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## **Standing Committee on Finance**

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**EVIDENCE**

**Thursday, October 18, 2018**

**Chair**

**The Honourable Wayne Easter**



## Standing Committee on Finance

Thursday, October 18, 2018

• (0845)

[English]

**The Chair (Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.)):** I call the meeting to order.

For the witnesses who are here for the formal presentation—just so you know what we're up to—we have a 15-minute session of what we call “open mikes” when we're on the road. That means that anybody in the audience who has registered has an opportunity to make a one-minute statement at the floor mike. There are no questions from members to those presenters, but their information and their request goes on the record and is considered part of the pre-budget consultations.

We are here for the pre-budget consultations for the 2019 budget. We welcome and thank everyone who is here.

We'll start with the open-mike sessions, with Orvie Dingwall.

Welcome, Orvie.

**Ms. Orvie Dingwall (As an Individual):** Thank you.

My name is Orvie Dingwall, from the University of Manitoba Faculty Association.

Across Canada there has been a 5% reduction in government funding of post-secondary education. These costs have been transferred down to students by increasing their tuition and their fees. That's not okay. The average student debt at graduation is about \$22,000. That's the same amount as a down payment on a house—well, here in Winnipeg, but maybe not in Vancouver.

We need to reduce this strain on students and make post-secondary education accessible. We need the federal government to develop and fund a national strategy for post-secondary education.

Undergraduate students at the University of Manitoba aren't graduating on time, because they can't get into the mandatory courses they need to graduate. Meanwhile, professors are reporting that their classrooms are so full that students are sitting on the floors. There is a higher ratio of professors to students than ever before, and about a third of faculty members are estimated to be on short-term contracts.

We need the federal government to invest in new faculty and new researcher positions.

Finally, post-secondary education institutions, including the University of Manitoba, have been striving to invest in education

for indigenous students. But to do this right takes specialized resources, new indigenous approaches to education, and indigenous professors and researchers.

We need the federal government to substantially increase federal support for first nations, Inuit and Métis students.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Orvie.

Next we have Maxine Meadows. Up after her will be Selwyn Burrows.

Go ahead, Maxine.

**Ms. Maxine Meadows (As an Individual):** Good morning.

My name is Maxine Meadows. I'm a registered dietician working with the Child Nutrition Council of Manitoba.

During the 2017-18 school year, the council funded more than 259 school nutrition programs all across the province. These programs provided more than 28,000 students with consistent meals and snacks. The council is a member of the Coalition for Healthy School Food, a network of more than 40 groups, and a project of Food Secure Canada.

Today, approximately 20% of students across Canada will participate in a school food and nutrition program. These programs are largely volunteer based. They have multiple funders, including parents, schools, community groups, businesses, municipalities, territories and provinces.

We are asking your government to invest \$360 million as part of a cost-shared program, with an estimated total of \$1.8 billion. This request complements Senate motion 358, introduced by former senator Art Eggleton in June, which recommends federal funding for a nutrition program.

This investment will establish new programs and strengthen existing ones. Evidence shows that food programs available to all students have many health and learning benefits, create jobs and improve the local economy. Everyone wins, especially our kids.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Maxine.

Selwyn Burrows is next.

**Mr. Selwyn Burrows (ONE Campaign):** *Bonjour.*

My name is Selwyn Burrows. I go by Sel. I am also able to put the honorific “O.M.” after my name, which I'll mention later.

I'm here today to plead with you to increase the amount of money Canada is giving to international development.

I am a person who puts my time and money where my mouth is. O.M. stands for Order of Manitoba, and I was given that honour for my anti-poverty work in Winnipeg. I have also spent time in Central America—in Nicaragua and in Guatemala—working on anti-poverty programs.

In my youth, in the sixties, we believed that Canada would be at the forefront of international development aid. The 0.7% of our GDP, as we called it then—sorry if my terminology is out of date—was something we believed we could reach. To see our percentage going down is very concerning.

This is something that goes across all party lines. Whether you're a Mennonite farmer with the food banks or an inner city person donating, this is something of concern. It is doubly concerning when our government is increasing its military spending at the demands of that conservative president to the south of us. I'm particularly concerned that we should be increasing the amount of money we are donating to international development when we have the privilege of being in a wealthy country. I have seen the poverty that exists in poorer countries, and I know that most of you have as well. Please, let's set that 0.7% target.

Thank you very much.

• (0850)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Selwyn.

Leanne Shumka is next.

**Ms. Leanne Shumka (As an Individual):** Good morning.

My name is Leanne Shumka. I am here representing the Canadian Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, also known as CASFAA.

CASFAA represents many personnel across Canadian post-secondary institutions who are dedicated advocates in helping Canadian students achieve financial wellness and success.

To build Canada's economic growth and ensure our competitiveness, we believe that the following three recommendations can help ensure student success.

First, allow students an adequate time to establish stability before beginning the regime of student loan repayment. This can be achieved by reinstating the Canada student loan interest subsidy for the six months following the completion of studies.

Second, empower post-secondary students who acquire loans through the Canada student loans program with mandatory entrance and exit loan counselling.

Third, reduce the educational gaps between indigenous and non-indigenous Canadians by providing a Canada student grant program for indigenous students.

CASFAA firmly believes that these measures will help to not only instill and develop financial literacy and awareness in our students but also position them to immediately engage in our economy when they have completed school.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Leanne.

Abdal Qeshta, welcome.

**Mr. Abdal Qeshta (As an Individual):** Thank you for this opportunity.

Mr. Wayne Easter, I understand you spoke with my colleague Pam in Edmonton.

Mr. Chair and members of the committee, I am Abdal Qeshta. I am the regional coordinator at the United Nations Association in Canada.

UNAC recommends support for a body of work supporting the directives to cabinet on defence, foreign affairs, international development, environment, heritage and labour with an investment of \$10 million per year over four years. UNAC will provide the following: dialogue, engagement, and mobilization for policy research and innovation to provide input to defence, diplomacy, development, climate change, populism and exclusion.

**The Chair:** Is the sound going into the booth?

Slow down a little. Perhaps you could start over.

• (0855)

**Mr. Abdal Qeshta:** Okay, I can start over.

I will start by introducing myself. I am Abdal Qeshta, Winnipeg regional coordinator at the United Nations Association in Canada.

UNAC recommends support for a body of work supporting the directives to cabinet on defence, foreign affairs, international development, environment, heritage and labour with an investment of \$10 million per year over four years. UNAC will provide the following: dialogue, engagement and mobilization for policy research and innovation to provide input to defence, diplomacy, development, climate change, populism and exclusion.

Second, support and develop educational materials meeting sustainable development goals.

Third, engage with the UN agencies supporting Canada's UN—

**The Chair:** Try it again.

We're having technical difficulties, and we're not even in the country. In the country, this happens all the time with cellphones.

**Mr. Abdal Qeshta:** Third, engage with the UN agencies supporting Canada's UN Security Council campaign. UNAC will mobilize support and engagement in sustainable development and human rights.

Last, UNA Canada shares the imperative to ensure full participation of women and youth toward building a fair, prosperous and sustainable world.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Abdal.

Amy Spearman, welcome.

**Ms. Amy Spearman (As an Individual):** Thank you. Good morning.

My name is Amy, and I am a high school student.

I am fortunate to have been raised in Canada, with access to health care, a good education and a safe community to grow up in. However, having recently attended a youth conference at the UN for children's human rights, I heard first-hand stories about how this is not the reality for millions of children around the world.

On the other hand, having visited developing regions with World Vision's youth program, I have seen the positive impact of Canada's investments abroad. Fewer communities are impoverished, and they are given the opportunity to improve their lives and the lives of their children. Canadians can and should be proud of this; however, there is still a lot to be done.

International assistance has a reputation of being about charity, but I believe it is more than that. It's about strengthening the global community, promoting basic rights and creating sustainable opportunities. Contributing to international assistance is not only good for the world, but it's equally beneficial for the Canadian economy and Canada's position as a leader in the world.

I am encouraged by the recent increases to international assistance; nevertheless, we need to be ambitious, because ambitious goals require ambitious financing. Therefore, I urge you to recommend annual long-term increases to international assistance in your report to Parliament on budget 2019.

Thank you for your time.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Amy.

Now we go to Richard Thiessen.

Welcome, Richard.

**Mr. Richard Thiessen (ONE Campaign):** First of all, I'd like to acknowledge that we are in Treaty No. 1 territory and on the traditional territory of the Anishinabe peoples and the homeland of the Métis nation.

Honourable members, my name is Richard Thiessen. I am a member of the ONE campaign in Canada. I'm here today on behalf of over two-thirds of Canadians who believe it is our responsibility to help others around the world.

As you know, Canada invests only 0.26% of its gross national income to official development assistance, which puts us far behind our closest friends and allies in the G7 and the OECD. Support for the Global Fund and the Global Partnership for Education and an increase in budget 2018 were important first steps, but we are still not doing our fair share.

You've recently heard from ONE, Engineers Without Borders, World Vision and others. I am here today to repeat the message. I ask that in budget 2019, the Government of Canada commit to increasing Canada's spending on global development over 10 years through predictable 15% annual increases to the international assistance envelope, starting in fiscal year 2019.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Richard.

Last in our open-mike session is William Loewen, or Bill.

Welcome. The floor is yours. Go ahead.

**Mr. William Loewen (President, TelPay Bill Payment Service):** Thank you very much for hearing me.

I am the president of Telpay Incorporated, a bill payment service company that I started in 1985. I was also the founder of Comcheq Services Limited, a payroll service company that started in 1968. In both cases, these operations involved the processing of data, but also, rather uniquely at the time, they involved the distribution of the funds generated from that data.

The requirement of our doing so is that we must maintain those funds in a trust account. That's an inefficiency that is really quite significant, maybe even surprising. At least \$2 billion of corporate working capital is tied up in those trust funds in various companies such as ours and payroll companies—\$2 billion of working capital, free working capital that could be released with suitable changes in the payment system.

The Department of Finance has made some excellent advances in that regard. In fact, the change made in the month of September has opened up the opportunity to diminish greatly those trust funds, because the payments that are made today can be obtained today, and so there isn't that float that is really quite costly to business.

In terms of what you're trying to achieve, efficiency and steps toward the future of the payment industry could be dealt with by implementing the changes, which are really fairly simple, I believe. We'd like you to recommend that the Department of Finance look at these changes.

Thanks.

• (0900)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Bill.

Thank you to all the open-mike presenters. As I indicated earlier, that information will go on the record and be considered.

We'll start our formal session with our witnesses here.

Before we do, I'll quickly go around the room and have members introduce themselves so that you know where each of us is from.

I'm Wayne Easter, member of Parliament for Malpeque, Prince Edward Island.

We'll start with Michael.

**Mr. Michael McLeod (Northwest Territories, Lib.):** Good morning, everyone. Welcome.

My name is Michael McLeod. I represent the Northwest Territories.

**Ms. Kim Rudd (Northumberland—Peterborough South, Lib.):** Hi. I'm Kim Rudd, member of Parliament for Northumberland—Peterborough South. For context, that is a rural riding in southeastern Ontario.

[Translation]

**Mr. Greg Fergus (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.):** My name is Greg Fergus and I am the member for Hull—Aylmer, in the Outaouais region of Quebec.

I am pleased to be back in Winnipeg. This is the third time this year.

[English]

**Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC):** I'm Pat Kelly, member of Parliament for Calgary Rocky Ridge.

**Mr. Matt Jeneroux (Edmonton Riverbend, CPC):** Good morning, everybody. I'm Matt Jeneroux, member of Parliament for Edmonton Riverbend.

● (0905)

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Good morning. I'm Peter Julian. I'm the member of Parliament for New Westminster—Burnaby. I'm very pleased to be in Winnipeg. I'm a fan of the Jets, but not of the Blue Bombers.

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**The Chair:** What about the Maple Leafs?

We'll start with the Canadian Network of Northern Research Operators and Ms. Fishback, chairperson.

Go ahead.

**Dr. LeeAnn Fishback (Chairperson, Canadian Network of Northern Research Operators):** Thank you very much for this opportunity to meet with me today.

My name is LeeAnn Fishback. I am the president of the Canadian Network of Northern Research Operators, commonly referred to as the CNNRO.

The CNNRO is a diverse network of research support facilities in northern Canada, providing services to communities, academics, government, private and international scientific research sectors. As such, the CNNRO strives to be knowledgeable on CNNRO member facilities, ranging from long-established research institutes and observatories that are in communities, to seasonal field stations that might be tent camps and also automated remote monitoring installations that might be something like a weather station sitting on a glacier.

CNNRO facilities are widespread throughout the Canadian Arctic and subarctic, and they represent every major ecological region in Canada's north. They are responsive to research needs and priorities across the north.

As everyone here knows, the Canadian Arctic is a vast and diverse region which is economically and socially important to Canada. It is home to a significant number of indigenous people and other northern residents. It's a region that has many unresolved research questions, and it's undergoing significant and rapid change, which has impacts on society and the economy of the region.

There is considerable interest, both nationally and internationally, in obtaining long-term, consistent datasets of many variables across the Arctic and subarctic. This has been highlighted in many reports, including the third International Conference on Arctic Research Planning report, which is commonly known as ICARP III, under the auspices of the International Arctic Science Committee, of which Canada is a founding member. They recommended a robust, sustained, co-designed and participatory observing system relying

on existing and new networks and infrastructure to improve our ability to predict local, regional and global processes.

In addition to these many grand plans, there are many small-scale research needs that are specific to the differing regions across the Arctic and across the peoples of the Arctic. These needs range in scale, and they also include a variety of subjects. They could be health, culture, social science, physical sciences, infrastructure, engineering or Arctic sovereignty.

The Canadian Arctic research community operates these significant number of fixed research facilities. Some of these facilities, such as the one where I work, the Churchill Northern Studies Centre, located in Churchill, Manitoba, have been in existence for many decades. We celebrated our 40th anniversary at the study centre last year.

Some are located in small communities and have new stations that have just been developed in the recent years. Some, such as the Polar Environment Atmospheric Research Lab, commonly known as PEARL, are remote facilities that are far from any community and are located in the extreme high Arctic. These facilities have research foci across all kinds of different spectrums, and have come together as the Canadian Network of Northern Research Operators to advocate for field stations across the Arctic.

Maintaining these stations is a constant challenge. Many of them are remote facilities. It is difficult to maintain equipment when it's outside -40 Celsius and complete darkness. The difficulty of recruiting necessary skilled staff is a challenge, and the necessity of planning on long time scales is also important in accessing many of these stations, perhaps only once a year.

Funding these facilities under the current funding structure is problematic, because the orientation of most funding mechanisms is toward research that's conducted in southern Canada, often within a university environment, and on short time scales that aren't necessarily appropriate for the Arctic.

In 2009, the Government of Canada implemented a one-time Arctic research infrastructure fund in the amount of \$85 million to expand and upgrade Arctic research infrastructure. That funding was much appreciated, and was well used at 10 stations across our network.

However, the issue of maintaining and operating these facilities was never addressed in that funding, and it's been a decade since that funding.

● (0910)

This has left an evident gap in Arctic research infrastructure. As a result, the full impact of the initial Arctic research infrastructure fund has yet to be fulfilled, and there is capacity in the current system facilities that cannot be utilized because of lack of funding.

The founding of the Canadian High Arctic Research Station, known as CHARS, and of Polar Knowledge Canada are welcome developments. They are members of CNNRO. These apply, however, only to a single locality around Cambridge Bay and don't necessarily facilitate the needs of the vast Arctic in its geographic scope.

To bridge this gap, the CNNRO makes two recommendations to this committee.

The government should institute a peer-reviewed Arctic research infrastructure support fund. This fund will help to ensure Canada's competitiveness in Arctic research and continue the significant work of the ARIF by supplying the support for maintaining and operating our current Arctic terrestrial research infrastructure.

The second recommendation is that the government provide funding on the order of \$10 million per year for the Arctic research infrastructure support fund. This funding will allow the potential to be fully realized and permit CNNRO facilities to fully participate in and support national and international research in Canada's Arctic.

