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:** Public Service Alliance of Canada

or

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

Topic: Federal budgets and the public service

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

Reverse the cuts to federal public services and programs. These cuts are having a negative impact on the health and security of current and future generations of Canadians. Examples of cuts include closing offices that provide direct service to Canada's veterans, removing search and rescue operations in communities where they are most needed, reducing or eliminating face-to-face service for taxpayers and EI claimants, increasing wait times for EI and OAS and reducing the number and enforcement powers of federal inspectors in all sectors.

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.

Corporations are hoarding massive cash reserves that are a direct result of corporate tax cuts. Former Bank of Canada Governor Mark Carney called this more than half a trillion dollars "dead money". These cash reserves are not creating jobs. The next federal budget should not only contain no further corporate tax cuts but corporate tax levels should be raised so that corporations pay their fair share for the benefits they receive from, for example, public infrastructure, universal health care and the education system.

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

Veterans' district offices example: Current client service agent case loads already range from 1,200 to 1,400 files each. Case loads will increase as jobs are cut. At least 15,000 current clients will be affected from the closures. They will have access to fewer agents, will be forced to travel much longer distances for service (e.g. Sydney to Halifax) incurring additional costs, or will have to rely on the phone or internet for services that need to be delivered in-person. Quality of life for veterans and their dependents will at least not deteriorate if the offices remain open.

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.

There are now fewer EI processing agents and call centre agents to handle more calls from Canadians as a result of changes in EI legislation and the layoff of thousands of term and hundreds of permanent employees. Wait times are up and more clients are in dire straits. Hiring more staff would deal with the ever-present backlog and provide timely service. Reversing the decision to close search and rescue centres in St. John's, Quebec City and Kitsilano would benefit the people who live, work and play in the surrounding waters.

Topic: Rural, remote and urban communities

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

Stop the elimination of federal public service jobs. Cuts to services impact Canadians and so do the job cuts. Federal public service jobs provide stable incomes, including retirement income, in small and medium-sized communities across the country. These jobs and retirement income of former employees support local small and mid-size businesses and family farms and provide a stable tax base that supports community infrastructure and services.

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.

The federal government can save billions by spending less on consultants, contractors and temporary staffing contracts. Growing evidence suggests that these practices cost more and undermine federal public service staffing policies and practices. In the case of veterans' services, the government is spending $318 million on a contract to a private, for-profit company, all of which could be spent on direct service.

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

Individuals who will continue to have jobs will benefit and their communities will benefit from their purchasing power and taxes across all regions.
Many federal public service jobs are held by women. With these cuts good jobs for women are being eliminated. The job cuts severely hurt women of colour, those with disabilities as well as women from immigrant and Aboriginal communities. These women are often the last hired and the first to be let go. They are also more likely to be term workers, with no job security.

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.

At a minimum, the standard of living of those affected would be maintained helping small and medium-sized businesses continue to provide employment.

Topic: Employment, labour markets and unions

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

Legislation designed to weaken the ability of Canadian workers to achieve and maintain a decent standard of living as well as retirement security by forming unions (e.g. Bill C-525), or to undermine the legitimate right of unions to represent their members (e.g. Bill C-377), has a negative impact on the current labour relations system which allows business and labour to resolve their differences with minimal disruption to the economy. C-377 is also an unproductive use of taxes.

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

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.

The federal government can save money if Bill C-377 does not become law. The Bill includes the setting up of an electronic production system, a database and web site. The Canada Revenue Agency itself estimates the cost to be $20.1 million in the first two years and $3.8 million in ongoing costs. Excluded from these costs are training, outreach and auditing. The estimate costs are based on a reporting population of fewer than 1,000 labour organizations. There are a minimum of 25,000 labour organizations in the CLC alone.

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

Canadian taxpayers who won't have to foot the bill for an unnecessary and expensive reporting system or to defend the constitutional challenges that are likely to result from the passage of Bill C-377 which infringes on privacy laws and provincial labour laws. Entities in commercial relationships with unions will be disadvantaged by this Bill in a competitive marketplace.

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.

Unions are already legally required to provide reasonable financial reports to their members federally and in a majority of provinces. Even in the absence of legislation, unions have financial reporting requirements in their constitutions and by-laws. Canada Revenue Agency resources could be put to better use collecting the estimated $29 billion in outstanding tax liability as well as restoring face-to-face service to Canadians.

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