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# PUBLIC VS. PRIVATE

*By Mark Hancock*

**O**ttawa - Re 'Shovel-ready' Projects Eyed For Post-shut-down Stimulus Plan (Report on Business, April 16): A rapid, targeted response to reboot the economy will be essential in the aftermath of COVID-19. As president of Canada's largest union, I support the federal government's plan to ramp up major infrastructure spending in the coming months to create good jobs and rebuild communities.

However, we strongly disagree with federal Infrastructure Minister Catherine McKenna that the Canada Infrastructure Bank can or should drive our postpandemic recovery by soliciting more public-private partnerships.

Study after study shows these for-profit infrastructure arrangements can lead to high costs for the public. The global trend - after years of failed experiences - is to move away from these arrangements and instead invest fully in public infrastructure and services. The CIB should provide grants and low-cost loans to municipalities for fully public projects.

Many industries will desperately need government support to get back on their feet when this is all over. Investment firms shouldn't be one of them.

Mark Hancock National president, Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE); Ottawa

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