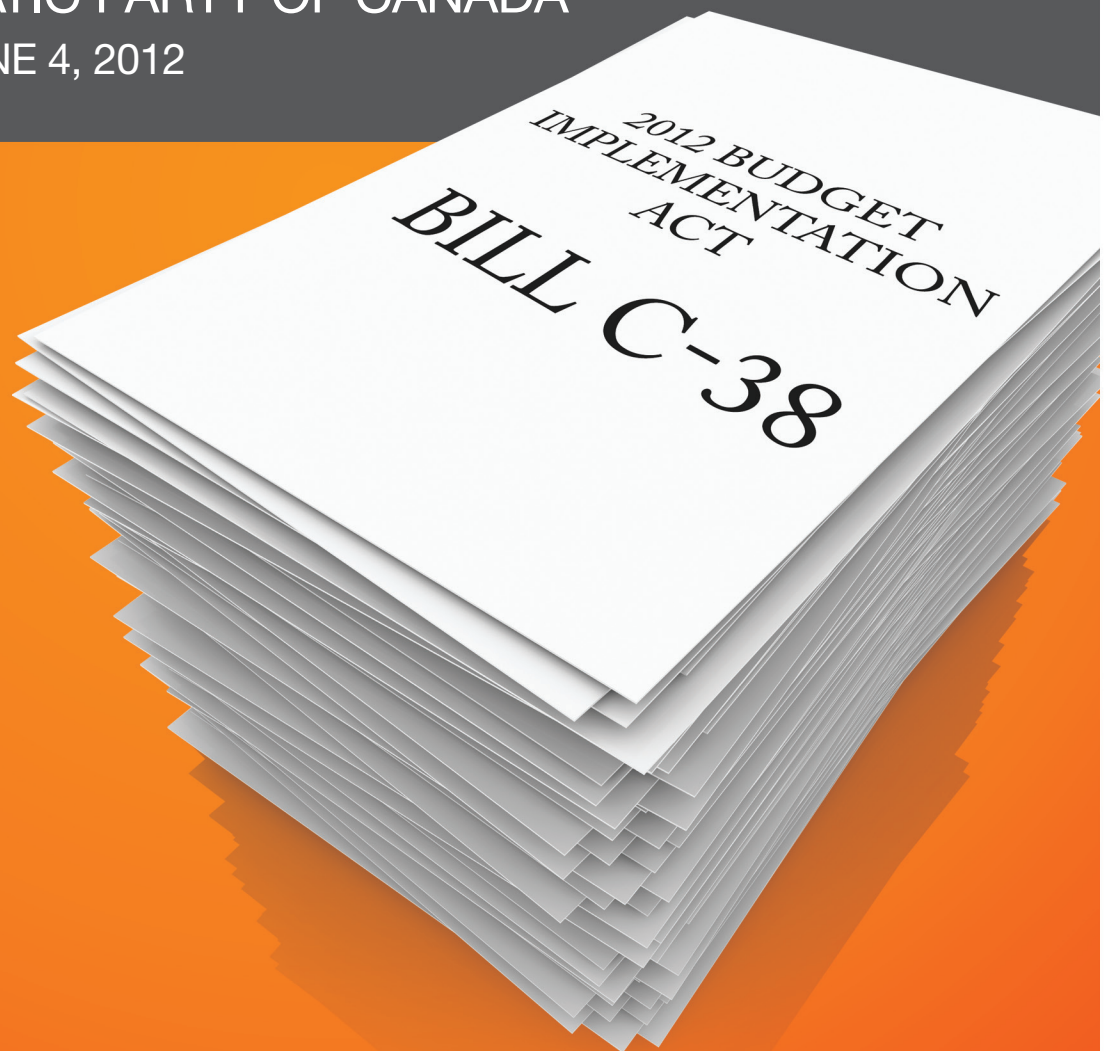


REPORT: BUDGET HEARINGS 2012

NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF CANADA
RELEASE DATE: JUNE 4, 2012



May 2012 NDP Caucus Public Hearing on the Budget Implementation Act

The Government's omnibus Budget Implementation Act, C-38, has caused shockwaves of concern across the country. The bill contains hundreds of harmful measures, and the process to ram them through under cover of the Budget Implementation Act undermines effective parliamentary scrutiny and democratic debate. Canada's New Democrats proposed that the massive 425 page bill be split into separate sections to permit proper study of its substantive measures, but the Conservatives refused.

