

Department of Finance – Pre-budget Consultations
St. John's
January 29, 2020
In-person session data

Question One: As part of government's continued balanced approach to fiscal management, we have focused on reducing the deficit while also maintaining services. Keeping in mind significant reductions in spending beyond where we are today will have an unavoidable impact on service delivery, tell us in which areas you believe we could find savings.

Health care sector– Suggestions for savings potential:

- It's a hard one. A lot of friends who are nurses, can't see where there could be any cuts.
- If anything, need to add more services – e.g. mental illness.
- Brother died of overdose, family did not know where to go for help.
- Mental illness – kids not getting things out of their heads. No release. Not outside playing.
- Suggest teach kids meditation.
- Ministers/executive budget should be cut 20 percent in Health department, \$165,000 savings.
- People who have vertigo, not enough beds in emergency room. People have to sit on chairs and wait for long periods of time.
- Providing services to areas with no revenue coming back from there – why would they have a complete hospital structure and then have one in Gander? Wastage and duplication of administrative side. Could have one super high quality health facility instead.
- Spending so much on health care and worse outcomes because we don't have a centre of excellence.
- Should have clinics that are operated by doctors not government. In clinics privately owned could have blood collection, x-ray, etc. Would take strain off emergency in hospital. Could rent x-ray machines, etc.
- Greater consolidation of health care facilities.
- Rural mobile medicine.
- Public policy initiatives on health care on prevention.
- Bring four RHAs to one - Example, in Hamilton ON there is one RHA with 18 execs as opposed to 28 with four RHAs.
- Drug spending keeps people healthy and working - 4.8% of the budget.
- Compass Group added costs to Health. Utilize local people rather than contract out to Compass Group. RFP process.
- Efficiency in services and resources virtual medicine/tele medicine, for example, Bonavista rather than traveling to Clarendville for a test result; less of a carbon footprint.
- Utilizing paramedics to offer service – e.g. to change dressings rather than travelling to see a RN in Port Rexton.
- Looking at population vs resources e.g. hospitals. Streamline services, air ambulance, ambulance.

- Government needs to be a little more aggressive regarding amount we are borrowing. Mental health areas would be in terms of government making sure they reach their goal to helping services in the community. Health budget doesn't necessarily need to increase just look at what we are spending. Eg. We are spending over 20% over other provinces and within that nurses and other services are 40% higher. Our focus should be on what other provinces are doing regarding transportation, etc. We can learn from them. We have the skills to do so.
- Health charges for doctor, higher tax for other Government operation
- More has to be done on digital services to core services such as health, transportation, post-secondary, etc. E.g. Grandparents are learning to use user friendly online services but we can also add someone to speak to.
- Alberta – one-stop shop where it's the first point of service for any public programs. There are many cost savings regarding different eliminating all the layers of service. E.g. health/mental health/social services. Avoiding duplication of services.
- Educate people and take responsibility in regard to our province being so high on the mental health and illness (obesity, heart and stroke, etc.).
- Create mobile health care – for example health care bus that can go from community to community – seniors have troubles getting to hospitals, etc. so if there is a mobile service that provides x-rays etc., it could speed up services. A better use of capacity.
- Investments that can be made to bring efficiencies (operational) and save money in the long term.
- Emergency room wait times – has to be a way to speed that up. I don't have an answer however having a doctor on site 24 hours a day could help so that you aren't waiting hours for an on call doctor to show up. Would people wasting less time in a waiting room be a cost saving? Likely an investment. A lot of people do not have a family doctor which means the number of people utilizing emergency in higher.

Education sector – Suggestions for savings potential:

- Custodians in schools get 24 sick days a year. Should be reduced.
- Some IRTs have one student for the whole day. Suggest these positions have more than one student.
- Amalgamate school districts with the Department of Education. Huge administrative savings.
- Have not addressed the issue of school closures. Example: LaScie – has two schools, could have one, Robert's Arm/Pilley's Island – has three schools – could reduce to one. Bell Island similar.
- Busing is done by school boards in some areas of the province.
- Sell buses to private industry.
- People with disabilities – can't even get interviews.
- Need to force the employers to hire people with disabilities.
- Need a distinct program to educate people with disabilities.

- Closure of the school for the deaf was a bad thing.
- Some community based schools – fewer student; better ratios; less busing miles and miles – better meeting education standards in smaller facilities.

Post-secondary education sector – Suggestions for savings potential:

- Province really needs to look at the whole funding model.
- Memorial - Province gives \$145 million, a tuition grant \$64 million, \$9 million construction, \$74 million on loans and grants, \$6.4 million to deliver the student loans.
- Can we start from scratch, look at different ways to offer quality education at less cost.
- Management, need to have a look at whole system. Trim staff.
- Tuition increases should be considered. But need to look after whole system.
- MUN has room to increase tuition; MUN is suffering in infrastructure and offerings; be competitive other than tuition.
- If tuition was free or lower they will no longer get tax benefit back.
- Increase revenue services for large corporations.
- When money is transferred for education can we airmark where it is going? E.g. Low income families, etc. and being spent correctly.
- Many jobs in this province require degrees, etc. and some families cannot afford to do that and that then decreases the potential.
- We want international students to attend post-secondary in our province but it is three times more expensive.
- There are long wait lists for programs at college level – maybe have another course to fall back on while waiting.

Other social sector (Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development; Department of Justice and Public Safety; and NL Housing) – Suggestions for savings potential:

- Wouldn't cut anything.
- A lot of people in rural NL on social assistance, staff fear losing the volume of clients because that would reduce staff. More staff not necessary.
- Reduce the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development's transportation and communication budget - would save \$100,000, executive support.
- Taxis for drug addiction appointments cost a lot of money. Is there a cheaper way. Free bus pass suggested.
- Number of people receiving social services needs to be looked at. E.g. there are cases when mother doesn't put father's name of birth certificate, who is working, to receive more benefits.
- We have the second lowest minimum wage. If individuals made more money they would spend it back into the economy.
- Break the circle of poverty issues, health and wellness.

