



***Brief submitted to the
House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance
regarding the 2026 pre-Budget consultation***

***By
The Coordinating Committee
Seniors for Climate Action Now!***

April 28, 2026



RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The budget must specifically allocate funding for the construction and operation of an east-west high-voltage direct-current (HVDC) electricity transmission line. The first segment of this line should link the resource rich windpower region of Atlantic Canada with the load centre of southern Ontario.
2. The budget must explicitly recognise the need for the **electrification** of the Canadian economy and allocate sufficient funds for action towards this objective, starting with the transport sector and the built environment.
3. The government must recognise that late 2026 and 2027 will endure higher than normal temperatures due to an enhanced 'El Nino' effect. The budget must set aside sufficient funds for municipalities to deploy measure to protect Canadians most susceptible to heat waves and higher temperatures.
4. The budget must not allocate funds for any and all forms of subsidies, guarantees or other financial support to the oil and gas industry, including the so-called 'decarbonisation' of oil; for carbon capture and storage, for new ports for fossil fuels or for any new or expanded pipelines. The private sector should fully finance these investments, after funding in full its existing obligation to safely deal with abandoned oil wells.
5. The budget must allocate funds so that Canada meets its obligations under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.
6. The budget should allocate funds for the creation and operation of a **federal agency for the management of wildfires.**
7. The government should commit to achieving a target of at least two million new non-market housing units over the next five years (as called for by municipal councillors and mayors in the 'Elbows Up for Climate' campaign), and allocate sufficient funds for this purpose.
8. The budget should allocate funds for municipal programs that introduce and manage rapid urban transit systems that are **free for users.** The advantages of these programs have been clearly demonstrated in many cities worldwide and the federal government should fund similar programs in cities across Canada



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1. Canada's government has strongly advocated views and economic policies that focus on short-term economic growth, often disregarding what is needed to keep us strong, healthy and prosperous over the longer term.

2. Many countries are increasingly turning to renewable sources of energy. Canada is lagging behind amid a global economy that is gradually decarbonising. In our view, a "Strong Canada" is one that is aggressively moving towards clean, carbon-free electricity generation produced predominantly by renewable sources of energy, rather than one based on carbon-laden fossil fuels—which are largely responsible for climate change and its worsening impacts.

- The 2026 budget must specifically contain significant, urgently required funding to support the construction and expansion of an east-west high-voltage direct-current (HVDC) electricity grid. The first segment of this HVDC transmission system should link the resource-rich windpower areas of Atlantic Canada with the load centres of southern Ontario.
- The budget must do more to advance the electrification of all economic sectors, particularly by enhancing support for electric vehicles, heat pumps, utility-scale batteries, and distributed solar power.
- In addition, budgets and recognition allocated to foreign travel and international conferences for lobbyists appointed to sell Canadian oil and gas should be reallocated to developing, promoting, and exporting Canada's considerable expertise in renewable energy.

3. Extreme weather, flood, and wildfires are costing billions in insurable losses in Canada. They are increasingly costly for Canadians and the Canadian economy as a consequence of escalating physical and mental health impacts, property losses,

and effects on productivity. Impacts on key infrastructure will become increasingly expensive at the municipal, provincial and national levels.

- The 2026 budget needs to focus on specific measures to lessen our impact on the environment, and on climate change mitigation and adaptation. Sufficient funds must be allocated for these priorities. These actions must be viewed as essential *INVESTMENTS* in our future and that of future generations.

4- The previous budget sacrificed existing programs that would have driven down carbon emissions, such as funding for tree planting, home energy efficiency, and public transit. These programs need to be fully reinstated, and emission reduction programs need to be adequately financed.

5- The 2026 budget, which is financed from public funds, should avoid measures that support and prolong the consumption of fossil fuels--these are private endeavours for profit that drive the climate crisis.

- The previous budget set aside the government's avowed commitment to imposing a cap on emissions from the oil and gas sector. Instead, it prioritized the development of fossil fuel (LNG) facilities and extended the existing investment tax credit for carbon capture and storage for the fossil fuel industry. The efficacy of such measures is debatable and is almost certainly far less effective than claimed by the industry.
- Given the recent agreement with Alberta extending the time for its methane reductions to 2035, extremely aggressive measures will be necessary throughout the rest of Canada to meet Canada's 2030 target. The Budget must allocate funds for those measures.
- Given the windfall profits being made by the fossil fuel industry due to wars and military actions around the world, the government should introduce an excess profits tax on the industry to generate government funds for the good of Canada instead of American investors.

6- An outdated view that seems to persist in the Canadian government is that taking care of our ecosystems requires little public investment, and that philanthropy and volunteer work will suffice. These forms of community and public support are stretched to the limit and cannot finance what is needed to ensure that Canadians and future generations can live in a safe and sustainable environment. What is the use of being an "energy superpower" if we

do not have clean drinking water, breathable air, and citizens free of growing risks to their health caused by such carelessness towards the environment?

