

Maryam Monsef - Liberal Party

Peterborough-Kawartha Riding

Q1 Taxation Would you encourage your party to appoint a royal commission to conduct a comprehensive review of the Canadian tax system guided by the principles of tax competitiveness, simplicity and fairness?

No,

Comment:

Four years ago, we gave Canadians the tax break they deserved. We put hundreds of dollars back into the pockets of the middle class and the people working hard to join it by cutting their taxes, while asking the wealthiest one per cent of Canadians to pay a little more. The impact of hundreds (and in some cases, thousands) of extra dollars for a family's yearly budget made a real difference. We invested in Canadians, and in turn they invested in their communities, creating more than a million new jobs, and plunging Canada's unemployment and poverty rates to record lows. Canadian families now have one of the lowest effective tax rates in the OECD, and the lowest in the G7 – largely thanks to the new Canada Child Benefit and Middle Class Tax Cut. We gave small businesses an opportunity to grow and succeed by lowering the small business tax from 11% in 2015 to 9% in 2019. We moved to allow businesses to immediately write off the full cost of machinery and equipment used for the manufacturing or processing of goods and introduced the new Accelerated Investment Incentive, which allows businesses of all sizes and in all sectors of the economy to write off a larger share of the cost of newly acquired assets in the year the investment is made. Today, Canada's economy continues to grow. Yet, I recognize that middle class Canadians aren't seeing the full benefits of that growth in their day-to-day lives because of the rising costs of living. That's why I am committed to encouraging my party to further cut taxes for the middle class and the people working hard to join it. We will give the average family nearly \$600 more per year by raising the basic personal amount to \$15,000 by 2023-24. This will lift about 38,000 Canadians out of poverty and nearly 700,000 low income people will pay no tax at all. I believe in lowering taxes the most for people who make less, helping the middle class, and ensuring that the wealthy don't get an extra hand up.

Q2 Regulation Would you encourage your party to implement a 2-for-1 rule to require the elimination of two regulations for every new one introduced over the next five years?

No,

Other (please specify):

Regulations protect and advance the public interest and support good government. I am committed to ensuring that regulations are accessible and understandable, that they are created, maintained, and reviewed in an open, transparent, and inclusive way that meaningfully engages the public and stakeholders, including Indigenous peoples. I am focused on making sure that proposals and decisions are based on evidence, robust analysis of costs and benefits, and the assessment of risk, while being open to public scrutiny. Regulations often play an important role in protecting Canadians. For instance, our party put in regulations to limit air pollution and reduce health issues like asthma by reducing methane emissions by 40% by 2025. We brought forward the Safe Food for Canadians Regulations into force, representing the largest overhaul of federal food safety regulations since the establishment of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. We have also proposed regulations that will lower prices for public drug plans and drug prices for Canadians. I also recognize that regulations regularly need to be modernized and simplified. An example is the Safe Food for Canadians Regulations which we modernized to allow greater market access opportunities for Canadian food products exported abroad, while also reducing the unnecessary administrative burden placed on businesses by replacing 14 sets of regulations with one. We also completed targeted regulatory competitiveness reviews of high-growth agriculture/agrifood, transport, and health/biosciences sectors; adopted a new Cabinet Directive on Regulation that strengthens stakeholder engagement throughout the regulatory lifecycle, and introduced the first annual regulatory modernization legislation to remove outdated, redundant and duplicative regulations and reflect modern realities. I will continue to support regulations that aim to promote inclusive economic growth, entrepreneurship, and innovation for the benefit of Canadians and businesses.

Q3 Small Business How would you ensure federal programs and interactions with business align with and respect small business realities?

Small business is vital to the Canadian economy and is at the heart of economic life in Peterborough-Kawartha.

That's why our government gave small businesses an opportunity to succeed and grow by lowering the small business tax from 11% in 2015 to 9% in 2019. We also moved to allow businesses to immediately write off the full cost of machinery and equipment used for the manufacturing or processing of goods and introduced the new Accelerated Investment Incentive, which allows businesses of all sizes and in all sectors of the economy to write off a larger share of the cost of newly acquired assets in the year the investment is made.

Because of the hard work of the people in these businesses, Canada has hit historic lows in unemployment and led the G7 in economic growth. Unemployment is markedly down in Peterborough-Kawartha, with hundreds of jobs created in our community and poverty significantly reduced.

Our government has been committed to consulting with Canadians. Through these consultations, we have come to recognize that for too many entrepreneurs ready to create even more jobs and support their families, the costs of doing business is a barrier.

To help, I commit to eliminating the "swipe fee" on HST and GST that merchants must pay to credit card companies every time a credit card is swiped. According to the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, this will save businesses nearly \$500 million a year in fees. We will also cut the cost of federal incorporation by 75 per cent, from \$200 to \$50.

We will eliminate all fees from the Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC), Export Development Canada (EDC), and Farm Credit Canada, for business advisory services like mentorship and training to business owners. We will implement a voluntary, real-time payroll system to automate records of employment so that small businesses no longer have to submit detailed records to Service Canada.

