

Standing Committee on Finance (FINA)

Pre-budget consultations 2012

Andrea Stangeland

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?

I think it is vital that we better support the demand side of our economy. I am much more concerned with economic stability than growth. I think tax cuts get us nowhere, they undermine the redistribution of wealth and leave us with a large population that is unable to support the supply side of our economy, thus weakening local economies and leaving us at risk of crises of overproduction. I would like the government to significantly increase corporate taxes, add a high-income tax rate of 35% on personal income amounts over \$250 000, and eliminate loopholes in capital gains taxes. I would like to see increased funding and direct investment for social services, for the provinces, and for local communities. I would like to see more effective investment in economic growth, industries that produce a better return in both jobs and revenues than simple resource extraction: Refineries, value-added industries, etc. I would like to see a carbon tax system to encourage the energy sector to develop more sustainable technology and practices. I want a federal government that puts a little effort into economic innovation and improvement rather than just obtusely selling off our natural resources in their least valuable form.

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?

I would like to see direct job creation in high multiplier areas like infrastructure, health care and education. I would like any sort of subsidies/investments to be targeted at encouraging long term, sustainable, labour-intensive industries with high rates of return in jobs and wages. I would like to see the government encourage value-added industry in resource sectors, so that we retain more resource profits in our economy in the form of jobs.

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?

I would like to see improved settlement and transition/training/recertification services for immigrants, so that they may quickly and effectively find their feet both socially and economically. Skilled workers are often underutilized and should be encouraged and supported in making use of their skills and training. I would like to see co-ordinated federal/provincial/community strategies to address poverty, including a raise in the GIS and appropriate affordable housing options. I think we should prioritize job creation in high unemployment regions and expanding industries BEFORE investing in the expansion of industries that are already facing labour shortages. Target jobs at Canadians, not temporary foreign workers. I think temporary foreign workers should receive the same pay and benefits as Canadians.

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?

I don't know.

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?

Native communities need stable funding, housing, poverty reduction measures, and investment in appropriate community-based economic development. I think we are failing woefully on the environmental front. We need a system of taxes and incentives that will steer our energy sector toward technological innovation and implementation of better environmental practices. Carbon taxes. Perhaps also tax incentives/sales tax breaks for individuals choosing green technologies? eg: electric scooters/vehicles, hybrids, car share fees, bicycles/parts National poverty reduction plan addressing housing issues and food security. MPs excessive pensions need to be addressed.