

COMMUNITY BUILDERS AWARDS

Nominate someone today!

Do you know someone who goes above and beyond to serve our community?

Show your appreciation by nominating them for a Community Builders Award.

Nominations for this recognition are open to those who positively impact the lives of others, including community volunteers, farmers, educators, artists, athletes, social workers, coaches, entrepreneurs, emergency responders, and anyone who goes above and beyond to give back to the community.

Youth Leader
Community Leader
Business Leader
Not-for-Profit Leader

The deadline to submit nominations is 11:59pm MDT on **Friday, May 27th**.
Apply online: www.RachaelThomas.ca
or pick up a nomination form from my office!

SCAN HERE to nominate!

THE FEDERAL BUDGET SHOULD FOCUS ON FOUR THINGS

While the Speech from the Throne, delivered in November, was used by the government to outline its priorities, and generate a roadmap for the parliamentary session, the annual budget shows whether or not the government is truly following that roadmap and making good on its commitments.

I am writing this on March 23rd and to date, the federal budget has not yet been announced. Although I cannot tell you what will be outlined in the coming Liberal Budget, I want to highlight four key areas I believe should be the central focus of any government: Unity, Safety and Security, Facilitating Economic Prosperity, and Our Place on the World Stage.

National Unity—The Prime Minister plays a vital role in the way he communicates and in the actions he takes, to either unify or divide the country. Many times over, Mr. Trudeau has chosen to use divisive rhetoric to pit regions and people against one another. The budget provides him with the opportunity to begin healing the wounds he has inflicted. It is my hope that he will use this budget as an opportunity to show he sees and values the entire country, not just the areas with the greatest concentration of his supporters. In particular, focus should be placed on building infrastructure that will facilitate economic prosperity in all regions of the country. Canada's first great infrastructure project, the Canadian Pacific Railway, was both a symbolic and practical unifier. We now have the opportunity to create projects, such as an east-west energy corridor where all Canadians can benefit from our nation's prosperity and natural resources.

Safety and Security—The safety and security of Canadians should be top of mind for any leader. Both national and international security affect Canadians' lives. We have serious issues around gun violence in our cities. Police Chiefs have repeatedly said that more investment is needed in police forces to combat gang violence and the trafficking of illegal firearms. We know human trafficking is a prevalent occurrence right here in Canada. It will require significant attention and resources to bring an end to this horrific form of modern-day slavery. It is undeniable that things are intensifying around the world. Threats to national security are not to be taken lightly, especially when countries like Russia and China have their eyes on becoming economic superpowers. We know that cyber threats are becoming more common and economic warfare is a reality, which is why it is vital that we bolster security measures. Canada cannot sit idle thinking our allies will be able to carry our weight. If Canada wants a seat at the table in various multinational security partnerships, we have to put our money where our mouth is, and that includes strengthening our defense capabilities. We need to replace our CF-18 fighter jets, modernize our NORAD defences, and revitalize our Canadian forces, which are currently 10,000 people below full strength.

Facilitating Economic Prosperity—First and foremost, the government must balance the budget and spend within its means. Economic prosperity starts with empowering Canadians to be the dreamers, solution makers, and wealth creators this nation needs to continue growing and advancing. It's about celebrating entrepreneurs as innovative risk-takers and job creators, not calling Canadian business owners "tax cheats" or "fat cats" who need to be penalized through higher taxation, as the Prime Minister has asserted. The budget should focus on lowering taxes, not raising them. We should be drawing investment into Canada and unbridling the potential in Canadians to create, build, and prosper. Canadians should be encouraged to innovate, come up with ground-breaking solutions, and export our incredible technology to make this world a better place. What I don't want to see in the budget is more red tape, more regulation, or more corporate welfare for Liberal insiders and the financial elite. It's time to put Canadians ahead of government.

Our Place on the World Stage—The whole world seems to be talking about energy supply right now, and for good reason. As the free world claims to defend human rights and democracy internationally, we are being faced with a very dark reality, which is some of the world's largest oil and gas producers have little regard for the rule of law and the well-being of their people. Canada is an energy superpower and we should be exporting our resources around the globe. To do that, the government must encourage energy production and support the building of pipelines, LNG plants, and export capabilities.