- We call on the federal government to meet Canada's obligations under the historic Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and provide sufficient *public* funding for this agreement, considering this as an INVESTMENT in our collective future. The parties to the Framework have agreed to designate and protect 30% of the nation's land, inland waters, and coastal and marine areas and to conserve and support biodiversity and ecosystems. Currently, only 12% of Canada's land and 14% of its oceans have some degree of protection.
- The 2026 budget needs to ensure the swift adoption of the [2030 Nature Strategy and Nature Accountability Bill](#) (Bill C-73) as a legislative priority (further to [Canada's 2030 Nature Strategy](#)). Since the situation is urgent, we recommend that a significant portion of the recently announced \$3.8 billion be part of the 2026 Budget.

7. In recognition of Indigenous Rights and Sovereignty, the budget must include the full cost of removing all water advisories in Indigenous communities and replace fossil fuels with renewable energy as much as possible..

8- We call on the federal government to create a National Agency for the Prevention and Containment of Wildfires and the Protection of Forests from Deforestation and Degradation. Recent data suggests that global extreme fire incidents could rise by up to 14% by the year 2030, 30% by 2050, and 50% by the end of the century. Canada is particularly susceptible to the widespread impacts of wildfires across its territory.

This initiative will require greatly increased federal expenditure for the purchase of a national fleet of water bombers and other equipment; technology for fire detection; and planning in partnership with municipalities and Indigenous communities.

Canada must commit to halting and reversing forest degradation and deforestation by 2030 under its obligations to international agreements, and protect forest biodiversity.

9 – In 2023, the Office of the Federal Housing Advocate estimated that Canada needs 4.4 million units of affordable housing for very low- and low-income households. This need cannot be met by the federal government's current Build Canada Homes program, which is forecast to produce just 26,000 units in the next five years, including roughly 13,000 designated as affordable housing. SCAN! calls for a much more ambitious, federally-led national non-market housing program that aims to build two million new non-market housing units over the next five years, as called for by municipal councillors and mayors in Elbows Up for Climate.

This new non-market housing should be built to meet Tier 4 of the National Housing Code, with close to net-zero carbon emissions. Housing built under the program in urban centres should achieve the goals of compact urban form; i.e., within existing municipal boundaries (no sprawl), close to public transit with minimum parking, and in areas with a high standard of public and private amenities and services to reduce travel demand and residents' costs.

10- A national public program for fast fare-free transit in urban areas should be financed. Low-cost, efficient, and convenient public transit motivates private drivers to leave their cars at home, allows low-income residents to gain increased access to essential services and amenities, and crucially, reduces Greenhouse gas emissions. Fare-free public transit increases the accessibility of services and amenities for low-income individuals and families. Public transit is a public good and should be operated and funded as such.

11. While we applaud the creation of a Youth Climate Corps, the initial funding level is inadequate for the many young people willing to learn the skills needed for climate actions and in need of employment that will lead to satisfying careers. We call on the government to very significantly increase that funding.

CONCLUSION

Public financing of Canada's "budget" is made possible by the hard work of millions of Canadians. Therefore, Canadians should have a greater say in how the riches WE created are allocated and to what purpose.

Seniors in Canada (over 55) represent a sizeable percentage of the population. We are faced with the realization that for the first time in recent history, we will be leaving less to our grandchildren and great grandchildren than what was bequeathed to us. Polluted air, soil, and water, and related diseases; a constantly shrinking level of biodiversity; extreme weather, floods and wildfires due to deforestation and climate change...the list goes on.

The heritage we want to leave isn't to be "the strongest economy of the G7", as was alluded to. It is rather to reverse the current trend and leave our children a healthier planet and more humane human practices that are sustainable and in harmony with nature.

In their campaign positions, the Liberal Party insisted that "As Canadians, we have our own unique identity, history, and geography. To keep Canada strong, we will protect our culture, protect our environment, and protect our core values." In reality, though, Canada's current political and economic measures tend increasingly to resemble those of our southern neighbors. There is a lack of commitment towards protecting our citizens, future generations and the environment, and Bills C-5 and C-15 attempt to bypass the safeguards given to us by current legislation, all in the name of 'economic growth'. We are increasingly concerned about what lengths the current government is willing to go to pursue its ideal of

“building the strongest economy of the G7” and becoming “an energy superpower”. We hope the 2026 budget will start to reverse this worrisome and dangerous trend.

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Seniors for Climate Action Now! (SCAN!) is building a pan-Canadian seniors' climate action movement for the benefit of generations to come. We are working with youth and other climate activists to create a democratic, just, and transformative movement to address the climate crisis.

<https://seniorsforclimateactionnow.org/>