



*Centre for the  
Study of Living Standards  
Centre d'étude des  
niveaux de vie*

## **Invitation to Attend the CSLS Seminar Series on Living Standards**

### **Business Tax Incentives for Economic Development: Do They Work?**

John Lester

4:00-5:30 PM  
Thursday, April 20, 2017  
Karsh Room, Rideau Club  
99 Bank Street, 15th floor  
Ottawa, Ontario

To attend, please RSVP by April 17 to [andrew.sharpe@csls.ca](mailto:andrew.sharpe@csls.ca).

The federal government spends about \$17 billion a year on business subsidies and the four largest provinces spend approximately the same amount. These subsidies are delivered by the tax system, spending programs, government business enterprises and by direct investment in enterprises. The largest subsidies are the small business deduction, deductibility of interest expenses incurred on outbound direct investment, and the SR&ED tax credit.

In this seminar, John Lester will take a closer look at business investment tax incentives, which, according to his estimates, cost federal and provincial governments each about \$8 billion a year. John will discuss the various rationales for government intervention and apply a benefit-cost framework to selected measures to determine if they have achieved their objective of raising real income.

John Lester is an Executive Fellow with The School of Public Policy at the University of Calgary. He is a former federal government economist who writes on public policy issues. John's last public service assignment was as Director of Research for the Expert Panel Review of Federal Support to Research and Development. Prior to that, he managed the Tax Evaluations and Research Group at Finance Canada. Since leaving the public service John has published papers with the School of Public Policy, the *Canadian Tax Journal*, *Canadian Public Policy* and the C. D. Howe Institute.