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Boost infrastructure for our economy and quality of life

Dear editor:

Canadians are paying a hefty price for poor infrastructure.

Homeowners face expensive repairs when sewer systems back up under the pressure of extreme weather. Manufacturing workers lose wages when their assembly line shuts down because parts can't get to the factory. Commuters spend hours in stop-and-go traffic, away from their job and their families.

All of that takes a hit on the economy.

Our public infrastructure is approaching a breaking point. Half of it is expected to reach the end of its useful life by 2027. Just maintaining what we have will take slightly more than what all levels of government?federal, provincial and municipal?are investing combined.

Instead of helping addressing these needs, the federal government has cut funding for its flagship Building Canada Fund by nearly 90% this year and next.

Pathetically, the new federal infrastructure plan will invest less per Canadian at its peak than the one it replaced.

This is irresponsible public administration and it couldn't happen at a worse time. With today's economic conditions, a soft jobs market and low interest rates, there is a historic opportunity to increase infrastructure investments, improve our productivity and grow our economy.

Because infrastructure matters?a lot. According to Statistics Canada, a whopping half of Canada's private sector productivity growth between 1962 and 2006 came from public infrastructure investments.

Justin Trudeau and the Liberal Party are building a team and plan that will provide a renewed national focus on infrastructure. That will create the right conditions for sustainable economic growth to finally help our struggling middle-class and all those aspiring to join it.

By rising to the challenge and revitalizing our public infrastructure, we will build a strong, more prosperous Canada and improve our quality of life.

Scott Brison, MP

Liberal Party of Canada Finance Critic