reverse cuts in transfer payments to the provincial governments. Stop undercutting our medical system. Skills shortages - re-instate student loan and grant programs. Allow trained and skilled immigrants to work in the field they have been trained in.

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?

Better funding to, and organization of, support and/or treatment programs for mental health, addictions, compassionate leave, families at risk, single parents, etc. Stressed out, overwhelmed workers cannot be productive. Addictions, depression and other mental health problems keep potentially useful citizens from participating in the workforce.

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?

First nations communities and citizens continue to face shamefully high unemployment rates, disgraceful housing problems, high incarceration rates, low levels of education, and outright discrimination. Our continued mistreatment of Canada's aboriginal population; in spite of decades of commissions, hand wringing, and tokenism is a huge blot on our international reputation. It is past time to scrap the Indian Act and treat ALL our citizens with respect.

