

Prince Albert, June 30th, 2014

M E M O R A N D U M

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To : The House Of Commons Standing Committee On Finance

Re : 2015 BUDGET

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This is a submission by the Prince Albert Seniors Advocacy Centre (306-981-2564) resulting in making a number of recommendations to the pre-2015 Budget Consultations. We were recommending the following :

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SERIOUS PENSION REFORMS

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Since more and more seniors have difficulty "making ends meet" on limited pension income (OAS/CPP), we recommend that the Federal Government seriously considers to immediately enrich the current CPP system, to make necessary changes to the admission requirements for OAS (i.e. reversing the age requirement from 67 back to 65), and to devise policies to change or enrich requirements to obtain income supplements programs (GIS/ALLOWANCE) for the poorest of the poorest seniors.

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NEW HORIZONS FOR SENIORS PROGRAM FUNDING

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To immediately triple the funding limit of this program from \$ 25,000.00 to \$ 75,000.00 per year per project and allow multiple year financing which would enable senior groups to organize themselves properly to "help themselves" in a meaningful way. It would be more useful to allow seniors to organize themselves socially within communities rather than giving, for instance, a stove or refrigerator to some seniors group. Programs should be centered on advocacy and providing real supportive counselling services to the most vulnerable seniors.

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CHRONIC AGE-RELATED ILLNESS

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To immediately release additional funding to the Provinces to dramatically increase applied research in Age-related Chronic Illness (i.e. Alzheimer and related illness, Severe Hearing Loss, Depression, etc...); and

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To provide project-type funding for community-based programs to seek solutions to deal with the increase in Age-related Chronic Illness at the community level. Selected projects would need to provide dissemination of project findings (how such projects can be replicated nationally in other communities).

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FEDERAL MINISTRY RESPONSIBLE FOR SENIORS

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To immediately raise the profile of and substantially increase the budget for the Federal Ministry Responsible for Seniors. All policies or programs of other ministries and departments remotely related to the lives of senior citizens in Canada should be “filtered through” this enhanced Ministry of consultation and actual input.

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FEDERAL            MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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To immediately release additional project-based funding to enable the integration of seniors with specific skill sets into the main stream of Canadian society. Funding would be provided to businesses, non-profits, government services, etc... to make it easier for them to recruit “professional seniors” through the provision of engagement costs, stipends, public relations, etc....

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END    OF LIFE ISSUES

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To allow community-based organizations to develop its own community-based solutions to end of life issues. Each community has its own flavor, its own personality, and rather than giving financing to one Nationally based organization to deal with end of life issues, allow communities to develop their own approaches. This could be done through either the Federal Ministry of Health or through additional designated transfers to Provincial Ministries of Health.

Of course this is a very limited list with very general (broad) recommendations. The general nature of these “requests” is understandable as the senior community in Prince Albert has just recently started to formally organize itself . We hope that within the next 12 month some type of “Prince Albert Council on Ageing” will be formed and more specific requests can be submitted to various levels of government for funding or policy development as it pertains to seniors.