Other general sector (Departments of: Finance; Service NL and Executive Council; Pensions) – Suggestions for savings potential:

- Booking appointments at Motor Vehicle Registration (MVR) is best thing government has ever done.
- Service NL spends \$489,000 on printing services. Move a lot of that online and have people print things themselves.
- Forms should be PDF editable forms.
- Offering service in rural parts of the province. Urban offerings and streamlining.
- Hard cap vs soft cap – consistency in serving resources for the same population.
- Privatizing agencies e.g. NLC, liquor distribution centres.
- Municipal assessment agency – taxation should be income based; cost sharing process; redistribute them.
- Underground economy – government needs to take control of that economy. For example, homes. No incentive for a homeowner not to pay under the table. How do you take control? Offer incentives to the public to repair your house etc. above board. You could write off a portion because you are employing people and government will receive the taxes.

Transportation and Works – Suggestions for savings potential:

- Would it be more efficient to have causeways vs ferries – ongoing challenge for all rural communities. How do you develop an acceptable level of service to a spread out population is difficult.
- Give communities more access to revenue generated by the services. Have sale taxes etc., flow into municipal governments. Give communities more ability and decision making abilities.
- Many municipalities do not qualify for gas tax rebate because of conflicts of interest, lack of man power, etc. Better utilization of tax bases from a municipal governance perspective to be more self-reliant. Shift to regional governance structure.
- Highways should be done by private contractors – snow clearing.
- Ferry service – spend same amount as on the highways.
- One ferry is going seven days a week for 140 people.
- Limit the schedule – e.g. three times a week - privatize.
- Built ferry for Bell Island and it's no good – didn't build the dock for it.

Other resource sector (Departments of: Fisheries and Land Resources; Natural Resources; and Tourism, Culture, Industry and Innovation) – Suggestions for savings potential:

- Attrition plan is not working – the assumption that bumping affects young people. What affects young people is that there is no opportunities. Current process for attrition is not working.
- Tourism – this past year we have lost airlines to this province. Need to recruit more airlines. Need a transportation system that is directly to and from NL. Give incentive back to tourists and not the airline corporations.
- Privatize Nalcor.

Question Two: Considering the sources of government revenue, where do you think government can increase its revenues and how do you think we can achieve this?

- NLC – makes huge profits, should give more to the province.
- NLC helping cause addictions, money from sales be used in that area.
- Government gets taxes from NLC, why not privatize it.
- Fees and fines – figure out a way to enforce it more and get people to pay.
- Film industry should be explored. Great potential
- Return the vehicle inspection fee – safety and revenue.
- Revenue from Summer Games, tax people who are going to use the new facilities. Legacy fund.
- Resettlement should be considered for small communities with small populations and using provincially funded ferries.
- Housing costs. Lower rent. Reduce rent or have government pay for some of rent for low income.
- Need for social housing or threshold needs to be looked at.
- Need to be more accessible and cleaner.
- NL Housing – some places are “a dump.”
- Metrobus – decrease cost of a bus pass – more people will take the bus and people will go out more.
- School Lunch – gets little support from government.
- Social enterprise is a great opportunity and supports our social programs.
- Pet food industry – could use bi-products of fishery.
- Big on aquaculture industry – not one pound of food fed to the aquaculture is made in NL. Thousands of pounds fed to the salmon every day.
- Recouping outstanding fines and fees (e.g. speeding tickets).
- Clear cut forest industry – Need to plant trees there.
- Tell people they can pay off your debt by planting trees.
- Won't get feedback now but will years down the road,
- Three or four fees that people have to pay but end up on credit card that can't pay off. Should be different fees for people for different income levels.
- Training for people in the province for people with disabilities. There is Empower program but people can't get jobs. People who are deaf have to travel to Washington for a post-secondary degree.
- Potential to educate people with disabilities and then the potential for the economy.
 - If put secondary school in the School for the Deaf then could use the money to put into the schools in the community to keep kids in their own community.
- Port du Grave – Government pays to clear snow but gets nothing back.
- Have a provincial residential tax assessment rather than municipal.
- Pitts Memorial – done by Provincial Government, Southlands by St. John's, Mount Pearl by City of Mount Pearl.
- Example: North River pay \$300 per year. St. John's pays thousands.
- Province has the revenue, needs to focus on spending; spend within our means.
- Life sciences – best research facility at MUN medical school.

- The Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information (NLCHI) – data is the new commodity – population based studies; pilot projects and then replicated worldwide; share of knowledge and resources – global research.
- Collection of taxes, fees, fines.
- Companies looking for places for bitcoin energy services.
- Increase hydro electricity.
- Gull island – sell.
- Interprovincial transmission of electricity and the link.
- Virtual education and services worldwide.
- Tourism – flights into the province, entrepreneurship in rural communities e.g. – Bonaville. Stephenville, Labrador, Battle Harbour - information sharing, lessons learned.
- Invest in youth – entrepreneurship program for tourism.
- Reduce red tape for entrepreneurs and make the opportunities without sacrificing the environment.
- Gensis Centre, business school, engineering school.
- Transportation systems such as metro bus, private vehicles, etc. for families who do not have a vehicle to social gatherings, church, school functions. Take the DD off the road and remove their vehicle ownership and place it with the government who can then use these vehicles to transport those who are ill, less fortunate, etc.
- Looking at the success of other jurisdictions.
- Adding sugar tax and other incentives that will help individuals as well (Tax benefits for healthy lifestyles).
- Increasing larger tax brackets for those large and successful companies in the province. What are other jurisdictions doing from a tax point of view.
- Focus on improving incomes. When you have money you spend right back into the economy. Win Win!
- Rate 'minimal wage' depending on the family's situation. Students can be one rate, single parent can be a little larger.
- Muskrat Falls – have heard very little about the plus side when it is finished. It must be a revenue generator. We will get money from upper Churchill before we make money from lower Churchill.
- Bull arm site - one of many sites in the world like that – when they have to service the rigs towed to Norway for service and repair – how can we put the capacity in place to do the work in NL.
- Create progressive tax system on high income earners. E.g. NB you pay 20% and their economies don't suffer because of it.
- NR – if NL drilled one and owned a rig 100% instead of getting 5% royalties - would government consider putting a rig out there and drill to generate its own revenue.
- Water – NL have a number of rivers – we could bottle the water – generate jobs and could sell to other countries.
- Offshore gas – have tonnes of natural gas - what are we doing there. All focus on oil no talk of natural gas. Should be talked about.

