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:** Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada

or

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

Topic: Education and skills training

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

Canada is facing an unprecedented demographic shift that will require its young people to be educated, skilled and ready to enter the workforce. In July 2012, just under 30 per cent of Canadian firms were reporting labour shortages that posed a challenge for their ability to meet demands. Affirmative work experiences and on the job training during early career development is positively correlated with long-term career prospects. BGCC recommends the government help youth integrate into the labour market by making permanent its extra commitment of 25M per year to the Youth Employment Strategy.

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.

$10 million-$99.9 million

Immediately

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.

A TD economic report estimates an impact of 23 billion to Canada's GDP over the next 2 decades, as a result of the rise in youth unemployment. The government has already seen the wisdom of reallocating funds to bolster its Youth Employment Strategy, committing an extra 50M over two years (2011-2013). BGCC urges the government to maintain this increase and make it permanent. This increase, along with support for innovative and collaborative cross-sector solutions to youth unemployment and skills shortages, will prepare Canada for a competitive economic future.

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

Youth across all sectors and regions will be employed in greater numbers and have a stronger attachment to the labour market, benefiting Canada's economic development. Youth who face barriers to employment will gain knowledge and develop the skills and work experience they need to participate in the labour market. Employers will benefit from better prepared and skilled workers that can fill available positions. Cross-sector partnerships to address unemployment will facilitate innovation and create new models for addressing this difficult social issue.

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.

Programs offered as part of the Youth Employment Strategy are extremely valuable. Boys and Girls Clubs are one of many organizations that have hired and trained youth with the support of the Skills Link and Career Focus programs. In 2013, 53 Clubs across Canada benefited from Canada Summer Job Grants, hiring and training nearly 300 youth. BGCC has partnered with Kal Tire to pilot Skilled4Success, a program that provides information about the skilled trades, and that offered 143 youth a job shadowing opportunity in the trades in its first year.

Topic: Military and public safety and security

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

In the 1990s, the Horner Commission and the Shaughnessy Cohen Report recommended that 5% of government spending on criminal justice be spent on the prevention of crime and victimization. The efficacy and cost-efficiency of secondary prevention is well established. Recently, risk-driven, collaborative, and immediate collaborative interventions (Hubs) are reducing crime in Sask. BGCC requests that the 2014 budget invest 2% in crime prevention initiatives, increasing the NCPC grants budget by 60M. We hope the government will see the wisdom of reaching a 5% allocation in the coming years.

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.

$10 million-$99.9 million

Immediately

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.

The Federal government spends 5.5 billion on criminal justice expenditures each year. Federal investment in evidence-based secondary prevention programs currently represents 1% of this budget. BGCC would like to see an additional 60M reallocated to secondary prevention, bringing the government's investment to 2% in 2014, with a commitment to increasing it further as Canada's economy recovers. Such a commitment is reasonable given the $83 billion in harm that results from crime. We would also hope to see the NCPC support innovative and evidence-based solutions that reduce crime (e.g. Hubs).

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

Victims of crime will be the first to benefit from increased prevention efforts, as secondary prevention reduces the number of victims and the social and economic cost of crime. Across Canada, but especially in regions disproportionately impacted by violence, highly vulnerable youth who are facing acute elevated risk will also benefit by receiving the support they need to avoid criminal activity. Fewer will enter the justice system. An integrated response system such as Saskatchewan's Hubs, is of great interest to Boys and Girls Clubs who want to increase support for families in time of need.

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.

Fewer Canadians will be impacted by crime and its social and economic costs. Focusing on high crime areas and integrating social services into crime prevention efforts (e.g. Hubs) will support young people and families during times of acute elevated risk thereby alleviating pressure on policing, the justice system, health care and other social services. This will free up resources to better serve all Canadians. High risk communities across Canada will be safer places to raise families, start and run a business.

Topic: Children, youth and families

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

As government seeks to create safer communities and improve training and employment opportunities for young Canadians, we encourage you to consult with youth themselves. Invite youth to address committees about a bill or share their experience and recommendations within the scope of a study. Youth-serving organizations can help youth prepare and engage to the best of their abilities. BGCC asks the government to increase youth engagement by extending more invitations to youth, and by offering a modest reimbursement of up to $750 to those who can support their participation.

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.

≤$499,999

Immediately

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.

Inviting youth to address committees as witnesses on bills and studies is a very low cost way to encourage democratic participation. Making this a positive experience requires some accompaniment. Reimbursement for costs related to travel are already available to those who are invited to brief committees. An additional reimbursement of up to $750, available to youth-serving organizations, will help ensure young people are supported throughout the process and can benefit most from their experience.

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

An active effort to bring youth into policy and legislative processes will increase young people's democratic participation and help Canada meet its commitments under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Government of Canada will benefit from hearing youth voices from all regions - voices that will help shape stronger policies and programs that meets the needs of Canadians.

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.

As an example of impact, BGCC recently supported a young staff at Boys and Girls Club of Ottawa to speak before the HUMA Committee with regard to their study on Exploring employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. Support involved two preparatory meetings to understand expectations and plan his presentation, accompaniment on the day of his testimony, and follow up to share the outcomes and committee report. He provided a lived experience perspective that was valuable to the Committee. The opportunity also affirmed his knowledge and expertise on an issue of importance to him.

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

FURTHER INFORMATION RELATED TO RECOMMENDATION 1, that the government help youth integrate the labour market by making its extra commitment of 25M per year to the Youth Employment Strategy permanent.

Beth, who was hired at the Boys and Girls Club of Whitecourt and District with the help of a Canada Summer Jobs Grant, wrote to her MP to tell him about her experience.

"In the fall of 2013, I plan to attend the University of Alberta in the faculty of Engineering. This summer job has helped me to prepare for the future by improving my public speaking abilities as I speak to groups of 20-50 kids on a daily basis; improving my time management as I am responsible for up to 20 children at a time, running educational and fun activities for them to learn and grow. But most importantly this job has increased my self confidence. Working with the Boys and Girls Club I have learned to trust my thoughts and judgement and I can quickly and efficiently put these into action Thank you, once again, for supporting the dreams of a student and a future engineer!" - Beth

ABOUT BOYS AND GIRLS CLUBS OF CANADA

Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada is dedicated to supporting and encouraging children and youth as they grow and develop. We are a national charity serving 200,000 young people in more than 650 locations across Canada. We listen to their opinions and ideas, applaud their accomplishments, lend support during their struggles and provide ways to explore their interests and talents. With this encouragement they develop the confidence and sense of belonging that helps them succeed in school, form positive relationships and mature into responsible, caring adults. For over 110 years we have welcomed children, youth and their families into clubs that reflect the diversity of Canada in small and large cities, rural communities and First Nations Reserves.

No two clubs are alike: each Club develops programs in response to the needs of the young people and families in its local community. A visitor to any one of our locations might see activities such as: a cooking and nutrition class; a basketball tournament; a class for parents of pre-teens; three 15-year-olds filming a video; a 10-year old doing his math homework; or a staff member sitting quietly with a girl in Grade 3 who was picked on during recess. Our 4,500 trained full- and part-time staff and 14,500 volunteers know that the voices, insights and wisdom of young Canadians are our best guide for creating the programs and settings that will help them reach their full potential.

*Please note that at least one recommendation must be provided