



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

February 5, 2021

The Honourable Joyce Murray
Minister of Digital Government
90 Elgin Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0R5

digitalgov.min.gouvnumerique@tbs-sct.gc.ca

Information Request: IR0584

Dear Minister Murray:

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.

I am requesting data regarding measures taken by your organization in response to COVID-19. Specifically, I am seeking data on the Canadian Digital Service (COVID-19 funding in the Fall Economic Statement 2020), notably how this measure is being used (e.g. how many individuals/organizations are using the measure) and the associated dollar amounts. If this measure includes transfer payments, I am also requesting additional details on the use of funds.

Ideally, I would like this data to be provided on a weekly basis. However, if this is not feasible, please provide as frequently as possible.

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 **February 19, 2021**. If access to the requested information cannot be granted by that date, a response must be provided by you or the Secretary of the Treasury Board as soon as possible.

Should you or your staff have any questions about this information request, the analyst responsible, Jason Stanton can be contacted directly at Jason.Stanton@parl.gc.ca, 613-790-1457.

Attached is a reply form. It too should be filled out and returned by February 19, 2021, whether or not you provide access to the requested information. Should you refuse to provide access to the requested information, you or the Secretary of the Treasury Board 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
Peter Wallace, Secretary of the Treasury Board of Canada

Attachment: Reply form for IR0584