The theme of this budget is ensuring Canada's competitiveness. Canada has had a long and distinguished record in arctic research, and that is a practical necessity because of the fraction of our country that is arctic and subarctic, together with the northern society, culture, resources and land area.

We are seeing that Canada is steadily slipping in international reputation as other countries that don't have arctic, such as Korea, Japan, and China, ramp up their research and other activities in our Arctic.

The ARIF program would provide support for Arctic research infrastructure, permitting full operation of existing stations, and would foster the further development of research partnerships among academics, government and communities. This will continue to contribute to Canada's competitiveness in this area for the future and for all Canadians.

Thank you for your time this morning.

**The Chair:** Thank you, LeeAnn.

We'll turn to Jim Everson, President of the Canola Council of Canada.

Welcome, Jim.

**Mr. Jim Everson (President, Canola Council of Canada):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to the committee for having me here today and for allowing us to share our comments about the preparation for budget 2019.

The Canola Council of Canada is a value-chain organization that represents the whole canola industry in Canada. We represent the 43,000 canola farmers across the country, mostly in western Canada, but some in the Ontario and Peterborough area, Northumberland, and so on. We also represent the processors who take the seed and turn it into oil and meal for export markets, and canola oil and canola meal for animal feed; the seed companies that develop innovative seed technologies to provide to the producer to increase their production capabilities and fight diseases, and so on; and the exporters of raw seed. We work on behalf of the whole industry.

Canola is Canada's most valuable field crop, returning \$9.9 billion to Canadian farmers. It has the largest acreage in western Canada, currently. We think that the canola industry is a real engine of

economic growth in western Canada, in terms of production processing, grain handling and sales.

Innovation and competitiveness are essential to the success of the canola industry. Canola is a Canadian invention and is often the single-biggest income for Canadian farmers. Innovation has helped canola be competitive on the world stage. More than 90% of canola grown in Canada is exported around the globe. We're highly dependent on export markets and innovation.

Our industry has a strategic plan that we call "Keep it Coming 2025", to increase production of canola from a current level of about 21.3 million tonnes last year to 26 million tonnes. There is certainly strong global demand for canola.

Our challenge is with our research work and so on, to ensure that we can grow more canola on every acre of land in western Canada. We have a goal of achieving that 26 million tonnes. We'll have more canola available for export markets.

To put this into perspective, if we achieve this plan, we would be adding \$4.5 billion to Canadian canola exports. Every incremental bushel that we grow is going to be exported.

The Government of Canada has set a target, and we think it's an excellent target to set, of \$75 billion of exports by 2025. It means an increase of about \$20 billion in value of exports between now and 2025. If canola is successful in achieving that, we would contribute \$4.5 billion to that target. Innovation is really critical to all of that.

We have four recommendations for the committee related to the 2019 budget.

The first I would like to speak to is corporate tax policies. Tax policies influence investment decisions throughout our value chain. For Canada to be an attractive place to invest in the canola industry, our corporate tax policies really need to be competitive with the U.S., with whom we compete within the oil market.

For example, as part of our Keep it Coming plan, we want to increase the amount of value-added processing and to turn this plan into investments that create jobs in processing plants. In that regard, the most important element is to match the accelerated capital cost allowance currently in place in the United States.

The processing industry in Canada has invested very significantly in recent decades to increase our processing capacity in western Canada. That allows us to take exports of raw seed, process it in Canada, and turn it into a higher value, differentiated product in international markets. We take a relatively low-value product and turn it into a higher value product. That's been very successful in the last decade in western Canada, and a key element of that is the investment climate and tax policies related to it.

The second is that enabling competitiveness in the canola industry also requires carbon pricing systems that keep us competitive. For example, Canada's canola processes are energy-intensive. As I mentioned, they are very much trade-exposed. A carbon pricing system needs to encourage greenhouse gas reductions while not impeding the competitiveness of the sector. The pricing system should be accessible and equitable for the entire industry.

When it comes to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, canola can also make a unique contribution. This brings me to the third recommendation, which is implementing a clean fuel standard that is focused on liquid fuels by the end of 2019.

When canola is used as a biodiesel, it produces up to 90% fewer greenhouse gas emissions compared to regular fossil diesel. As liquid fuels are the largest segment of carbon fuel use, biofuel made from Canadian canola provides an excellent opportunity to significantly reduce greenhouse gases while spurring innovation and clean growth.

● (0915)

Finally, China is an important market where we see tremendous growth potential for the canola industries. We're eager to have a discussion with China about removing tariffs and non-tariff barriers that are a challenge to accessing that market. Our industry estimates that if we were able to eliminate tariffs on our products, that would support an additional 33,000 Canadian jobs and increase the value of our exports by \$1.2 billion annually. We urge the government to engage at a very senior level with the government of China in negotiations to enhance trade.

In closing, remaining competitive and innovative is essential to our industry. These are our four recommendations: adjusting corporate tax policies to address the competitiveness gap with the United States; ensuring carbon pricing assistance that keeps our industry competitive; implementing a clean fuel standard that is focused on liquid fuels in 2019; and starting trade investments with China.

Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Jim.

We turn now to the Community Futures Network of Canada, with Ms. Smitka and Mr. Denbow. Welcome.

**Mrs. Wendy Smitka (President, Community Futures Network of Canada):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. It's a pleasure to be here.

On behalf of our members across rural Canada and our 267 offices, we wanted to tell you a little bit about what we contribute to the Canadian economy.

The main objectives of the community futures program are to help rural Canadians start or expand a business and to help strengthen our communities by diversifying their local economies. We work with our communities to assess local problems and plan and implement solutions. We deliver a range of business counselling and information services to SMEs and social enterprises. We provide access to capital when they can't access that capital from traditional sources. We support community-based projects and special initiatives.

There are currently 267 CF organizations serving close to 15 million Canadians across rural Canada in all 10 provinces as well as in Nunavut and the Northwest Territories. We employ more than 1,300 professional staff who are guided by 3,375 local volunteers.

Established in 1985 as part of the Canadian jobs strategy, the community futures program is a model for socio-economic development that has received international acclaim and is often praised by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

A 2017 OECD study recommended that the Government of Canada increase funding for the community futures program and assist community futures organizations in unblocking unused resources, with the aim of increasing the penetration of small business loans and business development services in remote and rural areas of Canada. The OECD has called the community futures program one of the most innovative and successful rural-oriented policies anywhere in the world and stated that its success is due in no small part to the fact that it is locally run and suited to local conditions.

I believe it is this ability for local volunteers to determine how federal funding can best be directed to meet local needs that has led the CF program's well-documented record of success, which we have noted in our brief.

I myself have been volunteering with Community Futures for 20 years now, first in central Vancouver Island, in Nanaimo, then in our provincial organization, and then western and national organizations. The reason that I and thousands of other community volunteers continue to volunteer for Community Futures is that we want to make a difference. When we volunteer for this organization, that difference is very tangible. We get to see the businesses that have started in our communities go on to grow and prosper. We get to see these special projects and initiatives create the right ecosystems for which those businesses can thrive.

● (0920)

**Mr. Jason Denbow (Board Member, Community Futures Network of Canada):** However, 10 years of frozen funding have now significantly eroded our ability to continue to effectively support those rural entrepreneurs and communities. There exists a gap of close to \$100,000 between the resources required to provide our services and the funding that's provided by the federal government in many of the regions of the country.

CF organizations have adapted as best as they can by adopting new efficiencies and processes, but increased deficiencies can only hold off the impact of inflation for so long. Without additional resources, it's a matter of time until service delivery to rural Canadians suffers and the management of our more than \$1.2 billion in federal assets is placed at risk. It isn't just the delivery of our existing services that are at risk, but also the underutilized capacity that's within our network to support other federal priorities.

CF organizations are strongly engaged in serving indigenous and women entrepreneurs, new Canadians, and entrepreneurs with disabilities. We have an extensive reach in rural Canada. We believe that our 267 CF organizations represent the federal government's second largest point of service network in rural Canada, second only to the post office. With appropriate resources, we could further advance the government's commitment to support indigenous entrepreneurship and could help ensure that rural Canadians enjoy the same access as their urban counterparts to initiatives like the women entrepreneurship strategy, the innovation superclusters initiative, and Connect to Innovate, just to name a few.

We're asking for three recommendations within our brief.

The first is that the government further leverage the Community Futures network of 267 locally directed organizations across rural Canada to support its overarching goal of ensuring a competitive Canadian economy.

The second is that the government provide additional annual resources of \$42.35 million for five years to increase the ability of Community Futures organizations to support federal priorities and deliver the program services.

The third is that the government support the modernization of the terms and conditions of the CF program to better serve the needs of rural entrepreneurs and communities.

The program updates that we are requesting will allow our services to keep pace with modern entrepreneurial needs. Our requested additional investment of \$42.35 million over the next five years will not only restore the service delivery capacity within the CF network, but we believe it will allow us to increase our lending, serve over 6,000 new clients, and create more than 4,000 new jobs while undertaking 1,600 new projects that will allow our CFOs to participate in a meaningful way in local community economic development.

In conclusion, the Community Futures program is a proven delivery network that has generated significant impacts and, if appropriately resourced, has the potential to generate many more while providing the federal government with a much-needed delivery mechanism to achieve their priorities in rural Canada. We are confident that the changes and supports that we're requesting will provide increased opportunities for all Canadians living in rural Canada to participate in the government's push to ensure Canada's competitiveness, and we hope that you agree.

Thanks for your time.

• (0925)

**The Chair:** Thank you, both.

Next we have the Manitoba Federation of Labour, represented by Mr. Rebeck.

**Mr. Kevin Rebeck (President, Manitoba Federation of Labour):** Thank you for the opportunity to present.

The Manitoba Federation of Labour, or MFL, is Manitoba's central labour body, chartered by the Canadian Labour Congress. It represents the interests of more than 100,000 unionized working people from every sector and every region of the province.

The MFL works to promote good jobs, fairness, and social and economic justice for all. The priorities outlined in the submission are informed by long-standing MFL policies, convention resolutions and emerging needs identified by our members.

As part of budget 2019, we recommend that the federal government prioritize health care services that families depend on, as well as look for opportunities for improvement as follows.

One, begin budgetary planning to implement a national, universal, single-payer pharmacare program in order to ensure universal access to prescription drugs, save Canadians money and improve health outcomes.

Two, commit to a long-term national health care funding arrangement with provinces and territories to reverse the cuts implemented by the Harper government and continued under this government.

Three, increase the federal government's share of health care spending while enforcing the principles of the Canada Health Act.

Four, work with provinces and territories on a national strategy for seniors care, including investments in public home care and community support services.

In order to address Canada's long and poor record of productivity growth, the federal government must put quality jobs at the heart of its agenda. Labour market and social policy should systemically restrict precarious work and the exploitation of vulnerable workers. We urge the federal government to take immediate action on pay equity to ensure that women are paid the same as men for the same work. Don't delay this until after the next election; women have already waited far too long for this fairness.

We'd like the government to prepare workers to adapt to technological change and emerging skills needs to ensure workers are able to meet the job requirements now and in the future, including making sure that Canada is the leader on implementing a right to continuous workplace training and lifelong learning.

We'd like the government to prioritize access to training opportunities for groups with fewer opportunities, including youth, low-skilled workers, workers with disabilities, newcomers to Canada and workers of colour. It should also expand vocational opportunities through apprenticeship and on-the-job experience, while recognizing the vital role of labour, employers and post-secondary educational institutions in partnering to deliver those opportunities.

Finally, it should mandate that employers hire and train apprentices on federally funded infrastructure projects, including utilizing community benefit agreements and project labour agreements to maximize local job and training opportunities.

To support working families, the federal government needs to invest in more supports for working families to ensure that life is affordable and that parents, especially women, have greater opportunities to get good jobs and contribute to our economy. We call on the federal government to transfer \$1 billion in 2019-20 to provinces, territories and indigenous communities in order to establish universal, accessible, affordable, high-quality and fully-inclusive early learning and child care in Canada. Delivered by public or not-for-profit providers, this funding must come with a strings-attached approach to ensure universality and affordability.

We'd like to see reform to the EI system to better reflect the realities of working people, especially women, including reducing the number of qualifying hours to 360, measuring a week as 30 hours instead of 35 to reflect the average Canadian workweek, and reforming the EI sickness benefit to permit working while on claim, while expanding the number of weeks for sickness benefits to deal with episodic or long-term illness.

We'd like to see restoration of the more than \$58 billion that's been withdrawn by government from the EI fund, and we'd like the government to end the use of EI funds for non-EI purposes. We'd like to see increased training supports for EI recipients, including targeted programs to help workers from equity-seeking groups to overcome barriers to employment, gain valuable, on-the-job experience and acquire training in high-demand occupations. We'd like to bring back the ability for workers to drop periods of low and zero earnings from the calculation of their CPP benefit and increase the CPP income replacement rate further, raise the ceiling on pensionable earnings, and further enhance the portion of employee contributions that are tax-deductible. These continued inequalities primarily impact women and the disabled.

Finally, on poverty reduction, too many Canadians live in poverty, especially women, indigenous people and children. The federal government's strategy to reduce poverty must include a comprehensive plan to eliminate poverty in Canada by raising the federal minimum wage to a living wage of \$15 an hour, which sets the standard for provinces to follow; increasing the Canada social transfer to fund social assistance and support for people with disabilities; increasing the flat rate old age security benefit and indexing it to average wage growth; and reforming the federal insolvency regime in order to better protect workers' pensions and benefits in creditor protection and bankruptcy.

● (0930)

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thanks very much, Kevin.

Turning now to the university sector, we have Mr. Barnard from the University of Manitoba.

Welcome.

**Dr. David Barnard (President and Vice-Chancellor, University of Manitoba):** Thank you.

Thanks to the committee for the opportunity to present to you today.

The University of Manitoba plays an integral role in the competitiveness of Manitoba, generating \$1.8 billion in economic

activity annually, supporting more than 20,000 local jobs, and educating future leaders. We have close to 30,000 students, a community of more than 140,000 alumni in 137 countries, and over 95,000 alumni who continue to call Manitoba home. UM alumni are in leadership positions in companies and organizations in Manitoba and around the world, extending the university's economic impact locally and globally. We're also a member of the U15 Group of Canadian Research Universities and of Universities Canada. We're in support of their submissions to this committee.

At the University of Manitoba, we're committed to inspiring minds through innovative and quality teaching; driving discovery and insight through excellence in research, scholarly work and other creative activities; creating pathways to indigenous achievement; building community that creates an outstanding learning and working environment; and forging connections to foster high-impact community engagement. These strategic priorities are reflected in our written submission and throughout our campus community.

Building on investments from the previous budget, which we support and welcome, the University of Manitoba is making recommendations that will further support our role in driving Canada's competitiveness, bringing more Canadians into the research ecosystem, and developing the talent our economy will depend on in this changing economic landscape. In our signature areas of research—*infectious diseases, global population health, and Arctic system sciences*—our researchers lead the way globally. Bolstered by the presence of the CIHR Institute of Musculoskeletal Health and Arthritis, the national microbiology laboratory, and two national training programs in immunology and infectious disease, University of Manitoba researchers are internationally recognized for their leadership in immunity, inflammation and infectious disease research.

The university has also built a world-leading team of researchers in the areas of population and global health, with highly developed networks of international partnerships and collaborations, who are recognized for their excellence internationally by governments and by funders like the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. This group of researchers currently has under way field trials around the world that involve 800 million people, with applications internationally and of course at home in Canada.

The University of Manitoba is home to internationally renowned programs of research in Arctic science, climate change and its effects on Arctic sea ice. Major investments and partnerships in this area include the *Amundsen* research vessel, the sea ice environmental research facility, and soon the Churchill marine observatory, a unique research facility located in Churchill, Manitoba. With increasing international interest in the Arctic, it's important for Canada to be present there for many reasons, among them sovereignty protection, economic opportunities and responding to climate change.

