

SMG: More about today's infrastructure announcement and the federal budget

January 27, 2009

Hi again,

Erin and I wanted to reconnect with you one more time tonight about today's federal budget.

First, you'll find attached an SMG press release that includes some framing messages to help you with your communications. It's critical that we create a wave of regional communications about this new infrastructure initiative because this is how it will be implemented - through Canada's regional development agencies.

Secondly, there was an important boost to Special Olympics Canada in the budget (up to \$1.5million annually) that will surely help this leading organization in their sport development work with and for Canadians with intellectual disabilities - great news.

Thirdly, there are many related initiatives that we ought to tap into:

- There are so many related infrastructure initiatives that we'll need a day or two to assess (i.e. Will the Green Infrastructure Fund help arenas retrofit with new, clean, green technology? Will the Colleges fund apply to sport and recreation facilities? etc.)
- If you typically hire students to work at your non profit sport organization, you ought to boost your plans for this summer and next. There is an additional \$20m a year in the Canada Summer Jobs program.
- Health outcomes are the priority for the First Nations and Inuit health partnerships - set to the tune of an additional \$305million over two years. Health promoting activities, like sport, physical activity, youth development and such have traditionally been included in the makeup of these programs given the holistic philosophy of Aboriginal health. Let's support our Aboriginal Sport and Recreation groups in accessing these programs.
- Sport Tourism built around Vancouver 2010 got a boost with \$40million over 2 years heading to the Canadian Tourism Commission.
- F-PT governments, Coaches of Canada, Coaching Association of Canada, and provincial coaches associations - take note. There is a new \$50million investment going into a national foreign credential recognition framework. Is this an opportunity for investment in how newcomer coaches can acquire their NCCP certification and/or Ch PC designation?

What we didn't see was any additional progress on tax policy beyond the advancement of the Athlete Trust act in pre-budget work. Nor did we see anything specific around the upcoming major event in Vancouver and bids for Pan Am and FISU games in 2015. Foreign policy and international cooperation received barely a mention. So there is more work for us to do together and more analysis to come.

Lastly, the story behind this budget is also worth telling, that I can attest. Perhaps at the next SMG meeting or, even better, when we gather over coffee or a beer and talk about the future of sport and physical activity, someone should remind me to share some of what I learned in the

lock-up about how this came to be. It's mostly about being there - all of us - about sticking to it and about everyone pitching in for many years. It sure made me appreciate what we are all about.

Good night everyone.

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Senior leader
On behalf of the Sport Matters Group

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