

Caledon MP unimpressed with federal budget

By **Zachary Roman**

Dufferin-Caledon MP Kyle Seeback says the Liberal government's recently released budget was 'more of the same.'

On April 7, the Government of Canada's Department of Finance released its 2022 budget, titled 'A Plan to Grow Our Economy and Make Life More Affordable.'

Some promises made by the Trudeau government in the budget include the banning of foreign investment in the Canadian housing market for two years; investment in affordable child care; and the creation of a critical minerals strategy to 'capitalize on a growing need for the minerals used in everything from phones to electric cars.'

In an April 8 media release, Seeback offered his thoughts on the budget and said Canadians looking for relief from inflation would not find it in the Liberals' budget.

'Sadly, what they received was more of the same from the Trudeau government - spending at 30 per cent above pre-pandemic levels threatening the financial security of Canadians by raising taxes on hard-working Canadians to pay for it,' said Seeback.

The Liberal government said its budget will make life more affordable for Canadians through a \$5.3 billion investment in dental care for lower-income families, doubling the first-time home-buyer's tax credit, and a one-time \$500 credit to those facing housing affordability challenges.

Seeback said he was looking for controlled spending to curb inflation, substantial action on

increasing housing supply, and the lowering of taxes for hard-working Canadians.

'But that didn't happen,' said Seeback. 'What Canadians received instead was a big spending NDP budget.'

Seeback was also critical of the Liberal government's dental care announcement, which was made possible due to a deal Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and NDP leader Jagmeet Singh made - in which the NDP pledged to support the Liberals in exchange for movement on key NDP priorities, such as the aforementioned dental care.

Seeback said the dentacare announcement was short on details and left more questions than answers.

According to the Liberals' 2022 budget, the \$5.3 billion it's investing in dentacare will be used to provide dental care for Canadians with family incomes of less than \$90,000 annually. It will start covering children 12 years and under in 2022; expand to people aged 18 and under, seniors, and persons living with a disability in 2023; and be fully implemented by 2025, according to the budget announcement.

In a quote released alongside the 2022 budget, Canada's Minister of Finance Chrystia Freeland said the budget won't leave anyone behind.

'Our plan is responsible and considered, and it is going to mean more homes and good-paying jobs for Canadians; cleaner air and cleaner water for our children; and a stronger and more resilient economy for years to come,' said Freeland.

Seeback argued many are going to be left behind by the 2022 budget.

'Dufferin-Caledon families struggling to pay bills have been let down. Seniors on fixed incomes struggling to keep up with

increased costs have been ignored; and small businesses still recovering from the pandemic received next to nothing," he said.

According to the Liberals' budget announcement, several measures are being taken in 2022 to address climate change, including: \$3 billion towards making zero-emission vehicles more affordable and a national network of charging stations; investments to protect land, lakes, and oceans; and the creation of a "Canada Growth Fund" to try and attract billions of dollars of private capital to build a net-zero economy by 2050.

Seebach contests all that plan does is push targets and project realization down the road, calling it "not a real plan."

"Spending billions on new bureaucratic agencies and advisory councils will not see Canada reach its targets," said Seebach.

He said the Liberals' 2022 budget is not responsible and that he wants to see targeted investments and policies that improve Canada's "competitiveness in the global marketplace."

"For example, we wanted to see policies that improve Canada's lagging investment performance, delivery of rural broadband, the elimination of interprovincial trade barriers, improved supply chain resiliency, and a robust innovation agenda," said Seebach.

"We also expected the NDP-Liberal government to implement a real debt management strategy that includes a firm fiscal anchor and a measurable path to returning to balance."

According to the Liberals' budget announcement, "Canada entered the pandemic with the lowest net debt-to-GDP ratio of all G7 countries, an advantage that has since increased relative to other countries."

It contests the 2022 budget will see Canada maintain its leading position and that the budget "upholds the government's fiscal anchor" a declining debt-to-GDP ratio and the unwinding of COVID-19-related deficits, which will ensure that Canada's finances remain sustainable in the long-term."