
March 13, 2015

SUBJECT: Pre-Budget Consultation Submission

Honourable Ross Wiseman,

On behalf of the Greater Corner Brook Board of Trade membership and business community, we would like to present these recommendations for inclusion in Government's budget for the upcoming fiscal year.

Given the tumultuous economic times we are currently in, we appreciate the opportunity to speak to help shape the direction you will take in the next fiscal year.

Item 1

Continue your government's commitment to a fair and balanced review of shale oil and gas exploration in Western Newfoundland.

If there is chance the Greater Corner Brook area can benefit from responsible development of this resource, we need to know. We need to know the extent of the possibility and the costs of development both in financial and environmental terms. We would like to see this happen soon and for it not to become an election issue.

Uncertainty limits willingness to invest in our region and adds to the risk of any development. Please work to limit this uncertainty. The GCBT's policy to support responsible economic development, regardless of the industry or sector, on behalf of the members of the greater Corner Brook region: leads to diversification of the economy, balances risks and rewards; builds capacity; and meets or exceeds government regulations. Knowing what the regulations will be is key to the success of any industry.

Item 2

Estimate oil and gas revenues using conservative projections.

When businesses estimate revenue they are encouraged to project reasonable figures and not best-case scenarios. If a business's budgeted spending is based on its best earning years only, it will not be prepared to provide the same level of service in lean years.

Our members expect the government to follow the same best practices.

Item 3

There is an incredible amount of optimism on the west coast among business support organization like the Greater Corner Brook Board of Trade. We believe building bridges between like-minded organizations will increase our ability to sustain and grow local business much more than we ever could alone.

We ask that you continue to work with us to strengthen our collaborative approach and rely on community partners to assist in service and development matters whenever possible. We support your commitment to ensuring your public service is staffed to optimal levels but we ask that you consider the important role key staff play in assisting this collaboration.

Item 4

Continue to support tourism.

This Government has led the nation with its approach to the marketing and the professionalization of the tourism industry. This means a lot on the west coast of the island where many small communities survive based on the revenue they reap in the tourist seasons. These entrepreneurs need the continued support of the provincial government and your continued support cannot be understated.

Thank you,

Chris Noseworthy
President
Greater Corner Brook Board of Trade