In response, the NDP caucus organized alternate public hearings in Ottawa and in cities across the country in May 2012 to ensure Canadians' views were heard on this Trojan Horse Bill. (A full list of MPs and witnesses for each hearing is included in the appendix). The NDP caucus has also invited Canadians to submit views directly to <http://budget2012.npd.ca>. The response has been overwhelming. Canadians are outraged at the undermining of democratic process and deeply concerned by the range of measures being proposed – including proposals to gut environmental protection, cut pensions, reduce government accountability, and undermine the health of Canadians. This report provides an overview of key concerns raised by citizens and experts about Bill C-38 in the hearings across Canada and via the NDP's Budget 2012 website.

I. Democracy, Ethics, and Accountability

Across the country, the NDP caucus heard that Bill C-38 undermines democracy by weakening the structures that hold government to account, shutting down centres for independent research, attacking voices of debate and dissent, and centralizing power. Even the way the bill is being pushed through parliament without sufficient scrutiny has offended Canadians' sense of due democratic process.

Ottawa

In Ottawa, the opening hearing in the Centre Block of Parliament was held on May 16 before a large crowd of over 200, and was chaired by NDP Finance Critic Peggy Nash with MPs Nathan Cullen, Charlie Angus and Mathieu Ravnagat on the panel. Witnesses spoke eloquently about the state of our democracy. Sheila Regehr, former Executive Director of the National Council of Welfare (NCW) noted : "I reflect on what democracy really means, and it doesn't mean being able to vote once every four years, it means being able to have access to the process by which we govern ourselves." Professor Errol Mendes, of the University of Ottawa, warned about the concentration of power underway, which is evidenced in actions such as the tabling of Bill C-38. "We are transferring responsible government under the centuries-old tradition of parliamentary democracy into PMO (Prime Minister's Office) government. And with PMO government, we have one-man government," cautioned Dr. Mendes.

Experts underscored that to ensure that changes proposed by government are properly debated, and that participation by the public is thoughtful and thorough, the budget bill should focus solely on the budget. Other aspects and changes should be removed, and included in other pieces of legislation. Ironically it was noted that Stephen Harper vociferously opposed omnibus bills being brought to Parliament when in Opposition, but has now abandoned such principles.

The NDP also heard strong concerns at the secrecy surrounding the process of the budget cuts. PSAC VP Larry Rousseau noted that the Public Service Alliance of Canada had asked that parliamentary committees be allowed to debate austerity measures applied to departments that provide crucial services to Canadians. The government's response was more secrecy.

Several witnesses addressed how the attack on civil society organizations and the closing down of organizations dedicated to independent evidence-based policy weakens the environment to evaluate policy and hold government to account on its record. Sheila Regehr told the audience that before being eliminated by Bill C-38, the National Council of Welfare was the only place where Canadians could get a national, comparable, unique look at welfare across the country, and any ability to compare ourselves outside of Canada.

Experts also spoke to the bill's effect of reducing critical oversight, including for example abolishing the Inspector General of the Canadian Security Intelligence Agency (CSIS). As the security perimeter plan with the US moves forward, more and more information will be shared with American officials making the need for greater monitoring of this Canadian agency more important than ever.

On a positive note, the hearings also revealed that Canadians want and expect a different approach. Based on their engagement with thousands of citizens, Matthew Carroll, Campaigns Director of LeadNow explained that "Canadians are hungry for a truly participatory democracy that works. The majority are outraged at the direction the current government is dragging our country. And they're looking for ways to step up and take action."

