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:** Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD)

or

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

Topic: Disabled persons

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

CCD recommends that the Disability Tax Credit (DTC) be made refundable.

The DTC was established to ensure tax fairness for persons with disabilities. The DTC is now used to determine eligibility for a variety of benefits; the Disability Child Tax Credit, the Registered Disability Savings Plan, the Working Income Tax Disability Benefit etc. Those who are DTC eligible but do not have a taxable income receive no direct benefit from the DTC. The DTC has now become a means of addressing poverty, CCD believes all who are DTC eligible should benefit thus the DTC should be made refundable.

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.

$1 billion or more

1 year

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.

It is impossible for non profits such as CCD to be able to review all federal expenditures and determine areas of costs saving or reduction in expenditures or increased tax measures that could be implemented to find the funds necessary to address our recommendation of making the DTC refundable. CCD believes this is the role of government. All we can do as volunteers is make the Government of Canada aware of the disproportionate poverty experienced by persons with disabilities and urge the Government of Canada to consider recommendations such as the one above.

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 disproportionately live in poverty. This is well documented in both voluntary sector research, government documents and academia. Those who would benefit from making the DTC refundable would be persons with disabilities who are DTC eligible and who do not have a taxable income. The major beneficiaries would be persons with disabilities who are living on social assistance. Across Canada between 45-60% of those on social assistance are persons with disabilities and they live on incomes of less than $10,000/year.

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.

The Government of Canada has progressively over the years implemented measures to lift Seniors out of poverty. Now is the time for the Government of Canada to implement measures to provide a similar benefit to Canadians with disabilities. Disability in Canada means living in poverty and sadly living in poverty often results in greater disability. A refundable DTC would put approximately $1,000 in the pockets of those living on an income of less than $10,000/yr. This is a considerable benefit.

Topic: Disabled persons

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

CCD recommends that research be undertaken to determine the potential impact of raising the age of eligibility for Old Age Security to 67 will have on persons living on social assistance and in particular persons with disabilities living on social assistance. Sadly in Canada many persons with disabilities looked forward to becoming 65 in that they were for the first time in their life lifted out of poverty. OAS and GIS benefits are significantly better than any social assistance benefit in Canada with the exception of recent changes in AISH in Alberta.

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

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.

This research could be implemented by the Department of Finance in collaboration with stakeholder organizations such as CCD. The research is necessary before any new policy initiatives can be identified.

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

Persons with disabilities living long term on social assistance support programs could be the beneficiaries if it is determined that the OAS changes extend and deepen the poverty of Canadians with disabilities.

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 previously stated Canada has done much to lift Seniors out of poverty, however, CCD believes that the changes in OAS eligibility may simply extend and deepen the poverty experienced by Canadians with disabilities living on social assistance or by Canadians with disabilities that take early retirement in that they their life expectancy is likely less than non-disabled Canadians.

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).

*Please note that at least one recommendation must be provided