Research enterprises such as these are possible thanks in part to commitments from the federal government. We appreciate the investments made in budget 2018, and we support continued investments in research, including through the research support fund to address the full cost of research. We encourage further investments in the fundamental science review proposal, first to increase annual scholarship and fellowship funding for graduate students, including for women, indigenous people, visible minorities and people with disabilities. We also recommend an expansion of undergraduate student research awards as a means to increase the number of students pursuing graduate studies.

Creating pathways to indigenous achievement is a strategic priority for the University of Manitoba, tied to the federal government's priority on competitiveness. With unique programs such as Ongomiiwzin, the Indigenous Institute of Health and Healing; the Indigenous Business Education Partners; and the engineering access program, the university is proud to be leading reconciliation efforts.

This is absolutely critical in a province in which indigenous peoples will make up 18% of the population by 2026. We cannot talk about the future competitiveness of this province or country without addressing this fact. Therefore, we encourage further federal investments to support the success of our indigenous students, including new scholarships to support indigenous graduate students and post-doctoral fellows with a view to building a cohort of indigenous faculty; direct student financial support for first nations, Inuit and Métis learners; and support for enhanced institutional programs that promote indigenous students' success throughout the post-secondary education continuum.

The University of Manitoba is also home to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation. This centre is the permanent national institution that emerged from the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. With a mandate in the areas of archives, education, research and community engagement, the NCTR is a leading voice in conversations about truth and reconciliation in this country. We recommend sustained financial support for the centre to ensure continued reconciliation efforts with Canada's indigenous peoples.

• (0935)

Finally, as a research-intensive university, we'd like to see continued investments in infrastructure to attract and retain talent that will drive discovery and the economy. We'd also like to see the dedication of specific funds to universities for infrastructure projects.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to present. *Meegwetch.*

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr. Barnard.

We'll turn, then, to the University of Winnipeg, with Ms. Trimbee, President and Vice-Chancellor. Welcome, Annette.

**Dr. Annette Trimbee (President and Vice-Chancellor, University of Winnipeg):** Thank you, and good morning.

The University of Winnipeg is located in the heart of downtown Winnipeg on Treaty No. 1 land in the homeland of the Métis nation. Today, UWinnipeg is home to about 10,000 students, primarily undergraduates, with some graduate learners, and a further 4,000 in our professional and continuing education programs.

We are known for academic excellence, small class sizes and a focus on teaching. Our faculty perform research with impact and relevance both locally and globally—for example, on adapting to climate change and on how to better integrate refugee children into our school system.

I echo and support the remarks of my colleague from the University of Manitoba, Dr. David Barnard. We are both signatories of the Manitoba collaborative indigenous education blueprint, and in 2016, UWinnipeg introduced an indigenous course requirement for all undergraduate students in keeping with the calls to action outlined in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final report.

We also have unique graduate-level programs in indigenous governance and indigenous economic and social development, and a program that encourages indigenous students to pursue graduate studies, which we refer to as the indigenous summer scholars program. Our Access Education programs, which train indigenous teachers, have graduated 163 people who are now at the head of their classrooms.

I believe that Manitoba's and Canada's success depends upon the success of indigenous people. Manitoba is the epicentre of the indigenous comeback. Indigenous people in Manitoba are one of our fastest-growing and youngest demographic groups. Over the next decade, 20% of Manitoba's population will identify as indigenous, and in Canada the population of indigenous people will soon surpass 2.5 million, yet indigenous people are under-represented when it comes to post-secondary attainment.

Today close to 10% of UWinnipeg's student body identifies as indigenous, and this number is increasing, but it still significantly lags behind their proportion of the population. In Canada, only 11% of indigenous people aged 25 to 64 have a post-secondary degree, compared with 30% for non-indigenous people. It is clear that more must be done, and a commitment to indigenous success requires all of us, at all levels of society, to work together: academia, the private sector and government.

To enhance Canada's economic success, we need a systemic approach to create pathways to and through post-secondary education in partnership with indigenous people. We need to support indigenous children and encourage them to dream big about their futures, and we need to continue that support through post-secondary graduation and into meaningful employment.

The current piecemeal approach, a program here or an initiative there, is not working. Statistics Canada shows that the indigenous population is currently under-represented in the labour market. Why does this gap exist? One of the reasons is that fewer indigenous students complete their degree or post-secondary program compared to non-indigenous individuals. Many do not have a family history of post-secondary education, and many experience multiple barriers, including distance and culture conflict, as highlighted by a recent study conducted by Indspire.

The strong link between educational attainment and success in the labour market is well established, not to mention the link between education and health and social outcomes. We know that children are more likely to attend post-secondary if their parents attended, which means that education also has positive intergenerational effects.

In order to support indigenous people in accessing and completing post-secondary programs, Canada needs to develop a system of pathways, entrance and retention supports in collaboration with indigenous communities and post-secondary institutions. Current employment-focused training programs are not enough to close the gap. The Government of Canada, through Employment and Social Development Canada, has developed several programs that are specifically designed to support indigenous people with employment and training needs. These programs include the aboriginal skills and employment training strategy, which links indigenous individuals' training needs to labour market demand. While these programs have produced some success, they rely heavily on third party partnerships to deliver their programming and focus on work-ready skills, which means that indigenous people are potentially forgoing college- and university-level programs for quick training programs.

In budget 2018, the Government of Canada announced that ASETS would be replaced by the new indigenous skills and employment training program. While the specific details of the program have yet to be announced, if it operates similarly to ASETS, there will be a lost opportunity to create systemic change.

The degree to which quick training programs can address the underlying causes of the indigenous skills and education gap is limited. This is due, in part, to the over-reliance on a patchwork of programs. Many jobs in this category are vulnerable to technological disruption. Over the long term, quick training approaches are not a systemic solution to the underlying problem.

• (0940)

Post-secondary institutions have an important role to play in creating economically resilient graduates with higher earning potential over their lifetimes. Planning to attend post-secondary starts early. We know that children as young as in grades 3 and 4 start imagining what their futures will be like, and developing this university-bound identity is critical.

One aspect of the University of Winnipeg's approach to engaging children from diverse backgrounds is through the Wii Chiiwaakanak Learning Centre, a community partnership that provides educational opportunities through Winnipeg's indigenous inner city communities. The centre provides programming to over 20,000 community members per year, including after-school programs focusing on culturally appropriate activities and indigenous language programs in Cree and Ojibway.

Once at UWinnipeg, indigenous students have access to a range of academic, social and cultural supports that help them achieve academic success and facilitate an engagement with graduate school opportunities, meaningful employment and leadership roles.

UWinnipeg and many other universities across Canada also support the development of top-tier indigenous scholars and leaders through various programs designed to provide more intensive levels of support to honours-level and graduate students, including through

transition programs, mentoring, and academic and financial support. The majority of these programs are funded by private donations or from university resources. We do receive some federal funds for these programs, but the funding is episodic, unpredictable, unconnected, and often channelled through third parties. More needs to be done.

A national strategy and a systemic approach is required. The university should be asked to table and should be supported, as we are providing a front-line support to indigenous students and helping them achieve their full potential.

What do we need? We need funding for indigenous student spaces, funding for indigenous language programs that also engage family members, funding for indigenous elders in residence, funding for indigenous research partnerships, focused programs to support the development of highly qualified indigenous professionals, and support for programs that are designed to engage indigenous children in developing university-bound identities.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Annette.

We'll go to seven-minute rounds. I think we've got time to get all members on.

We'll start with Ms. Rudd.

**Ms. Kim Rudd:** Thank you very much.

Thank you again for coming this morning. It's quite a diverse group, and there's little time for the questions.

I'm going to start with the Canola Council. My riding is in district 3 in Ontario. While we certainly don't grow the amount of canola that is grown in the west, we do our part.

In 1978, canola came on the scene. It has been a good-news story on a number of fronts, both from the opportunity for domestic production and also for export, as you've mentioned, and for its importance of reaching our goal as a country in reaching \$75 billion in exports by 2025.

I'd like you to expand a little on a couple of things you said. One is about the biofuels and the fuel standard, because this is something we hear a lot about from different perspectives. Can you talk a little about what you see as the contribution of the canola sector and the opportunities for the canola sector as biofuel standards are implemented and expanded over the decades to come?

• (0945)

**Mr. Jim Everson:** Biofuels have been proven to be a really excellent opportunity to lower greenhouse gas emissions. We as an industry have developed... Canola in Canada is in the mandate that we have for biodiesel in Canada currently. A lot of it gets processed elsewhere and then comes back into Canada and goes into that environment. We also sell to the European Union, which has a very advanced biofuels agenda.

We see it as a real opportunity, a win-win from the point of view of meeting those climate change goals for reducing GHG emissions and at the same time providing another stable marketing opportunity for the product. It's a small part of our industry. Most of our canola goes into the food market for oil, and it goes into animal feed, but it certainly represents an opportunity to grow.

There's been considerable work done in the liquid fuels portion of it. I know Environment Canada is also interested in gaseous fuels and other elements that can be put in place. The regime that they're talking about at Environment Canada is one that's about carbon intensity. If you have a product that reduces carbon more than another product, the marketplace would decide, based on pricing, to choose that commodity.

From a canola perspective, that is a good news thing, because, as I said in my brief, compared to petroleum-based diesel, the use of canola can reduce GHG emissions by 90%. We would have a considerable opportunity, if the regime were put in place on liquid fuels, to generate lower GHG emissions as well as to stimulate to the canola industry.

**Ms. Kim Rudd:** Thank you.

You may know that some European countries are looking at using biofuels for their aviation within the next few decades. A lot of work, money and effort have been put into those next generations.

In terms of the CPTPP, I know a lot of canola goes to Asia, and China is certainly a large market that's available. Do you see discussions happening around the Mercosur and ASEAN trade agreements? Do you see them helping the canola sector?

**Mr. Jim Everson:** We do. All agreements that reduce barriers or tariffs are good. We have a superb trade negotiation group in agriculture in Canada. We are really well served by our civil servants when it comes to trade negotiations, in my view.

We would be recommending to pursue trade agreements that have a high economic potential. Mercosur, ASEAN—there is some real opportunity, I think, with Asian countries, but smaller, and with Mercosur probably less so.

Our major piece would be China. We face a 9% tariff on our seed and oil going into China. Soybeans enter China at a 3% tariff. Canada benefits from that in our soybean trade, for sure, but the large importers into China for soybeans are Brazil and the United States. To be competitive with them, we would like to see the tariffs at least addressed so we're competitive.

We really welcome what the Prime Minister has said recently about diversifying and having a discussion with China. We think that's a really important market for the next major trade negotiation.

**Ms. Kim Rudd:** Okay. Thank you very much.

Community Futures has been near and dear to my heart as an entrepreneur for the past 30 years. Being very involved in the ones in my community, I have seen the difference it has made, particularly in rural communities, in bringing economic development to places where people didn't anticipate it happening.

We still have challenges. We have challenges around broadband and other things, but one of the things that has happened—and I

want to get your thoughts on this—is that we're starting to see innovation hubs, makers' labs. It's happening in one of my communities. They have changed the landscape of the possibilities.

Are you familiar with those new innovation hubs coming directly out of the Community Futures program? As you mentioned, you could probably write a book about the work you've done as a volunteer over the last 20 years. In those rural communities we're seeing out-migration from the more urban areas, with a lot of the skilled people in business volunteering their time and mentoring, which has been a game-changer, frankly.

Can you talk a little about the potential of those innovation hubs and about how that mentoring is helping to transform the rural communities?

• (0950)

**Mrs. Wendy Smitka:** There are certainly a few in British Columbia I can speak to.

In the Okanagan Valley there is the innovation tech sector. The provincial government at one time wanted to set the Okanagan Valley as the Silicon Valley of the north, and so they invested some of the provincial resources. You'll see the lottery corporation, for example, in B.C. is housed in Kamloops, because they have their online gaming machines, and that was seen as kind of kick-starting that particular industry.

Working with Community Futures and Okanagan University, they were able to build quite a tech sector in the Okanagan, and with people from across the country retiring into the Okanagan area, you find that you have very well-educated individuals who then get a little bored and would love to take a look at some of these young start-ups and mentor young people and even provide their own capital, forming mini-pockets of angel investing for some of these young entrepreneurs. It's a really good strategy, a combination of business groups looking to support them, the university helping with the innovation sector, and Community Futures doing the planning piece that says we could have a niche here if we work collaboratively to put it together. It works very well.

**Ms. Kim Rudd:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, all.

Mr. Jeneroux.

**Mr. Matt Jeneroux:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to everybody again for being here, including those of you who travelled to be here as well.

I do want to talk to the universities in particular, but I would like to start with Ms. Fishback, if I may.

The PEARL program at the time was certainly something that was important up north. We saw back in 2012 the sustainable funding over what was a seven-year period for the CHARS program. It was eleventh-hour piecemeal funding that seemed to come together. It wasn't part of any budget planning, but the minister of science and the minister of the environment came in and decided that this was something they needed to fund. I think it was for 12 or 14 months, whatever the period was.

We're getting down to the end of that again. Have there been any conversations or discussions you have had or that you're aware of where there is a program coming forward for the extension of CHARS that would also indirectly help the PEARL program?

**Dr. LeeAnn Fishback:** Thanks very much for your question.

The vice-chair for the Canadian Network of Northern Research Operators, Dr. Jim Drummond, is just returning from the PEARL station right now. They're getting ready for the winter season up there when a large amount of their work does occur. The PEARL station is a challenge because it's not located in a community, and it's a very difficult station to access during the wintertime.

As you mentioned, the program that funded it came to an end, and it's really been running on piecemeal funding. I understand some MPs were able to visit the PEARL station this summer, and there has been a push for sustained, direct funding for that particular station to continue to contribute to atmospheric chemistry measurements throughout the polar winter. This is on the order of about \$1 million per year that has been requested to keep that station running.

The PEARL station was constructed in 1993 just when I very first started working in the Arctic. I remember visiting the site where they were going to construct PEARL.

The request we're looking for from the CNNRO is to provide that sustained support, not just for PEARL, which is a very valuable station, but to have a sustained fund available for some of these longer-term monitoring stations to be able to have access to so there isn't this last-minute push or trying to find resources to keep these very expensive infrastructures working.

● (0955)

**Mr. Matt Jeneroux:** Which is what CHARS was....

**Dr. LeeAnn Fishback:** Which is what CHARS was....

**Mr. Matt Jeneroux:** In terms of showing that support, the extension of the CHARS program would be helpful, I assume.

**Dr. LeeAnn Fishback:** For that station, but for the entire network of field stations, I think it's important to have a research infrastructure fund for the Arctic so all stations are able to access those funds. We have about 50 stations in our network, and PEARL is one of those—

**Mr. Matt Jeneroux:** The science minister says good things about this, but, unfortunately, it has been three years now. We have yet to see the commitment.

**Dr. LeeAnn Fishback:** Yes.

**Mr. Matt Jeneroux:** I do want to turn to both Mr. Barnard and my good friend Annette Trimbee, former deputy minister of finance. I'm sure the former deputy minister of finance would actually have seen a number of these things over her career in Alberta.

I want to start with you, Mr. Barnard, on the research report funding from the Naylor report. We saw a good portion of the last budget funding the Naylor report, but it certainly did not address the research support fund as you indicated.

Can you give us an example of what's happening now? The research support fund keeps the lights on, the basic equipment, the maintenance, and so on and so forth. I imagine that's still happening.

Your institution is still funding that. The lights are still on, but without the research support fund, how are you funding that now? If the research support fund were to be implemented, what would that mean to what you could fund with those funds?

I would assume some of it, perhaps all of it, is coming from undergraduate tuition right now. What would that mean, I guess, if the RSF were funded?

**Dr. David Barnard:** The dichotomy that you suggest certainly exists at the University of Manitoba and also in other universities across the country, and it's certainly one of the ongoing subjects of conversation, in particular at the U15 group of research-intensive universities.

There are indirect costs of research, and a lot of the programs that are in existence fund the direct costs, but the indirect costs—infrastructure within the institutions, recognition of space costs, and many, many things—typically are funded at higher rates in other countries than they are in Canada. How do we make that up? You're exactly right. How do we make that up? We make it up from other sources of revenue, which often means, in effect, subsidizing the research enterprise from the provincial transfers that are supposed to be in support of teaching. That's not a good thing, as you can imagine, because there's limited flexibility to do that. It puts stress on the infrastructure and the institutions.

