

DAY ON THE HILL

RATIONALE FOR THE DAY ON THE HILL

We are on the Hill to

- **RAISE THE PROFILE OF THE SECTOR.**

We want to tell Parliamentarians about the contributions that the sector makes to communities and individual lives here at home and around the globe.

- **BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH PARLIAMENTARIANS.**

Parliamentarians shape public policy that directly affects charities and nonprofits every day. It is imperative that government and sector organizations strengthen their relationship in order to better serve citizens together, leverage tax-payers' dollars, and work efficiently and effectively for sustainable change and growth.

- **PROVIDE INPUT INTO PUBLIC POLICY.**

The charitable and nonprofit sector is extremely diverse, but we are all united in our commitment to serve communities. There are a number of sector wide public policy priorities that Parliamentarians can consider within their own parties and duties.

- **SAY THANK YOU.**

Many MPs and Senators have made efforts both on and off the Hill to improve the conditions in which charities and nonprofits fulfill their missions. They have also supported and recognized publicly the work of the sector in their own constituencies.

- **LEARN HOW TO ADVOCATE AND COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY TOGETHER.**

Many delegates have experience connecting with politicians and political staff in their organizational capacity. Few of us, however, have experience carrying the message for the sector as a whole in collaboration with other charity and nonprofit leaders.

KEY MESSAGES ON THE SECTOR'S NARRATIVE

Our sector

- **IS BIG AND DIVERSE.**

Canada's charitable and nonprofit sector is the second largest in the world with an estimated 170,000 charities and nonprofits.

- **IS A MAJOR CONTRIBUTOR TO THE CANADIAN ECONOMY.**

It generates \$176 billion in income, employs two million people, and accounts for 8.1% of Canada's GDP. Charities and nonprofits help create and sustain prosperous, vibrant, innovative and inclusive communities, where businesses want to grow and employees want to live.

- **HELPS BUILD AND SHAPE CANADIAN PUBLIC POLICY.**

Charities were instrumental in advocating for smoke-free environments, reducing tobacco consumption and curtailing acid rain. Similarly, charities have helped create the Registered Disability Savings Plan, the Canadian Initiative for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health, the Treaty to End Land-Mines, and laws to combat child-trafficking and drunk driving, to name but a few initiatives in which charities have been involved.

- **HAS VALUABLE EXPERTISE TO INFORM DECISION-MAKING.**

Firmly rooted in their communities, charities bring a wide range of front-line expertise to policy issues and often speak up for Canadians who are marginalized and unable to do so themselves. They can also contribute to the implementation of government measures to mitigate the negative impact and maximize the positive impact on the people who will be most directly affected.

- **MATTERS TO CANADIANS.**

More than 13 million people, just under half of all Canadians 15 and over, volunteer annually — devoting two billion hours or the equivalent of just over one million full-time jobs. Charities are considered important by 93% of the population and 88% of Canadians believe charities improve our quality of life.

KEY MESSAGES ON THE 2015 FEDERAL BUDGET

We are pleased that the 2015 Federal Budget

- **INCLUDED A SECTION DEVOTED TO CHARITIES.**

It is encouraging that the Budget recognizes charities as a sector and for the enormous social and economic contributions it makes in Canada.

- **CONTAINED MEASURES THAT WILL ENCOURAGE INVESTMENT IN CHARITIES.**

The expansion of the capital gains exemptions for certain donations and allowing foundations and other charities to invest in limited partnerships, in particular, will free up new and much needed capital for the sector.

KEY MESSAGES ON THE 2015 FEDERAL ELECTION

We are asking all political parties, when developing their election platforms, to consider

- **RECOGNIZING CHARITIES AND NONPROFITS AS AN ECONOMIC SECTOR AND KEY CONTRIBUTOR TO QUALITY OF LIFE.**

While it would be unthinkable for a federal party platform not to include sections on small business, agriculture, or manufacturing — among others — we’ve never seen a platform that talks about charities and nonprofits as a sector.

This could be achieved by:

- **ENSURING THAT CHARITIES ARE FULL PARTICIPANTS IN THE PUBLIC POLICY PROCESS.**

Canadian public policy is better when charities are at the table. Parties can send an important message to Canadians by acknowledging, protecting and promoting the sector’s role in public policy development.

- **PROMOTING PHILANTHROPY THROUGH THE ADOPTION OF THE STRETCH TAX CREDIT FOR CHARITABLE GIVING.**

The Stretch is the only significant investment recommended by the House Finance Committee’s report on incentives for charitable giving that has yet to be implemented, due to fiscal pressures.

- **FACILITATING EARNED INCOME ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE SECTOR.**

By working with charities and nonprofits to ensure that the regulatory environment maximizes organizations’ ability to engage in social enterprise, social finance, and earned income activities, government can encourage financial sustainability within the sector.

• **TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE IMPACT OF FEDERAL POLICY PROPOSALS ON THE SECTOR.**

All public policies have the potential to impact the charitable and nonprofit sector. Parties should ensure that new policies consider the sector and implement a charitable sector lens for memos to Cabinet.

• **EXPLORING THE MODERNIZATION OF CHARITABLE LEGISLATION.**

Canada's current statutory definition and regulatory framework for charities is hundreds of years old. Parties can commit to working with the sector to identify the potential benefits, and potential downsides, of modernizing our understanding of charity by developing a new statutory definition and regulatory framework.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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