In addition to safeguarding humanity through energy security, Canada is blessed with an abundance of agriculture. Agriculture exports can help with food insecurity in places like Ukraine, where they won't be able to get their crop in the ground due to the war. This will have a huge impact on food security in all of Europe. As Canada invests in itself and becomes more prosperous, it allows us to give a stronger helping hand to other nations in need. This is what we should be striving for.

SPRING 2022

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I'VE SEEN YOUR ENERGY BILL— TRUDEAU'S CARBON TAX IS PUNITIVE & WRONG!

If you've shopped at a local grocery store, eaten at a restaurant, paid a home heating bill, or filled your tank with gas, you don't need me to tell you that life is getting more and more expensive, and many Canadians are feeling the pinch in a big way. Many of you have called, emailed, or visited my office to express your concern and frustration. Some of you have shown me copies of your home heating bill to point out how much you're paying in carbon tax.

It seems like no matter how hard you work, you just can't catch a break, and thanks to inflation, every dollar you make only counts for 90 cents.

When the Liberal government continues to spend beyond its means, Canadians are forced to pay more. It has been alarming to watch this government flood the economy with newly printed money and throw off the balance of supply and demand, which inflates the cost of goods.

Instead of helping those in need, the spending practices of the federal government are causing an ever-growing economic divide between the low-income wage earners, whose purchasing power is being assaulted, and the financial elite, whose assets are increasing in value by the day.

Prime Minister Trudeau promised to grow "the middle class," but in reality, his policies are making it more and more difficult for Canadians to make ends meet, let alone make financial gains. A recent poll found the number one concern for 78 percent of Canadians is the rising cost of living.

This is people's lives and livelihoods being affected by the Prime Minister's irresponsible behaviour. Mr. Trudeau has been warned by leading economists that his decision to spend and print money with little-to-no restraint will have devastating effects on Canada's economy, but he appears to care more about his agenda than the wellbeing of Canadians.

To add insult to injury, the Liberals went ahead with their planned carbon tax hike on April 1st—a cruel April Fools joke. It is confounding to think that when we have some of the highest gasoline prices in Canadian history, the Liberals think it's a good idea to make Canadians pay even more.

WINTER SURVEY RESULTS

Are you concerned about rising inflation in Canada?

89.2% YES
4.3% NO
6.5% MAYBE

Where are you noticing the rising cost of living most?

INSURANCE
CLOTHING
SERVICE LABOUR RATES
GROCERIES
AUTO PARTS
UTILITIES
FUEL
VEGETABLES
FRUIT
SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES
HEATING
HOUSING COSTS
MEDICAL EXPENSES
LUMBER
FARM INPUTS
MEAT

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____
EMAIL: _____
 Please sign me up for email updates
Comments: _____

What are the top THREE issues that matter to you most?

- Affordability
- Climate Change
- Economic Recovery
- Government Overreach
- Healthcare Spending
- Increasing Gun Control
- National Unity
- Reducing Reliance on Foreign Oil
- Supports for Seniors
- Other: _____

COMMUNITY TOWN HALL
I WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Parliamentary Update and Open Q&A | Thursday, April 28th 7:00 PM

IN-PERSON

RSVP by April 26th: Call 403-320-0070 or visit RachaelThomas.ca

Scan here TO RSVP

Continued...

From the genesis of the Liberal carbon tax, Mr. Trudeau claimed it was necessary to modify Canadians' behaviour and steer them away from the nasty habits of filling up their gas tanks and heating their homes, but here's the thing, Canadians don't have any other option. Fuel is needed to drive to work and home heating isn't a luxury in Lethbridge. It's a necessity.

Farmers—those who keep us fed and who, in Alberta, stand as our best hope for strengthening our economy—are particularly hard hit. Why is Mr. Trudeau punishing those who care for the environment by sequestering carbon through crop growth and by investing in advancements in science and technology? If the carbon tax really is about taking care of the environment shouldn't farmers be rewarded rather than penalized?

In fact, the carbon tax hike is a form of punishment intended to pressure Canadians into adopting the Liberal's anti-energy agenda. It's wrong!

What I'm hearing from you is that you're tired of the struggle—not the struggles or challenges that come from building, innovating, taking risks, or creating, but the struggle of determining whether or not you can afford enough fresh produce for you and your family, or whether or not you should take that long drive to see your relatives because gas is so expensive, or whether or not you can afford to enroll your kids in sports programs.