- Population increase - many educated people from across the world looking for somewhere to go – if we could find a way to expedite immigration that could help create revenue.
- Immigration is probably the easiest way to grow tax base and making NL more friendly/attractive for newcomers – and making it easier to come here. Remove the barriers. Immigration process in USA puts emphasis on families. In Canada we base it a lot on merits and skills. Getting immigrants to come here is easier than keeping those people – should put focus on the latter.

Question Three: Please list any other areas you believe government should focus spending on new programs or services or improvements to existing ones, if government can afford to do so.

- School Lunch Association – 36 schools. Hygiene, team building, balanced eating. Kitchen is learning experience. They need more money. They do charge and have small revenue. Fundraise \$400,000 a year. \$100,000 from the province. If children learn to take care of themselves now, they will less medical care when they grow older.
- Mental health investment needed. Long wait lists. Money to help reduce wait lists – people need to have help now. Facility in Corner Brook, Humberwood, needs to be closer, majority of those suffering live on East Coast.
- Adoption area instead of abortion. Abortion clinics will be a thing of the past in a few years.
- On adoption side don't have any incentive. We have a population problem with the province if had an incentive for adoption.
- Fertility rates are very low. Could provide incentives for people to adopt.
- School Lunch Program.
- If spent more money would have more kids in school
- Affordable child care – more families would have children or more children. Having affordable childcare – would keep more people working.
- Government provides some services. There are non-profit organizations throughout the province that do a better job than anyone else providing the same services. Increase investment in social programs. Get a better service and return. Then get services that are in the community.
- Investment in RDSP – registered disability savings plan – program is not promoted. Needs to be promoted more.
- Should invest in more recovery programs. Recovery centre in CBS. Need more programs.
- Increased funding in the drug budget; know there are improved outcomes; quantified results; need an increase to give better access to drugs for the people of the province; better health care and quality of life.
- Capital Infrastructure – broad band, roads, transport links.
- Increased funding for the school lunch program; flat give but the program has increased over the years; corporate and parental donations down since the downturn of the economy.

- Education – School Lunch Program, increase physical education – healthy the student the better performer, long term benefits, kids walking to school where safe – long term prevention.
- Address the wellness issue of the province – invest in youth.
- Badger to PAB – highway – lower cost of commodities.
- More investment in post-secondary education – get rid of tuition freeze – better infrastructure, quality of learning, investment in seed programs, no more tuition and MUN needs to get their books in order.
- Increasing mental health support including housing.
- Long-term planning. If there is no long-term plan and process for those with disabilities and increase their knowledge to know what is available.
- Eastern Health giving more support in dementia.
- Post-secondary tuition. Tuition should be increased but not affect the amount of students. Create more grants, unrepayable loans. Education is going to be the highest factor in which will tell if our province will succeed in the future. And if immigrants come to this province for education we need to insure they stay.
- In terms of a good education system that we may not paying attention to is the large amount of drop outs in elementary system and junior high.
- Lack of education creates mental health problems, crime, poverty.
- Spending more on the environment, tourism marketing.
- Eg. Media coverage from Blizzard 2020 and how the province came together.
- Student loans – if NL took over loans and had students pay loans back to provincial government vs federal government could create revenue.
- An educated population creates a richer population. Make an investment in “earned” education / performance grants. If they stay here to go to school here make there a reason to stay here after school. When student graduate and stays/lives in NL for two years then give them an incentive of an “earned grant”.
- Child care is a major way to attractive new working families/ newcomers usually bring a family with them. If child care is not a concern then more chance to get the parents in the workforce. Low hanging fruit.
- More emphasis on local business. Local business are the backbone and the people that work in them, make it easier for them, government has a leadership role in terms of procurement and services, etc. new products that are innovative.
- A living wage is good to stimulate the economy. Puts more disposable income in the economy. Low income earners aren’t spending their money away they are going down the street and spending that at local stores.
- Minimum wage affects government – would like to see continuous minimum wage increases and a living wage.
- Tax cuts for lowest income earners.
- Investing in the green economy. Is an opportunity that is slowly going to pass us by. Are all in on oil but are so many opportunities with the green economy. Oil is important but there is a balance.

Question Four: Government has committed to support the private sector by fostering the growth of high-potential industries and promoting economic diversification. In recent years, we have released action plans through The Way Forward in the areas of oil and gas, mining, aquaculture, agriculture, technology, tourism and entertainment, forestry and health care. Are there any other industries where government should focus resources and attention to create jobs and stimulate economic growth?

