



Looking into and out for Canada's charities and nonprofits

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Examiner et renforcer des organismes de bienfaisance et sans but lucratif au Canada

November 21, 2008

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada

Dear Prime Minister,

Re: Helping Canada's Charities and Communities during difficult economic times

As the Government of Canada prepares to release its Economic Statement next week, we urge you to consider the important role of our federal government in supporting Canadians through the work of Canada's charities and nonprofits in our communities and around the world, particularly during periods of economic hardship. Over the past days and weeks, Canadians have heard and read in the media that demands on charitable organizations have begun to rise while donations may be increasingly at risk in light of the diminished capacity of individual and corporate donors to give.

The Government of Canada ensures that important programs and services are delivered to Canadians through direct grants and contributions, and through tax measures that have an important stimulative effect on giving. Both are critical forms of financial support, especially during difficult economic times.

We urge the Government of Canada to maintain existing levels of funding to Canada's charities and nonprofits through its grants and contributions programs. The many Canadians who serve their communities in these organizations in every reach of the country, a number of whom have joined us in signing this letter to you below, strongly believe that now is not the time to reduce support to communities through federal funding cuts. We are not asking for new support but a commitment to hold the line.

We also urge the Government of Canada to consider special short-term measures that will have an important stimulative effect on individual and corporate giving. In the past two years, your Government has introduced tax measures that have, in those economic circumstances, proven very effective in stimulating new charitable gifts. The adoption of short-term stimulative tax measures to leverage more private support, could assist in preserving critical donor revenues at a time when these funds will be needed most.

Imagine Canada is mandated by the undersigned, and by over 1,000 charitable and community organizations and institutions that serve as our members, to discuss these proposed measures with you and your officials and look forward to doing so.

Yours very truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marcel Lauzière".

Marcel Lauzière
President & CEO, Imagine Canada

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Don McCreesh".

Don McCreesh
Volunteer Chair, Imagine Canada

...see over for supporters

Supported by:

Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg, Damon Johnston, President; **Alzheimer Society of Canada**, Scott Dudgeon, CEO; **ALS Society of Canada**, David Cameron, President & CEO; **Arthritis Society**, Steven McNair, President & CEO; **Association of Fundraising Professionals**, Timothy Burcham, Chair and Paulette V. 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