



OFFICE OF THE PARLIAMENTARY BUDGET OFFICER
BUREAU DU DIRECTEUR PARLEMENTAIRE DU BUDGET

November 20, 2020

The Honourable Diane Lebouthillier
Minister of National Revenue
555 MacKenzie Avenue
Ottawa, ON K1A 0L5

cra.minister-ministre.arc@cra-arc.gc.ca

Information Request: IR0565

Dear Minister Lebouthillier:

As you are likely aware, the Parliamentary Budget Officer (PBO) provides independent and non-partisan analysis to the Senate and to the House of Commons about matters related to the nation's finances and the economy, the estimates, certain other government documents, and the cost of proposals. In carrying out my mandate, I often require information held by government departments and Crown corporations and I am entitled to free and timely access – subject to limited exceptions – to such information under section 79.4 of the *Parliament of Canada Act*.

I am currently undertaking an analysis pursuant to paragraph 79.2(1)(a) of the *Parliament of Canada Act*, which mandates the PBO to prepare reports analyzing the following federal government documents: (i) a budget tabled by or on behalf of the Minister of Finance; (ii) an economic and fiscal update or statement issued by the Minister of Finance; (iii) a fiscal sustainability report issued by the Minister of Finance; (iv) the estimates of the government for a fiscal year.

For this analysis, I am requesting information on the number of Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) recipients for all the claim periods since inception of the program, delineated by:

- The week of the first payment;
- The number of weeks claimed;
- The total amount paid;
- The age, sex and marital status of the recipients, and
- The number of dependents.

I would also request information delineated by the province of residence and the previous year's income (for example, grouped by income ranges of \$10,000, with a maximum of \$150,000) as well as 2018's income. The data should represent an accurate history of CERB (CRA & EI) payments, including potential higher payments, which permits one to determine how much was spent for the entirety of the CERB program to date. Alternatively, transaction level data including the above information could be an acceptable substitute.

In order to provide the analysis to parliamentarians in a timely manner, I ask the information to be provided to my office no later than **December 11, 2020**. If access to the requested information cannot be granted by that date, a response must be provided by you or the Commissioner as soon as possible.

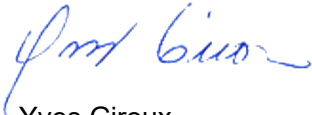
Should you or your staff have any questions about this information request, the analyst responsible, Louis Perrault can be contacted directly at Louis.Perrault@parl.gc.ca, 613-292-7426.

Attached is a reply form. It too should be filled out and returned by December 11, 2020, whether or not you provide access to the requested information. Should you refuse to provide access to the requested information, you or the Commissioner must provide a written justification for the refusal as required under section 79.41 of the *Parliament of Canada Act*.

The response letter will be posted on the PBO website and, therefore, it should not be marked "confidential". As well, the requested information should be attached separately. If this information is confidential, please clearly mark it as such, either on the electronic spreadsheet or the hard copy version.

Providing timely and effective analysis to the Senate and House of Commons and promoting greater budget transparency and accountability are the PBO's primary objectives. The degree to which this is possible depends, to a large extent, on free and timely access to quality information held by government departments. In doing so, you are assisting us in better serving the Senate, the House of Commons, and their members.

Yours sincerely,



Yves Giroux
Parliamentary Budget Officer

c.c.: Antoine Brunelle-Côté, Privy Council Office, Assistant Secretary to the Cabinet,
Liaison Secretariat for Macroeconomic Policy
Bob Hamilton, Commissioner of Revenue and Chief Executive Officer, Canada Revenue
Agency

Attachment: Reply form for IR0565