



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

August 10, 2020

The Honourable Diane Lebouthillier  
Minister of National Revenue  
555 MacKenzie Avenue  
Connaught Building, 7th Floor  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0L5

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

Information Request: IR0517

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 data regarding measures taken by your organization in response to COVID-19. Specifically, for each measure announced, as well as any future measures, I am seeking data on how this measure is being used (e.g. how many individuals/organizations are using the measure) and the associated dollar amounts. If any measures include transfer payments, I am also requesting additional details on the use of funds.

For example:

- Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB)
  - Number of weekly CERB claims
  - Payment amounts
- Increasing the Canada Child Benefit
  - Number and amount of CCB payments
- Special Goods and Services Tax credit payment
  - Number and amount of GST credit payments

- Extra time to file income tax returns
  - Number of individuals deferring filing of income taxes
  - Deferral amounts

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 **August 24, 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, Jason Stanton can be contacted directly at [Jason.Stanton@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Jason.Stanton@parl.gc.ca), 613-790-1457.

Attached is a reply form. It too should be filled out and returned by August 24, 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 IR0517