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PM HARPER Q&A – SURREY, B.C.

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MODERATOR: ... to the microphone on the left. We'll start with John Daly from Global

JOHN DALY (Global News): Thank you Prime Minister Harper. John Daly, Global News, British Columbia. Eight percent up to 30 percent. How much will that cost the taxpayers and how much do you see it bringing in? How much do you see this leverage bringing in to the tax base of Canada and British Columbia over the next, say, 10 or 20 years, because obviously this is not a short-term plan or investment.

RIGHT HONOURABLE STEPHEN HARPER (Prime Minister of Canada): The actual cost in our fiscal framework is quite modest. It's my recollection, less than \$50 million a year, which in terms of tax incentives is not that large. The reason for that is we have not booked natural gas...large natural gas development. This is obviously to encourage that. So our belief is that this will create investment that would otherwise not occur. Look, it's hard... It's hard to calculate. It would ultimately depend on how many of the major projects go ahead. But I can certainly assure you that it won't take very much development to more than recoup that cost.

MODERATOR: We'll continue with Cindy Leung from City TV.

CINDY LEUNG (City TV): Prime Minister there's been a lot of talk from many former prime ministers about concerns about the lack of oversight with the RCMP and CSIS with your new terror bill. What do you say to them, to their concerns, their right concerns that this will impact human rights?

RT HON STEPHEN HARPER: Well first of all, in terms of the legislation, the oversight that has been in place for many, many years is

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left in place. We're not changing that. In Canada I believe we've had a superior model of oversight based on independent, expert, third-party advice. In fact, if anything, our government has gone further in that direction. And in this legislation many of the additional powers given actually require judicial authorization to actually be used in every individual case. So we're strengthening oversight already, but the model we have in Canada of independent, expert oversight, that's the model we're pursuing. We're going farther in that direction and we, as a government, are not interested in politicians doing the oversight.

MODERATOR: We'll continue with John Woodward from CTV BC.

JOHN WOODWARD (CTV News): Hi there. John Woodward from CTV News. A lot of people in the transit referendum here making a lot of promises about what your government will contribute in the case there is a yes vote to raise the PST. And I'm wondering if that yes vote passes, if we do have about \$250 million in new money for transit, will you match that?

RT HON STEPHEN HARPER: I'm not going to get involved in the local transit referendum here. That's obviously a decision for local people to make. I will just say that it was two budgets ago now, two years ago, an economic action plan 2013, our government announced the largest infrastructure investments in Canadian history. That, combined with some recent announcements I made, we are putting \$75 billion into federal, provincial, municipal, community infrastructure over the next 10 years. The most... Most of that will be going to provincial and municipal levels of

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government and that is obviously not based upon the referendum here, that's based upon the government's own budgets which we've already adopted.

MODERATOR: We'll continue with Melanie Nagy from CTV.

MELANIE NAGY (CTV): Prime Minister, I appreciate you already commented on C-51. I just want to go a little bit further on that. We have activists to former prime ministers saying to put a clause into the bill on oversight. What's wrong with doing that? Why not weave that in to the legislation?

RT HON STEPHEN HARPER: As I already said, additional authorities in the bill in many cases actually require judicial authorization to be used. So that's obviously an extra level of oversight. But as I say, we have in Canada, for many years now, strong and effective oversight done on a basis of independence and expertise from politicians. We're strengthening that system. We're not going to move to a model where politicians do the oversight.

MODERATOR: And we will finish with Lisa Wu from the Phoenix Sun.

LISA WU (Phoenix Sun): Prime Minister, the first day of the lunar new year. Would you like to send out some greetings to your Chinese voters here? And what are your other plans while you are touring Vancouver?

RT HON STEPHEN HARPER: Well in terms of greetings, kung hai fat choy.

(Laughter & applause)

RT HON STEPHEN HARPER: Sing yang quoi la (ph). So those are my greetings. I was at the Aberdeen Center last night marking the

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lunar new year with many hundreds of Chinese Canadians – I think there were actually thousands over there at the time. I am going to the GTA tomorrow to also mark the lunar new year. We've been doing this not just for Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese Canadians. I recently also attended in the Toronto area Tet Festival as well, so we wish a happy new year to all of our Canadians from these various cultural communities who celebrate the lunar new year.

MODERATOR: Thank you.

RT HON STEPHEN HARPER: Merci beaucoup.

(Applause)

RT HON STEPHEN HARPER: Thanks for doing this everyone!

(Applause)

(Words: 923)

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