The University of Manitoba and others in the U15 group would love to see support for the full costs of research come up to the same kinds of levels that exist in other countries. The costs here are not different; we're just stressing other parts of the university's budget in order to meet them.

**Mr. Matt Jeneroux:** All right.

Ms. Trimbee.

**Dr. Annette Trimbee:** Basically, my answer is the same. The provincial money is for teaching, and if we don't have that, if we wind up subsidizing that, it causes some issues.

**The Chair:** Okay. We're going to have to leave it there. Thank you all.

Mr. Julian.

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Thanks to the witnesses. Your statements were very interesting.

I'm going to start with you, Mr. Rebeck.

You raised the issue of a universal pharmacare program. What we have heard from some business groups as we've gone across the country is that they would prefer to fill in the gaps that exist in the current series of drug programs, which would make it very much more like the patchwork that we see in the United States. Can you give us a sense of why it's important to have a universal pharmacare program rather than just trying to fill in some of the holes?

**Mr. Kevin Rebeck:** Absolutely. I think pharmacare is the issue of the day. It can make a real difference. Canada is the only nation that has a national medicare program that doesn't include a pharmacare program, and we're losing out as Canadians by not having that.

Filling in the gaps or providing only for those without isn't a fair system. It creates a bunch of inequities, or perpetuates inequities, and doesn't achieve the full savings that could be realized by having a universal system that's accessible to everyone. Everyone should be entitled to the same amounts. They shouldn't be dependent on their personal relationship with an employer, or with a program, or with an agency that provides those services. We should all have equal access. It's an issue of fairness. It's something that Canadians believe in and stand up for, and it would make a huge difference in people's lives.

• (1000)

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Thank you very much for that.

You referenced a number of other issues in your statement. One was the issue of pay equity. Another was the issue of apprenticeship programs.

In a sense, for this next budget, there's a choice to make between trickle-down, where there's more handouts, if you like, to the very top, in the hope that it circulates down to Canadians. The other approach is to build up from a foundation stone. As I think everyone is aware, we're now experiencing a crisis in family income in this country. Debt levels are the highest we've had in our history per Canadian family. Canadians are under more and more stress, and have fewer and fewer services.

How important is it to establish pay equity so that we're building that foundation of family economics rather than starting at the top? How important is it to build into our economy apprenticeship programs so that we actually have people trained to do the jobs of tomorrow?

**Mr. Kevin Rebeck:** Pay equity is such a simple issue that people should be able to wrap their heads around it. If we do the same work, we should get the same pay, and we shouldn't have discriminatory practices based on gender. They continue today and they need to be addressed. That's an issue of fairness.

When people who are underemployed or not making sufficient funds start getting more, they spend every penny of that in the local economy and build things back up. That's how we need to support Canadians to help our country be successful.

As well, making sure people have good jobs and have the training and skill sets they need to be able to participate fully in the economy means supporting people in their training efforts, in apprenticeships. When we do huge infrastructure projects through the federal government, which we're providing funding for, it would be a huge loss not to ensure that we make it a criterion for apprenticeships that people who are underemployed or facing additional barriers get the supports they need to get those opportunities.

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Thank you very much.

I'd like to move to Mr. Barnard and Ms. Trimbee.

My brother is an alumnus of the University of Manitoba. You both made a very eloquent case, particularly you, Mr. Barnard, about the importance of investing in reconciliation efforts, which means really moving to establish funding in a whole variety areas for indigenous peoples.

We've heard from a number of first nations chiefs and indigenous leaders and a couple of the regional grand chiefs as well. They've all stressed the importance of this budget being a sea change. What we really need to do is talk about multi-billion-dollar investments for access to education, health care, housing infrastructure and indigenous languages. All of those things need to be tackled. Rather than just having small amounts that are only symbolic, it's about really fundamentally changing how we approach the federal budget.

How important do you think it would be for us to put in place that sea change for the next budget, so that we're really investing in reconciliation efforts, including in the education sector?

**Dr. David Barnard:** There's no question in my mind, and I believe others would agree, that we need to do a better job than we're doing in all of these areas you've mentioned. Making it a priority for the country to invest in some of these activities would certainly be consistent with our image of ourselves as a nation and what kind of society we want to build.

There are a number of pinch points in the system, and to make a sea change, it would be necessary to see what's working and fuel those programs, and note things that are maybe not working as well as they could be and do more there.

The particular perspective we bring is that of people involved in education, and we see what can happen when we are able to make investments specifically to advance the cause of education for indigenous peoples. A good number of people in this province and all of the post-secondary institutions in the province, not just our own, are working very hard to increase access and increase success. An infusion of additional resources would be much appreciated and very helpful. I think in this province at least we have a very active working collaboration, a lot of single-mindedness about how we could move the agenda forward and what some of the priorities could be.

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Ms. Trimbee.

• (1005)

**Dr. Annette Trimbee:** I think education is key. I'm not only saying that as a university president; I would have said that as a deputy minister, to be honest with you, because I think it starts with developing that talent. I think we also need to be mindful of the economic part of reconciliation. I think sometimes that part gets a little bit confused. I do think investing in indigenous youth leads to their economic success.

**The Chair:** Next we'll have Mr. McLeod.

**Mr. Michael McLeod:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thanks to all of you for your very interesting presentations.

I think I have questions for everybody, but I'm going to focus on the University of Winnipeg, because what I'm hearing you say is music to my ears.

I'm one of the few MPs—I think there are only two—who are indigenous MPs living in indigenous communities, and I think I'm only one of two indigenous MPs who went to residential school. It was called a hostel program when I went there.

The whole reason I ran, to get into a position such as this, was to try to change the conditions that I see every day in our communities. I represent Northwest Territories, and I also see the need for us to move forward in getting our youth educated. I think it's crucial to moving out of some of the very difficult conditions that we live in. A lot of our leaders are saying that.

As we settle land claims, and as we make agreements with mines and everybody else and start to see revenues come in, we're seeing a lot of indigenous governments invest in post-secondary education. But we're starting to realize that it's not enough.

We need to start looking at a whole wraparound program that starts when the girls are pregnant, so that we can reduce the number of children being born with FAS and FAE. The numbers are staggering. We need to have programs that are going to help us make sure that the babies are fed healthy food: no more seeing babies with pop in their baby bottles. The toddler, also, has to be in a safe house, and a lot of people don't have that.

It goes on. As a child hits elementary, we know they're already getting addicted to drugs and alcohol. As they go into high school, the sexual abuse is rampant in our communities.

So many of our indigenous governments are saying that we need a blueprint. We need a path, a strategy, that starts when a mother is pregnant, and continues to the time that they enter university. Otherwise, the challenges are even more difficult.

Is that something you envision? You talked about an indigenous blueprint. That really caught my attention. I think that's what we're talking about in the Northwest Territories with indigenous governments.

**Dr. Annette Trimbee:** Thank you.

When I talk about a blueprint, I think first and foremost, indigenous youth should, like non-indigenous youth, have the possibility to imagine a bright future and have choice.

Sometimes when we start on this journey, we think about short-term quick fixes. I know when I was in Alberta, in the early days the focus was on indigenous students getting into forestry or oil and gas, and then the next wave was indigenous students getting involved in health care professions. I'm an advocate for encouraging indigenous youth to participate broadly, across all of the offerings in our post-secondary institutions. I believe that Canada's future requires indigenous people with Ph.D.s standing in front of students in our universities. We require indigenous engineers. We require indigenous philosophers.

I think first and foremost it is about going back to youth, and it is about good transitions from high school into post-secondary, with those wraparound services and with that opportunity to connect with future employers.

●(1010)

**Mr. Michael McLeod:** Yes.

I sat on a committee that studied suicide in our indigenous communities. There are many things that contribute to that. One of the things that came to the surface was cultural disconnect, with

indigenous people, indigenous youth, not proud of who they are anymore.

Many students who have gone on to post-secondary who are graduating—some of them with very impressive degrees—are committing suicide. The ones who reported back and who we were able to talk to indicated that they've lost touch with who they are. They go to university. They lose their culture. They lose their language. They no longer can talk to their grandparents. They feel like they've failed.

Many of our indigenous governments are now saying that the young people have to live in two worlds. They have to live in the traditional world, where they know how to hunt and trap and all the skills of living on the land, and they also have to live in the modern-day society. I like to use the saying that the Tlicho people of my riding always use, that they have to be "strong like two people".

How important is that? Is that something the institutions can start looking at, ways of incorporating that into studies?

**Dr. Annette Trimbee:** It's absolutely critical, and we found that programs for youth work best if family is involved, and if there is a cultural component. I couldn't agree with you more. To me, success is, for an indigenous student, to come to our university and feel that they have maintained their identity, that they haven't given up anything with respect to their family and their sense of values. You are absolutely right. They do have to think about living in two worlds.

The other experience we often have in our university is indigenous youth will show up and they will tell me, "Annette, I know that I am from a Métis background, but until I came here, I didn't know enough about that and I wasn't proud. Now I'm learning about my culture." It's the same with a lot of urban first nation students as well, that they have lost that cultural component. Ironically, in our universities, our colonial institutions, they are being reintroduced in part because we are bringing in elders and other representatives of their communities.

**Mr. Michael McLeod:** My next question is for the Canadian Network of Northern Research Operators.

I smiled when you said working in -40° and complete darkness. That's the environment I grew up in. I'm really impressed by the amount of research that is happening. I think there's still so much more that has to be done.

As I travel through my riding, I learn so much in this position. I heard some people talking in one of my coastal communities about hearing thunder for the first time. It confused me because I thought that everybody knew about thunder, but in some of these communities there was no thunder, no thunderstorms, until climate change started happening. This past winter when I was travelling through one of my communities, they were talking about receding ice, and now they're starting to see killer whales, so they can't get the beluga whales, which they need for the muktuk. They can't get it anymore. Many things are changing.

You study many things in your research. One of the things that is quite concerning is the artifacts that are disappearing. I'm just wondering if you do any work in that area.

**Dr. LeeAnn Fishback:** There are groups across our stations who do work in archeological investigations.

I think one of the important things is working with communities and making Arctic research a viable choice for students, for senior researchers who are visiting the community, but also for local people who are in those communities, and making it a partnership. That's one thing at CNNRO we strive to do, to partner and make research properly resourced, not just for people coming from the south, but also for communities, so they have the capacity to keep those resources or artifacts in their own communities. It's also—you mentioned climate change—to strengthen Canada's capacity to engage in research across our vast Arctic region, and to empower the people who live in the communities, and even in places where there aren't communities to ensure Canada's competitiveness in the future.

•(1015)

**The Chair:** Thank you. We're over time.

Before I go to Mr. Kelly, Ms. Trimbee, on Mr. McLeod's questioning, you talked a fair bit about the programs for indigenous people, but in your earlier submission, you talked about the patchwork of programs. I think we see that in universities, colleges, skills training, provincial governments, federal government, indigenous groups, you name it, there's all kinds of programming out there. How can we restructure that somewhat so that there's more focus and maybe better utilization of the money that is spent by all levels of everything?

When you're dealing with indigenous issues, there are probably, as there is in agriculture, several departments putting money out there, but how do we focus it?

**Dr. Annette Trimbee:** I think part of it is how programs are designed. I remember in my early days as a bureaucrat I moved to health and wellness and I had this health innovation fund, and it funded pilots. Then if the pilots were successful, the health authorities were to incorporate them into their funding.

I always thought it would be better to do it the other way around. The other way around would be to actually recognize when innovation happens and when the institutions are getting outcomes that are desirable. It's another approach to thinking about how you design programs and reward those institutions that are making progress.

The issue is that there are a lot of excellent examples of incredibly successful programs to attract indigenous youth to imagine a future in university. There are a lot of examples of good things happening in institutions, but they're not scalable and they're not sustainable because often the money is one shot.

I mentioned that we had the Wii Chiiwaakanak Learning Centre, and that is right behind the University of Winnipeg, on Ellice Avenue, in one of the statistically lowest socio-economic areas.

Our staff spend all of their time looking for pots of money and applying for one-time grants. They'll hire somebody, start a language program, and it will be oversubscribed, and then the next year there is no money.

Think through the design long term and reward innovators.

Again, I'm not asking for the peanut butter approach where everybody gets their two cents, but I think sometimes you need to make bigger bets.

**The Chair:** Okay, thank you.

Mr. Kelly.

**Mr. Pat Kelly:** Thank you.

There's lots of interesting information.

May I start, first of all, with Ms. Fishback and the north.

Besides your specific ask on funding for the research operations that you undertake, are there other things that the federal government could be doing that would help facilitate your work?

I ask this having already heard testimony while we were in Whitehorse, and indeed last year when we were in Yellowknife. There are real deficiencies in basic infrastructure in the north. We've heard about these kinds of things many times—inadequate roads, or airports that have not been upgraded or kept up to date or don't exist at all, and port facilities.

To what extent would basic public infrastructure help with the work you do in the north?

**Dr. LeeAnn Fishback:** Thank you very much for the question.

A lot of our facilities may not have some of those basic requirements as they may be located in an area where there is no road access, no port facility, or no airport. Basic infrastructure would very much help to be able to access facilities.

For example, in Churchill we haven't had a rail line for a year and a half now. They're in the process of fixing that rail line and hopefully we will have that rail link back soon. That will support projects like Mr. Barnard mentioned, the Churchill marine observatory. They're trying to get the construction materials in. These will help promote research facilities, and construction and operations to reduce some of those costs.

I think one other thing, as Mr. McLeod mentioned, would be in terms of increasing the capacity of indigenous communities to conduct research and to partner with the broader research community.

I'm sure that in Whitehorse you met with the Yukon College folks, who are working to establish a Yukon university, to actually have a university in the north.

I think these are all different ways that would help support Arctic research.

•(1020)

**Mr. Pat Kelly:** Thank you.

Mr. Everson, you spoke about competitiveness; issues that face the Canadian economy, and as they affect your industry, tax competitiveness. Carbon pricing was your second point.

Do you have a specific ask for assistance with or exemption from the carbon tax? What are you looking for?

**Mr. Jim Everson:** In the implementation of the carbon pricing system, there is work being done both with what's called the federal backstop and also with a provincial program to introduce a carbon levy called an output-based pricing system. It's a transition mechanism for large energy users, especially those that are exposed to the trade environment globally, to transition into that environment.

**Mr. Pat Kelly:** You're not asking for exemption. Are you asking for a rebate?

**Mr. Jim Everson:** We're asking for access to that output-based pricing system so that we can transition to that environment.

**Mr. Pat Kelly:** This is a recurring theme that we've heard from other completely different industries. It really speaks to the competitive disadvantage that a whole variety of industries appear to face under this carbon pricing system. If we end up with a carbon tax that harms each industry in a carve-out or a special arrangement, or if transition money or you name it has to be paid, or indeed, as has come up in testimony, if we add a carbon levy to imports to make the playing field more level, we merely pass it all on to the consumer. The consumer at the same time is also pressed and without the capacity to pay an additional tax.

I think you said you had five points. There was taxation, carbon pricing, biodiesel, and you spoke about trade with China. What was your other point?

**Mr. Jim Everson:** No, those were the four.

**Mr. Pat Kelly:** Okay. I thought you said five, and I was waiting for it.

In the moment or so that is left, is there anything that you want to add to any of those points?

**Mr. Jim Everson:** We're not suggesting that carbon taxes are a bad policy. We're not experts on how to address climate change.

We are in a globally competitive environment, and it's an extremely competitive environment with other oils globally. A tax in one jurisdiction that's not applied in another jurisdiction makes it extremely difficult to create the economic growth, especially for the products on the value-added side.

**Mr. Pat Kelly:** Hence there's the peril of mere carbon leakage, when you displace production in Canada, and it goes somewhere else without a carbon tax.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** We will have to end it there.

