

Dufferin-Caledon MP and fellow Conservatives share concerns over U.S. tax threats against Canadian Snowbirds

Increases to Underused Housing Tax (UHT) being consideration by feds

Written By SAM ODROWSKI

A group of Conservative MPs are raising the alarm on recent statements made by Liberal MPs and government officials at the International Trade Committee. They claim the comments made could lead to tax increases for Canadian snowbirds who own property in the United States due to the risk of retaliatory measures being proposed by American officials. Kyle Seeback (Shadow Minister for International Trade), Tony Baldinelli (Shadow Minister for Tourism), and Colin Carrie (MP for Oshawa) are pushing back against the federal Liberals' suggestion of potentially raising the Underused Housing Tax (UHT).

The Conservative MPs say they fear such actions would significantly enhance the risk that Canadian snowbirds might be targeted by retaliatory tax measures in the U.S. and any Canadians who own property in the U.S. could be impacted.

"We have heard from Canadians, cottagers, and U.S. Congressional Representatives that the UHT is a poorly designed and implemented tax. Despite these concerns, Liberals at [the International Trade] Committee mused about raising the tax even higher during our study, which was frustrating since they were with us in Washington DC when concerns were expressed by congressional officials we met with," said MP Seeback. "The tax is bad enough as it stands but raising the UHT even further strongly increases the chance of retaliatory measures being taken against Snowbirds by the U.S."

He added, "It is especially irresponsible to suggest raising the UHT with the review of CUSMA coming in 2026, since we have created yet another trade irritant with the U.S., our best trading partner. We are trying to prevent another crisis created by the Trudeau Liberals, since they seem oblivious to the impact of their actions. I call on the government to immediately clarify whether they are planning to increase this tax or not."

The Conservatives are calling on the Liberal government to review the implementation and administration process of the Underused Housing Tax; to refute Liberal MP's calls to raise the UHT; and to lay out a comprehensive strategy to avoid potential retaliatory measures taken by the US against Canadian snowbirds who are already planning their winters away in 2023-24.

In addition, Conservative MPs plan on submitting an official request to the Parliamentary Budget Officer to review the UHT and its cost-benefit analysis due to the lack of responsiveness from Finance Canada and Canada Revenue Agency officials who appeared at the International Trade Committee.