

Dear friends,

Parliament has now resumed in this New Year, and without a doubt the big question remains the 2011 Federal Budget. Due in front of Parliament in March, this document will likely determine whether the country is in its next Federal Election, or if the Conservative Government will last through to summertime.

The Government says it does not believe the economy should be upset by an election, that the country is still recovering from the recession and they want Parliament to focus there. The NDP agrees that there is important work to do for people in the economy, and I support this fully. But it is necessary to do something in the budget to address the real problems people have in coping with rapidly increasing costs, especially with energy, which northerners only know so well.

Seniors need protection from these costs; we want to see the Guaranteed Income Supplement raised to take our elders out of poverty. Families need help; by lowering the tax on home heating and by re-instituting the Eco energy program, they can see their costs going down.

Health care needs to be improved and northerners know this very well. We need more doctors and health professionals throughout northern Canada.

I am still pushing this government to raise the Northern Residents Tax Deduction. Our recent Northern Development Report unanimously adopted by all the parties in the House of Commons made a strong pitch for this as well.

There are many things this government can do to show it is working for ordinary Canadians in the upcoming budget expected in March. They seem to give up so much to large corporations with massive tax cuts that line the pockets of shareholders worldwide. We want them to focus on the real needs of Canadians.

As Northern Development and Arctic Sovereignty Critic I will be working on a number of important northern issues as long as Parliament is still going on. As Transport and infrastructure Critic, I deal with many issues that affect all Canadians.

The issues in all we deal with here are compelling and important. Your feedback is vital to me. Please keep the emails, phone calls and letters coming.

Dennis Bevington

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