Mr. Fergus, you have the last questions.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Greg Fergus:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

To begin, I have a comment for Ms. Smitka. It is a comment, not a question.

Your sector does outstanding work for community development, just as the Community Futures Development Corporations, or CFDCs, and Business Development Centres, or BDCs, in Quebec do.

I am saying this to send a message to my colleagues at the table. If they are not already aware of the work of the BDCs and CFDCs, I

encourage them to tour their own regions. They will find volunteers, both former business people and entrepreneurs, who are helping other entrepreneurs develop something in their own region.

That is what I wanted to say, Ms. Smitka. I commend you and fully support your request, which is entirely reasonable.

My questions pertain more to research. Ms. Fishback, Mr. Barnard and Ms. Trimbee, you talked about the importance of research, especially in the north. We have heard a lot about that here. Two of my colleagues, including Mr. McLeod, raised this issue. The link between the north and what Mr. Barnard and Ms. Trimbee are doing here is indigenous participation, not just indigenous students and indigenous communities, but also indigenous researchers.

Mr. Barnard and Ms. Trimbee, can you tell us about the role your institutions play? I hope the number of indigenous persons is growing at your universities and that they are doing research at all levels, from undergraduate to the doctoral level.

• (1025)

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Who wants to start?

Ms. Trimbee.

**Dr. Annette Trimbee:** I mentioned that about 10% of our students are indigenous. We have some unique master's programs, for example, indigenous governance, and a master's in development practice, which is very much development done with an indigenous lens. We have expertise in health research that is different from the type of expertise you have in a medical school.

I think more and more of what we are emphasizing is that research done in indigenous communities should be led by indigenous researchers. Regarding the tri-council, SSHRC, NSERC and CIHR are looking at all of their programs. They're looking at ways of drawing in and attracting indigenous students to believe in themselves and believe in a career in research.

I think they are adapting in a very progressive way, and universities are adapting to go along with that. However, as I mentioned earlier, we need to work hard to help students make that transition to graduate school. Again, it takes them away from their community, and it might be perceived as creating an even bigger divide with respect to their isolation from their families and so on.

**Dr. David Barnard:** At the University of Manitoba, there's an increasing emphasis in research at the undergraduate level in all programs, and that applies to indigenous and non-indigenous students.

In a number of cases at the undergraduate level, we have put in place what we refer to as access programs. We specifically target indigenous students. The array of data that they present to make their case for entry may not be quite as strong. We allocate spaces for these students in programs like engineering, for example. The record has been that with some support during the programs, these people are amazingly successful.

Last year, both the gold medal winner and the third-place student in engineering had come in through the access program and done exceptionally well. I think there are two things at work there. One is getting students into the program, and the other is getting more research into the undergraduate programs.

At the graduate level, we've been very successful I think in hiring indigenous faculty, who themselves attract indigenous students. We've been increasing the number of indigenous faculty in each of the last several years. It's a specifically targeted budget envelope.

The third generic thing I would mention is our work in the north. I'm conscious of the time, so I'm hurrying. The very large amount of work that we do in the north is done collaboratively with indigenous people in the north. They work as partners with us, and so are heavily involved in that research.

In fact, we had had a very interesting publication done a few years ago, a very beautiful book, *Two Ways of Knowing*. It was a focus on two ways of knowing: what is found in the indigenous community and what's brought by the scientists who go there.

• (1030)

[Translation]

**Mr. Greg Fergus:** Sorry to interrupt you.

[English]

**The Chair:** Mr. Fergus, you're out of time. In fact, you're over your time. You'll have to change your clock.

We're going to run into a hard stop today because two members have to go. We will have to end it now at 10:30 a.m., to get to our next panel so that we are done on time. I'm sorry about that.

In any event, thank you to all the witnesses for your presentations.

We'll suspend for 10 minutes and start our next panel.

With that, the meeting is suspended.

• \_\_\_\_\_ (Pause) \_\_\_\_\_

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• (1045)

**The Chair:** We have everyone here so we'll reconvene.

As everyone in this room knows, we're doing the final panel for the pre-budget consultations in advance of the 2019 budget, last but not least.

I want to thank every one of the witnesses for coming. For anybody who has made presentations prior to August 15, we do have them on our iPads and all of those are taken into consideration as well in what recommendations we may make to the government.

Before we start, I'd ask members to introduce themselves so that the folks know where all our members come from.

We'll start with Mr. Julian from the NDP.

**Mr. Peter Julian:** My name is Peter Julian. I represent the riding of New Westminster—Burnaby on the coast of British Columbia, which is the traditional territory of the Qayqayt First Nation and the Coast Salish peoples.

Welcome. We're looking forward to your statements.

**Mr. Matt Jeneroux:** I'm Matt Jeneroux, a member of Parliament from Edmonton.

I thank you for being here today.

**Mr. Pat Kelly:** I'm Pat Kelly. I'm the member of Parliament for the riding of Calgary Rocky Ridge.

[Translation]

**Mr. Greg Fergus:** Hello, my name is Greg Fergus and I am the member for Hull—Aylmer, in the Outaouais region of Quebec, on the other side of the Ottawa River.

[English]

**Ms. Kim Rudd:** I'm Kim Rudd, member of Parliament for Northumberland—Peterborough South. For context, that's a rural riding in southeastern Ontario.

**Mr. Michael McLeod:** Good morning. My name is Michael McLeod. I'm the member of Parliament for the Northwest Territories.

Welcome.

**The Chair:** I'm Wayne Easter, member of Parliament for the riding of Malpeque in Prince Edward Island.

With that, we'll start with our first witnesses. From the Canadian Association of Fairs and Exhibitions, we have Mr. Peco and Mr. Fritz.

Welcome.

**Mr. Michael John Peco (Vice-President, Canadian Association of Fairs and Exhibitions):** Thank you for inviting us here today to be with you.

I am John Peco. By day I'm the chief officer of this development at the Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto. Previous to that I was the general manager of the Markham Fair in the northern suburb of the GTA in the Toronto area. I share that with you because I have this perspective of the needs of both very large fairs, the Canadian National Exhibition being the largest event in the country attracting in excess of 1.5 million people annually, and also the needs of a small fair like the Markham fair attracting about 70,000 people or so annually.

Today we're here to speak to you in our capacity as executives with the CAFE, the Canadian Association of Fairs and Exhibitions. We represent some 800 fairs, agricultural societies and exhibitions right across the country, from the very large to the very small. In our opinion fairs hold a very deep cultural, traditional and emotional connection to the people of their communities, and they embody a real sense of Canadian identity. At the same time, these events are significant economic drivers in the areas in which they're held. On average, in excess of \$17.2 million in economic benefits are derived from our fairs nationally and in small communities. The average is in the magnitude of just under \$1 million annually, and they have very significant impacts on the local economies.

There are several examples of fairs in our country that are older than our country itself. In Hants County, Nova Scotia, we have the Hants County Exhibition which is some 252 years of age. We have the Williamstown Fair in Ontario at 206 years of age, and in Quebec we have the Lachute fair at 193 years of age.

I share all this with you as context because we hope that you'll consider today recognizing Canadian fairs and exhibitions as cultural and heritage events, and amend the language of the Canadian heritage grants to specifically include fairs and exhibitions within that funding envelope. The government has been very supportive of festivals over the past number of years. We support that of course, but in many cases, fairs and exhibitions do not meet the strict criteria that's established to define a festival. We feel we have many cultural dimensions to our exhibitions and our fairs. It would be very common to see talent shows and food festivals and artisan showcases and many other examples of cultural activities within our events. We would urge the government to consider fairs and exhibitions as a vital heritage institution and to amend the language of the Canadian heritage grants accordingly.

Our secondary strength and the primary purpose of the majority of our members is to showcase agriculture to the public. As the government continues to try to build public trust in agriculture to ensure its competitiveness, we encourage the government to seek out our events and to collaborate with us. Our events see in excess of 35 million visitors across the country annually.

CAFE as a national organization has the expertise required to develop public trust. The majority of our members have a mandate to include agriculture in their programming through shows, competitions, displays and educational programming. We also have the knowledge of how to run a successful and engaging event for people of all ages and all demographics. This is certainly a unique pairing for others that few other festivals or other organizations can offer. This is why our secondary request is that the government allot \$10 million over four years from the Canadian agricultural partnership, CAP, to support agricultural education, biosecurity and safety, animal welfare and community engagement projects at fairs and exhibitions across the country. Our members are willing to create and support a national framework of excellence under our leadership.

I will now turn over the microphone to my colleague Max.

• (1050)

**Mr. Max Fritz (Interim Executive Director, Canadian Association of Fairs and Exhibitions):** Thank you, John.

Good morning, everyone. Like John, I bring a diverse background in the fairs and exhibitions business. I was born and raised in Calgary—an Alberta boy—and I live on a farm just outside of Calgary. I've spent my entire career in the fairs and exhibitions business in the Calgary area.

Throughout this presentation, we have been citing numbers—35 million visitors annually and so on. These numbers come from an economic impact study commissioned in 2008, the research going back almost 10 years. These numbers offered our organization strength, helping us and our stakeholders understand the role we play in Canadian society.

Therefore, our third recommendation is that the government provide funding in the amount of \$1 million for an in-depth national survey of the economic and socio-economic impact of fairs and exhibitions across Canada. In 2008 it was reported that our events contribute \$1 billion annually to the economy, and that fair-related spending supports 10,700 full-time jobs spanning many sectors. As mentioned above, we are confident that these numbers have increased but have no tangible proof or measurement ability to do so without a new study.

One of the main ways our events also contribute to the Canadian economy is by supporting and stimulating tourism. We, along with festivals and other events, have been able to drive attendance for decades from local, national and international visitors. These visitors stay in Canadian hotels, eat in Canadian restaurants and buy Canadian souvenirs and products. As a result, fairs and exhibitions alone generate \$97 million in federal taxes annually.

To ensure that these events remain world class in an increasingly globally competitive marketplace, we recommend that the government establish a funding program in the amount of \$20 million per year specifically dedicated to the growth of fairs, festivals and events with a capacity to generate touristic and economic activity. Through this funding, Canadian service providers would also be promoted, and an incentive program would be developed to hire Canadian providers, supporting them and therefore ensuring Canadian competitiveness in the entertainment and event marketplace.

Our final recommendation for your consideration is that the government provide exclusion for fairs, exhibitions and events in regard to sponsorship as it relates to Bill S-228, an act to amend the Food and Drugs Act (prohibiting food and beverage marketing directed at children). Many local fairs and events rely heavily on the support from local businesses, sponsors and corporations to sustain their community-building activities. Bill S-228 may impact upon their industries and their ability to support our events. Hundreds of small communities and rural and remote fairs work very hard to continue their operations, despite at times some revenue declines and ongoing logistical challenges. Without the support of the private sector, these local communities will likely not be able to hold their fairs and exhibitions as they know them today.

CAFE is a service-based organization. We're a charitable organization. We want the further support through the above recommendations to allow our membership to be successful in the future.

Thank you very much for your time.

• (1055)

**The Chair:** Thank you both very much.

I will now turn to Mr. Olin, chair of the Canadian Chiropractic Association.

Welcome.

**Mr. Gerald Olin (Chair, Canadian Chiropractic Association):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'm Dr. Gerald Olin and I have been a chiropractor for over 20 years. I am currently the chair of the Canadian Chiropractic Association. I'm here on behalf of 9,000 chiropractors represented by the Canadian Chiropractic Association and the 10 provincial associations.

Today I wish to ask the federal government to add chiropractors to the list of authorized professionals who can determine eligibility for the disability tax credit.

Many Canadians suffering from osteoarthritis rely on chiropractors, who are regulated in all provinces and are extensively trained to assess, diagnose and treat musculoskeletal conditions, commonly referred to as MSK conditions. These are conditions like osteoarthritis, and back, neck and knee pain.

Chiropractors are often in the best position to recognize when a chronic MSK condition has reached the point of disability. We work closely with our patients over an extended period to manage symptoms and improve quality of life for these patients. To be managed effectively, chronic MSK conditions require a strong doctor-patient relationship.

Because chiropractors are not on the list of health care providers able to certify eligibility for the disability tax credit, some Canadians face barriers and delays. Chiropractors are uniquely trained health care professionals with a specialization in musculoskeletal health. This is our expertise.

Our main reason for seeking to be added to the list of authorized professionals who can determine eligibility for the disability tax credit is to better support our patients.

For example, many Canadians suffering from osteoarthritis rely on their chiropractors to assess, manage and reduce the impact of symptoms, including making it easier to keep performing their daily activities. Chiropractic care helps manage bone and joint pain. Treatment often includes personal care plans that provide rehabilitation recommendations, such as exercise programs, to help patients achieve their goals. However, we are not currently permitted under the Income Tax Act to fully assist our patients with osteoarthritis that has reached the disabling stage, as we cannot issue the disability tax credit certificate, despite our qualifications being comparable to other health professionals already listed in the Income Tax Act.

This creates a significant barrier for these disabled Canadians. In order to obtain a disability tax credit certificate, our patients are forced to make an unnecessary visit to another health care professional who may not know the patient's history. This may result in several visits with another health professional for the determination of the disability tax credit, adding more burden to the patient and additional cost to our health care system.

Unfortunately, despite aiding millions of Canadians, chiropractors are not authorized by the federal government to determine the level of their patient's disability to make them eligible for this disability tax credit. This is in contrast with chiropractors currently being recognized as assessors of disability under most provincial

programs, including workers' compensation and motor vehicle accidents.

Many chiropractors also serve on appeal tribunals to assess disability and make appropriate recommendations. Personally, I have served as a reviewer of disability and return-to-work reports for the last 10 years with Manitoba Public Insurance.

The costs associated with this ask are minimal. We wish to minimize the burden on Canadians with significant MSK conditions who need to access the disability tax credit.

Chiropractors care deeply about their patients and their families, and want the opportunity to complete their role with patients who qualify and ask for access to the disability tax credit.

Our request is also supported by the Arthritis Society, Canada's voice for Canadians living with osteoarthritis, along with the Council of Canadians with Disabilities.

The primary beneficiaries of this change would be people with qualifying disabilities who currently have conditions, symptoms or limitations related to their disability being treated by their chiropractor. Secondary beneficiaries include caregivers, family and friends of those patients.

On behalf of Canadians and the patients we serve and represent, we ask the Standing Committee on Finance to support our recommendation to add chiropractors to the list of health care professionals authorized to certify eligibility for the disability tax credit.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak to you on behalf of Canadians with significant musculoskeletal conditions. I look forward to any questions you might have.

• (1100)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Dr. Olin.

Next, from Canada's Royal Winnipeg Ballet, we will hear from Mr. Leach and Ms. Fennell.

Welcome.

**Mr. Don Leitch (Chair, Board of Directors, Canada's Royal Winnipeg Ballet):** Thank you very much. We appreciate the opportunity to be here today.

My name is Don Leitch. I am Chair of the Board of Directors of Canada's Royal Winnipeg Ballet, the RWB. I'm also president and CEO of the Business Council of Manitoba. In that organization we regularly advocate the importance of Canada's being internationally competitive in all respects to ensure that our citizens have access to meaningful, productive employment.

The RWB school is one of Canada's leading professional arts training schools. For almost 50 years, this school has been inspiring talented students and providing them with the tools necessary for careers as professional dancers and dance teachers. Our artistic faculty members are committed to helping students realize their highest potential, cultivating in them the high levels of discipline, dedication and technical excellence required to succeed in today's demanding world of professional dance. We are thankful for the support of our partners in government, without whom we would not be able to do this important work.

I'm also speaking on behalf of the 36 professional arts training organizations supported by the Canada arts training fund.

I will talk about training.

It is the collective recommendation of these 36 professional organizations that the Government of Canada increase its investment in the training of professional artists to ensure Canada's international competitiveness in arts, culture, and entertainment.

In budget 2016, the Government of Canada committed to invest \$1.9 billion in arts and culture, currently the biggest investment of any G7 country. We applaud that investment and believe it will strengthen Canadian cultural and creative industries and support our national institutions.