- We need upscale people who are unemployed to be able to work in tech sector. Need to examine what training is needed, and match up with unemployed people and train them. Verafin had to open an office in Toronto because there were not enough people training in NL to do the jobs.
- More communication needed for students – just to let them know what jobs are available – e.g. you could do graphic design, do three weeks more training and be interface designer.
- Not all tech jobs are coding – need to diversify workforce in the tech sector.
- Local food sourcing.
- Film industry – there is so much potential.
- Need more opportunities here so people do not have to go away to work - rotation work.
- Putting money into the community sector.
- Department of Health – wants navigators across the province. Better off to put money into the community sector, in the communities. Will have a better return and will be able to employ more people. Need community buy-in.
- Accessibility to get anywhere. No way of people to get where they need to be. Buildings downtown are not accessible.
- Accessibility legislation is coming.
- Interpreter services.
- If you take a service and put it out in the community instead of in government. Efficiencies can be recognized.
- Interpreter services - Need more interpreters
- Aquaculture industry.
- Impact benefits agreements – has to be an impact benefits.
- Manufacturing.
 - Pet food, fish food (salmon food)
 - Gisborne Lake
- Seal Industry.
- Need to be creative.
 - Find a market for different things.
 - Rodrigues winery – can't produce enough for New York, etc.
- Life sciences – med school.
- Non-monetary – invest in immigrants and students from other places to stay and work with different backgrounds, education. Making post-secondary lucrative to draw people to the province.
- Sustainable energy – wind energy, solar energy – need to change monopoly on the grid through legislation.

- Invest in local contractors and people rather than mainland companies.
- Local component for RFP process.
- Work with federal government to change interprovincial rules – Quebec can bid on work in NL but not vice versa.
- Electricity transmission.
- Wine making – liquor production, craft beer, ciders interprovincial trade.
- Investment in agriculture – keep funding the agriculture.
- Medical research.
- More supply and demand.
- Food security. Teach locals the importance of purchasing locally.
- Education and training to support each of those trades.
- Fits into the non taxing and others are coming into the provinces that is being generated by wealth by NL but going out of the province.
- Agriculture needs to succeed so we can sell good natural food locally.
- Tourism sector investments e.g. Fogo.
- Home care sector, we do not have enough training and investments.
- Training people to be able to provide the appropriate services in those sectors.
- Keep rural NL rural and then support people and train them so they can stay in the province.
- Every community in this province exist because of local natural resources (e.g. paper mill, fish plants, etc.).
- Tourism is huge – don't need to make it more attractive, need to make it easier for people to get here and more accessible – roads/transportation are terrible and damaging motorhomes for example and discouraging repeat visitors.
- Air BnB's – a lot of people are staying in air BnB's so that they have more money to spend at stores in the community/city instead of spending all of their money on hotel rates.
- Power rates – scared to how they are going to operate their business with the uncertainty of power rates. Government is not being transparent and telling us what we can expect in the future. That level of anxiety is likely contributing to the outmigration. Business community is going through mass exodus because of the uncertainty. A lot of businesses are closing up shop and moving in. Government needs to find a way to support small businesses. If government is committed to supporting the private sector needs to give businesses more certainty.
- Investment in immigration and retention. A way to increase speed of getting people here and invest in their cultures so that they will stay where they feel like home.
- Government is hitting their immigration targets because their targets are extremely low. Need to increase those targets. As soon as immigrants get here they are immediately impacting the economy.

Department of Finance – Pre-budget Consultations
Happy Valley-Goose Bay
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Question One: As part of government's continued balanced approach to fiscal management, we have focused on reducing the deficit while also maintaining services. Keeping in mind significant reductions in spending beyond where we are today will have an unavoidable impact on service delivery, tell us in which areas you believe we could find savings.

Health care sector– Suggestions for savings potential:

- Handled a lot of MTAP program – we've look at the last 5 years breaking it down anonymously. Specialist services that are only in St. John's. Is it possible to have specialists come here instead?
- Patients having to go to St. John's – local resident went to St. John's for a cardiology appointment. The doctor used a stethoscope, patted him on the back and told him he was good to go. Trips are very costly for patients – could some of this been done locally? Over video conference? We need more specialists here.
- Not a new issue – we've been talking about this for years.
- Instead of bringing out 20 people from Makkovik, 10 people from Postville – etc. to the dentist, it would be cheaper for the dentist (or other specialist) to be the one doing the travel.
- File management on this also needs improvement.
- We'll be back here again next year talking about the same thing
- We talked about it last year.
- This is happening not just to people from the coast – also happening to people from other areas.
- Literally go in for 5 minute long appointment.
- You're in for 3-5 days for a consultation that literally takes 5 minutes.
- Staying in a hotel/meals, etc.
- By the time you get home, do the paperwork and then wait 3 months to get the claim back from MTAP back, you're out money.
- No need to go in for pre-op appointment 3 or 4 days before a procedure – they should be able to see you the day before.
- Also need to consider future care costs – if a patient has non-critical illness (e.g. dental issue), they may not travel to get it fixed/addressed, because it is so expensive to travel. That issue won't get better, and their costs, later, will be higher because they didn't go see a doctor when the issue first arose.
- Need increased video conference for education.
- Need increased funding for mental health – more mental health supports is shown to often decrease other costs in healthcare and lost work days.

Education sector – Suggestions for savings potential:

- Participant advocates for more spending in education.

- There are arguments to be made for having resources in place for students – especially for students with needs outside the norm.
- Facilities maintenance.
- Many schools are older buildings. Repairs are costly. This may not be received well, but we need to look at consolidation of schools. If you have 20 students in two buildings 20 kilometres apart, it's not the most economical way to do things.
- Procurement – every time you do a repair, have to order a part/supply from St. John's. That part/supply becomes so much more expensive because you have to order it and pay shipping on it, when it could have been ordered locally with no shipping charge.
- Because the school board has a standing offer with some companies.
- Participant noted that he believes that not many people in Labrador will be able to tell you how to save money, because they want to see improvements. And they usually cost money.

