

January 11, 2012

Dear Editor,

Through his [open letter](#), Minister Oliver may have left an impression with Canadians that charities should not be involved in debates on some of Canada's most important policy decisions. These decisions are always strengthened through hearing many voices and charities can help bring those forward. Charities in Canada have a long history of getting involved in the policy process and that has served us well. Without the advocacy work of health charities, we would not have smoke-free environments and substantially reduced tobacco consumption. Similarly, charities have contributed to the creation of the Registered Disability Savings Plan, the Canadian Initiative for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health and efforts to reduce drinking and driving. Imagine Canada has taken no position on the Northern Gateway pipeline project. That is not our role. But we do know that the voice of charities is critical and that debate and discussion will always make for better decision making.



Marcel Lauzière,
President & CEO, Imagine Canada