

The 2009 Federal Budget and Canada's Charities & Nonprofits **Short-Term Stimulus Measures for Assisting Canadians and Communities during the Economic Downturn**

OTTAWA, Friday, January 16, 2009 – Imagine Canada submitted a Brief to the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance yesterday on *Short-Term Stimulus Measures for Assisting Canadians and Communities during the Economic Downturn*. The Brief is an outcome of consultations with a Task Force struck by Imagine Canada to provide further detail to the measures called for in an Open Letter to Stephen Harper published in newspapers on November 21, 2008. The Open Letter signed by 75 of Canada's leading charities urged the Prime Minister to consider the important role of charities and nonprofits in assisting Canadians and communities during times of economic hardship.

The Brief puts forward three key stimulative measures to assist Canada's vulnerable populations and the organizations that support them to be considered by the federal government prior to release of the Federal Budget on January 27:

- 1) Maintain Direct Funding through Federal Grants and Contributions Agreements,
- 2) Earmark federal Infrastructure funding for Community and Social services, Arts and Culture, Sports and Recreation and Green Retrofit initiatives,
- 3) Provide a time-limited Enhancement to Tax Measures that Stimulate Giving.

The Brief also supported the recommendations from many other charities and nonprofits calling for enhancements to income support programs including employment insurance. For more details on these measures, download the full Brief at:

http://www.imaginecanada.ca/files/en/publicaffairs/brief_budget_2009_20090115.pdf

“Canada's charities and nonprofits partner with both the private sector and government to ensure that the needs of individual Canadians and communities are met, particularly the most vulnerable among us during times of economic crisis,” says **Marcel Lauzière, President & CEO of Imagine Canada**. *“The purpose of this Brief is to create an ongoing and more formalized dialogue between our sector and the federal government. We believe our sector can be an important part of the solution. We encourage our government to consider these particular budget measures as well as vehicles to support ongoing dialogue about appropriate public policy measures and their outcomes in our communities.”*

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Imagine Canada's Caring Company members — a broad representation of Canadian companies that formally commit to donating 1% of their earnings to community causes and organizations — added their voice to this call for stimulative measures to assist Canada's vulnerable populations and the organizations that support them in a full-page statement published in the *Globe & Mail* on January 15, 2009. A link to a copy of this publication, including over 100 signatories from both corporate Canada and the charitable and nonprofit sector can be found in the Additional Materials section of this media release.

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Imagine Canada is a national charitable organization that looks into and out for Canada's charities and nonprofit organizations. It advances knowledge and relationships to foster effective and sustainable charitable and nonprofit organizations.

Additional Materials:

Imagine Canada's *Short-Term Stimulus Measures for Assisting Canadians and Communities during the Economic Downturn* Brief to the Federal Government:

http://www.imaginecanada.ca/files/en/publicaffairs/brief_budget_2009_20090115.pdf

January 15, 2009 Imagine Canada's Caring Company members' *Globe & Mail* ad in support of the original Open Letter to the Prime Minister:

http://www.imaginecanada.ca/files/en/publicaffairs/caring_company_globe_ad_20090115.pdf

November 21, 2008 Open Letter to Prime Minister Harper with charity and nonprofit supporters:

http://www.imaginecanada.ca/files/en/publicaffairs/pm_letter_ad_20081120.pdf

November 20, 2008 Media Release – *Charities & Nonprofits Propose Measures to Prime Minister to help Canadians and Communities during Economic Downturn*:

http://www.imaginecanada.ca/files/en/publicaffairs/letter_to_pm_release_20081120.pdf

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Marcel Lauzière, President & CEO of Imagine Canada, is available for interviews. Please call the contacts above to schedule an interview with Mr. Lauzière.