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Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound MP Alex Ruff Reacts to the 2022 Federal Budget

BRUCE-GREY-OWEN SOUND — Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound MP Alex Ruff has released the following initial statement to the 2022 Federal Budget, tabled on April 7th by the Minister of Finance, the Hon. Chrystia Freeland:

“Although the 2022 Budget contains some needed support that will help constituents within Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound there are some serious shortfalls:

Housing:

“While the budget includes some welcomed and long-overdue investments to resolve the state of homelessness in Canada, it fails to adequately address many structural issues in Canada’s housing market.

“In the past three years alone, the price of a home in Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound has risen by 115%, to an average of \$759,427. The budget offers very little to resolve the housing shortage in rural areas like our riding. The “Housing Accelerator Fund” promises to construct 100,000 homes over the next five years across Canada, which is a far cry from the 3.5-million units that the Department of Finance has estimated will be needed to resolve Canada’s housing supply shortage.

“The federal government needs to do more to ensure we can double our housing production by Canada’s homebuilders, so we have affordable homes for people across Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound.

Labour Shortages:

“Many areas across Canada, including right here in Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, are facing acute labour shortages. Locally, over 1,200 jobs are going unfilled. The actions outlined in Budget 2022 will not help to resolve this. There are no substantive proposed actions to incentivize workers to enter the skilled trades or our agri-food sector; two sectors that will be paramount to Canada’s post-pandemic economic recovery efforts.

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National Defence:

“The increase in defence spending was needed, although this growth to 1.5% of Canada’s GDP is short of the 2% commitment to meet our NATO commitment at both the Wales Summit and contained in the Conservative motion that the Liberal government supported earlier this week. In addition, the \$500M in military aid for Ukraine is welcomed; however, the government’s plan for yet another defence policy review with no deadline for completion and without first doing a long-awaited foreign policy review is lacking. As I outlined earlier this week in the House of Commons a non-partisan foreign policy is needed for Canada.

Agriculture:

“Some modernizations to Canada’s Temporary Foreign Worker (TFW) program are welcomed, although it appears the implementation of these changes will come too late to be beneficial to many agri-food businesses in Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound. These businesses rely on assistance from the TFW program but are facing undue burdens when accessing the program, which is hurting local businesses. The overall lack of attention for Canada’s agri-food sector in the 2022 budget is concerning.”

MP Ruff may release a more detailed statement once further analysis has been completed on the 2022 federal budget.

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