Post-secondary education sector – Suggestions for savings potential:

- No comments.

Other social sector (Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development; Department of Justice and Public Safety; and NL Housing) – Suggestions for savings potential:

- Housing – high demand – supply low here.
 - General Note on work in Labrador (after housing was mentioned) - the window of opportunity to do work is short – contractors need to be here when the window is open because doing work here is different. Circumstances are different in every way – transportation/weather/etc.

Other general sector (Departments of: Finance; Service NL and Executive Council; Pensions) – Suggestions for savings potential:

- Service NL - Same issue as health specialists – electrical Inspector was taken out of Goose Bay. Contractors have to wait for electrical inspector to come in from Corner Brook.

Transportation and Works – Suggestions for savings potential:

- No comments.

Other resource sector (Departments of: Fisheries and Land Resources; Natural Resources; and Tourism, Culture, Industry and Innovation) – Suggestions for savings potential:

- People on the south coast thought they wouldn't get a gravel road. We've been told/promised so many things.
- "Road down to the straits will be paved by the end of next year."
- PC/Lib have both said "We can't look at the north coast until the straits is paved."

- Now the only thing everyone is talking about is a fixed link. – what about the people on the north coast?
- Government is making millions of dollars on every trip going into Voisey's Bay, but in Nain, 11 kilometres away, they can't get someone who is dying out of there in the night.
- Continuing to offload and divest properties and unused infrastructure and combine infrastructure resources for efficiencies.

Question Two: Considering the sources of government revenue, where do you think government can increase its revenues and how do you think we can achieve this?

- Some discussions around outstanding fines – the amounts owing are decreasing.
 - There is more cooperation between jurisdictions (e.g. if someone moves here from Alberta and they have fines outstanding there, we don't re-register their license until they pay, and vice-versa).
- Enticing industries to develop in the province.
 - Lot of open space, land-based industries.
- What about wood? Participant told a story about a man who was fined for taking 11 sticks of wood out. However, when the government/Nalcor did the road, there were hundreds of thousands of cords of wood left to rot.
 - That could have been brought out and sold - the focus was on the cost of removing it vs. the value it had (because there was great value in that wood).
- Wind.
- Agricultural industry.
 - We don't want to see everything wiped out, but there are sustainable ways to develop industry.
 - We need to be looking at generating revenue that will help with our deficit.
- If you bring industry in, people will stay, they will add to the economy. But it has to be sustainable and sensible – we can't have telemarketers come in and leave after a little while.
- Job creation for importing.
- Government has got to take time to go into communities and talk about industry impacts beyond just the money.
 - The effects it will have on communities.
 - Addictions issues.
 - Roads torn to pieces.
- We have to borrow money to fix these roads.
 - There was a Capacity agreement (made with a previous Government) – We've been trying to get extension to this capacity agreement to help fix the issues we have experienced.
- MYSA – community thermostats.
- Hey Orca, etc.
 - How do we find these young minds? Small investment, big returns.

Question Three: Please list any other areas you believe government should focus spending on new programs or services or improvements to existing ones, if government can afford to do so.

- NOTE ON POLLING – participants noted that education wasn't given as an option for this question.
 - We just spent time talking about how important education is, how keeping bright minds is so important, and education/post-secondary education is **THE ONLY SECTION NOT INCLUDED** in this prioritization list.
 - This should be a choice to prioritize and add numerical supports.
- We need to be looking at services and figuring out better ways to do it at a lower cost to government.
 - It's less expensive to have a helicopter on standby for some communities than it is to have a ferry running constantly.
- Memorial University campus in Labrador.
 - We are the University in Canada with the most cuts.
 - We are the major economic driver of teaching young people, growing the brain trust.
 - Least supportive group for a campus in Labrador is government.
 - We have funding from private companies, indigenous governments, federal governments, etc. but the provincial government will not invest in MUN in Labrador.
- 300 students/year .
- 30 new positions – high paying, good jobs.
- University campuses keep people in place – an educated population increases economic growth and social health.
- Revenue generating conference centre, education opportunities
- MOUS with other Northern Universities
- We have support from NG, NCC, Innu Nation, Town of HV-GB Combined councils. We are recognized nationally and internationally, and the only group who won't come to the table is the provincial government.
- Professionals here want to continue their education, but cannot do it because they don't want to leave.
- Revenue coming in.
- There are mental health benefits of young people having to leave home to go to school.
- They would stay here/help grow the economy.
- Education has never been funded properly in Labrador – this is a social justice issue.
- In times of fiscal constraint, if you cut education, people will leave – they will get educated elsewhere and they will stay there.
- Labrador is the only growing economy, the only growing population in our province - now is the time to invest in education in Labrador.
- Campuses are proven economic drivers all over the world, this will transform Goose Bay and Labrador.
- Transportation to the north coast. Needs to be addressed.

- We are 6% of the population
 - We contribute SO much to the provincial coffers.
 - Even before the boat service started in February 2018 – I told people about the problems we were going to have.

Question Four: Government has committed to support the private sector by fostering the growth of high-potential industries and promoting economic diversification. In recent years, we have released action plans through The Way Forward in the areas of oil and gas, mining, aquaculture, agriculture, technology, tourism and entertainment, forestry and health care. Are there any other industries where government should focus resources and attention to create jobs and stimulate economic growth?

- Gull Island.
- Uranium mine between Makkovik and Postville to be developed.

Department of Finance – Pre-budget Consultations
Corner Brook
January 30, 2020
In-person session data

Question One: As part of government's continued balanced approach to fiscal management, we have focused on reducing the deficit while also maintaining services. Keeping in mind significant reductions in spending beyond where we are today will have an unavoidable impact on service delivery, tell us in which areas you believe we could find savings.