As part of that commitment, support for the Canada Council for the Arts will be doubled by 2021, from \$180 million to \$360 million. That is a game-changing investment and a major vote of confidence in those professional artists who have completed their training and are ready to create, produce, record, exhibit and tour their work.

However, the government's commitment overlooks the earliest part of the continuum, the specialized and focused training that artists receive in order to become professional. This training is not supported through the Canada Council but rather through the Canada arts training fund, the CATF. It's delivered by the Department of Canadian Heritage. As the CATF was not part of the current investment, an annual investment is required in order to keep pace with the growth of the Canada Council and to realize the full value of the investment that has been made.

In 2016-17, the CATF sat at \$23 million, where it had been frozen since 2009. Our recommendation is for an additional \$10-million annual investment. This investment would allow the Department of Canadian Heritage to increase support to existing training programs and fund new arts training organizations from indigenous and diverse communities.

With additional funding, professional arts training organizations will increase the opportunity for artists to receive training and make sure that training is relevant to the 21st century through the use of digital technology in creation, production and distribution; preparing artists to engage with audiences in new ways, including community-building activities that will strengthen our society through shared understanding of Canada's stories—and they are diverse stories; and providing opportunities to artists to develop the leadership skills valued by the creative economy whether in for-profit or not-for-profit organizations.

Canada's Royal Winnipeg Ballet school has proudly trained world-renowned artists such as RWB artistic director André Lewis, associate artistic director Tara Birtwhistle, principal dancers Jo-Ann Sundermeier and Sophia Lee, and prima ballerina and officer of the Order of Canada Evelyn Hart. Other RWB graduates are dancing on stages across the country and around the globe with such world-renowned companies as Ballet Zurich, Pina Bausch company, and Birmingham Royal Ballet.

More still are making their name as choreographers and arts leaders, such as Red Sky's Jera Wolfe and Opera Atelier's Marshall Pynkoski. These Canadian-trained artists share the gift of their talent and remind the world of Canada's exceptional contribution to the arts.

In closing, one has only to look at the success of the annual \$62-million contribution to the Own the Podium program at Sports Canada to understand the impact of what investment today delivers in the future.

● (1105)

The artists who are in our schools now or who are auditioning this year and next, whose names will be known to you in the years to come, deserve this investment in their future.

It is our recommendation that the Government of Canada increase its investment in the Canada arts training fund in budget 2019 by \$10 million to ensure Canada's competitiveness in arts, culture and entertainment. An investment in excellence produces excellence.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr. Leitch.

We have Ms. Armstrong with the Indigenous Women's Healing Centre. Welcome.

**Ms. Annetta Armstrong (Executive Director, Indigenous Women's Healing Centre):** Thank you.

My name is Annetta Armstrong. I'm the Executive Director of the Indigenous Women's Healing Centre.

We operate three residential facilities in Winnipeg for urban indigenous women.

Our North Star Lodge is specifically a transition centre for indigenous women who are trying to start making some positive choices in addressing some of the tremendous systemic issues that urban indigenous women have to face.

A lot of young ladies who are coming to stay with us are trying to fight these systems and navigating through them. They're getting their kids back from care or trying to solidify their steady footing if they're struggling with addictions issues.

We also run a building called Memengwaa Place, which is a second-stage facility for women who have managed to get their kids out of care, who need some extra support so that they can live in our building and still have some case management and access to my staff as resources.

Our third facility is Eagle Women's Lodge. This is our newest building. It has three storeys. We are operating a Correctional Services of Canada CRF. It's essentially a halfway house for women who are coming out of the correctional system. We are also taking in women who are coming out of the provincial system.

I'm excited about our section 81 because we currently have an application in Ottawa to open a section 81 facility. Rumour has it that it's sitting on the desk of probably Treasury Board at this time. It's just a matter of time before it gets approved. For those of you who don't know why this is important, if a woman gets sentenced federally in Manitoba right now, there's nowhere for her to go. She has to be shipped out of province. This, I'm sure, is very costly. There are a lot of Manitoba women who are waiting in institutions across Canada, waiting to return home. My section 81 facility will allow minimum-security women to come home and finish their time in my building, with my staff, and get the proper resources, trauma counselling and services that they need. It will also repatriate these women back to their families and hopefully reunify them with their children before they're even done serving their sentence. I'm very excited about that.

My recommendations today are relevant to all kinds of systems that I and my ladies have to deal with on a daily basis.

The first recommendation is in regard to the MMIWG inquest. I firmly believe that inquest needs to continue to be supported in time and in monetary support. The issues that are coming to the table in the MMIWG inquiry are so big that we can't take the time away. They need to start figuring out what the solutions are and what these families need to do to move forward.

My second recommendation involves indigenous families and keeping them together. There needs to be significant investment on working with parents to keep their children out of care. Again, if necessary, wherever possible, children should be placed in culturally appropriate environments.

My third recommendation is that all funding agreements that the Government of Canada is working on with non-profits include a guaranteed living wage, with consideration given to actually providing competitive wages.

My fourth recommendation is as cited in the calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, that the Government of Canada ensure that indigenous healing lodges be a priority in housing indigenous offenders. I would just add that they be perhaps indigenous-led healing lodges, not led by Correctional Services of Canada.

My fifth recommendation is that the Government of Canada should immediately expand the resources to Housing First models, with priorities given to meet the special needs of women who are homeless. Homeless women mean homeless children. The issues that homeless women face are very different from those of homeless men.

My final recommendation is that the Government of Canada partner with 100 women centres across the country to establish social enterprise so that marginalized women have access to that training, employment and income.

●(1110)

In the spirit of true reconciliation, I think it's time we start to look at these issues and address them.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Now from the Shock Trauma Air Rescue Service, or STARS, Ms. Robertson, president and CEO, and Ms. Beauchesne. Welcome.

**Ms. Andrea Robertson (President and Chief Executive Officer, Shock Trauma Air Rescue Service (STARS)):** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, members of the committee, for asking STARS to be part of your pre-budget consultation.

STARS, which stands for Shock Trauma Air Rescue Service, is a non-profit organization that provides critical care, ambulance and air rescue support for communities and isolated populations across the Prairies and eastern British Columbia. Our funding includes support from our provincial governments and generous donations from private individuals, service organizations and corporations. Our mandate is to provide life-saving care and level the playing field to ensure those living in rural and remote communities have the same access to care as Canadians living in urban centres.

To continue to deliver on this mandate, we must renew our fleet of helicopters as the current fleet is aging and increasingly more difficult to maintain and more costly to repair. I am here to request a one-time capital investment from the federal government to support the replacement of this essential equipment.

Access to care is an important principle of our Canadian health care system. STARS brings intensive care to western Canadians who cannot access it, and our professional teams do this with pride and distinction. Our model is a uniquely Canadian story, and it suits the particular needs of our region where communities and industries that support them are often isolated from emergency and essential public services. Whether you're a hockey player from Humboldt, a maternal patient from Cold Lake or an indigenous teenager from Sandy Bay First Nation in desperate need of critical care, STARS is a vital safety net for those who live, work and play outside of western Canada's most populated areas.

Flying an average of eight life-saving missions daily, STARS plays a crucial role in support of governments at the local and provincial levels, but our work is also vital to the success of the federal government in the following areas: supporting the needs of indigenous people—for example, over the last five years we've flown more than 1,000 missions to indigenous communities—providing emergency services where natural disasters such as wildfires threaten public safety and security; being a critical part of the support network for eight national parks; and partnering with Canada's military and RCMP to support emergency and security response.

We see a bright future for STARS. Our model is working very well, but our fleet of helicopters needs replacing. We've identified the nine new aircraft required to maintain our service. We are sharing because we are at a critical point, and we are asking for a one-time federal contribution of \$117 million to acquire the equipment that will serve western Canadians for generations to come.

My appearance here today is a combination of two years of work with members of Parliament from all parties. To keep STARS in the sky, every year 44% of our funding comes from provincial governments, and the remaining 56% comes from philanthropic support. STARS is asking the federal government to support this one-time capital request.

As you consider our request, you may recall the events where STARS has provided some essential response: the RCMP shooting in Onanole, Manitoba; the Humboldt Broncos tragedy; the Fort McMurray fire; the shooting in La Loche; the Manitoba and Alberta floods; the RCMP shooting in Mayerthorpe; and the Pine Lake tornado.

These dramatic events stand out because they capture the hearts and minds of Canadians through heartbreaking stories of tragedy, national unity and community heroism. That is what we do every day at STARS. STARS has become a core of Canada's emergency preparedness and response across the Prairies. This one-time partnership will ensure we do not compromise the operational effectiveness of our mandate.

Thank you for your time.

• (1115)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Now we have the Western Canadian Short Line Railway Association, Mr. Pellerin and Ms. Field. Welcome.

**Ms. Allison Field (Director, Western Canadian Short Line Railway Association):** Thank you.

My name is Allison Field, and I'm the director of government relations and communications for the Western Canadian Short Line Railway Association. Thanks so much for having us. We really appreciate being here.

Western Canada has 86% of the total field crop acreage in Canada. That gives you an idea of how much we produce here in terms of grain, and we're growing constantly. The grain we grow and the oil and propane resources we extract in western Canada need to move. As 2013-14 and this past year of 2016-17 indicated, our current transportation network can't manage the load. We need to start thinking more creatively as a nation to better use our transportation system so that we can be competitive on the world stage.

I'm not sure how familiar everyone is with short-line railways, so I'll just give you a little five-minute intro. I'll take you back to the 1990s. There was a lot of deregulation going on, and CN and CP decided to divest themselves of their less profitable lines. That left the western Canadian provinces in quite a bind. In Saskatchewan, for example, that meant losing 30% of our rail network. Farmers, small businesses and RMs were panicking. They decided they needed to do something, so they banded together and bought the short-line

railways. They bought the short-line railways first and learned how to run the railways second, so that was quite the undertaking.

Now fast-forward 25 years. All of our 17 member short-lines are still viable enterprises. We have 70 businesses built on our lines. We employ over 200 people. We move about 20,000 cars a year. It's a really fantastic western Canadian success story in a lot of ways.

While I wish I were just here to brag, but not everything, unfortunately, is rainbows and unicorns. We used to move 40,000 cars a year. Our dream, or what we'd really like to do, is to become a very useful partner to the class 1s like the short-lines are in the U.S. In the U.S. they're used as feeder networks, really active feeder networks, to CN and CP, the main lines that are kind of like the superhighways to ports or to the U.S.

That's what we really want to be. To get there, we desperately need a large investment in infrastructure. When we took over those lines, you have to remember that CN and CP were getting rid of them. They hadn't been maintaining them like you would something you were going to be using for years and years. We didn't really know what we were taking on, because we weren't railroaders.

We've been band-aiding those lines for 25 years. Now we're getting to the point where it's preventing us from taking on new business. Our speeds are limited. Our train lengths are limited. Our train frequencies are limited. We have to stop work to do a lot of repairs. We're in a kind of catch-22 at the moment in terms of our infrastructure.

Then on the other side, access to government funding, although we do feel there has been effort made to support us, hasn't really been working out. For example, with the building Canada fund, short-lines were included in that in theory. That was great from the federal point of view, but we needed provincial support. We needed provincial support to make that application. Of course, that would mean competing with the provinces' other projects, so we didn't receive support anywhere and we couldn't access that fund.

For the RSIP, the railway safety improvement program for infrastructure, there were hundreds of approvals over the last two fiscals, and only three went to short-lines. They were for crossings, which we really appreciate, but we need more than just crossings help.

Finally, one short-line has been approved under the national trade corridors fund. That short-line is incredibly appreciative, but there are 56 short-lines across Canada, and we all need help.

Then with private financing, obviously they don't really want to fund us because we need a lot of capital money, but you can't use that for anything else other than rail. It's not like they can just repossess your house and sell it to someone else.

On the other hand, expenses are ballooning. Insurance rates after Lac-Mégantic went up significantly. There have been lots of regulations on safety, which is amazing, but the whole regulatory, red tape portion of it has required us to hire people and do a lot of extra administrative work. We just checked out how much more on average we've been spending over the last five years than we used to. Our 17 short-lines are all small businesses, small to maybe medium, and we're spending about \$580,000 a year more now on overhead than we were before, based on insurance and regulatory things.

• (1120)

To properly serve our customers and current shippers and to attract new ones, and to provide competitive rates and services, we need some help. We don't want to be on long-term government assistance, but we need a short-term hand just to mitigate the effects of that aging infrastructure and increased regulatory burden.

Our first recommendation is that the government provide funding in the amount of \$90 million in 2019-20, and \$200 million over the following five years, for western Canadian short-line infrastructure improvements to enhance Canada's grain and oil transportation networks, facilitate export capacity and improve safety.

Second, we recommend that the government earmark funds for short-line railways within the new building Canada fund, the railway safety improvement program, the national trade corridors fund and other funds that come along.

Third, we recommend that the government amend the Safe and Accountable Rail Act to include short-line railways in the fund for railway accidents involving designated goods, because a big part of the reason our insurance went up is that we're not under that umbrella.

Fourth, we recommend that the government provide funding in the amount of \$500,000 per year, for three years, for the Western Canadian Short Line Railway Association to develop a marketing department and a legislative department to further the competitiveness of both our short-lines and the small and medium-sized shippers on our lines.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thanks very much, Allison. I had considerable involvement with the short-lines a number of years ago.

Before we go to Ms. Rudd, I'll just give the committee members a heads-up. It's increasingly looking as though there will be a mini-budget in the fall. That's the word coming out of Ottawa. There are a number of things we've heard in our travels for pre-budget hearings that really need to be acted on quickly, that can't wait until we present our submission for the budget in the spring. Maybe we need to get together with the full committee in Ottawa next week and see if we can put together a letter on the three quick items that we might want the minister to consider if he's going to do an economic update this fall, such as accelerated capital costs and so on, some of the things that relate especially to the United States.

That's just to give you something to think about between now and when we meet next week, because we could do a letter as a committee regarding the issues that are of urgent concern before the end of the year, rather than wait for the full report.

Ms. Rudd.

**Ms. Kim Rudd:** Allison, I'll just continue on with you, if you don't mind. I'm learning lots about short-lines. I know they are a critical component of the transportation corridor to get products, whatever those products might be that are moved by rail, out to either export markets or around the country.

Just for clarification purposes, if I'm understanding you correctly, there is a significant amount of money or funds to which you were able to apply, but the province is not supporting your application; therefore, you can't access it.

I looked at your website—and by the way, we're not playing on Facebook, we're actually doing research. Your website says you are funded by municipalities as well. Could you give us a breakdown of what that funding mechanism looks like?

• (1125)

**Ms. Allison Field:** The association is not funded by municipalities. Some of the municipalities own portions of short-lines.

**Ms. Kim Rudd:** Okay. That's how that works.

**Ms. Allison Field:** We have a variety of different ownership models, but there are some short-lines in which the municipality has maybe a 25% stake. That was to help the short-line to start, because when the farmers were first starting out, sometimes they didn't have enough money to get going.

**Ms. Kim Rudd:** Okay. I'll come back to that subject and maybe get in touch with you directly.

As we look at funding mechanisms, of course partnerships are key, with various levels of government as well as private enterprises. To really understand what that makeup is would be very helpful for the process.

On the one-time capital investment of \$117 million, what's the total...?

Sorry, that was wrong. That was going to the other witness.

**Ms. Allison Field:** It's \$90 million, for the first portion.

**Ms. Kim Rudd:** Right.

Can you tell me first a little bit about what you see the main asks as being able to accomplish, from a movement-of-goods perspective?

**Mr. Perry Pellerin (President, Western Canadian Short Line Railway Association):** What we need to do.... As Allison mentioned, when we took over these short-lines they were in disrepair. Now we need to come up with a program to give our shippers confidence that we'll be there forever. This one-time shot will bring our lines back up to acceptable condition, whereby we can do an acceptable speed and appear to be around forever. Nobody's going to invest in a business on our line and have as their first concern whether we're going to be here next week.

We need this shot to get that standard back up. If we're able to do it, then I think that, as Allison mentioned, our long-term.... We have some very good operators. It's just that we need to bring in confidence from future customers that we'll be there to supply service.