Vancouver

At the May 22nd, Vancouver public forum, over 160 people focused on issues of ethics, accountability, and the democratic process. The forum was chaired by Don Davies, and fellow NDP MPs Charmaine Borg, Peter Julian, Charlie Angus, and Fin Donnelly also sat on the panel. A wide range of witnesses gave presentations, including: Art Kube, President of the Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations; Joey Hartman, President of the Vancouver and District Labour Council; Maxwell Cameron, Director for the Centre for the Study of Democratic Institutions, Department of Political Science, University of British Columbia; Margot Young, Associate Professor, Faculty of Law, UBC; Peter G. Prontzos of the Department of Political Science, Langara College; Rachel Tutte, Co-chair of the BC Health Coalition; and Robyn Allan, Independent Economist and former CEO of the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia.

Much of the discussion centered on issues concerning the nature of the omnibus bill itself, as well as reduced access to EI, and reductions in environmental review processes. Mr. Hartman, for example, spoke about a number of concerns with the budget, including the reduced access to Employment Insurance, where only 40 per cent of unemployed Canadians can currently access EI, as well as the elimination of the EI appeals tribunal, concerns with the closure of the Coast Guard base in the downtown Vancouver port, and the dismantling of environmental protection laws.

Others were more concerned with the budget process itself, and the nature of omnibus bills. Mr. Cameron stated “the current budget process exemplifies all the deficiencies in our political system from a democratic perspective. I welcome the idea of public hearings conducted by parties, and would like to see riding associations engaged in this process as well.”

II. Environment and Fisheries

Ottawa

In Ottawa, on May 17, at the NDP caucus alternate parliamentary hearing on the environment, presenters underscored the ripple effects of the changes proposed in the budget bill before a panel chaired by House Leader Nathan Cullen with MPs Megan Leslie, Anne Minh-Thu Quach and Jamie Nicholls. From the repeal of the Kyoto Implementation Act to the elimination of wastewater surveys and the National Roundtable on the Environment and the Economy (NRTEE), the budget bill will silence experts on environmental impacts and reduce the information available to decision-makers. The new measures will also leave a data and transparency gap on climate change. Dr. James Bruce, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change author and Nobel Peace Prize winner, noted that these attacks on environmental regulation will only make it more difficult for Canada to export natural resources to countries in Europe.

The NDP also heard testimony regarding threats to freshwater ecosystems buried in the budget bill. By gutting the Fisheries Act, one of the strongest tools available in environmental protection in Canada, experts argued that Bill C-38 downloads environmental responsibilities to provinces that are not in a position to fill the gaps this creates. A major problem is that section 142 of the Act will allow the Minister to exempt almost anything from review. Will Amos, Director of the Ecojustice Environmental Law Clinic underscored the important history of fisheries legislation, and noted that the problems the government claims to be solving may actually cause more problems for industry in the long run.

The undermining of effective environmental review processes was a major theme in the hearings. Experts such as Dr. Peter Usher (former member of the Joint Review Panel for the proposed Mackenzie Gas Project) noted that the Canadian environmental assessment process is “going backwards” instead of becoming more efficient. He pointed out that a 24-month deadline to achieve a full decision would not result in a quality review and did not take into consideration what

happens when the proponent calls a halt to the process. In Dr. Usher's words, the government and industry can "pay now or pay later" in legal costs to defend a flawed process. Jamie Kneen of MiningWatch Canada argued that the budget bill's repeal of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act is an "abdication of federal responsibility," leaving only a patchwork system of assessments that provides incomplete protection for the environment.

Halifax

Also on May 17, 2012, the NDP caucus held a public forum with over 110 people in Halifax on the budget bill, focusing on the impacts this bill would have on fisheries in the East and West coasts. The discussion focused on how the changes to the Fisheries Act were vague, and how fishery workers are concerned about the precise impacts changes to the Act would have. The panel was headed by NDP MPs Ryan Cleary, Robert Chisholm, and Fin Donnelly.

Trevor Ketchington, President of Gadus Associates, a company that offers scientific and professional services in fisheries management, warned about the dangers of making significant changes to the Fisheries Act. He said "ignoring it [fish habitat] would be like a farmer ignoring the field and the rainfall." He warned that the small, individual changes that are being made to the Fisheries Act and other related acts amounts to a "death by 1000 cuts" to our ecosystems.