I want to make it easier for business owners to have access to money to help grow their business. That's why I am supporting the creation of the Canada Entrepreneur Account - which will provide up to 2,000 entrepreneurs a year with as much as \$50,000 to launch a new business. Consultations with entrepreneurs will help make sure the program is simple and effective.

Through these and other measures, I will always choose to invest in Canadian small business.

Q4 Connected Canada How will you continue to improve access to high-speed networks in underserved communities? (municipalities as a whole and business)

Canadians living in rural communities have told us that to be competitive in the 21st century, they first and foremost need access to reliable and affordable high-speed Internet. Being connected is no longer a luxury – it's a necessity. Our Connectivity Strategy is our plan to ensure that, over time, all Canadians will have access to reliable and affordable high-speed Internet, no matter where they live.

As a result of this plan, many more residents of Peterborough-Kawartha will be able to connect with family and friends, do business online, participate in distance education and take advantage of the opportunities afforded by the digital age.

We have committed to contributing up to \$71 million for the Eastern Ontario Regional Network's mobile broadband project. Once completed, the project will improve mobile coverage for over 1.1 million residents in 102 communities in Eastern Ontario, including the County of Peterborough. The new network will allow businesses to grow and reach new markets, with a potential to create more than 3,000 full time jobs over 10 years. For residents and families, extended mobile coverage means better access to mobile applications on a smartphone or tablet. The improved connectivity will also make it easier for people in remote areas to call for help in emergency situations.

Our target is for 95% of Canadian businesses and homes – no matter where in the country they are located – to be connected to Internet speeds of at least 50/10 Mbps by 2026 and 100% by 2030.

Q5 Skills What is your plan to help with retraining and upskilling of workers?

I am committed to investing in a Canadian workforce that has the skills they need for the jobs of tomorrow.

That has meant, for example, an investment of \$225 million over four years with \$75 million ongoing in Future Skills, an initiative that includes the launching of the Future Skills Centre and the Future Skills Council.

New Labour Market Transfer Agreements (LMTA) have been established with provinces and territories (with an additional \$2.7 billion in funding over six years, on top of \$3 billion annually) in order to significantly increase training programs, work placements, employer-sponsored training, job search help, career counselling, and more.

I am committed to encouraging more young people to consider a good, well-paying, middle-class job in the skilled trades. This includes a promotional campaign of \$6 million over two years to help change the perception of skilled trades by focusing on high demand, high wages, and the importance of continual professional development in a skilled trades career.

We have also begun a \$46 million investment over five years for a new program of pre-apprenticeship training. This program will help Canadians, particularly underrepresented groups such as women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and newcomers, to explore the trades, gain work experience, make informed career choices and develop the skills needed to succeed.

Q6 TradeWhat is your position on breaking down interprovincial trade barriers?

I am committed to advocating for and achieving improved trade among Canada's provinces and territories.

We are already taking action to break down trade barriers between provinces and territories, which makes up almost 20% of Canada's annual GDP, or almost \$370 billion. For example, we have made building codes available for free, and are working to standardize them across the country. Having one set of rules means that a sector that employs nearly 1.4 million Canadians can be more competitive and can focus on growth and creating more jobs. We have also implemented an agreement with provinces and territories to work for harmonized standards in the trucking sector.

Additionally, we eliminated the only remaining federal barrier to trade in alcoholic beverages within the country, a first step in giving Canadians better access to Canadian products.

I will continue to work with the provinces and territories to eliminate barriers to internal trade.

Q7 TradeHow do you view international trade agreements? What role do you see them playing in economy?

I believe in the benefits of progressive trade agreements to increase and diversify trade, and attract job-creating investment to Canada. The benefits of trade must, however, be widely shared.

Over the last three years, our government has opened the door to new markets – securing free trade agreements with the European Union and the growing markets of Asia – and kept the door open to our largest market through a modernized North American trade agreement. Canada today is the only G7 country that has a trade deal with every other country in the G7. Thanks to these agreements, Canadian businesses now have preferential access to 1.5 billion customers around the world.

This has brought results. For example, since the Canada-Europe agreement has come into effect, exports to the EU have increased to a total of \$36.1 billion, and 98% of the EU's tariffs on Canadian goods are transitioning to becoming duty-free. As one of the first six countries to ratify and implement the Trans-Pacific trade deal, Canada has seen an increase in overall exports of 10.1% to Trans-Pacific countries year-over-year.

When Canada faced an unprecedented challenge from the United States over the terms of NAFTA, the Liberal government recognized that the stakes were so great, and of such vital national importance, that we adopted a Team Canada approach. When the Americans imposed steel and aluminum tariffs, we fought until they were dropped. And because of our teamwork, we ended up with a better deal. We protected supply management, we protected dispute resolution, we rejected a sunset clause, we protected Canadian culture, and we secured better environmental and labour protections.

I will always stand up for Canada, for progressive trade agreements that support the Canadian economy, and for protecting the jobs of hard-working Canadians.