Health care sector– Suggestions for savings potential:

- Need to re-focus how we deliver health care services such as primary care.
- More investment in new technologies such as telemedicine.
- Need to change and be more modern – opportunity to have a triage away from the hospital where people can be handled more non-life threatening issues.
- Telemedicine can help address doctor shortages – especially in rural.
- Need to focus on the needs and not on the wants.
- Looks at the structure – too much admin? Vs need more nurses?
- Look at other jurisdictions – what are they doing that can work here?
- Example of more responsibilities for pharmacists.
- Too heavy at the executive level in health care – can be reduced. Too many executive levels. We changed/reduced education boards why not health?
- Maybe more nurse practitioners – can help with quicker, more efficient care. Also relieves pressure from health facilities.
- Need to change our thinking about how health care is delivered – is there a better way?
- Generally – our population is very spread out – we need to encourage people to re-locate to larger service hubs and allow for more centralization of services.
- Need to be realistic with how we spend money and deliver services but still need to think about people and the impacts of having to travel to get services.
- Centralization of services is also a stimulant for the economy.

Education sector – Suggestions for savings potential:

- No comments.

Post-secondary education sector – Suggestions for savings potential:

- Essential to grow enrolment and programs.
- Recruitment of international students – also good for addressing the population growth issues.
- Need to provide more supports to international students to allow them to stay here.
- Need to find a way to keep med school grads here.
- Future in tech sector – more focus on this sector in education.
- Need to remove the tuition freeze – use the fees to address education funding issues. Low tuition can also be a negative – perception of a lesser quality education.

Other social sector (Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development; Department of Justice and Public Safety; and NL Housing) – Suggestions for savings potential:

- No comments.

Other general sector (Departments of: Finance; Service NL and Executive Council; Pensions) – Suggestions for savings potential:

- No comments.

Transportation and Works – Suggestions for savings potential:

- Local municipal councils could do some work instead of TW with some financial support. Can do it cheaper and work is good. Done to spec.
- Municipalities can work with TW if they have the capacity – efficiencies in getting things done.
- Department of TW does great work – second to none compared to other provinces.

Other resource sector (Departments of: Fisheries and Land Resources; Natural Resources; and Tourism, Culture, Industry and Innovation) – Suggestions for savings potential:

- More regionalization/centralization of services to find efficiencies.
- Municipalities can work with any government department if they have the capacity – efficiencies in getting things done.

Question Two: Considering the sources of government revenue, where do you think government can increase its revenues and how do you think we can achieve this?

- Maybe need to revisit how equalization is calculated – should not only be based on revenue generation.
- Can't increase taxes and fees.
- Sell Labrador to Canada – no less than \$50B. Would solve all problems in the discussion guide.
- Sell offshore oil and gas rights to Norway for a large upfront sum and future dividends. Still get the servicing of the industry spinoff benefits.
- Need to address our debt issue – interest costs so high.

Question Three: Please list any other areas you believe government should focus spending on new programs or services or improvements to existing ones, if government can afford to do so.

- School bussing – increase 1.6 km boundary.
- Insulin pumps – would provide returns in future in saving to health care.
- Home based care (health care). Is more cost effective.

Question Four: Government has committed to support the private sector by fostering the growth of high-potential industries and promoting economic diversification. In recent years, we have released action plans through The Way Forward in the areas of oil and gas, mining, aquaculture, agriculture, technology, tourism and entertainment, forestry and health care. Are there any other industries where government should focus resources and attention to create jobs and stimulate economic growth?

- Technology sector needs investment.
- Invest in quality of life – but you need a critical mass.
- Encourage people to move to regional hubs.
- Anything the government wishes to invest money in is a new borrowed and we don't have any money – don't borrow to subsidize industry.
- If anyone in the world is interested in building an incinerator – give them the land to do it. Incineration of garbage (not teepee burners) can make money. You can even produce heat from it to be used.

Department of Finance – Pre-budget Consultations
St. Anthony
February 7, 2020
In-person session data

Question One: As part of government's continued balanced approach to fiscal management, we have focused on reducing the deficit while also maintaining services. Keeping in mind significant reductions in spending beyond where we are today will have an unavoidable impact on service delivery, tell us in which areas you believe we could find savings.

Health care sector– Suggestions for savings potential:

- Dialysis at home rather than in hospital; wouldn't have get min numbers; critical mass is too high to get big unit.
- Palliative care not being done in clinics like should be. A lot being done at home.
- Digital health care; videoconference more; a lot of registration and admin for one person who has to do a lot of things.
- Health care app to preregister before you go; save on labour in admin; lower waiting lines.
- Telehealth more.
- More shared record keeping between different health boards; province wide.
- More nursing practitioners; seeing different doctors every time you go; explain same thing over and over.
- Need continuity with patient.
- Tests being done, don't call unless something wrong but should be called regardless.
- Access to patients own reports maybe through the app.
- More streamlined.
- Top heavy, management.
- Issues usually with admin.

Education sector – Suggestions for savings potential:

- A lot of empty buildings departments still paying expenses on. Need to dispose of for minimal price.
- When get low numbers in school consider pilot of looking at moving them to centre with larger school, maybe pay their expenses, etc. cheaper in long run.
- Use distance education more.
- Large busses with very few kids in them.
- Look at types of fleet vehicles.
- Consolidate more schools around the province within area.

Post-secondary education sector – Suggestions for savings potential:

- Convert from diesel to electric.

- Highly smart kids should be sent to school with all expenses paid and they sign contract to come back here to work which will increase population and get people in the jobs; min 5 years work.

Other social sector (Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development; Department of Justice and Public Safety; and NL Housing) – Suggestions for savings potential:

- People who commit non-violent crimes to serve some of their time as community service; help out the nonprofits, etc. They may learn to be a better citizen, experience, etc.
- Use of monitoring bracelets more.
- More safe haven or transition type dwelling in area, not 5 hours away.

