8 September 2026

Budget 2026

Building Canada Strong Means Building Canadian Media Strong

Recent developments in Canada's trading relationship with the United States have brought a renewed focus to Canada's economic independence and resilience. The Government has made clear that strengthening Canada means building more capacity at home, supporting Canadian businesses and workers, and reducing our reliance on foreign markets.

Canada’s media system must be part of the nation-building project

A sovereign country needs the capacity to tell its own stories, report its own news, connect its own communities, and ensure that Canadians can access trusted information produced by Canadian institutions and reflecting Canadian perspectives.

Canada’s private radio and television broadcasters provide that capacity every day. They operate newsrooms in communities across the country. They provide trusted local and national journalism and life-saving emergency information. They showcase Canadian artists and stories. They connect communities across the country. And, at a time when information is increasingly controlled and distributed through powerful foreign platforms, they help ensure that Canadians continue to see themselves – and understand the world – through a Canadian lens.

Canadian media is key to sovereignty

That role takes on greater importance in an increasingly global media environment. Just as Canada is looking at where it may be overly dependent on foreign suppliers and markets, we should also consider the extent to which we depend on foreign-controlled platforms for the distribution and discovery of Canadian news, information, and entertainment. Maintaining strong Canadian-owned media gives Canada greater control over how Canadian news and cultural content are created and made available to Canadians.

The Canadian Association of Broadcasters (CAB) and its members appreciate the measures already undertaken by the government to provide immediate stability to Canada’s media sector, particularly the recognition of the importance of supporting news and services of exceptional importance. But more needs to be done.

Budget 2026 provides an opportunity to strengthen the Canadian-owned media institutions that underpin our cultural, democratic, and information sovereignty.

Four steps to strengthen Canadian media sovereignty

1. Support Canadian Journalism

Implement the extension of the Canadian Journalism Labour Tax Credit to broadcast news organizations in a fair and equitable manner, ensuring that eligibility reflects the realities of modern radio and television newsrooms.

Strong Canadian newsrooms are particularly important at a time of geopolitical uncertainty, foreign interference, misinformation, and profound technological change. Maintaining strong Canadian newsrooms is an investment in Canada, ensuring Canadians continue to have access to trusted news produced by Canadian media.

2. Buy Canadian media

Prioritize Canadian-owned media through federal advertising, including a commitment to direct at least 70 per cent of Government of Canada advertising expenditures to Canadian-owned radio, television, print, and digital media.

The Government is increasingly using its purchasing power strategically to build Canadian capacity and strengthen domestic industries. The same principle should apply to media. Federal advertising dollars should, wherever possible, strengthen Canadian companies, Canadian workers, Canadian journalism, and Canadian communities, rather than reinforcing dependence on foreign technology platforms.

3. Modernize Canada's tax rules to support Canadian media companies

Update the *Income Tax Act* to eliminate the tax-deductibility of advertising placed with foreign internet-delivered media, consistent with the longstanding treatment of advertising placed with foreign broadcasters and publications.

Canada's tax system should not incentivize Canadian businesses to direct their advertising dollars away from Canadian companies and toward foreign platforms. Updating these provisions would restore the original public-policy principle behind them: Canadian tax policy should support Canadian economic and cultural capacity.

4. Reinforce the complementary roles of public and private broadcasting

Align future funding for CBC/Radio-Canada with its public service mandate by tying any additional parliamentary appropriations to a transition away from commercial advertising.

A strong Canadian broadcasting system requires both a strong public broadcaster and a sustainable private sector. Public funding should enable CBC/Radio-Canada to deliver distinctive public-service programming, while reducing its reliance on advertising revenues that are essential to the survival of Canadian private media.

The result: A stronger and more resilient Canadian media sector

These are not new asks – the CAB has consistently recommended these measures as part of a coordinated effort to create a more sustainable Canadian media sector. What has changed is the broader context in which they should now be considered.

Foreign digital platforms now capture the majority of advertising revenues in Canada, while Canadian broadcasters continue to make significant investments in Canadian programming, news, and local communities. In 2025 alone, private broadcasters invested more than $630 million in news programming – more than any other media sector. At the same time, conventional private television has accumulated almost $2.4 billion in losses over the past decade, 30 local radio stations have closed, and approximately 170 more are considered at risk.

Budget 2026 provides an opportunity to strengthen Canadian media capacity

These trends have implications beyond the broadcasting sector. As Canada looks to strengthen its economic resilience and reduce its dependence on foreign-controlled companies and supply chains, it should also consider the importance of maintaining strong Canadian-owned media companies. Federal advertising policy, tax policy, journalism supports, and funding for the public broadcaster are all tools the Government can use.

None of these measures alone will address the structural challenges facing Canadian media. Together, however, they would help create a fairer environment for Canadian media companies, support continued investment in Canadian journalism, programming, and communities, and help maintain an important source of Canadian news and cultural content.

At a time when Canada is making deliberate choices to strengthen its economic independence and resilience, Canadian media should be central to the conversation.

Yours sincerely,

[Original signed by]

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