

Chapter Action Updates

by Philippe-A Charbonneau

Council of Canadians chapters have been active in communities across Canada raising awareness about climate change and the need for a new way forward, trade deals and how they hurt communities, why it's better to keep utilities public, and much more.

Film screenings address climate change

In the past six months more than 20 Council of Canadians chapters have shown the documentary film *This Changes Everything* in communities across Canada. The film is an attempt to re-imagine the vast challenge of climate change. Directed by Avi Lewis, and inspired by Naomi Klein's international non-fiction bestseller of the same name, this film presents powerful portraits of communities on the front lines – from Montana's Powder River Basin to the Alberta tar sands, from the coast of South India to Beijing and beyond. After their screenings, many chapters have introduced and discussed the "Leap Manifesto," a document that calls on people to speak out for a Canada based on caring for the Earth and for one another.

Trans-Pacific Partnership tour

Close to 20 Council of Canadians chapters across the country have organized public events in their communities with Health Canada whistleblower Dr. Shiv Chopra. Dr. Chopra spoke about new rules in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) that will allow milk from cows that have been given bovine growth hormone (commonly referred to as BGH, rBGH and rBST) into Canada. BGH is an artificial growth hormone that was developed to increase milk output from dairy cows. Its use has been banned in Canada for health safety reasons.

Keep hydro public

The London chapter of the Council of Canadians and Hydro One Not for Sale staged sit-ins at Deputy Premier and London North Centre MPP Deb Matthews'

office to oppose the privatization of Hydro One. Bringing banners and visual props, chapter members and local activists used the weekly sit-ins to raise awareness about the importance of keeping hydro services in public hands.

The London chapter is particularly concerned about how privatization will open Ontario to greater liability under free trade deals. Investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) clauses included in many trade deals allow corporations to sue governments if legislation or policies interfere with profits. Under NAFTA, American corporation MESA power sued the Canadian government for \$775 million because local energy producers were given preference to create jobs under the Ontario's FIT program.

Reinstate Dr. Cleary

Fredericton, Kent County and Saint John chapters called on the New Brunswick government to reinstate Dr. Eilish Cleary as the province's chief medical officer of health. The provincial government placed Dr. Cleary on leave in December and subsequently fired her. Kent County chapter activist Ann Pohl had contacted Dr. Cleary and asked her to study the health and environmental impacts of the herbicide glyphosate, which is used by the forestry company J.D. Irving Ltd. and NB Power. It is widely believed this is why Dr. Cleary was dismissed.

The Fredericton chapter held a media conference in December to highlight the call for Dr. Cleary's reinstatement. While Dr. Cleary was ultimately not reinstated, chapters continue to press for independent and accountable health officials.

Community forum on LNG proposal

The Victoria chapter and allies organized a community forum in February about the proposed Steelhead-Malahat liquefied natural gas (LNG) project that would send natural gas through an un-



John Jacobson and Heather Doty, members of the Brandon-Westman Chapter of the Council of Canadians, offered information to students at Brandon University in March. Chapter members encouraged students to vote in the provincial election and also handed out information about the Council.

derwater pipeline from Washington State, through the Gulf Islands, to Vancouver Island.

The Council of Canadians is opposed to LNG terminal and pipeline projects. If just five LNG terminals are built they would release 13 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions. The fracking and transport of the gas would generate an additional 15 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions. The gas needed for five of these LNG terminals would also require an estimated 582 billion litres of water from B.C.'s rivers, lakes and streams. And just five LNG terminals could require an estimated 39,000 new wells by 2040, the majority of which would likely be fracked.

#RefugeesWelcome

Council of Canadians chapters from Kamloops, Chilliwack, Victoria, Prince Edward Island, Fredericton, St. John's, Quill Plains, South Niagara, Ottawa and London took part in #RefugeesWelcome rallies last fall. The Council of Canadians supports diversity and inclusion and rejects racism and Islamophobia.

Philippe-A Charbonneau is the Political Team Administrative Assistant for the Council of Canadians.