Other general sector (Departments of: Finance; Service NL and Executive Council; Pensions) – Suggestions for savings potential:

- Common license plate you would keep forever; stop people driving without insurance, etc.
- Municipal affairs – any money given to towns, etc. should be given directly, eliminate intermediate.
- Share admin across departments.

Transportation and Works – Suggestions for savings potential:

- Piggy back of government with paving.
- Own a lot of old buildings that people don't know; finding out who owns buildings.
- TW should have Crown corporation for pavement; have own people to pave; still option for contractor.

Other resource sector (Departments of: Fisheries and Land Resources; Natural Resources; and Tourism, Culture, Industry and Innovation) – Suggestions for savings potential:

- Crown lands – all lands in municipality belong to town; eliminate some of the paper work; form a inter department committee to meet monthly and see what is needed to get the approvals put through; everyone get together to see what needs to happen to complete the file.
- More available to be done online for crown lands; land atlas – go online to purchase land, etc.
- A disconnect between departments to move things through.
- Provincial governments gets royalty on every tonne of product that comes out of their community.
- Everyone pay same price for gas prices across island.

Question Two: Considering the sources of government revenue, where do you think government can increase its revenues and how do you think we can achieve this?

- Regional government – LSD and unincorporated areas should be paying portion for their services; certain rate for each household, etc. everyone pay equal share

for their services; got to be from the top down; government would pay out less for services overall

- One size doesn't fit all for regional government.
- Immigration.
- Province charge everyone a fee in NL and use it to fund roads, etc. for those not living in municipalities.
- Try to curb the underground economy.
- Enforcement for dumping illegally.

Question Three: Please list any other areas you believe government should focus spending on new programs or services or improvements to existing ones, if government can afford to do so.

- Consolidation of engineering services in one department that towns that can tap into fee for service.
- Government own all properties that falls under their departments, e.g. schools owned by school board.
- More access to different licensing etc. can be done at home; other government services to be done online.
- Fixed link!!!
- Investment in rural area colleges, keep youth in area.
- Some services done in hospital in St. John's should be fanned out to other hospitals, cut down on travel for medical.
- Promote hospitals that can provide services in shorter timeframe.
- Road improvement; government should know what road conditions are like and know that they need to be repaired.
- Infrastructure for towns.
- Economic development to attract businesses.
- Oil and gas industries.
- Increase docking facilities in LAM.
- Investment in strategic areas, World UNESCO sites, key infrastructure.
- Passing lanes on NP.
- Improve Internet service; needs upgrade to fibre.

Question Four: Government has committed to support the private sector by fostering the growth of high-potential industries and promoting economic diversification. In recent years, we have released action plans through The Way Forward in the areas of oil and gas, mining, aquaculture, agriculture, technology, tourism and entertainment, forestry and health care. Are there any other industries where government should focus resources and attention to create jobs and stimulate economic growth?

- Great Northern Port project – shipping, transportation, etc.
- Strengthen some of the smaller areas to increase tourism industry.
- Guided tours for tourism.
- Training done via college with respect to tourism initiatives.

- Resources in fishery be dedicated to that area where they are caught to be processed. For a company to come set up there needs to be resources allocated to the area so they know they will get the product.
- Move at the speed of businesses; government moves slower and lose potential businesses.
- Manufacturing throughout the province not only in urban areas.
- Customs – cruise ships can't come here until they land elsewhere in province with custom office.
- Container boats are looking at removing the cranes on their ships; this would be detriment to port.
- Supply firewood to Frobisher Bay.
- More research in products that can create economic opportunities.

Department of Finance – Pre-budget Consultations
Gander
February 13, 2020
In-person session data

Question One: As part of government's continued balanced approach to fiscal management, we have focused on reducing the deficit while also maintaining services. Keeping in mind significant reductions in spending beyond where we are today will have an unavoidable impact on service delivery, tell us in which areas you believe we could find savings.

Health care sector– Suggestions for savings potential:

- Mobile lab service (25) vs. ambulance (75).
- Due to high cost of health care ... more attention required.
- Due to aging of population ... more stress on system.
- Promotion of healthy living through education.
- Increased use of Telelink.
- More vaping restrictions required.
- Rising costs a concern for all categories.
- More nurse practitioners and midwives required for rural areas.
- Make a decision and stick to the plan – all areas.
- Doctors should try to reduce prescription writing.
- All employees should be aware of costs of supplies and products.
- Pay for service or privatizing services.
- Should physicians be ordering so many tests?
- Talk to the front line people.
- Integrated health service into everyday life (massage therapy, physio., mental health, etc...). As opposed to having to see a doctor to then get referred.
- Promote healthier lifestyle.
- Proactive.
- The whole person is forgotten. Look at the whole health system and body.
- Is our standards and expectations too high as a society - lower expectations?
- Aging population lineups for services.
- Increase costs. Have to pay for ambulance??? This is a burden to people who can't afford it. Government should be covering this cost. This may discourage follow-up visits.
- People missing appointments due to parking or for other reasons. Reminders of appointments. A better means to confirm appointments.
- Type of need targeting appropriate service provider vs going to wrong provider.
- Increase use of telemedicine.
- Improve organizational skills of Family Doctors. More efficient use of time.
- Emergency services. Two hospitals in area, have both hospitals doing 24 hour services vs just one to reduce the strain on the system.

