

2015 ANNUAL REPORT

www.canadians.org

For **30** **years,**

the Council of Canadians has brought people together to make a difference in communities and act for social justice.

The Council's work is funded almost entirely by generous donations from people like you. And our independence as an organization is maintained by not accepting any money from corporations or governments. This independence allows us to speak out clearly and freely with a powerful, collective voice.

We thank you, our supporters, as we reflect on the positive changes you helped make possible in 2015.



Taking action for Social Justice

With a network of 60 volunteer chapters across Canada, the Council of Canadians organizes hard-hitting campaigns to protect water, build democracy, strengthen public health care, and demand trade and climate justice.

There are many people who help in these efforts, including our tireless Chairperson Maude Barlow, our national Board of Directors, our staff in Ottawa and regional offices across Canada, our chapter activists who put these campaigns and progressive issues into action, and of course, our committed supporters who make it all possible.

Celebrating 30 years of activism

In 2015 the Council of Canadians celebrated its 30th anniversary. On March 11, 1985 the Council of Canadians was founded by publisher, author and political activist Mel Hurtig with the goals of “a new and better Canada with more and better jobs for Canadians, a higher standard of living for Canadians, and a sovereign Canada that plays an important role among the world community of nations.” Through 2015 we found special ways to mark the history and strength of our grassroots organization.

In 2014 the Harper government changed election rules through the so-called “Fair”

Elections Act. The new rules make it harder for some people to vote, particularly youth, Indigenous people and marginalized citizens. The new rules also prevent the Chief Electoral Officer from sharing information with voters, including investigations into election fraud, and put an end to public outreach campaigns encouraging people to vote. With the Canadian Federation of Students, we launched a constitutional challenge of the act. We also sought an injunction to prevent the most egregious elements (such as the new voter ID rules) from being implemented in the 2015 federal election. While the injunction was not granted, the constitutional challenge is still pending.

Your generous support ensured that key information and evidence was made public and widely reported by the media. The next steps in this important case will be determined once the Liberal government decides whether to repeal the act or continue to defend it in court.

Encouraging people to “Go Vote!”

Much of 2015 was devoted to achieving political change in the country. After 10 years of the Harper government systematically eroding, dismantling and endangering

key programs and values in Canada, there was an urgent call for change.

One of the ways the Council of Canadians fought the unfair voting rules was by launching our largest democracy campaign to date, encouraging people to “Go Vote!” With support from CUPE, Unifor, the Directors Guild of Canada, PSAC, the United Nurses of Alberta and UA, we organized town halls across Canada, which were attended by thousands of people. We shared information on key party platforms through our Voter’s Guides.

In the spring we launched our “Game Changers” campaign aimed at getting youth – the age group that had the lowest voter turnout in the 2011 federal election – to the polls. We visited college and university campuses and provided students with information about how to register as voters and cast their ballots. We shared our Youth Voter’s Guide, which contained key information on party positions about issues youth care about.

Your generous support got people to “Go Vote!” and also empowered youth to be true game changers in the federal election. Together, we ensured a clear political change for Canada. As a non-partisan organization we will continue to push



the federal government for programs and policies that truly provide social, environmental and economic justice.

Supporting Indigenous struggles

The Council of Canadians works closely with Indigenous peoples. In April 2015, Maude Barlow and other Council representatives visited Shoal Lake No. 40 First Nation, a community located near Winnipeg that has been without access to safe, clean drinking water for more than 17 years. The Council supported the community's call for its "Freedom Road," which would give local residents a safer way to access water, food and jobs.

We also supported the call for an inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women and marched with thousands of people to Parliament Hill. We joined community efforts to stop pipelines through Indigenous territories, and supported the call to stop the massive Site C dam in British Columbia that would displace many Indigenous peoples.

Protecting water

The Council of Canadians has always been willing to wade into a water fight. In 2015, we drew attention to the Harper government's gutting of federal protections for 99 per cent of our lakes and rivers.

Through our #Pledge2Protect campaign people across the country shared photos of their unprotected lakes and rivers and used social media to raise awareness about the risks to these waterways.

Early in 2015 we launched the hard-hitting report *On Notice for a Drinking Water Crisis in Canada*. The report examined the patchwork of information regarding drinking water advisories in Canada and put a spotlight on the thousands of people who do not have safe drinking water. Some of these advisories – including ones in First Nation communities – have been in place for many years.

We challenged private water giant Nestlé, objecting to the company's plans to draw even more water from Elora, Ontario, for its water-bottling operations.

We continued to turn more communities "blue" with our Blue Communities Project. This project gives people the tools they need to encourage their local governments to recognize water as a human right, promote publicly financed water and wastewater facilities, and ban the purchase and sale of bottled water in public facilities. In 2015 we celebrated Tsal'alh, St'át'imc Territory becoming the first Indigenous blue community.

Thunder Bay, Ontario, and the District of Lunenburg in Nova Scotia also became blue communities.

The Council's Blue Planet Project works globally for water justice with allies from around the world to inform, motivate and inspire people and to push governments to implement the United Nations' declaration of water as a human right. In 2015 the Blue Planet Project called for the human right to water to be recognized as a component of all of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. Blue Planet Project staff participated in efforts to prevent water privatization in Mexico and South Korea, stop water meters in Ireland, and stop water shut-offs in Detroit, Michigan.