In fact, we supply better service than the class 1 railroads. We just have to convince them to get on our line.

**Ms. Kim Rudd:** I noticed something about 75 crossings.

Living in a rural riding, I will tell you that those of us living in rural ridings would like a lot of crossings to be fixed. That's another story.

**Mr. Perry Pellerin:** The interesting part of that is the fact—Allison mentioned crossings—that we were successful in a couple of them, but the funding was only half. To put signals or that type of thing at a crossing costs about \$250,000. We'd have to come up with \$125,000. We don't have enough pop bottles to do that. There's just no way. As nice as that sounded, it's not realistic. We can't do it.

**Ms. Kim Rudd:** Now I'll come to my second question, concerning the Shock Trauma Air Rescue Service, STARS.

It's very impressive work that you do, and I can't imagine in the future that there's going to be less need. You talked about a number of the significant events that are happening because of climate change. We know we're going to have more forest fires, more floods and a number of things. Thank you for the work you do in your organization.

What does the one-time capital investment of \$117 million look like in several perspectives: what does it buy, what's the total package and who else is contributing to it?

**Ms. Andrea Robertson:** Thank you for the question.

The \$117 million actually purchases all nine aircraft—that's what it buys—servicing from the Manitoba-Ontario border through into British Columbia to Fernie and up to the Fort St. John area.

As I said, the three provincial governments, all in, provide about 44% of our operating funding.

• (1130)

**Ms. Kim Rudd:** Right.

**Ms. Andrea Robertson:** We've gone to major corporations, starting in Alberta primarily, with huge support from oil and gas.

Part of that has been that we are part of their emergency net. Think about mining, such as potash in Saskatchewan, and big oil and gas camps. When they're that far removed from major centres, we're part of their emergency response.

In fact, it's an economic stimulus. They actually pay us to monitor their sites and their people. We have GPS coordinates showing where all their employees are working, for example. They have been a huge funder.

What we heard when we went out and started talking about the replacement of this fleet.... We've been flying this fleet for almost 34 years, and the planes are at their end of life. We think this is another 30-year investment. They said they'd be interested in helping if government helps.

It may seem like an unusual step, but we have precedents with the federal government. We're the first civilian organization in Canada to use something that's called night-vision goggles. The federal government funded that program for us. We're the first organization outside of the military to use them, because we're flying in complicated situations in the middle of the night in mountains and all that stuff.

During the G8 in 2002 we were asked to provide air support to the Kananaskis, and we couldn't because we didn't have enough aircraft. The federal government helped us fund a helicopter at that time. You may wonder what we are doing here. What we're trying to identify is that we touch many ministries but don't perfectly fit in any one.

**Ms. Kim Rudd:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Mr. Jeneroux.

**Mr. Matt Jeneroux:** Thank you all for being here today, and thank you to those of you who travelled a distance to be here.

I would like to begin with you, Mr. Peco and Mr. Fritz, if we could.

Can you help me understand the structure of how you raise money? For example, the Calgary Stampede is a very popular event. I think it brings in a lot of money but I can appreciate that there are probably some smaller events—which I think was the theme of your comments, Mr. Peco—that do struggle with raising....

Is it a fee structure that these events pay to you? How are you structured?

**Mr. Michael John Peco:** We have a very modest membership fee structure that members, participating fairs, pay us to represent them on issues of national importance. There are provincially organized associations that work closely with provincial governments, and we're organized nationally to represent members on national issues of interest.

I think it's a bit misleading to suggest that the majority of fairs in Canada represent or resemble the stampede or the Canadian National Exhibition. There are only nine fairs that have attendance in excess of 100,000 people across the country. The vast majority of these fairs are local community organizations run by volunteers, and these volunteers come together, support and often own community space. That space is made for community assembly and activities, and they volunteer year-round to orchestrate, plan and execute their annual fair.

The needs are similar regardless of fair size across the country. We all struggle with the same challenges around infrastructure funding, programming development and biosecurity. These are all very important themes, but the magnitude, perhaps, does change based on the fair we're speaking about.

**Mr. Matt Jeneroux:** Does the membership fee structure do something? Does the Calgary Stampede then inadvertently fund some of the smaller ones, or is it nominal and doesn't really have an impact?

**Mr. Michael John Peco:** Each member organization is fully self-sufficient in their own right. They contribute a modest amount, in the neighbourhood of \$100 for a small fair, to join the association. A larger fair may contribute something in the order of several thousand dollars. There's a varied scale across the country, but our membership fees are not our only source of programming funds. We've successfully obtained provincial and federal grants in the past that have enabled us to put on very successful E. coli workshops, as an example.

I suppose we envision that the demands of the new traceability requirements the federal government is implementing will create a significant role for us to play in the development of programming and services to support our members. In some cases, our members will pay for such services.

• (1135)

**Mr. Matt Jeneroux:** Thank you for helping explain that.

I want to turn attention to our friends from STARS in western Canada. Thank you for all the work you do. When you see the STARS helicopter in the sky, it's certainly recognizable in western Canada where I'm from, in Edmonton. Thank you.

I know that you encompass B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan and I guess somewhat, Manitoba, but then there's Ornge. They do the Ontario component. Are you partners in a lot of ways? Is there a line in the sand that neither of you cross? What's the relationship with organizations like Ornge?

**Ms. Andrea Robertson:** Thank you for the great question.

We're actually partners with all the air medical programs in Canada. Ornge is the most recognizable, largest program. What differentiates us is that Ornge is an entirely provincially funded organization. I'd argue it has to be. It's a large, high-density population. The vast majority of what Ornge does, close to 80%, is inter-facility, hospital to hospital. We would be doing almost the reverse—scene to hospital.

There's a fundamental difference in terms of density of population and the infrastructure that's required. But we do share all of our learning and try to make sure that the level of patient care continues to rise to the highest boat from coast to coast. We have some very good relationships.

**Mr. Matt Jeneroux:** Okay, so Ornge is 100% funded provincially, and you are about 44% funded provincially in comparison. That's interesting.

Looking at your financial statement here, it seems there have been some increases in certain areas of funds, but the lottery, for example, brought in less in the previous year. I guess that's the 2018 year end of March 31.

Are we seeing, across western Canada, a reduction in people donating to organizations like yours? Perhaps you could comment on why and what could be helpful.

**Ms. Wendy Beauchesne (Executive Vice-President, Foundation, Shock Trauma Air Rescue Service (STARS)):** Thank you for the question.

Absolutely, we definitely have seen a dip, although not as significant as other non-profits in western Canada have seen. Depending on the year, we have seen around a 15% dip on average in philanthropic donations.

That said, we are very lucky in western Canada. We have a great group of supporters—over 50,000, and another 100,000 supporting our lotteries. Last year our lottery, for the first time in its 24-year history, did not sell out. That was a bit of a bellwether for us, for sure. We've never had that struggle before. The previous two years were also a struggle. We've seen a slight dip but overall we're pretty confident in our ability to continue supporting and getting support from western Canadians.

**Mr. Matt Jeneroux:** Just to follow up, any idea as to why that would have happened?

**Ms. Wendy Beauchesne:** What we're hearing from our supporters is that it was really the economy. The economic downturn in western Canada certainly hurt us.

What we found was that many of our major donors—industry—cut other sponsorships or donations to others, but they did keep STARS. They might have lowered it slightly, or extended their pledges over a few more years. Again, we are very lucky, but we did see a bit of a dip.

**The Chair:** Thank you, all.

Mr. Julian.

• (1140)

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Thank you to all witnesses for very interesting statements. That will be very helpful to us, so thank you for that.

I'd like to start with Ms. Armstrong.

You have set out a series of recommendations that are very important. We have heard from a number of indigenous leaders, first nations' leaders and regional grand chiefs on a couple of occasions in western Canada, all stressing the same thing—that what is needed for reconciliation is a sea change, a fundamental change, in how we put together a federal budget, and to make substantial investments in infrastructure, in housing and education, in indigenous languages, in programs and supports like the programs that are so valuable that come out of your organization.

Would you agree, in terms of reconciliation, that rather than small levels of funding, what we really need is a fundamental change in how we put together a federal budget so that we can achieve meaningful national reconciliation?

**Ms. Annetta Armstrong:** Yes. Thank you for the question.

I agree that the band-aid approaches and governments working in silos definitely create barriers to organizations like mine that are providing the social service at the ground level. It's hard to think globally or nationally when the issues coming to me on a daily basis are so immediate and sensitive.

One of the frustrations that I have on a daily basis is the fact that my funding is piecemeal. There are systems that are put in place to act as extra barriers for indigenous women, systems like the child and family services systems and the EIA systems. That might not be on a national agenda but I really believe that the Government of Canada has the ability to impact and direct the provinces to stop working in such silos when it comes to these grassroots issues.

Particularly when it's about women who are struggling, who have their children apprehended and no longer get the EIA to afford their apartment, who are no longer able to get their kids back from care because they have no place to live because EIA won't give them an apartment with the right space for them to have their children. That's one example of how systems are constantly revolving doors for the women who are trying to navigate through them.

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Annetta, from your organizational standpoint, how many women and families would you see who are impacted by that, who have no housing and as a result aren't able to be united with their kids?

**Ms. Annetta Armstrong:** That's a difficult question to answer because the residents have specific needs in each of my buildings. Easily 100 a year would try to come through the doors to stay in any one of our buildings, or who have left and are still trying to navigate the system. I'm dealing with so many CFS issues. For example, CFS would rather give their kids back to moms if they're living in apartments rather than living in one of my buildings, which doesn't make sense because the mothers are living next to meth dealers. It's been very frustrating.

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Thank you very much. That's an important statement, that one family is impacted every three days. That's pretty important for the committee to know.

Mr. Olin, I think a lot of us around the table are very happy with your recommendation to facilitate access to the disability tax credit. We've seen Revenue Canada restrict access to it, and that's caused enormous problems in my riding and in other members' ridings across the country.

I truly believe the disability tax credit program needs to be expanded and access needs to be even greater than it is now. I'd be interested in knowing. When we look at chiropractors, would they charge if they had the ability to fill out the disability tax credit? Of course, one of the barriers right now is that many doctors are charging, so we have very poor individuals who can't afford the fee and aren't able to access the disability tax credit because of that.

• (1145)

**Mr. Gerald Olin:** Chiropractors do bill for reporting to several agencies like auto insurance and workers' compensation, but I can also tell you that within fee guidelines provincial jurisdictions would oversee that. The Canadian Chiropractic Association has an advocacy group that does not have any regulatory input on fee schedules around the country. But I know that it's a quite regular practice for chiropractors to complete paperwork like that at no cost to patients.

If we look at the list of health care practitioners who have the ability to complete disability tax credit forms, like physiotherapists for example, we would follow very similar types of rules to what they would as well. I know that this committee added nurse

practitioners to the group last year. Again, we've followed a very similar type of situation to what they would as well.

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Thank you very much.

Mr. Peco and Mr. Fritz, in your brief you talk about recognizing Canadian fairs and exhibitions as cultural and heritage events and amending the language of the Canadian Heritage grants. Then later on you talk about a \$20-million funding program for the growth of fairs, festivals and events.

I want to be very clear so that we all understand the budget ask. If the language is amended for Canadian Heritage grants, that makes a smaller pool unless the funding envelope is expanded. Are you also asking for that envelope to be expanded, or are you saying that the funding program for \$20 million a year would be sufficient? I certainly support your budget ask, but I'm worried that we're cannibalizing festivals and fairs and exhibitions if we have the same budget envelope but have more applications.

**Mr. Max Fritz:** Thank you for your question. I understand it.

I think from the Canadian Association of Fairs and Exhibitions' perspective, whenever we have an opportunity to take on a leadership role with our membership, it's about creating programs at the national level that we can disseminate down to each membership group in the provinces. On the idea of just having more access to pursue grants within the heritage sector, yes, if there are more people applying, obviously, I understand that question.

Ideally, we'd like to pursue that, because we do believe we have an important role in celebrating Canada and the heritage of Canada.

For the \$20 million, we really don't have a national platform and a national voice around tourism. We rely on the good work of large fairs and small fairs to communicate opportunities to get Canadians out and enjoying fairs and festivals throughout Canada, but we don't really have a national program that speaks to one collective tourism industry.

We're not trying to take away from all the great work that Canada does internationally, or the provinces do at a provincial level, but we just feel we have an opportunity and a new place for us to play an important role in tourism overall in Canada.

**The Chair:** We go now to Mr. McLeod.

**Mr. Michael McLeod:** Thank you, all, for your presentations.

I wanted to ask a question to the Indigenous Women's Healing Centre.

We've heard lots in the House of Commons about indigenous healing centres and women's jails. I don't know a whole lot about jails, but we do have a women's correctional facility in the Northwest Territories. There are no bars, no windows, no fence. I'm just wondering how that compares to what is considered an indigenous healing lodge or...? Is that what you call it, a healing lodge? It's an indigenous-led lodge. Are there similarities?

Do you know of any women's jails that have bars, barbed wire fencing, things of that nature?

• (1150)

**Ms. Annetta Armstrong:** Thank you for your question.

I have had the opportunity to go visit the Edmonton Institution for Women, which is of course in Edmonton, and there is fencing around it. The Edmonton Institution for Women has a max, medium and minimum security. I'm very impressed, actually, with the Corrections Canada model compared to the provincial models that I see here in Manitoba.

The medium-security women actually live in what looks like a neighbourhood, in houses, and from what I saw they were walking around on beautiful green grass and have mail keys. It's weird what sticks out. The maximum unit is quite different. The maximum unit is where the women kind of stay in their cells in hallways that are monitored by guards. The minimum security, they're more like dormitories. I believe the minimum security, if I remember correctly, in Edmonton isn't behind a fence.

In my experience with healing lodges and specifically to section 84, I've only been to two. One is for men in Manitoba, here in Crane River, and they live in cottages. Then there's a section 84 in downtown Edmonton for women. There is a locked facility but there are no bars. The women all have their own suites or apartments.

I think it varies. I can only speak to what I know that I'm going to offer, which is fully furnished apartments where each resident has the privacy of her own room, which will stay locked. Then she has access to a multitude of supports and counselling, and of course, reunification with her family and children.

**Mr. Michael McLeod:** My next question is that I want to know how your centre collaborates with the mainstream medical system to ensure there is continuous care.

**Ms. Annetta Armstrong:** I've established a partnership with a local—for lack of a better word—pharmacy. It's a pharmacy but they offer medical services, methadone services, doctor and nurse services. We're working it out because this is still very brand new. This is all theory for me at the present time. We are including them in our holistic wraparound support for the women to make sure that they have access to the nurses and the doctors and all of their pharmacare needs.

**Mr. Michael McLeod:** We just established an Arctic healing foundation in Yellowknife. Many of the people who are going to the facility are not indigenous, even though it has an indigenous kind of focus.

Is that your experience also, that you work with non-indigenous clients?

**Ms. Annetta Armstrong:** We have had a few. I don't like to say that I would turn anyone down who is interested in coming to live with us. It's about commitment. The importance to me is that they participate in all the programming. Our programming has a significant cultural lens and places traditional value on ceremony. The women who are asking to come to live with us have to participate in that equally with...

**Mr. Michael McLeod:** I know I'm running out of time, but one of the things that Status of Women and the native women in my constituency have raised a number of times is the need for assistance to navigate through the maze that exists for social programs and in the justice system.

Many women are in really vulnerable positions because they can't get the fathers to assist them or the divorce process is too slow or they can't find lawyers. They don't know who to go to. They're saying they need help, somebody to help steer them through the system and to provide support while they're doing it.

Is that something we should be looking at as a government?

**Ms. Annetta Armstrong:** Absolutely. I know that Winnipeg is very lucky to have a fairly good support network for indigenous women and for women in systems like that. My recommendation would be to make sure that, for whatever supportive home you can find to help these women navigate whatever program, it is going to be supported long term.

What I find is that many organizations that are funded only provide one-off support and one-time support. The key, in my experience, is long term. It's like having pre-care, then care, and then post-care through whatever system it is that they're navigating through, because it's never just one event.

