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:** Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance of Canada

or

☐ **an individual** **Name:** _____

Topic: Health

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

That the federal government, as part of a comprehensive approach to achieving healthy weights, introduce a tax on sugar-sweetened beverages and use some of the revenues generated from this tax to fund healthy living initiatives.

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

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.

If the federal government implemented a tax of one cent per litre of sugar-sweetened beverages, it would generate estimated revenues of $36 million dollars annually. This revenue could then be reinvested in heath prevention. Either a sales or excise tax could be applied to SSBs. An excise tax could be made visible to consumers at point of purchase and would be easier to implement versus an excise tax. A tax on SSBs is an important component within a multi-pronged, comprehensive approach to address SSB consumption, obesity and chronic disease prevention.

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

All individuals across Canada would benefit from this new tax on sugar-sweetened beverages, particularly children. It is estimated that obesity costs the Canadian health care system and economy $30 billion annually. A tax on SSBs could be used to help offset the cost/price of healthier foods and drinks, such as vegetables and fruit and low-fat non-flavoured milk. The tax could also help to offset the costs of SSB related health care costs. An SSB tax would begin to make a significant impact on childhood obesity rates in Canada.

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.

Strong evidence supports the association between the consumption of SSBs and the development of childhood obesity. In one Canadian study, children who consumed SSBs between meals from the ages of 2.5 and 4.5 years of age were twice as likely to be overweight compared to children who did not consume SSBs. The consumption of SSBs has also been linked to dental caries among young children. Generally, SSB consumption increases the risk of obesity and associated risks, particularly diabetes, heart disease, stroke, arthritis and cancer. A new tax on SSBs will improve health among all Canadians.

Topic: Health

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

That the federal government establish inter-departmental and federal/provincial/territorial policies to reduce poverty and food insecurity and continue to support and improve the Nutrition North Canada program to ensure affordable pricing of nutritious foods in remote northern locations. Establish market-based guidelines for social assistance rates to help ensure that they correspond to the basic costs of living in all regions of Canada.

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

Please select from the drop down

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.

Continue to support and improve the Nutrition North Canada program to ensure affordable pricing of nutritious foods in remote and northern locations. Provide financial, research and policy support to foster growth of local food procurement initiatives and the improvement of food distribution networks that increase access to healthy food, particularly for those living in remote locations.

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

Implementing this recommendation will assist those living in remote and northern locations, especially children. A number of studies have shown that low income households do not have enough income to pay for the basic costs of living, including the cost of a nutritious food basket. Healthy eating is also a key element in human development and health throughout life, from prenatal and early childhood to later life stages.

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.

Lack of access to a sufficient quantity of food has extremely important health, economic and social consequences. People who are food insecure eat diets with less variety, consume lower amounts of fruits and vegetables and are more likely to suffer from malnutrition. Efforts to improve food security for remote and lower-income Canadians should address lack of income as well as food pricing and physical access to nutritious foods.

Topic: Health

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

That the federal government establish, as part of the new Building Canada Plan, a $250 million infrastructure fund (distributed over three years) that supports active transportation.

Active transportation includes walking, cycling, all other forms of non-motorized transportation and public transit. Examples of infrastructure that supports active transportation (this is not a complete list) include sidewalks, walking paths, cycle tracks, bike paths, paved shoulders, crosswalks, appropriate street lighting, public rest areas, and accessible public transit.

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 billion or more

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.

Funding for active transportation infrastructure could be allocated from within the Gas Tax stream of the new Building Canada Plan's Community Improvement Fund. Alternatively, funding could come from within the Provincial-Territorial Infrastructure Component of the new Building Canada Plan.

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

Canadians of all ages would benefit from funding for active transportation. Municipalities that invest in active transportation would also benefit greatly from this funding. Local businesses would also see benefits.

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.

Availability of active transportation routes will improve the health of Canadians and decrease pollution with less people using cars as their primary mode of transportation.

Please use this page if you wish to provide more explanation about your recommendation(s).

The Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance of Canada (CDPAC) is a network of national organizations who share a common vision for an integrated system of research, surveillance, policies, and programs for maintaining health and prevention of chronic disease in Canada.

CDPAC ' s mission is to foster and help sustain a country-wide movement towards an integrated, population health approach for the prevention of chronic diseases through knowledge for action.

MORE TO COME HERE - WRAP UP OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

*Please note that at least one recommendation must be provided