Stopping Energy East

Our campaign to stop TransCanada's Energy East pipeline project, which, if built, would ship 1.1 million barrels of oil per day, continued to expand in 2015. We held town-hall meetings in communities along the pipeline's route to raise awareness and connect with local groups saying "no" to the pipeline. We are effectively building a wall of grassroots resistance to TransCanada's broken pipeline plan and promoting what Canadians really want: clean energy alternatives to tar sands expansion.



In 2015 we worked closely with many community groups. We supported a massive rally in Red Head, New Brunswick, to show Energy East the “end of the line.” This community is where TransCanada wants to build a massive tank storage farm and export terminal.

We encouraged hundreds of people to make submissions to the Ontario Energy Board and applauded the Board’s decision to declare the Energy East pipeline “too risky” for Ontario residents.

A better energy future

With growing concern about the grim realities of climate change and diminishing energy resources globally, we supported communities fighting energy projects that will destroy their land, water and air. We pushed the Canadian government for strong policies that protect our environment and focus on renewable and sustainable energy solutions.

Council of Canadians chapters were active in fights against fracking in 2015 as we continued to call on the federal government to ban the extraction process that uses massive amounts of water, chemicals and sand to get at trapped underground gas reserves. Across the country, awareness is growing about the negative impacts of fracking, which include contaminated water, health concerns, pollution and more.

Council of Canadians representatives were in Paris, France, for COP21, the United Nations conference on climate change.

There, we called for strong political leadership to do what is necessary to reduce the global temperature rise and ensure the future of our planet.

Fairer trade

The Council of Canadians’ 30-year history is rooted in speaking out against trade deals that hurt people, the environment and social policies.

The Harper government signed the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) in 2014, but its ratification has been held up in the legal and translation processes. While these were ongoing, we travelled to Europe to rally opposition. In March, Maude Barlow debated the merits of the deal with German Chancellor Angela Merkel. In the fall, we followed up on growing concerns with CETA and its investor-state dispute settlement provisions that allow corporations to sue governments during a 12-city, 8-country speaking tour.

Council chapters also rallied against the secrecy of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a free trade zone of 12 countries including Canada, representing 40 per cent of the world’s economy.

Strengthening public health care

Like many social programs, public health care was slowly being dismantled under the former Harper government. In 2015 Council of Canadians chapters fought for better health care in communities across Canada. They spoke out against hospital closures and the privatization of services,

and lobbied for a new health care accord that would increase federal funding levels, which, under Harper, had been cut to a new low.

We pushed for a new health accord between the federal government and the provinces that would include a national pharmacare program and better long-term care, home care and mental health care so people have access to the services they need.

Thank you to our donors

Our work is made possible by the generosity of like-minded people who believe social, economic and environmental justice is something we must all strive for. With your support, we garnered hundreds of media hits, organized major events in communities across Canada and around the world, held conferences and speaking tours, produced educational factsheets and reports, provided daily updates on our website at www.canadians.org and on social media, and delivered informative articles in *Canadian Perspectives*.

These remarkable achievements are made possible by your financial contributions. More than \$3.9 million was received from supporter donations this fiscal year, which represents 86 per cent of total revenue. Please see the Summary Statement of Revenue and Expenses which shows our sources of revenue and how we spent this funding.

Your donations make a difference

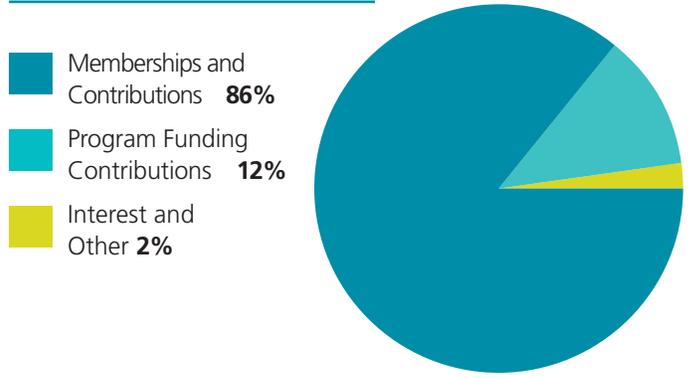
We extend a most heartfelt thank you to all of our donors for supporting our work!



For fiscal year ended:	June 30, 2015	June 30, 2014
Revenues		
Memberships and Contributions	3,963,203	4,190,985
Program Funding Contributions	578,539	189,029
Interest and Other	92,671	126,935
Total Revenue	4,634,413	4,506,949
Expenses		
Regional Office and Chapter Funding	644,300	640,060
Communications	450,428	403,906
Campaigns	1,389,606	1,070,008
Fundraising	837,032	1,157,516
Meetings, conferences and newsletters	173,204	198,020
Subtotal	3,494,570	3,469,510
Shared Costs, Administration and Program support	1,129,815	1,056,032
Total Expense	4,624,385	4,525,542
Net Revenue (Expense) for the period	10,028	(18,593)

Each dollar you give to the Council is spent on the following:	Cents
Political work	58.3
National campaigns	29.7
Local/regional campaigns	14.7
Conferences/other political work	8.9
International campaigns	5.0
Fundraising	20.2
Communications	13.3
Administration/support	8.3

Revenue sources 2014-2015



The Citizens' Agenda Fund

The Council of Canadians would like to extend a special thank you to everyone who donated to our Citizens' Agenda Fund (CAF). These leadership-level contributions made it possible to achieve many campaign victories in 2015. Please visit our website at www.canadians.org/CAF to see a list of our CAF contributors.