



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

November 13, 2020

The Honourable Carla Qualtrough  
Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion  
140 Promenade du Portage  
Gatineau, QC K1A 0J9

Carla.Qualtrough@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca

Information Request: IR0549

Dear Minister Qualtrough:

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. If any measures include transfer payments, I am also requesting additional details on the use of funds.

The measures for which I am seeking information include the following, by Branch:

Learning Branch:

- Canada Student Loans Program Enhancement for loan year 2020-2021
  - Number of loans and associated dollar amounts
  
- Moratorium on Canada Student Loan Repayments
  - Number and amount of suspended student loan payments

Skills and Employment Branch:

- Youth Employment and Skills Development Programs
  - List of programs receiving funding and associated dollar amounts
- Support for the Temporary Foreign Worker Program
  - Number of payments and associated dollar amounts
- Addressing the Outbreak of COVID-19 among Temporary Foreign Workers on Farms
  - Number of payments and associated dollar amounts
- Personal Support Worker Training and Other Measures to Address Labour Shortages in Long-Term and Home Care
  - Number of payments and associated dollar amounts
- Supporting Provincial and Territorial Job Training Efforts as Part of COVID-19 Economic Recovery
  - Dollar amounts transferred to provinces and territories to date
  - Details on the use of transferred funds
- Waiving the Employment Insurance Waiting Period for People in Imposed Quarantine
  - Dollar amounts used to date

Income Security and Social Development Branch:

- Support for persons with disabilities
  - Number of Payments made and associated dollar amounts

Public Affairs and Stakeholder Relations Branch:

We were also informed by the Privy Council Office that they will be transferring funds to your department as part of the COVID-19 Communications and Marketing campaign. Could you please provide data on the dollar amounts used to date?

Finally, I am requesting the amounts spent to date on the Support for a Safe Restart in Indigenous Communities COVID-19 measure for which your organization is receiving \$63.9 million pursuant to the *Public Health Events of National Concern Payments Act*.

- Dollar amounts used to date

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 **December 11, 2020**. If access to the requested information cannot be granted by that date, a response must be provided by you or your deputy minister as soon as possible.

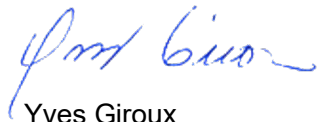
Should you or your staff have any questions about this information request, the analyst responsible, Jill Giswold can be contacted directly at [Jill.Giswold@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Jill.Giswold@parl.gc.ca), 613-297-3856.

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 your deputy minister 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  
Graham Flack, Deputy Minister, Employment and Social Development Canada

Attachment: Reply form for IR0549