• (1155)

**Mr. Michael McLeod:** One of my observations, living in an aboriginal community all my life, is that many women are stuck. They can't get out of that community. They can't get out of that relationship. There's nowhere to go. If there's an opportunity—sometimes it's a medical appointment, sometimes it's getting out of a correctional facility, but whatever the case may be—they migrate to the larger centre and there are no support services there. They end up on the streets and sometimes end up in very dangerous situations.

We don't have any shelters. We have a shelter in Yellowknife, which is the centre, but not many other communities have them. I wonder whether this is something you're seeing in your situation here in Winnipeg: no housing, no job, abusive husband or abusive relationship, and they're just trying to get out.

**Ms. Annetta Armstrong:** Yes, I agree that there are so many issues. I can guarantee you that if there is an issue out there that a woman has been experiencing, whether from communities that are remote, such as you say you're from, or not, I've seen them all.

We try to take an approach whereby the issues of each individual resident who comes to stay are dealt with. That's the wrong word; I mean we provide individualized care.

One of the most important things, especially from an indigenous perspective, is that somewhere along the line our people have stopped having a long-term vision. It's not that they're stuck. It's that they don't know where they're going. One thing I take pride in working on is teaching women how to do simple goal-setting and vision work for themselves.

**The Chair:** Okay, thank you all.

Mr. Kelly is next, and then Mr. Fergus.

**Mr. Pat Kelly:** Thank you.

I'll continue with Ms. Armstrong.

Perhaps for my own edification maybe even more than for the sake of the recommendations we're going to make, are the residents of the facilities you operate solely people who are under some form of custodial sentence from the criminal justice system, or do you provide service more broadly than that?

**Ms. Annetta Armstrong:** Thank you. That's a good question.

In two of the three facilities we don't necessarily take anyone who has any involvement in the justice system. At our Eagle Women's Lodge I think currently we have around 10 or 12 women who are involved with CSC, whether they're on parole with residence or are at a half-way house because their sentence hasn't been completed. At this time, however, because the section 81 proposal hasn't been negotiated or given the thumbs up yet by the Government of Canada, I have community women living there as well.

To answer your question, then, right now at our Eagle Women's Lodge site we have both. When section 81 goes through, I'm thinking that all of the residents who are going to be living in there will be connected to Correctional Service of Canada.

**Mr. Pat Kelly:** Okay, so you help women who interact with our prison system and you assist in reintegration, whether it's parole or nearing the end of a sentence. You also act as a community institution that helps women who are, as Mr. McLeod was speaking of, in horrific situations with nowhere to go, or with mental health or addiction or other problems.

**Ms. Annetta Armstrong:** Yes.

**Mr. Pat Kelly:** I'll maybe quickly go to the festivals and fairs. Your first recommendation was around the definitions for access to heritage funds. Mr. Julian actually had a pretty good question about the issue that if you're just seeking a change in definition, you're competing for funds that would go to other groups.

I certainly want to support the assertion of exhibitions as heritage cultural institutions. Certainly the Calgary Stampede is the one that I'm most familiar with, and surely an institution in Calgary that, since its inception, has been dedicated to the exhibition of Calgary's heritage and a great success story, part of the very soul of our city.

In terms of funding, though, what would an institution such as the Calgary Stampede do if it could access a heritage grant?

• (1200)

**Mr. Michael John Peco:** I'll speak from the perspective of the Canadian National Exhibition. We are a right of passage as we welcome new Canadians into our community and they will spend time in the community. We sponsor and support emerging artists,

both the performing artists as well as visual artists. We have all sorts of educational programming around, in the current context, responsible use of cannabis, where we had educational programming targeted at parents and families.

We have all sorts of programming that is very relevant to society's struggles.

**Mr. Pat Kelly:** Do these large and extremely successful exhibitions that generate quite large amounts of money not undertake these activities in the absence of, for example, a heritage grant? What would change from what you already do?

**Mr. Michael John Peco:** If I could speak to the Canadian National Exhibition's perspective again, although we have a \$38-million annual budget, we rarely generate a surplus. It's only in a very successful year that there may be a modest surplus. Therefore, to suggest that these fairs and exhibitions are operating with significant funding and resources just isn't accurate. That would certainly be the case in any of the mid-size and smaller fairs across the country.

**Mr. Pat Kelly:** Who funds the deficit, then, if you don't run a surplus?

**Mr. Michael John Peco:** Occasionally we will have a modest surplus, but we typically operate at a break-even. We just break even and there's no—

**Mr. Pat Kelly:** Thank you.

Lastly, I'll turn to STARS.

I wasn't aware that the lottery didn't sell out this year, certainly, I'm sure, through no lack of effort on your part. I recognize and have heard that many civil society groups, service clubs and philanthropic groups in Calgary are really suffering. At still above 8% unemployment, there is a lot less appetite to buy lottery tickets. Thank you for getting that important point put on the record.

It did seem interesting to me, though, and I know provincial governments are under budgetary pressures, as all levels of government are, but over the decades, has there been a push toward STARS operations being integrated with the broader provincial health system, more similar to what happens in Ontario?

**Ms. Andrea Robertson:** It's a complex question. It's a good one, though.

STARS started 34 years ago and had no government funding for almost two decades, simply because the rural and remote communities said, "We need this." In a provincial system in which we're always looking for funds for health care for one reason or another, we actually funded the program by selling baseball caps, and most people just volunteered. As it professionalized over the decades, this changed.

Should we be fully funded? That will be a debate that goes on for a long time. I think communities and corporations in particular really see the need for us to be somewhat independent, to a degree. Why? It's so that we keep pushing the boundaries of medical care and coming up with new and better things. Do you need to have a physician available 24-7? We employ 100 emergency critical care-trained physicians to train our staff. Many would argue that this is too high a training, that it's too much investment. We think it's absolutely necessary to be best in class.

The debate, then, is hot and heavy. When we've gone to our provincial governments and have asked for additional operating funding, we just have not been able to come up with it.

• (1205)

**Mr. Pat Kelly:** I wasn't taking a position as to whether it should be integrated. I just found interesting the differences across Canada.

That was a great answer. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Fergus, you're the last questioner.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Greg Fergus:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I have a number of questions.

First, I have a question for the person representing Canada's Royal Winnipeg Ballet. You are seeking \$10 million from the Department of Canadian Heritage, to be shared among several groups. Can you tell us about the groups who would receive that amount annually, aside from your famous company in Winnipeg?

[*English*]

**Mr. Don Leitch:** I'll start and will turn it over to my colleague.

First of all, from the Royal Winnipeg Ballet perspective, if you're talking ballet and dance, there are the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, the National Ballet of Canada, l'École supérieure de ballet contemporain de Montréal, and to a lesser extent the School of Alberta Ballet. Those are the principal major ballet companies that participate in the fund, but there are many other arts and culture organizations, and Kate will speak to them and give a broader explanation of them.

**Ms. Kate Fennell (Director of School Operations, Canada's Royal Winnipeg Ballet):** To be eligible for Canada arts training funding you need to meet certain national criteria. The 36 organizations that we're here to represent have all met the criteria. Some are really well-known national institutions, like ours. There are some other smaller and mid-sized organizations that may offer more niche training. They may be a little more boutique, but they're satisfying a national need.

A good example of that is a program run out of Toronto by Obsidian Theatre specifically to support professional development of Canadian artists with ties to the black community. That's a niche offering, but it satisfies a national need.

The issue is that the 36 organizations inside CATF right now simply aren't able to grow and develop, and we are losing our competitive advantage as far as our international colleagues are concerned. The best and most talented young people are starting to

look to other countries to train in and/or are being exported to other countries as some process in their training.

Also, there is simply no room for new clients. There is a lot of really neat arts practice in multidisciplinary spaces also representing different cultural backgrounds and diverse stories. Presently the fund can't accommodate them, because it has been frozen since 2009 at the \$23 million mark.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Greg Fergus:** Thank you very much.

My next question is for you, Ms. Armstrong. What you said about the plight of homeless indigenous women, and therefore also homeless indigenous children, was very moving. What should the federal government do in its budget to eliminate or at least try to address this problem?

• (1210)

[*English*]

**Ms. Annetta Armstrong:** Thank you for the question.

I have a whole lot to say, but I think that it starts with a paradigm shift in the child and family service systems in this country. We come from a history of being taken away from our families as indigenous people, and the systems are still taking kids away from their families. I really believe that families can stick together if they're properly supported. These children are not doing anything wrong; their parents are struggling.

I believe the answer lies in making sure that the parents have the support and resources they need to become parents. The true intergenerational effects of residential schools are that indigenous people are struggling to even know how to parent. Sometimes I believe that indigenous people have a hard time learning how to take care of themselves. It's the parents that need that support to keep the families together.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Greg Fergus:** Here in Manitoba, what are the differences between the needs in the cities and those in remote communities?

[*English*]

**Ms. Annetta Armstrong:** Of course, I'm less familiar with what the day-to-day issues are in the remote communities. From my experience, hearing what goes on in my home community in northern Manitoba, there is a lack of support just based on the numbers of support workers and the CFS family support workers. There is also a lack of homes where kids can go if they are placed in care. The northern communities are different, with community politics and how families are working together.

I come from a community that started taking parents out of the home and leaving the kids there. This is a very good way of looking at how to address this issue. It's not the kids who are removed from their beds and their toys. It's the parents who are removed and given the support they need to figure out what to do differently to get back to their homes and their kids.

I suggest that all of the rural communities should start doing that.

**The Chair:** We'll have to end it there, Greg.

Thank you all.

I have a couple of questions to Mr. Leitch and Ms. Fennell.

You have basically a, b and c, in terms of what the additional funding would do for the professional arts training organizations. If that investment were made, how would it enhance the ability of artists or organizations to create economy, for lack of a better word? In terms of a budget argument, we have to make an economic argument.

**Mr. Don Leitch:** We have reviewed and conducted significant analysis. I'm sure every sector in the country has produced for this committee, if not this year, in other years, arguments about what the contribution to GDP is, based on econometric modelling.

The arts and culture sector, broadly defined, equalled about \$54 billion in 2016. Those figures are from places generating data, such as the Conference Board of Canada, bank analyses and bank forecasters. That's extremely large and it rivals lots of other sectors. We know how preponderant the arts and culture sector is, particularly in the major centres. We recognize that in the Royal Winnipeg Ballet and we do outreach.

That's a strong, vibrant cultural sector. It has direct and indirect spin-off benefits regularly in the economy. As Kate said earlier, we're producing some awfully fine, impressive talent, and increasingly we're watching them drain off to other countries where they can get better training and develop their careers.

We have trained people in Canada who are internationally renowned in terms of opera and dance. There are some inconsistencies. We'll put in more than \$60 million a year to train a gymnast to perform on a mat, but we do very little for a dancer to perform on a floor. When you look at them, they're not too different, or whether they're an ice skater.

As Canadians, we all marvel at that and we take pride. It enhances our image internationally when we're more well rounded. We're not saying, and I, for one, certainly would not say, take it away from sports. I advocated previously for enhancing the "own the podium" program and how important it is. I'm saying that we have lagged in the arts and culture sector and it hasn't gotten the attention it needs, but it does produce a very significant contribution to GDP. We have attached to our paper some basic economic statistics and analysis.

• (1215)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

I have a question for short-line rail. On a one-off payment or a one-off contribution to short-line rails, one of the difficulties is that I think the federal government was trying to get away from the one-offs with the Canada infrastructure program.

Maybe we've given a little too much say to the provinces in the program because they do set the priorities, but from a province's perspective, with the short-line rails in place, there is a heck of a lot less wear and tear on the province's highway system. All you need look at is the C-trains or B-trains going down some of these roads and then drive on them afterwards. You guys know what they're like.

In your mind, is there any other way that we can push the provinces to prioritize this as well? It's important to the economy. It's important to feed the class 1 railways. Is there any other avenue we could pursue other than the one-off money?

**Ms. Allison Field:** I'll just go quickly and then let Perry go.

I met with our Minister of Highways and Infrastructure in Saskatchewan recently. I would love to say that they're interested, but I don't think they particularly are. It is their highways. It's our provincial taxpayer dollars that are going to those highways, and then there is the environmental cost as well. Moving by rail is a huge saving to the environment.

I would love to have another idea, but this is the only one I have.

**The Chair:** Go ahead.

**Mr. Perry Pellerin:** One of the things that Saskatchewan especially has seen in the communities is the loss of hospitals and schools. When the railway leaves, the town dies.

As Allison mentioned, we look at short-lines as good for the environment. We're good for the highway network, and really, if we're lost, opportunity is lost. That's what we're scared of, the fact that we don't know what the future holds. There's lots of opportunity out there, but once we're gone, we'll never come back and we're at a critical point. We could lose short-lines within the next year now.

**The Chair:** Okay. Those are all valid points. We'll have to look at it. The fact that a short-line railway is there is saving the provinces gobs of money in a number of ways.

I know that three of our members had to leave. They have to catch a plane. On behalf of the committee. I'd certainly like to thank all the witnesses for their presentations.

For the committee members who are still here, we still have two open-mike speakers for one-minute presentations.

I'll let you folks go. Thank you very much for your presentations. They'll all be considered in terms of where we go from here.

We'll suspend for a couple of minutes while we get the open-mike folks to come up to the microphone. I don't think the rest of us are in quite so much of a rush.

• \_\_\_\_\_ (Pause) \_\_\_\_\_

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• (1220)

**The Chair:** We're down to a skeleton crew for the open-mike session.

We'll start with Gerald Jennings.

Gerald, welcome. Just so you know, there are no questions from members, but your information will go on the record the same as that of any other witness and be considered.

Go ahead. The floor is yours.

**Mr. Gerald Jennings (National Association of Federal Retirees):** Thank you.

My name is Gerald—Gerry, please—Jennings. I'm here representing the National Association of Federal Retirees, and I'll get right at it.

Canadian seniors are living longer than ever before and are on course to reach 25% of Canada's population by 2030. Defined pension benefits are the most effective means of achieving retirement income security. Retirees with defined pension plans are less likely to rely on government assistance, such as guaranteed income supplements.

A barrier to retirement security is House of Commons Bill C-27, an act to amend the Pension Benefits Standards Act, 1985. Bill C-27 will enable defined benefit pension plans to be replaced by targeted benefit plans. Defined benefit pension plans invest in Canadian equities, real estate and infrastructure such as railways, bridges, airports, utilities and pipelines. Pension funds are uniquely poised to invest in Canada and Canada's Infrastructure Bank.

The National Association of Federal Retirees asks the government to withdraw Bill C-27 to ensure that Canadian retirees continue to contribute to our economy and economic growth and not become a burden upon it.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Gerry. You're not the only one who's said that this week.

Ms. Carlson.

Give us your first name too, Ms. Carlson, if you would.

**Ms. Jordyn Carlson (Engineers Without Borders Canada):** Good afternoon.

My name is Jordyn Carlson. I'm a volunteer with Engineers Without Borders Canada.

In budget 2019, I'm asking that Canada commit to a 10-year timetable of predictable annual increases of 15% to the international assistance envelope. This is in keeping with a recommendation that the committee made last year in its report on the pre-budget consultations and an OECD report on Canada released in mid-September.

I was really encouraged to see the Government of Canada commit to increasing ODA in budget 2018, but despite this increase, Canada's ODA spending is still near historic lows and well below that of many of our global peers. The increases will simply keep the aid budget on track with inflation.

ODA is fundamental to our shared global prosperity, and these investments support vital services such as health care and education in some of the least developed countries. Increasing ODA through a predictable timetable in budget 2019 would show that Canada is a committed global leader and that it's helping to create a better world for everyone.

Thank you for your time.

• (1225)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Jordyn.

I think we've heard from Engineers Without Borders in all nine cities, plus Ottawa. Thank you.

With that, on behalf of the committee I want to thank the clerk, the logistics staff, the interpretation staff, and the analysts—their work is just starting. It takes a lot of work and logistics to plan travel in nine different cities, so on behalf of the committee, thank you all.

We will adjourn.

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