It would seem that somewhere along the way, the government lost sight of the very people it's called to serve.

During this difficult time, the government should focus on facilitating the prosperity of Canadians, not hindering them. I will continue to use my voice to advocate for you.



UKRAINE & THE IMPORTANCE OF ENERGY DEVELOPMENT WITHIN CANADA

The world has watched in horror as images and video clips of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, ordered by Russian President Vladimir Putin, have taken over our news channels and social media feeds.

The invasion is a clear violation of international law, the UN Charter, and the rights of Ukraine to sovereignty, territorial integrity, freedom and democracy.

This horrible crisis in Europe has illuminated the fact that national security and energy security go hand-in-hand.

Currently, much of Europe is dependent on Russian oil and gas. Sadly, because our current government is opposed to building energy infrastructure, instead of being able to import oil and gas from Canada, European countries are left with no other option than to purchase from Russia and thereby fund President Putin's war machine.

While the United States, Australia, and several other countries have started to boost shipments of liquid natural gas (LNG) to Europe, Canada has been sidelined. Why? Because our government has failed to approve energy projects that would allow us to export LNG from the East coast.

Canada is the fifth-largest producer of natural gas, and yet anti-energy ideologies and environmental activists have left us handcuffed.

This is not just an economical issue; it is an issue of safeguarding humanity. We could be helping the world reduce its dependency on oil from authoritarian regimes like Russia, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela. It is an abdication of responsibility and I dare say, humanity, for Canada, as an energy-rich nation, to withhold this natural resource that has been produced in an ethical and environmentally responsible manner, simply because of our government's ideological opposition to oil and gas.

"This requires a pragmatic approach to building energy projects in Canada so we can help safeguard the world from authoritarian regimes that have little regard for the inherent value of human life."

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EMERGENCIES ACT

On February 14th, the Prime Minister did something unprecedented in our nations' history. He invoked the never-before used Emergencies Act to quash a peaceful demonstration in Ottawa.

Undoubtedly, the thousands of Canadians who gathered in the nation's capital to call for an end to COVID mandates were getting on the Prime Minister's nerves. This is especially the case because they were drawing attention to the fact that Canada's Chief Health Officer was calling for a re-examination of restrictions, provinces were starting to lift their mandates, and countries around the world were starting to return to normal, while Mr. Trudeau insisted on digging in his heels.

Because the Prime Minister decided to declare a Public Order emergency under the Emergencies Act, he had to make the case that this was "an emergency that arises from threats to the security of Canada and that is so serious as to be a national emergency."

But here's the rub: the Prime Minister had made up his mind about the protestors well before they arrived on Parliament Hill. He was against the cause and therefore, against the demonstrators. He didn't even try to cloak his disdain for the Freedom Convoy or the participating demonstrators, characterizing them as a "fringe minority" with "unacceptable views" well before they showed up on the streets of Ottawa.

This was not a crisis. In fact, commentators around the world mocked Mr. Trudeau for responding in such an authoritarian manner. Invoking the Emergencies Act was like using a sledgehammer to swat a fly.

Within seven days of invoking the Act, the government had to table a motion in Parliament declaring an emergency and detailing the reasons for its use. Once that motion was tabled, we debated it in the House of Commons and a vote was taken on whether the declaration of emergency would go ahead or be revoked.

With the support of the NDP, the motion passed in the Liberal's favour on the evening of February 21st. Before and after that vote, which allowed for the continuation of emergency powers, there was public outcry across the country and even the world. My colleagues and I received record levels of emails and phone calls from Canadians who felt this was a complete abuse of power.

As public opposition continued to grow, and while the motion was being debated in the Senate Chamber before a final stamp of approval or denial, Mr. Trudeau decided to back down.

Just two days after he had been deceiving an emergency on a scale that threatened national security, he completely changed his tune. This, despite the fact nothing had changed, except the mounting public pressure from people like you.

What we are seeing on a frequent basis is the Prime Minister being exposed as someone who is more concerned about maintaining his position as an authority figure, than ensuring the peace of a nation. The fact that he called a freedom protest "anti-government" is very telling.

