

OTTAWA REPORT

By Lois Brown, MP
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Promises Made, Promises Kept

Since 2006, the Government's priorities have been to create well-paying and secure jobs for Canadians, lower taxes for families, individuals and businesses, and balance the budget. How have we done?

The record shows over 180 tax relief measures have been introduced and the overall federal tax burden is now at its lowest level in more than 50 years. This means that Canadian families and individuals will receive \$37 billion in tax relief and increased benefits in 2015/16 alone, over 2006 levels. A further \$2.8 billion in annual tax relief has been provided to seniors and pensioners through measures such as pension income splitting and increasing the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS). Moreover, Canadians at all income levels are benefitting from this tax relief with low- and middle-income Canadians receiving proportionally greater relief. The number of low-income families is at its lowest level in three decades.

Our broad-based tax relief efforts include cutting the GST by 2 percentage points from 7% to 5%, reducing the lowest personal income tax for all earners, increasing the amount Canadians can earn without paying tax and introducing the Working Tax Benefit and the Tax Free Savings Account. Parents with children now receive benefits of \$2,329 per year for a typical two-earner family of four to help with the cost of raising children.

Over 1.2 million more Canadians are working now than at the end of the peak of the recession in June 2009. The majority of these net new jobs have been full-time positions in high-wage, private-sector industries. This the best job creation record of the G7 countries.

While lowering taxes, we are fulfilling our promise to balance the federal budget this year. Balanced budgets ensure low taxes, support the sustainability of the services and programs Canadians depend on, and inspire confidence in investors and consumers. We also believe that our quality of life and ability to compete on the global stage depend on the performance and quality of our public infrastructure. In Economic Action Plan 2015, we continued to make unprecedented long-term investments to ensure that Canadians continue to benefit from world-class infrastructure across the country.

We have done all of these things and much more, all the while increasing transfers to the provinces and territories for the health, education and social service programs we all depend on, to historically high levels.

Boosted Universal Child Care Benefits

The first Universal Child Care Benefit (UCCB) cheques will be received by families starting July 20. The majority of families with children, approximately 3.8 million, are known and will automatically receive the enhanced UCCB or be contacted by the Government to confirm their information. However, an estimated 200,000 eligible families are not currently captured by the Government's UCCB system and may miss out on receiving money that is owed to them unless they apply. Under the increased UCCB, families will receive almost \$2,000 per year for each child under 6 and \$720 per year for each child aged 6 through 17. The new benefit amounts would be retroactive to January 1, 2015, and be reflected in monthly payments to families in July 2015. The proposed enhancements to the UCCB are expected to more than double the number of families that benefit from 1.6 million to more than 4 million. If your family is not currently receiving the UCCB, has never received the UCCB or has never applied for the Canada Child Tax Benefit and you still have children under 18 in your care, please go to www.canada.ca/taxsavings in order to find out how you can apply.

Thank you Auroran!

This will be my last Ottawa Report before the next federal election when Aurorans will have the opportunity to elect two Members of Parliament to represent them. Residents living north of Wellington will remain in the Newmarket-Aurora federal riding, where I am running, and those living south will be part of the new riding of Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill. Until the election is called; however, I remain the MP for all of Aurora and as always, will continue to work hard to serve your interests.

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to Brock Weir and The Auroran for providing me this regular column to communicate current happenings in Ottawa with you. I will continue posting reports on my website and encourage you to visit www.loisbrown.ca for updates.

Lois Brown is the Member of Parliament for Newmarket-Aurora and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development. She can be reached by phone at 905-953-7515 or through her website at www.loisbrown.ca.