House of Commons
Chambre des communes
Canada

**House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance – Pre-budget Consultations 2013**

**This brief is submitted by:**

(•) **an organization** **Organization name:** March of Dimes Canada

**or**

( ) **an individual** **Name:** _____

**Topic:** Disabled persons

## *Recommendation 1: Please provide a short summary of your recommendation.

A national agenda for bridging aging and disability should be formally developed through the involvement of researchers, practice professionals, policy makers, older adults, persons with disabilities and their families. We recommend (a) that we continue and enhance the research necessary to bridge the two fields of aging and disability and (b) that the Government of Canada coordinate public and private funding to provide the necessary financial support for research and scholarship that advance the science of aging and disability knowledge, practice and policies.

**Expected cost or savings:** From the pull-down menus, please indicate the expected cost or savings of your recommendation to the federal government and the period of time to which the expected cost or savings is related.

unknown

5 or more years

**Federal funding:** Please provide a precise indication of how the federal government could fund your recommendation. For example, indicate what federal spending should be reallocated, what federal tax measure(s) should be introduced, eliminated or changed, etc.

This recommendation could find life through enhanced and targeted funding to Research Canada OR through the announcement of a task force or research commission, a task force or commission that draws from the portfolios of the Ministers of Employment and Social Development, Seniors, Health and the Office of the Prime Minister.

**Intended beneficiaries:** Please indicate the groups of individuals, the sector(s) and/or the regions that would benefit by implementation of your recommendation.

Canadians with disabilities, their families, caregivers and communities nation-wide; older adults throughout Canada; policy makers throughout the Government of Canada; practice professionals costs to coast; and applied and academic researchers throughout Canada.

**General impacts:** Depending on the nature of your recommendation, please indicate how the standard of living of Canadians would be improved, jobs would be created, people would be trained, etc.

Aging with and aging into disability are global population trends. Cross-national and international collaborated efforts can support effective and efficient knowledge development and transfer, implementation of best practices, and facilitate information exchange among, and empowerment of, Canadians with disabilities and their families. The needs of Canadians aging with a disability will be better aligned in order to make better life choices, navigate support and service systems, and more fully engage in opportunities for inclusion and participation in society.

**Topic:** Disabled persons

## Recommendation 2: Please provide a short summary of your recommendation.

Accessibility Legislation - The federal government has a role in the evolving landscape of accessibility legislation in Canada. Ontario has the AODA. Manitoba introduced the Accessibility for Manitobans Act. Other provinces are considering such an approach, which will contribute to a coast-to-coast framework of accessibility legislation. A coordinating role for the Provinces, as well as an approach that ensures regulated accessibility throughout the federal sphere, will not only complete the national framework, but can harmonize national regulatory efforts, spending priorities, an results.

**Expected cost or savings:** From the pull-down menus, please indicate the expected cost or savings of your recommendation to the federal government and the period of time to which the expected cost or savings is related.

unknown

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**Federal funding:** Please provide a precise indication of how the federal government could fund your recommendation. For example, indicate what federal spending should be reallocated, what federal tax measure(s) should be introduced, eliminated or changed, etc.

Such efforts could see the introduction of tax incentives for the private sector. For example, a business tax measure that complements provincial legislation as well as recognizes appropriate costs in barrier-free renovations, can stimulate the removal of physical barriers, advance the construction and/or renovation of accessibility features, and include more people in local economies, employment opportunities, and society as a whole.

**Intended beneficiaries:** Please indicate the groups of individuals, the sector(s) and/or the regions that would benefit by implementation of your recommendation.

This is a measure than any small or medium-sized business in any town or city could benefit from. Since accessibility features in building codes tend only to have a "go-forward" effect, with few other means to address existing physical barriers in the build environment, a tax measure such as this can have multiple benefits: small businesses include a greater number of customers; the construction industry would see added opportunity for accessibility construction and renovation; and older Canadians (with or without a disability) would have greater access to local goods and services.

**General impacts:** Depending on the nature of your recommendation, please indicate how the standard of living of Canadians would be improved, jobs would be created, people would be trained, etc.

Accessibility legislation throughout Canada requires leadership and harmonization. As the laws roll out across the country, harmonization will be required if only to identify where efficiencies can be achieved in programs and services. Moreover, as accessibility becomes a fully fledged component of Canadian public policy, policy makers will understand how and where to eliminate barriers to employment, to economic participation, and to becoming a more inclusive society.

**Topic:** Please select from the pull-down menu

## Recommendation 3: Please provide a short summary of your recommendation.

**Expected cost or savings:** From the pull-down menus, please indicate the expected cost or savings of your recommendation to the federal government and the period of time to which the expected cost or savings is related.

Please select from the drop down menu

Please select from the drop down menu

**Federal funding:** Please provide a precise indication of how the federal government could fund your recommendation. For example, indicate what federal spending should be reallocated, what federal tax measure(s) should be introduced, eliminated or changed, etc.

**Intended beneficiaries:** Please indicate the groups of individuals, the sector(s) and/or the regions that would benefit by implementation of your recommendation.

**General impacts:** Depending on the nature of your recommendation, please indicate how the standard of living of Canadians would be improved, jobs would be created, people would be trained, etc.

Please use this page if you wish to provide more explanation about your recommendation(s).

Our second recommendation, Accessibility Legislation and its accompanying fiscal and regulatory opportunities, is something that can be achieved by announcing team that will be given the mandate to design the legislation (Ontario and Manitoba already have models to consider), the financial impacts and savings, and the tax measures that could augment the intent of generating greater accessibility and removing barriers to participation.

Our first recommendation, Bridging Aging and Disability, will help find solutions to population issues that not only challenge policy makers today, but will become exacerbated by inaction.

In the years ahead, disability will be an even greater concern to Canada due to aging populations, higher risk of disability in older people, as well as the global increase in chronic health conditions (such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer and mental health disorders). The dual phenomena of aging and increased longevity for individuals with disabilities represent significant advances in health and eduction.

However, new challenges now include strains on pension and social security systems; preparing health providers and societies to meet the needs of population aging with, and aging into, a disability; preventing and managing age and disability-associated secondary conditions and chronic diseases; designing sustainable policies to support healthy aging and community living as well as long-term palliative care; and development disability and age-friendly services and settings.

Bridging the fields of aging and disability research, policy and practices is critical for meeting these challenges. And immediate action can begin with either the announcement of a task force/commission or specifically targeted funding to Research Canada to consider the issues around bridging the fields of aging and disability.

For additional information, please contact:
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*Please note that at least one recommendation must be provided