The Prime Minister has always had a choice between demonstrating statesmanship or gamesmanship. With this recent move, we can see once again he is engaging in gamesmanship for political advantage at great cost to the nation.

A SPECIAL COMMITTEE FOR REVIEW

Built into the Emergencies Act is a provision that requires a special committee to be formed with Members of Parliament and Senators to review the exercise of powers and the performance of duties used under the invocation of the Emergencies Act. Fundamentally, the committee is charged with the task of determining where or not its use was justified.

This is an important step but one the government is exploiting. The Emergencies Act dictates that the special committee should be composed mostly of MPs from opposition parties to ensure vigorous analysis and accountability.

In a healthy democracy, the government cannot be allowed to police itself. Yet, of the three co-chairs, not one will be a member of the Official Opposition. The Liberals have solidified the makeup of this committee in a manner that should concern even the least suspecting person.

Although my Conservative colleagues on the committee will do their best to hold the Liberals to account for their unjustified power grab, we remain concerned the Liberals, with their NDP allies who voted to give the Prime Minister unprecedented power, are now trying to avoid scrutiny and cover up the fact that the government never needed these powers in the first place.

If this concerns you, please take a moment to write a one sentence email to the Prime Minister:

justin.trudeau@parl.gc.ca

BILL C-11: MORE GOVERNMENT CONTROL AND LESS CHOICE FOR CANADIANS

Whenever we see government attempt to exert more control over the lives of Canadians, we should be on high alert.

Many have classified the internet as the new public square. A place where people are free to speak, debate, share, listen, critique, and learn from one another. This space is unique in that it allows for connections to be made irrespective of geographical location. It is truly amazing!

The internet has given us the opportunity to learn about different cultures, enjoy music from all over the world, find recipes from the 1600's, and learn how to maintain an urban garden, or change a flat tire.

Creators have been empowered to reach a global audience and viewers are able to access pretty much anything they wish. Who could have predicted, even thirty years ago, the vast reach individuals would have through the internet, or the success artists would enjoy on various digital platforms? It is something remarkable and, I believe, something we should protect.

Why, you might ask, does this new public square need to be protected? Quite simply, because the Liberal government is not comfortable with this vast space of open communication existing outside of its control.

There are tens-of-thousands of digital first creators and artists in Canada who have found a way to capitalize on this new system of digital communication. They have built businesses and exported their art around the globe.

country to apply its broadcasting act to the internet. In effect, Bill C-11 will put in place an "Internet Czar"—the CRTC—which will govern how easily creators are able to make their content accessible online, and how easily viewers can access it. If that sounds alarming, it's because it is!

It's important to note that the Broadcasting Act was never meant to regulate the internet, which is infinite. The Broadcasting Act was written for the purposes of regulating public television and radio programming.

The Liberals claim that bringing more government intervention through bureaucratic regulation will boost the Canadian arts and culture sector, but tell me about a time in history where more red tape and regulation has increased innovation, incentivized artistic creation, or prosperity. You cannot because it does not.

The Liberals assure us this bill will protect and promote Canadian culture, but in actuality, it will prevent Canadian creatives from being able to organically gain and maintain a following. And it will give bureaucrats the authority to decide what you should be watching and listening to.

The government, through the CRTC, will dictate what is "Canadian" enough to be kept on page one of your YouTube search, and what has to be bumped to page 53. In other words, the CRTC will choose which creators get to succeed and which do not. It will be up to government-instructed bureaucrats to pick winners and losers.

In effect, the government will act as the arbiter of what you should and should not wish to watch based on a convoluted definition of how "Canadian" the content is. Talk about a heavy-handed approach and a direct imposition on your freedom to choose.

Canadian digital first creators are hitting it out of the park without any intervention, strings-attached support, or regulation from the government. Bill C-11 is a solution looking for a problem that doesn't exist.

Digital first creators are against this bill because they do not want the government getting in the way of their potential. Canadian viewers are concerned because they do not want the government to limit their viewing choice.

I am saying NO to government deciding what is best for Canadians to produce and view, and YES to Canadian artists and Canadian consumers choosing for themselves. If you agree with me, please take a moment to write a two-word email to the Heritage minister, Mr. Rodriguez: "No C-11!" He can be emailed here: hon.pablo.rodriguez@pch.gc.ca

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Want more frequent updates?
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NO STAMP NEEDED