Jeannie Baldwin, Regional Executive Vice-President for the Atlantic for PSAC, had some very concise words for her thoughts on the budget: "There are three words for this budget—delusional, dismantle and destroy." Baldwin's concerns reflect layoffs in public service sectors across the Atlantic, including recent cuts to the Coast Guard. She indicated that this budget hurts workers—not only by cutting their jobs but by making their work nearly impossible amongst all the cuts. Also on the panel was Wil Brunner from Clean Nova Scotia. His concerns centre on the lack of direct information on changes to the Fisheries Act. He is worried that we will not know the impacts of such changes to regulations until we see the impacts it has on habitat.

Many of the audience members also shared their concerns with the BIA. Mark Cusak, a Marine Engineer, indicated that he now refuses to take out his research vessel because he fears that the changes over the past five years have made it unsafe to captain. Some members of the audience also shared concerns about how the Temporary Foreign Workers program is undercutting fisheries jobs for East Coast fishermen.

Toronto

On May 22, in Toronto, the NDP caucus held another regional public forum on environmental concerns with some 150 people attending. This forum, chaired by NDP Finance Critic Peggy Nash, with environment critic Megan Leslie and deputy environment critic Anne Minh-Thu Quach, focused particularly on how changes to the Environmental Protection Act in Bill C-38 will affect our natural environment.

Gillian McEachern, Deputy Campaign Director for Environmental Defence, was very clear about how this government treats those who condone proper environmental assessment: “we’ve been attacked directly because we give voice to concerns about the environmental damage caused by tar sands – our funding has been questioned, there have been calls for our charitable status to be revoked, a federal budget that targets environmental charities.” She also went on to say, “under the new rules, fewer projects would even be looked at by the federal government, with much responsibility being shunted to the provinces. The mandatory timelines for completing environmental assessments will make it harder for civil society and First Nations to take part meaningfully, and mean sloppier reviews.”

Other panellists who took part in the hearing included Greenpeace’s Keith Stewart, who focused on the political aspects of how the Conservative government has moved to label and attack environmentalists. Kathleen Cooper, Senior Researcher for the Canadian Environmental Law Association, spoke in detail about the proposed changes to the Environmental Assessment Act.

III. Health, Employment Insurance, Pensions and Labour

The NDP caucus also heard widespread concerns from experts and ordinary citizens that the budget bill aims to balance the books on the backs of the frontline services on which Canadians rely—from healthcare to food safety, pensions to Employment Insurance. Much of the burden falls to underfunded provinces or to families and the charitable sector, leaving many Canadians falling between the cracks.

Ottawa

In Ottawa, on May 17, Dr. John Haggie, president of the non partisan Canadian Medical Association, gave a powerful warning that this budget represented a lost opportunity to find ways to transform the health care system and help Canadians get better value and better patient care for the money they spend. He raised the important health impacts of raising the age of OAS from 65-67 and confirmed the need for an accountability plan for the \$446 billion flowing in federal transfers for health over the next twelve years, and implementing key goals such as a national pharmaceutical strategy. Haggie noted:

“We are greatly concerned about the move to raise the age of eligibility for Old Age Security. Many seniors have low incomes and delaying this relatively modest payment by two years is certain to have a negative impact.... Gnawing away at Canada’s social safety net will no doubt force hard choices on some of tomorrow’s seniors... the choice between whether to buy groceries or to buy their medicine.... People who skip their meds, or lack a nutritious diet or enough heat in their homes, will be sicker. In the end, this will put a greater burden on our health care system.”

He also pointed out that no one was consulted on the elimination of the National Aboriginal Health Organization and over \$100 million in related cuts.

Roberto Bomba of the Fédération interprofessionnelle de la santé du Québec expressed concern that the new formula does not take into account the real needs of the population, and will cost Quebec more than \$200 million, with similar impacts on other provinces. “It seems like the federal government is doing what the Liberal government did in the 90s which was to eliminate its deficit on the backs of the provinces,” said Bomba.