Education sector – Suggestions for savings potential:

- Promotion of healthy living through education.
- Make a decision and stick to the plan.
- Why is tuition costs so low in NL compared to other provinces and why tuition freezes?
- When schools are upgraded, equipment or furniture at the former schools is discarded and may still be in good condition.
- All employees should be aware of the cost of everything.
- Teacher compensation is associated with what education someone has vs what they use/need for their course delivery. This is a collective bargaining issue.
- There are 25 schools in the province that have less than 25 children.
- Take the politics out of school board decisions.
- Reduce infrastructure costs of schools. Possible other revenue generating used for existing infrastructure.
- More online courses.

Post-secondary education sector – Suggestions for savings potential:

- Why is tuition costs so low in NL compared to other provinces and why tuition freezes.
- The trades should be promoted more as an education option vs University.
- Make a decision and stick to the plan.
- Currently subsidizing most students who attend whether they are from NL or not.
- Imbalance between cost of acquiring it and whether you are outside the location. The cost to those students from outside St. John's is much higher than if living in St. John's.
- Provide more entry-level courses closer to home.
- Training that leads to actual jobs. Programs are outdated. Not consulting with industry.
- Reduce the number campuses. With too many the resources are spread too thin.
- Involving more industry into the course work. Improve process of reviewing programs.
- Better research/frequency in terms of the need for certain professions.

Other social sector (Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development; Department of Justice and Public Safety; and NL Housing) – Suggestions for savings potential:

- Make a decision and stick to the plan.
- Find a way to collect outstanding fines through payment or community service. Maybe hire more collectors.
- More affordable housing to help people into housing market. Paying property tax, etc.
- Is there overlap in police services?

Other general sector (Departments of: Finance; Service NL and Executive Council; Pensions) – Suggestions for savings potential:

- Make a decision and stick to the plan.
- Look at ways to refinance the debt.
- Regionalization of services.

Transportation and Works – Suggestions for savings potential:

- Make a decision and stick to the plan.
- Are all government buildings being utilized and efficient?
- Can you have standardized plans for buildings? Is all design and engineering work necessary?

Other resource sector (Departments of: Fisheries and Land Resources; Natural Resources; and Tourism, Culture, Industry and Innovation) – Suggestions for savings potential:

- Make a decision and stick to the plan.
- Make it easier for people access/purchase Crown Land (make the system work better. Takes too long to get an answer.
- With, TCII, no cuts to funding and continue to invest in tourism and innovation.
- More contracting out.
- Allocate more funds to destination management organizations to allow them to get more done and improve both the communities and the economy to make people healthy, happy and productive and to bring more money from outside the province.

Question Two: Considering the sources of government revenue, where do you think government can increase its revenues and how do you think we can achieve this?

- Crown Lands - move applications through the system faster.
- A lot of land can be monetized in the province including agricultural.
- We should all buy and wear seal products.
- Public private partnerships ... more of that ... more jobs, etc., for rural NL.
- Charge more for ferries. Two tier system to be considered. Charge more for tourists vs. locals.
- Toll roads/highways may make sense in some cases.
- Shared services with municipalities.
- Speed up crown lands process and get money from sales of crown lands.
- More economic development through mining, industry, etc.
- Value for tax revenue/more directed tax option project by project (donate).
- Tourism levy / tax for community or area. Tax visitor not resident.
- Carbon Tax process that can be used to target other community based development.
- Changes to the equalization payments.

- Supplement child care to get more people into the workforce and increase tax revenue from those.
- If you are going increase corporate tax rate from large businesses. Those sending money out of the province.
- Get in the insurance business.

Question Three: Please list any other areas you believe government should focus spending on new programs or services or improvements to existing ones, if government can afford to do so.

- 4 is number 1, 5 and 7 were tied at 2nd and # 3 was 3rd
- More money for dental program.
- Invest more money to reduce homelessness. Like a shelter.
- More money for mental health and addictions.
- May need more programs or a review of the programs, as some people seeking treatment seem to stay on programs for life.
- Shared programs/services among municipalities and LSD's.
- Improved access to quality water in many communities.
- Reduce income taxes a couple of percentage points.
- Buy local.
- More investments in ocean sector and aerospace.
- More culinary institutes required to train cooks, etc. so new businesses can access.
- Taxes too high for people to work more hours.
- Importance of Telehealth province wide.
- The province should try harder to attract more and new businesses to come here and set up.
- Reinstating dental service for seniors.
- Eye-care access.
- Increasing funding to destination management organizations (DMOs) as they improve access to increase tourism business.
- Promote healthy living programs for youth.
- Funding for subsidize or reduce cost of insurance.
- Increase spending to incentivize regional service delivery/shared services.
- Increasing more emergency services available in different areas.
- Funding support for not-for profits organizations and volunteer organizations.
- Cell service and Wi-Fi access.
- Adjust funding structures so companies can use some of the funds for operational cost and practical infrastructure, not just for studies, consultants and surveys. Studies and consultants only ID options they do not lead to business development and enhancement.

Question Four: Government has committed to support the private sector by fostering the growth of high-potential industries and promoting economic diversification. In recent years, we have released action plans through The Way Forward in the areas of oil and gas, mining, aquaculture, agriculture, technology, tourism and entertainment, forestry and health care. Are there any other industries where government should focus resources and attention to create jobs and stimulate economic growth?

- Aerospace.
- Technology, particularly in the oceans sector.
- Renewable and green energy.
- More fabrication/specialized workers.
- Food processing.
- Telecommunications.
- Offer more specialized online learning courses/programs.
- More career preparation and entrepreneurial studies.
- Find more uses for sealing products and ways for other parts of the world to understand its importance.
- Business/industry where we have a competitive advantage.
- Expand on tourism activity and investment.
- Are we spreading ourselves too thin?
- More focus on agriculture. Bee farming. Secondary processing opportunities; cannabis.
- Package and process here vs mainland.
- Utilize more greenhouse technology.
- Investment in electric vehicles infrastructure and green energy industry.