

New Democrats on the Parliamentary Budget Office

From: thomas.mulcair@parl.gc.ca

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To: thomas.mulcair@parl.gc.ca

Thank you for taking the time to share your concerns about the termination of Parliamentary Budget Officer (PBO) Kevin Page's tenure. New Democrats pushed hard for the PBO to be created and continue to lead the push to make the Parliamentary Budget Officer independent.

Canada's Parliamentary Budget Officer helps provide oversight for government spending, critical in a functioning democracy. Scrutiny over government spending is one of the primary responsibilities of MPs-the PBO helps Parliamentarians to make informed decisions and better choices for Canadians.

Under Mr. Page, the PBO has helped expose the Conservatives' gross mismanagement on vital issues such as the failed fighter jets, unnecessary Old Age Security cuts, and record setting deficits.

New Democrats believe Canadians deserve an independent budget watchdog. That is why I have put forward legislation to bolster the power and independence of the Parliamentary Budget Officer. You can read more about my legislation and follow its progress here: <http://tinyurl.com/bp1g2hb>.

Under the current legislation, the PBO serves "at the pleasure" of the Prime Minister. My legislation would remove the PBO from under the thumb of the Prime Minister and make the Parliamentary Budget Officer an independent Officer of Parliament, like the Auditor General.

New Democrats also had called for an extension of Mr. Page's term until a suitable successor is appointed. Peggy Nash, Official Opposition Finance critic, put forward a motion to this effect at the Standing Committee on Finance-but unfortunately it was voted down by the Conservatives - so we are now left without a full-time PBO in the middle of Budget season.

My legislation would avoid future showdowns and legal battles. That way, you'll always have a strong watchdog - not a Conservative lapdog - working for you in Ottawa.

We will continue to hold the Conservatives accountable for their attacks on fiscal accountability and the PBO. Ottawa is broken-but New Democrats are working hard to fix it.

Again, I appreciate hearing from you. I encourage you to share this message with your contacts.

All the best,

Thomas Mulcair, M.P. (Outremont)
Leader of the Official Opposition
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