Other witnesses agreed that the government’s changes to Old Age Security are unnecessary and misguided. They pointed to reports by the Public Budget Officer and the Department of Finance noting that OAS is sustainable. Actuarial reports of the last 24 years have all shown the same costs for OAS, with an increase between 2010 and 2030 that is not exorbitant, and then costs returning to 2010 levels. The changes to OAS introduced by Bill C-38 unfairly target the poorest Canadians, with low income Canadians losing up to \$16,000 a year compared to \$6,400 a year for wealthy Canadians. The result will be an increase in seniors’ poverty. Witnesses told the caucus that changes to OAS represent generational unfairness. Pat Kerwin, President of the Congress of Union Retirees of Canada said that retirees are concerned about the changes despite the fact that they won’t be affected because “it’s our kids and our grandkids. It’s really all about the concept of society you’ve got.”

Witnesses also agreed that the government’s changes on EI appear to be misguided. Despite an extremely weak labour market and an EI program that reaches fewer than 40% of the unemployed, the government is making changes that will reduce accessibility. “The problem that we have in Canada’s labour market is not that too many people are loafing around on unemployment insurance,” said Erin Weir, Economist with the United Steelworkers. “[T]he problem is, first of all, a big shortage of jobs, especially genuinely suitable jobs, and the other problem we have is that far too many people, unemployed through no fault of their own, can’t access Employment Insurance benefits.” The changes on suitable employment will obliterate 60 years of jurisprudence about what constitutes a reasonable job search, starting from scratch with rules that the Minister will not reveal. Even business groups are asking for the Minister to reveal her intentions.

And witnesses were very concerned that the government consulted no one about the changes. As Pierre Céré of the Conseil national des chômeurs ET chômeuses commented “This government does not seem to understand the democratic practices of listening to people and consulting people to build projects and to build this country.”

Witnesses noted that the new Social Security Tribunal will replace an EI Board of Referees system that has been in effect since the 1940s with a system with unclear details and implications. What can be expected, however, with a smaller Tribunal, are significant backlogs for appeals. There

is also a question whether Tribunal members will have the medical expertise to make decisions for CPP Disability appeal. Seema Lamba of the Public Service Alliance of Canada expressed concern that the Minister will have sole discretion to divide criteria for entrance to the Federal Contractors Program, essentially eliminating any requirement for employment equity.

Montreal

New Democrat MPs Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont–La Petite Patrie), Peggy Nash (Parkdale–High Park) and Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe (Pierrefonds–Dollard) chaired the forum in Montreal on May 23. The forum focused specifically on changes to Old Age Security and employment insurance. Nearly 150 people attended the event.

Peggy Nash expressed her concerns about the Conservative Government's lack of transparency. She pointed out that even though the NDP tried to have a real discussion on the budget implementation bill, the Conservatives quickly moved to shut down debate.

Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe chaired a panel on Old Age Security, explaining that the cuts will affect those who depend on these benefits the most and who in no way live beyond their means. The health care system will also be affected because more seniors will have to choose between feeding themselves and purchasing their medication. This also poses problems with collective agreements negotiated with employers assuming retirement at 65.

A witness invited to the forum, Shirley Miller, pointed out that on the West Island, the proportion of elderly people is increasing each year. Its community centre is called upon by an increasing number of seniors who don't have enough to eat, most of whom take food provisions from the Centre. She also is disappointed that nothing was announced for those who want to retire early to care for an elderly family member.

A citizen recalled that not long ago, the wealthy paid a higher level of tax. He criticized the Conservatives' tactics, which reduce taxes and attack public services. Many people thought that Old Age Security benefits should be re organized to give more to low-income people. A citizen recalled that in the 1930s, it the first leader of the CCF, Woodsworth, who proposed the idea of old age pensions. Many people wondered how these changes would impact women and youth who want to access the job market.

Jacques Beaudoin, a representative of the organization Action chômage, pointed out that the EI system was attacked by various Conservative and Liberal governments in the 1980s and 1990s. But by his estimation, the changes proposed this year are the worst attacks yet. He noted that between 50 and 60% of people who lose their jobs aren't eligible for EI benefits.

