

Standing Committee on Finance (FINA)

Pre-budget consultations 2012

Lara Zalinko

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?

Cut way back on selling raw resources to foreign countries and companies. Mine minerals and oil in an environmentally sustainable manner and manufacture them into value-added products. Stop the export of raw logs. Instead log 2nd growth sustainably and again, create value-added products and therefore more jobs. Keep more of our fresh water here too. Rethink NAFTA. Work towards rebalancing our economy. We are currently too heavily involved in being a raw goods supplier to the world (any student of history can see we are going backwards in our autonomy as a nation if we are just a raw materials supplier to the world). Oil comes to mind, especially since we are allowing other countries to grab so much of ours these days.

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?

As mentioned in the previous section, create more jobs by exporting value added products instead of raw goods. Higher tariffs on raw goods being exported? Invest in alternative energy research and projects. Hire back the scientists that were fired.

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?

Forgive student loans so that those who are skilled and educated can have enough money to stay in the middle class and pay the CPP and increased costs of caring for the aging population. Offer more support for parents who are working - daycare subsidies and more spaces. Daycares at work places. Health care costs are going to keep going up. Plan for that, and work towards getting care for people before they get really sick - saves money in the long run. Continue to increase the transferability of skills and education from other countries so that skilled immigrants can start working in their field far quicker than what currently is happening.

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?

More people working less hours. Not sure how to help this happen, but I think there would be more productivity, less sick time and a healthier population over all. You may have to offer tax breaks to those who are willing to work less so that they don't suffer financially. Maybe tax breaks for those who volunteer or participate in activities that are proven to decrease diabetes, cancer and heart disease?

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?

Students and student debt impairs graduates ability to participate fully in the economy. Example: I am currently considering cashing in my RRSPs to pay down my student debt, despite the fact that I'll have to pay taxes on these now. It's out of despiration that I would consider such a move, but the debt load and monthly payments mean that I won't be able to buy a home (ever) unless I can get employment in a small town. Disabled people, including those with "invisible" disabilities such as chronic pain, seem to be getting less and less assistance in terms of getting health care and opportunities to volunteer or work in ways that fit their specific needs and abilities. Basically, the most vulnerable people in society need the most help in terms of programs, funding, and tax breaks.