



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

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February 2023

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR MP

It has been a busy couple months being back in Ottawa ahead of Budget 2023. Thank you to everyone who submitted their thoughts during the Pre-Budget Consultation period. Your ideas and concerns help shape what our government focuses on when planning for the next fiscal year. I even had the opportunity to visit Cambridge Elementary School in Surrey to explain my role as a Parliamentarian and discuss how the Federal Budget gets created through Pre-Budget Consultations.

Aside from the federal budget, another major topic of discussion is still the Canada Dental Benefit. As of Jan 17, over 153,509 children and their families have benefited

from this program. In British Columbia, the number of applicants approved has now reached 8,480, with more coming in every day.

To be eligible, families must not have other access to private dental insurance, have a net income of less than \$90,000, and have kids under 12. Canadians can apply for the Benefit through their CRA My Account. \$650 is provided for each eligible child, per year, if the family's adjusted net income is under \$70,000. The amount is \$390 if net income is between \$70,000-\$79,999 and \$260 if between \$80,000-\$89,000. More information can be found at: [CanadaDentalBenefit - Canada.ca](https://CanadaDentalBenefit-Canada.ca)

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CHECKING IN WITH OUR MUSEUMS & FILM SECTORS

While in the constituency in January, I welcomed MP Chris Bittle, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, to our community. Chris and I attended meetings with local community leaders as we discussed how art and film is thriving in our region.

Our first stop was touring Salishan Place By the River. It was a fantastic opportunity to see what will become an important arts,

culture, and heritage centre in Fort Langley. Salishan Place By the River will be opening this year and is being completed in partnership with the ᑭᓴᑭᓴ (Katzie), ᑭᓴᓴᓴᓴᓴᓴ (Kwantlen), Máthkwi (Matsqui) and se'mya'me (Semiahmoo) First Nations.

Chris and I also toured the new Surrey on Screen exhibit at the Museum of Surrey. It was a fantastic opportunity to see some of

the costumes and props used at film and TV shows that were shot in Surrey. Thank you to Lynn of the Museum of Surrey, James of City of Surrey, and Erin of Tourism Langley for the discussion on the history and future of film and TV in our community.

I encourage everyone to visit a museum or an art gallery in our region when you get the chance.



ADDRESSING THE LABOUR SHORTAGE

Our government's new immigration levels plan is to grow the economy by addressing skills shortages. For this reason, Canada aims to welcome 465,000 new permanent residents in 2023, 485,000 in 2024 and 500,000 in 2025.

We are easing access to permanent residence for foreign-trained doctors, and are investing in Foreign Credential Recognition, with a \$90 million fund to launch a call for proposals.

Canada is also expanding eligibility to work for spouses and working-age children of workers in Canada, benefitting approximately 200,000 foreign workers.

New features in the Express Entry system will welcome newcomers with the required skills and qualifications in sectors facing acute labour shortages, such as health care, manufacturing, building trades, and STEM disciplines.

We are also lifting the cap on the number of hours that international students are allowed to work. This will benefit employers and the 600,000 foreign students who study in Canada. International graduates will also stay and work in Canada longer by extending their Post Graduate Work Permits. Nearly 100,000 graduates who otherwise would have had to leave Canada can now stay and work here longer, filling more job vacancies in our economy.

The construction business is one of many sectors struggling to find workers, with about one million jobs sitting vacant across the country. Welcoming more immigrants with skilled trades will increase Canada's home supply as retirements close in on the industry. According to Stats Canada, immigrants who arrived between 2016 and 2021 are younger on average than the rest of the population and have been critical to filling jobs.

PROCESSING IMMIGRATION APPLICATIONS

Despite lasting challenges that arose during the pandemic, we have made significant progress in reducing our inventories, improving wait times, and increasing the number of immigration applications processed.

Since August 2022, we have reduced our overall inventory by half a million applications, and have processed nearly twice as many applications (4.8 million) in 2022 as we did

during the same period in 2021 (2.5 million).

For Permanent Residents, our government has cleared 99% of PR card renewal backlogs, spousal sponsorship is down to the 12-month service standard, and Express Entry is down to the 6-month service standard.

Francophone permanent residents outside Quebec now sit at 4.2%, with a target of 4.4% in 2023.

For Temporary Residents, study permits are back to the 60-day service standard, with 593,000 processed Jan-Oct 2022. Work permits are down to 94 days from 192 days in July 2022, and are expected to be back to 60-day service standard this month.

For citizenship, we are back to the 12-month service standard, and over 30,000 new citizens per month being processed.

We are on track to welcome a historic number of new citizens in one year.



THE INDO-PACIFIC STRATEGY: PT 2

As mentioned in last month's newsletter, Canada is investing \$2.3 billion in the Indo-Pacific Strategy over the next five years. I want to share some additional information on this exciting program.

Encompassing 40 economies, over four billion people, and \$47.19 trillion in economic activity, the Indo-Pacific is the world's fastest-growing region and home to six of Canada's top 13 trading partners. It is Canada's second-largest

regional export market, after the United States, with annual 2-way trade valued at \$226 billion. 50% of world GDP is projected to come from this region.

50% of global greenhouse emissions also come from this region. As part of our commitment to build a clean future, Canada has committed a total of \$913.3 million to grow the clean economy as part of this strategy. \$750 million will go to accelerate our involvement in priority

markets to support high-quality, sustainable infrastructure. \$84.3 million will go to enhanced measures against illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing.

This strategy also focuses on global security. The Government will invest over \$720.6 million to advance Canada's regional peace and security interests, including \$492.9 million to reinforce Canada's Indo-Pacific naval presence, and increase Canadian Armed

Forces participation in regional military exercises. \$47.4 million will go to launch a new multi-department initiative to help develop cyber security capacity with select regional partners.

Canada's increased presence will help achieve our goal of economic prosperity, while also providing peace, resiliency, and security to the Indo-Pacific Region.