Alexandre Boulerice explained that the EI reforms would force people who lose their jobs to accept almost anything. Many people were shocked to learn that the minister would be able to

decide what constitutes “suitable employment” once the bill is adopted. One person said that it was not enough to fight in Parliament alone and that we must mobilize public opinion.

Regina

On May 22 in Regina, the NDP caucus held a public forum with over 150 members of the public in attendance, focusing on issues affecting health. This forum was chaired by NDP deputy leader and Health Critic Libby Davies, and the panel included Agriculture Critic Malcolm Allen, Deputy Health Critic Djaouida Sellah, and Military Procurement Critic Matthew Kellway.

Witnesses included Carrie Bourassa of the First Nations University of Canada; Dr. Ryan Meili, vice-chair for Canadian Doctors for Medicare; Marlene Brown, President of the Saskatchewan Healthcare Coalition; Rosalee Longmore, President of the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses; Betty Pickering, President of the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism; Andre Magnan, Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology and Social Studies at the University of Regina; and Marianne Hladun, the Regional Executive Vice-President for PSAC for the Prairie Region.

Many of the concerns with Bill C-38 with regards to health care focused on how changes in the budget will disproportionately affect the most vulnerable populations in Canada, such as rural and Aboriginal communities. Many speakers brought up issues not directly related to health care, but that have impacts on our health care system, such as reductions in food inspection services, which may result in more risk for the spread of food-borne diseases. It was noted that changes to food inspection were cited as an issue by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food in his recent visit to Canada. The Special Rapporteur referenced the issues of food access, particularly in rural and remote regions of the country, and the impact poor nutrition has on the health of the population.

There was also a significant discussion about the unilateral changes to the health care funding formula for provinces, and how many provinces will see significant reductions in their budgets as a result. This is coming on the heels of the 50th anniversary of Medicare. Concerns are that we should be continuing to build the next phases of Medicare (through, for example, home care, pharmacare, etc) instead of rolling back funding for the provinces.

IV. Speak out on the Conservative budget - Report from online submissions (to June 1, 2012)

Web consultation: <http://budget2012.npd.ca>

On May 15, New Democrats launched an online consultation tool in both official languages—to explain the budget bill to Canadians and seek their direct input. Visitors are invited to learn about the budget bill and read excerpts from submissions shared by other Canadians.

- 5100+ public submissions have been received.
- Submissions from coast-to-coast: ON:1767 | BC:1238 | QC:782 | AB:425 | NS:241 | SK:145 | NS:241 | MB:204 | NB:127 | NF:68 | PEI:23 | NWT:9 | YT:4 | (remainder unspecified)
- At least 95% of submissions critique the budget and support the NDP's approach.
- Site visitors: 8300 on Day 1; 15,000 in Week 1; 22,000 since May 15
- A high proportion of visitors are motivated to leave comments.

SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN: *Our Canada, Our Budget*

On May 25, with party support, NDP House Leader Nathan Cullen launched a public engagement campaign on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/nathan.cullen1>) and Twitter (@our_budget). This is a “next steps” campaign for Canadians who want to discuss the budget's implications — and organize local events to push back and develop alternatives.

- 26 Canadians engaged online have agreed to organize 30-40 real-world local meetings.
- “Overall Reach” of Nathan Cullen Facebook page expanded from 27,425 to 76,464 people
- “Talking About This” Facebook index expanded from 700 to 2,042
- Average comments per Facebook post: 30 (reaching as high as 80)
- Average @our_budget Tweet is generating 15 click-throughs and 5 retweets.

Sample English language excerpts from 5000 submissions to <http://budget2012.ndp.ca>

Max Vere-Holloway (Portugal Cove-St Philips NL) — The changes to pensions won't affect me — but they will affect my sons, both of whom are trying to get established in their chosen field. One of my sons is in the trades, which is very seasonal here in Newfoundland and changes to EI will almost certainly impact him. It seems Newfoundlanders are being targeted for the way we voted in the last federal election.

Laura Khoo (Toronto ON) — As a parent, I fear that this bill erases years of work on environmental protection and hands the reins to corporations to use Canadian land as they

please. I don't know how Mr. Harper could explain this to his own children. As an Occupational Therapist and healthcare worker, I fear what further cuts will do to our cash-strapped system at a time when the complexities of care are only increasing.

