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OPEN AND TRANSPARENT GOVERNMENT

MAKING GOVERNMENT MORE OPEN, ENHANCING TAX FAIRNESS AND INVESTING FOR LONG-TERM GROWTH

Open and Transparent

Canadians expect their government to be open, honest and transparent. They expect their government to represent their interests and deliver the services they need quickly and effectively. Above all, Canadians expect their government to deliver real, meaningful results while ensuring that their tax dollars are spent fairly, efficiently and responsibly.

Canadians have high standards for the services they receive. Canadians expect high-quality services delivered in a way that makes them feel respected and valued. Dealing with the government should not be an exception to this.

Budget 2016 will bring real change to how government works so that it better reflects the values and expectations of Canadians. In doing this, the Government will improve client services at Canada Revenue Agency, it will take important steps toward evolving online services available through Canada.ca, and it will set out new performance standards to promote a better client experience for Canadians when they interact with the Government. The Government will also improve Employment Insurance service delivery so that Canadians receive the benefits to which they are entitled in a timely manner.

Tax Fairness

As a matter of fairness for all taxpayers, the Government is committed to preventing underground economic activity, tax evasion and aggressive tax planning. That is why Budget 2016 provides increased resources to ensure more effective administration and enforcement of tax laws. Budget 2016 also proposes actions to improve the integrity of Canada's tax system, on both the international and domestic fronts, to give Canadians greater confidence that the system is fair to everyone.

“The trust Canadians have in public institutions—including Parliament—has, at times, been compromised. By working with greater openness and transparency, Parliament can restore it.”

— Speech from the Throne, December 4, 2015

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Canada's Fiscal Strength

The Government will make necessary investments in growing and strengthening the middle class, and help those working hard to join it. The Government has the capacity and the willingness to act, and there is growing international support for its approach.

The Government is wholly committed to openness and fairness. To that end, Budget 2016 will improve direct services to Canadians and create client-focused products and services that give Canadians more of the information and services they need more easily, and with fewer delays.

On December 7, 2015, as one of its first actions, the Government delivered on its commitment to strengthen the middle class by introducing a middle class tax cut. In total, nearly 9 million Canadians are now benefiting from this tax cut.

With more money in their pockets, Canadians will be able to save, invest and spend more, thus boosting economic activity in the short term, and putting Canada on a solid growth path over the long term.

“Governments in many countries are currently able to borrow for long periods at very low interest rates, which in effect increases fiscal space. Many countries have room for fiscal expansion to strengthen demand. This should focus on policies with strong short-run benefits and that also contribute to long-term growth.”

– Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Interim Economic Outlook, February 18, 2016

“As Minister of Finance, your overarching goal will be to use the fiscal and budgeting tools at our disposal to implement our New Plan for a Strong Middle Class. That plan is grounded in the understanding that a healthy economy starts with a strong and growing middle class and that we must invest to strengthen the middle class and those working hard to join it. Canadians have elected us on our commitment to invest to create sustainable growth and economic opportunity for more Canadians. You are expected to lead the fiscal implementation of our plan and ensure that we create good quality jobs and improve economic opportunity and security for Canadians.”

– Minister of Finance Mandate Letter

Budget 2016 will also give Canadian families more money to help with the cost of raising their children, by replacing the current complicated child benefit system with the new Canada Child Benefit. The Benefit will be **simpler, tax-free, better-targeted and much more generous**, with families benefiting seeing an average increase in child benefits of almost \$2,300 in the 2016-17 benefit year.

Canadians want services delivered in a way that makes them feel respected and valued. Budget 2016 will provide \$185.8 million over five years, and \$14.6 million ongoing, to the Canada Revenue Agency to improve client services.

To make it easier for Canadians to access government information, including their personal information, the Government will create a simple, central website where Canadians can submit requests to any government institution, backed up with a 30-day guarantee for personal information requests.

To help ensure that all taxpayers pay their fair share, Budget 2016 provides increased resources to ensure more effective administration and enforcement of tax laws, and proposes actions to improve the integrity of Canada's tax system.

