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:** International Association of Fire Fighters

or

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

Topic: Military and public safety and security

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

The IAFF recommends that the Committee recognize M-388, a motion adopted in the House of Commons in 2012 and supported by MPs from all parties, and establish a national Public Safety Officer Compensation benefit as an appropriate way for the nation to recognize the sacrifice made by a fallen fire fighter or police officer and to address the financial security of the surviving family. This benefit should be established through the Department of Public Safety, Labour or another appropriate department in the amount of $300,000 and function as a direct, indexed benefit to each surviving family.

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.

$5 million -$9.9 million

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.

This initiative could be funded easily from existing revenues sources. The Parliamentary Budget Officer's preliminary analysis of the PSOC benefit from May 22, 2013, stated that it would cost the Canadian government approximately $6.1 million per year, indicating that "the implementation of such a benefit program will not have any material fiscal impact." Funding may be allocated from the Department of Labour, Public Safety or another appropriate department.

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

The surviving families of fire fighters and police officers who die in the line of duty would primarily benefit from the establishment of a PSOC benefit. The economy as a whole also benefits when individuals and families are financially secure and have disposable income and can afford optimum post-secondary education opportunities for surviving children for example.

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.

If a fire fighter dies at age 43 – the average for fireground line-of-duty deaths - even $300,000 is only about a quarter of the income that the family would have received over the next 17 years if that fire fighter had worked until age 60 at an average salary. The standard of living of the family of a fire fighter who is killed or permanently disabled on behalf of Canadians is deserving of an equitable national standard; a minimum base amount would enable the family of a fallen fire fighter or police officer to face their grief without additional worries about financial security.

Topic: Education and skills training

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

The IAFF requests that the Standing Committee on Finance recommend that the federal government funds a second five-year installment of the IAFF's Canadian Haz-Mat and Chemical, Biological, Radioactive, Nuclear, and Explosive (CBRNE) Training Initiative after the completion of the fiscal year 2013-2014. This initiative, which has provided training to more than 1,800 first responders across Canada since 2009, is proven effective and delivers much-needed Haz-Mat and CBRNE training on an extremely cost-effective basis.

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 million-4.9 million

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.

Public Accounts 2011-12 cites general cost variances that may assist in continued funding for this program. For example, the Department of Public Safety recorded a surplus of over $1.3 million in cost variances under grants and contributions, and $7.6 million within the Ministry. It is also important to consider the cost savings of Haz-Mat and CBRNE trained first responders to help mitigate disasters that can span across local, provincial or national borders. Costly damages from transport and energy infrastructure accidents as well as natural disasters may be significantly minimized.

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

This initiative improves the safety of first responders and the public. All Canadians in both rural and urban communities would benefit from this training program. A renewed funding commitment would enable the IAFF to expand the program in Quebec, and into other areas of the country that have yet to take full advantage of this opportunity. By supporting interoperability between response agencies, this program protects first responders on-the-ground. As shown by the Calgary flooding and Lac Megantic rail disaster, haz-mat and CBRNE emergencies can take many forms and can occur anywere.

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.

Proper haz-mat resources aid in protecting lives and infrastructure which is directly related to jobs and the economy. Many haz-mat trained teams are comprised of senior ranking members. Over the years, highly experienced members are lost through attrition. Program extension would retain necessary levels of trained personnel. Furthermore, this program would improve response to predominately retirement-based communities such as Elliot Lake, Ont. which recently suffered a fatal structural collapse. Retirement communities are at greater risk when emergency response funds are cut.

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