



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

Hon. Karina Gould

Member of Parliament
Burlington

February 18th, 2022

The Honourable Chrystia Freeland
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Minister Freeland,

On February 18th, I took part in a Pre-Budget Consultation with the Burlington Chamber of Commerce. Constituents had the opportunity to directly engage with me as their Member of Parliament to share their views on what should be included in Budget 2022.

Residents of Burlington, small business owners, and local organizations shared with me how our government can support the creation of good jobs, strengthen and grow the middle class, and build and foster a sustainable economy that works for everyone. My constituents expressed their views on addressing the labour shortage, increasing support for employment services, prioritizing infrastructure, and taking leadership on healthcare.

Labour and the workforce

The labour shortage was a large overarching concern amongst participants. Small and medium businesses as well as community organizations need support to grow and thrive, and workers need adequate training and support to meaningfully participate in the workforce. This is especially true for women, newcomers, and racialized individuals.

Recommendations to address the labour shortage include working with the provinces and territories to facilitate mutual recognition of employment standards, supporting local solutions to address community workforce needs, creating flexible and accessible talent pipelines, modernizing the Temporary Foreign Workers Program, and fostering lifelong learning.

Participants also highlighted the need to support women to ensure their fulsome participation in the workforce via applying a gender-based analysis to job scaling and transitions, as well as making childcare an eligible business expense for small and medium-sized businesses.

Employment Services

Employment organizations in Burlington and across the country have been and will continue to be integral in helping Canadians get back to work and find good middle class jobs. Employment organizations in my riding identified the need to provide multi-year funding for employment services, providing timely notices of granting/renewal for funding, and developing and launching an awareness campaign for employment services.

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They also stressed the need for recognizing mental health impacts on employment in policy and funding frameworks.

Infrastructure

Participants advocated for a greater importance to be placed on infrastructure. Recommendations included the carrying out of a national infrastructure assessment, increasing funding to the Canada Infrastructure Bank, prioritizing trade that influences investments in infrastructure, and prioritizing high growth sectors, such as energy and transportation.

Increasing investments in cybersecurity infrastructure was also emphasized by participants, as we know that cybersecurity is increasingly a core component of quality infrastructure. It is recommended that businesses be allowed to write off relevant cybersecurity training, equipment, and software.


Health

All participants emphasized the urgent need to support our healthcare system, its workers, and the mental health of Canadians. We have seen the toll that the pandemic has taken on our healthcare workers and the strain it has placed on our system. We have also seen how important it is to have strong support and resources for the mental health of all Canadians.

Suggestions included supporting a national health and human resources strategy, creating a national hospital capacity plan, creating a national digital strategy to support healthcare across Canada, upholding national long-term care standards, and significantly investing in mental health services and supports.

I would like to thank you for taking the time to review the recommendations raised by the constituents of Burlington for Budget 2022 during my Pre-Budget Consultation. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact my office at 905-639-5757 or karina.gould.c1a@parl.gc.ca.

Sincerely,



The Honourable Karina Gould
Member of Parliament
Burlington