Steve Schroeter (Edmonton) — I faithfully paid federal taxes all my life, but now you are slicing away future seniors' income with your OAS changes! You didn't mention that during your election campaign. My daughter is graduating at the top of her class, with huge student loans because you continue to starve the post-secondary education system. But she can't find a good job because of your cutbacks.

Brendan Howlett (Toronto ON) — As a young Canadian, this irresponsible budget bill severely threatens all prospects for my generation. It will sell out our precious environment, decimate jobs and workplace conditions, which will have a very specific impact on young people like me who are entering the work force at the bottom of the ladder.

Juan Castro (London ON) — As a new Canadian, I find it appalling that Stephen Harper is trying to dismantle everything that I knew about Canada that was good, and that inspired my family to move to this country: the environment, public health care, old age pension, immigrant rights, freedom of speech, women's rights, democratic principles. These are the things that made us Canada, and we are at risk of losing them...

Shella Gardezi (Vancouver) — When I was on EI recently, I applied for a self-employment program. I was on EI for about five months before I was accepted. Under this budget I could have been forced to take a job outside of my field because they don't understand how EI helps people transition from one employment situation to another. Instead of starting my own business and learning new skills, I could have been forced into a position that wouldn't use my education or experience.

Melissa MacLean (Ottawa) — As a parent, I'm devastated by the way this budget affects the economic, political, and natural environment in which my kids are growing up. It sets out to exclude citizens from environmental assessments, weaken accountability and oversight mechanisms, cut research capacities, attack fair labour policies, and eliminate valuable programs and organizations that reflect important Canadian values and priorities ... But what concerns me most is that this "budget" is making the idea of democracy and good governance in Canada a farce. What kind of legacy is that for my children?

Appendix - NDP Caucus Public Hearings on the Budget Implementation Act

Democracy, Ethics, and Accountability Hearing

OTTAWA, Wednesday, May 16, 2012
253-D, Centre Block
12:00-2:00

MPs Present:

Peggy Nash, Finance Critic
Nathan Cullen, House Leader
Guy Caron, Deputy Finance Critic
Charlie Angus, Ethics, Access to Information and Privacy
Mathieu Ravnagat, Treasury Board

Panellists:

Errol P. Mendes, Professor, Faculty of Law, Ottawa University
Larry Rousseau, PSAC Regional Executive Vice President, National Capital Region
Sheila Regehr, former Executive Director of the National Council of Welfare
Matthew Carroll, Campaigns Director, Leadnow.ca
Tyler Sommers, Co-ordinator, Democracy Watch
Roch Tassé, National coordinator, International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group

Environment and Fisheries Hearing

OTTAWA, Thursday, May 17
Room 362, East Block
10:00-12:00

MPs Present:

Nathan Cullen, House Leader
Megan Leslie, Deputy Leader and Environment Critic
Anne-Minh-Thu Quach, Deputy Critic, Environment

Panellists:

Dr. James Bruce, IPCC Author and Nobel Prize winner, IISD Board Member, former Acting Deputy Secretary General, World Meteorological Organization, Geneva

Patrick Bonin, directeur climat-énergie, AQLPA

Tony Maas, Climate Change and water program director at WWF

Dr. Peter Usher, leading authority on social impact assessment, renewable resource utilization, and management

Will Amos M.A., LL.B, Director, Ecojustice Environmental Law Clinic at the University of Ottawa

Jamie Kneen, MiningWatch Canada

Health, OAS, Employment insurance, and Employment Equity Hearings

OTTAWA, Thursday, May 17

Room 362, East Block

12:00 – 2:00

MPs Present:

Chris Charlton, Human Resources and Skills Development Critic

Libby Davies, Deputy Leader and Health Critic

Anne-Marie Day, Employment Insurance Critic

Irene Mathyssen, Pensions Critic

Niki Ashton, Status of Women Critic

Djaouida Sellah, Deputy Health Critic

Panellists:

