

OTTAWA REPORT: Economic Action Plan

By Lois Brown, MP
Newmarket-Aurora

Economic Action Plan 2013 was tabled in the House of Commons on March 21. It is a continuation of our government's responsible plan to create jobs, growth and long-term prosperity and a document created by a government who listens and delivers results. Since the depth of the global economic recession, the Canadian economy has created over 950,000 net new jobs ? the best record among advanced economies. We are building on that strong foundation by taking action in three important areas, staying on track to balance the budget by 2015, increasing federal transfer support to Ontario to record highs and keeping federal taxes at their lowest level in fifty years.

Connecting Canadians with Available Jobs

A new Canada Job Grant will transform the way Canadians receive skills training. Training in Canada is not sufficiently aligned to the skills employers need or to the jobs that are actually available. Now, individuals may qualify for up to \$15,000 to learn new skills to accept a new or better job. The \$15,000 will be funded from the federal government (up to \$5,000) with matching funds from provincial or territorial government and the employer. For the first time, the Canada Job Grant will put skills-training choices where they belong: in the hands of employers with unfilled jobs and Canadians who want to work.

Our plan also includes increasing opportunities for apprentices and new support to underrepresented groups such as persons with disabilities, youth, new Canadians and Aboriginal peoples.

Introducing a new Building Canada Plan

This new infrastructure plan - \$70 billion in federal infrastructure funding over 10 years ? is the largest federal investment in job-creating infrastructure in Canadian history. It has a number of important components, including:

New Community Improvement Fund ? providing base funding for Canadian municipalities of \$32.2 billion over 10 years including an indexed Gas Tax Fund (GTF) and increased GST Rebate to build roads, public transit, recreational facilities and other community infrastructure. The GTF indexing alone represents another \$29,000 into Town of Aurora coffers on top of the current \$1.46 million it receives each and every year through this program.

New Building Canada Fund - \$14 billion will support major economic infrastructure projects that have a national and regional significance. The \$10 billion Provincial-Territorial Infrastructure Component will support projects of national, regional and local significance in communities across the country that will include highways, public transit, drinking water, wastewater, connectivity and broadband, and innovation.

Renewed P3 Canada Fund - \$1.25 billion will be invested to find innovative ways to build infrastructure projects faster and provide better value for Canadian taxpayers. Under P3 arrangements, governments continue to own the infrastructure assets while the private sector plays a larger role in their design, construction, operation and maintenance. In doing so, the private sector assumes a greater share of projects risks.

In addition, over the next 10 years, we'll invest \$6 billion in existing infrastructure funding and \$17 billion to build, operate and maintain federal public infrastructure.

Supporting Canada's Manufacturing Sector

Economic Action Plan 2013 takes action in three ways to support Canada's manufacturers, by; providing tax relief for new manufacturing equipment through the extension of the temporary accelerated capital allowance; building equipment for the Canadian Armed Forces; and helping Canada's manufacturers to compete through a new Advanced Manufacturing Fund for Southern Ontario, continuation of the Strategic Aerospace and Defence Initiative, investments in Forestry Industry Transformation and renewed Automotive Innovation Fund.

Balancing the Budget by 2015

Our Government is committed to balancing the Budget by 2015. Since 2010, we have taken significant action to reduce government spending and this year's spending is projected to be over \$11 billion lower than planned. To date, over 16,000 positions have been eliminated and direct program spending on federal government operations is projected to remain below 2010 levels for the next five years. Economic Action Plan 2013 builds on these efforts by announcing an additional \$1.7 billion in ongoing savings including; reducing travel costs through the use of technology, standardizing government information systems and enhancing the integrity of the tax system by closing tax loopholes to ensure that everyone pays their fair share.

Keeping Taxes Low

Economic Action Plan 2013 continues to keep taxes low for families, seniors and businesses. Since 2006, we have reduced taxes over 150 times, and the average family of four pays \$3,220 less in federal taxes each year. Seniors are also benefiting from our low-tax plan, paying on average \$2,260 less in taxes each year. Budget 2013 takes further action to support families by eliminating tariffs on babies' clothing, sporting goods and athletic equipment.

If you would like to contact me on this or any other issue, please call 905-953-7515 or visit my website at www.loisbrown.ca. I look forward to hearing from you.