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Those issues of course are the issues of what northwestern Ontario is all about. That basically is forestry, mining, tourism and a small amount of manufacturing along with the retail sector.

Like the rest of Canada, my riding is dependent on a very small business sector to create and maintain valuable jobs. The small businesses in Kenora—Rainy River can be found servicing, complementing and drawing on the strengths of major resource sectors. The viability of small and medium sized businesses in my riding is typical of the diversity needed to build secondary industries in Canada.

There is no doubt that main estimates' spending in 1994-95 in the federal budget is geared to reinforcing a solid small business sector to create jobs and spark the economy. It is because of the dependence on small business that I am pleased to see the initiatives in the 1994-95 budget addressing stability and growth for small business.

• (2005)

As I have said before, as a member of the opposition in this House in the previous Parliament, one of the major concerns that I focused on was the lack of initiative for small business, the lack of help that we as parliamentarians gave to the small business sector.

In Canada we must ensure sustainable and viable resource based industries are supported. But in order to build an economic foundation for the long term we must diversify our economy to take advantage of our raw materials and our technological development. Perhaps nowhere in Canada is that more evident than in northwestern Ontario where diversification and secondary industry development are the keys to opening tomorrow's doors.

The small business working groups recently established by this government are examining the initiatives needed to foster an environment for growth and give business the tools to expand.

I am happy to see that the government is making access to capital and appropriate training a priority for the small business sector. I have risen in this House on previous occasions and lamented on the sad state of the relationship between small businesses and the financial institutions.

I sincerely hope a new code of conduct between small businesses and banks provides a more fruitful relationship than we have seen in the past. Entrepreneurs need capital investment in order to expand and start up new ventures which provide the jobs this country is looking for. Expansion of the Small Business Loans Act will also enhance the flow of capital to legitimate business operations in Canada.

Small business also needs the expertise to explore export markets and utilize new technology. The budget speaks well to these concerns. The Canada investment fund for example will help companies access leading edge technology. As well, the business centres will help make information on government programs and services more readily available as well as providing insight into strategies for exploiting export markets.

The remote locations of many businesses in Canada have historically made it difficult to access pertinent information. Federal government spending on information services will give these businesses the knowledge they need to explore new technology and make inroads into international markets.

I am anxious to work with the business community in developing this government's objectives. Believe me, we have many ambitious and capable entrepreneurs in Kenora—Rainy River if only given half a chance simply by doing very key and very elementary things.

Let me give a couple of examples of those. One of those of course is replacing the GST. Reducing red tape and the burden that is on small business as it relates to red tape and harmonizing federal and provincial regulations are just some of the things that I find to be extremely important to creating the right environment for our business sector to flourish.

Such federal initiatives are a breath of fresh air to our small business community and something that I wait anxiously for in order that we can start creating the jobs. The small business sector is the key and what we as parliamentarians should not lose sight of if we are to see this economy start to grow.

Other measures such as changes to the social security system and new job training strategies for young people are essential to changing the fundamental structures in this country that will help lead the way to practical training for people entering our workforce. An expanding small and medium sized business sector needs a talented and appropriately trained workforce.

I am confident federal spending on innovative training programs will help accommodate this objective.

Realistic job oriented training, better financial, technological and information resources for small business are essential to building a strong economy in my region and across the country. However, to take advantage of these enhanced resources for small business my region in particular needs the very basic of infrastructure networks.

I feel we are on the right track with spending on the infrastructure projects. Not only are we creating jobs to jump-start the economy, small that it is, we are also providing the basic foundation for a competitive national economy. Basic infrastructure involves roads, buildings, transportation and water and sewer services.