

CANADIANS ARE INVITED TO SHARE THEIR PRIORITIES FOR THE 2015 FEDERAL BUDGET

I am an individual responding to a letter from my MP, John Duncan, PC, MP in The Echo Newspaper (July 22, 2014; Comox Valley, BC) inviting input from Canadians to the Government's pre-budget planning.

1)Balancing the federal budget to ensure fiscal sustainability and economic growth

Reform the tax system so that the very wealthy and corporations contribute more to services and infrastructure available and beneficial to all Canadians. Redirect subsidies, eliminate deferments of tax payments and raise their taxes. They are low enough to remain competitive with other countries, even if raised.

Investment now in services can be an investment in the future and save money down the road. Many students begin their working lives with debt from higher education. Couples invest in houses and carry a mortgage. Small businesses put up money to open and operate in order to benefit in the future. Governments can invest in people through services that will help to decrease problems for the long-term that are costly with short-term "solutions".

2)Supporting families and helping vulnerable Canadians by focusing on health, education and training

Health: fund strengthening our National Health system; fund a National Universal Public Prescription Drug Plan; create and fund a national plan for chronic health care, home and long term care; increase funding for mental health, VETs and victims of abuse. Long term Federal funding and planning in these areas will save money in many other areas in the long term (i.e. the criminal, justice and health care systems).

Increase programs, and Federal support for programs, such as "Insite" (Supervised Injection Site) in downtown east-side of Vancouver.

Increase Federal funding for housing for the homeless and follow-up support for drug, abuse, and poverty issues.

Restore funding for Kitimavik. With the current emphasis on education for jobs, rather than learning for its own sake, Kitimavik funding was minuscule compared to the benefits provided by it through supporting youth in the development of leadership skills, social responsibility, citizenship and work experience.

Restore funding to programs that support people! People are our most important resource!

Restore funding for the CBC. It is a glue that holds the country together- educating communities about each other; local, national and global cultures, entertainments, ideas, history, politics, and issues that matter to everyone. It is more professional and of higher quality than what now passes for entertainment and news in the general media. It is a service for all Canadians that allows us to be informed, entertained and educated about ourselves, our fellow citizens and citizens of the world.

3)Increasing the competitiveness of Canadian businesses through research, development, innovation and commercialization

Promote "thinking outside the box" with grants and subsidies for sustainable and alternate energy and manufacturing that relies on oil products.

4)Ensuring prosperous and secure communities, including through support for infrastructure

Support and encourage communities to be sustainable and to protect their environments with Federal grants and subsidies.

Protect public water rights from privatization.

Protect my tax dollars by ensuring that no foreign company can sue the Federal government, the province I live in, or my municipality over laws and rights that benefit me and the citizens of Canada but that they feel interfere with their rights and businesses.

Implement national programs to confront poverty, abuse, dysfunction in families and mental illness in communities. Crime will be reduced and productivity will increase (although it might take more than one generation to make a significant difference).

5)Improving Canada's taxation and regulatory regimes

Create a tax system and regulations that ensure a fair tax-system, a minimum income and living wage, protects the environment, human rights and workers' rights.

Close tax loop-holes and find "cheats".

Limit corporate lobbying contributions and reform campaign finance regulations.

Reinstate federal party tax-payer funding based on votes in an election.

Spend my tax dollars on protecting the Canadian environment, researchers' jobs and prevention and alleviation of poverty etc. It seems ironic I willingly pay taxes for services and infrastructure that benefit all Canadians and also feel it is necessary to support groups lobbying the government on my behalf to protect those very services, Canadian values and rights that I expect any democratic government to protect for its citizens.

6) Maximizing the number and types of jobs for Canadians

Build a clean energy economy.

Transition our economy into the future with support for sustainable, clean industries. Support keeping jobs in Canada. Don't ship raw resources abroad.

I appreciate being given the opportunity to share my priorities even though I know that they don't fit with the ideology of the Conservative government. I was raised and educated to believe that a democratic government administered on behalf of all citizens, not interest groups or ideology, practicing the principle of equality of rights, opportunity and treatment.

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