John Haggie, President, Canadian Medical Association

Roberto Bomba, Treasurer, Fédération interprofessionnelle de la Santé du Québec

Pat Kerwin, President, Congress of Union Retirees of Canada

Barry Thorsteinson, President, National Pensioners and Senior Citizens Federation

Bernard Dussault, former Chief Actuary of the Canada Pension Plan and Old Age Security

Angella MacEwen, Senior Economist, Canadian Labour Congress

Tony Wohlfarth, former Commissioner for Workers, Canada Employment Insurance Commission

Pierre Céré, Spokesperson, Conseil national des chômeurs

Erin Weir, Economist, United Steelworkers

Seema Lamba, Human Rights Officer, Public Service Alliance of Canada

Fisheries Hearing

HALIFAX: Thursday, May 17
St Mary's University (Atrium)
923 Robie St.
7:00-8:30pm

MPs Present:

Ryan Cleary, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and Post-Secondary Education Critic
Robert Chisholm, Fisheries and Atlantic Gateway Critic and Deputy Critic Intergovernmental Affairs
Fin Donnelly, Western Economic Diversification Canada Critic and Deputy Critic Fisheries (West Coast)

Panelists:

Trevor Ketchington, Gadus Associates
Jeannie Baldwin, PSAC
Wil Brunner, Clean Nova Scotia

Democracy, Ethics, and Accountability Hearing

VANCOUVER, Tuesday, May 22nd
Vancouver Public Library, Combined Alma VanDusen and Peter Kaye Room
350 West Georgia Street
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

MPs present:

Don Davies, International Trade Critic
Charmaine Borg, Digital Issues Critic
Peter Julian, Natural Resources Critic
Charlie Angus, Ethics, Access to Information and Privacy Critic
Fin Donnelly, Western Economic Diversification Canada Critic and Deputy Critic Fisheries (West Coast)

Panellists:

Art Kube, President of the Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations;
Joey Hartman, President of the Vancouver and District Labour Council;
Maxwell A. Cameron, Director for the Centre for the Study of Democratic Institutions, Department

of Political Science, University of British Columbia;
Margot Young, Associate Professor, Faculty of Law, UBC;
Peter G. Prontzos of the Department of Political Science, Langara College;
Rachel Tutte, Co-chair of the BC Health Coalition;
Robyn Allan, Independent Economist and former CEO of the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia.

Health and Social Policy Budget Hearing

REGINA, Tuesday, May 22

Regina Inn,
1975 Broad Street
7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

MPs Present:

Libby Davies, Deputy Leader and Health Critic
Malcolm Allen, Agriculture Critic
Djaouida Sellah, Deputy Critic Health
Matthew Kellway, Military Procurement Critic

Panellists:

Carrie Bourassa, First Nations University of Canada
Dr. Ryan Meili, vice-chair for Canadian Doctors for Medicare
Marlene Brown, President of the Saskatchewan Healthcare Coalition
Rosalee Longmore, President of the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses
Betty Pickering, President of the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism
Andre Magnan, Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology and Social Studies at the University of Regina
Marianne Hladun, the Regional Executive Vice-President for PSAC for the Prairie Region.

Environment Hearing

TORONTO: Tuesday, May 22

Northern District Library
40 Orchard View Boulevard
6:30-8:30

MPs Present:

Peggy Nash, Finance Critic
Megan Leslie, Deputy Leader and Environment Critic
Anne Minh-Thu Quach, Deputy Environment Critic

Panelists:

Gillian McEachern, Deputy Campaign Director, Environmental Defence
Keith Stewart, Climate and Energy Campaigner, Greenpeace
Kathleen Cooper, Senior Researcher, Canadian Environmental Law Association

OAS and Social Policy Hearing

MONTREAL: Wednesday, May 23
St. Pierre Centre, 1212 Rue Panet, Room 200
6:30-8:00pm

MPs Present:

Alexandre Boulerice, Labour Critic
Peggy Nash, Finance Critic
Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe, Seniors Critic

Panelists:

Jacques Beaudoin, Mouvement Action Chômage.
Shirley Miller, Executive Director at Projet Communautaire de Pierrefonds; Board Member,
Volunteer West Island