

BC SOLUTIONS

News & Commentary from the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives' BC Office | JANUARY 2018



Fossil fuel industry accustomed to guarding the hen house, documents reveal

BY SHANNON DAUB & ZOË YUNKER

In August 2016, the BC government (led at the time by the BC Liberals) announced a new “climate leadership” plan that disappointed many British Columbians—including members of the Climate Leadership Team who spent months deliberating and making recommendations.

“What happened?” we wondered. “Why did the province ignore its own Climate Leadership Team’s advice, not to mention the thousands of people and organizations who contributed their thoughts and ideas to a public consultation process?”

We found the answer in documents obtained through repeated Freedom of Information (FOI) requests we submitted as part of our work on the Corporate Mapping Project.

Those documents revealed a cozy relationship between the fossil fuel industry and the last BC government, which went even further than we suspected—all the way to inviting industry to directly craft the province’s “climate leadership” plan. →

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CCPA
CANADIAN CENTRE
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BC Office

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MEET THE REAL “CLIMATE LEADERSHIP” TEAM: BIG OIL AND GAS CORPORATIONS

While the UN climate talks in Paris were underway in December 2015, the government launched a closed-door three-month-long process to work jointly with the oil and gas industry to revise and rewrite the Climate Leadership Team’s recommendations.

The process entailed five rounds of meetings over three months with all the key corporate players, from oil and gas producers to distributors. It was divided into working groups on the carbon tax; methane and fugitive emissions (i.e. from natural gas production, a significant source of BC’s greenhouse emissions); and electrification (i.e. the provision of cheap electricity to natural gas extraction sites and LNG plants).

Notably, most of these meetings took place not in BC, but in Calgary—specifically in the boardroom of the most powerful fossil fuel lobby group in the country, the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP).

The FOI-released documents included the agendas and attendee lists from one round of working group meetings. These show that senior officials from the Ministry of Natural Gas Development, the Climate Action Secretariat and BC Hydro attended at least one set of meetings in person. Also in attendance were over two dozen representatives from at least 16 oil and gas corporations and industry groups, including the BC LNG Alliance (which also had a seat on the official Climate Leadership Team), Canadian Natural Resources Limited, Chevron, ConocoPhillips, Encana, Imperial Oil, Nexen/CNOOC, Progress Energy, Shell Canada, Suncor, Teck, Woodfibre Energy, and others.

While the UN climate talks in Paris were underway in December 2015, the government launched a closed-door three-month-long process to work jointly with the oil and gas industry to revise and rewrite the Climate Leadership Team’s recommendations.

The documents obtained also show that this was clearly much more than a “consultation” process. Rather, the process invited the country’s most powerful oil and gas companies to shape both the substance *and* language of BC’s next climate plan.

A STUNNING EXAMPLE OF INSTITUTIONAL CORRUPTION

This is more than a case of ideological alignment between a corporate-friendly party and its corporate donors. It is a profound blurring of the lines between government and industry, who set out to make policy together behind closed doors—while what can now only be characterized as a pretend consultation process was acted out publicly.

It shows that the fossil fuel industry has become accustomed to directly shaping the very policies that should constrain it—as any meaningful climate plan must do.

This blurring of the lines is an example of what ethicists refer to as “institutional corruption:” a “systemic and strategic influence that undermines the institution’s effectiveness by diverting it from its purpose or weakening its ability to achieve its purpose, including...weakening either the public’s trust in that institution or the institution’s inherent trustworthiness.”

The whole charade also represents an abuse of the Climate Leadership Team’s time and a mockery of BC’s claims to leadership during the Paris climate talks, not to mention a tremendous waste of public resources.

LOOKING AHEAD

Why does this matter now that we have a new government? For one thing, it reveals how profoundly corrupting the years and years of unfettered corporate donations have been for our province’s democracy—and it reinforces why the ban on big money in politics passed this fall in the BC Legislature was so urgently needed.

But more importantly, it shows that the fossil fuel industry has become accustomed to directly shaping the very policies that should constrain it—as any meaningful climate plan must do.

A great deal of political will is now needed to move forward if we are to develop a meaningful climate plan for BC. We can expect a huge amount of pressure from oil and gas corporations and lobby groups, which have a strong interest in avoiding such constraints.

Shannon Daub is the Associate Director of CCPA-BC and co-director of the Corporate Mapping Project. Zoë Yunker is a graduate student in the Sociology Department at the University of Victoria and a research assistant with the Corporate Mapping Project.



This analysis is part of the Corporate Mapping Project, a research and public engagement project investigating the power of the fossil fuel industry in Western Canada, led by the University of Victoria, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (BC and Saskatchewan Offices) and Parkland Institute. This research is supported by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC).



BC needs a full public inquiry into fracking

BY BEN PARFITT

Last year, more natural gas was produced in British Columbia than at any point in the past 10 years. That may come as a surprise to some people who thought that growth in BC's natural gas industry hinged on the emergence of a Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) sector. But the reality is that even without a much-hyped LNG industry, natural gas production in BC jumped 70 per cent over the past decade with major customers, including Alberta's tar sands industry, fueling that growth. And the situation is poised to intensify, with one major industry player predicting a doubling of natural gas production within just two years' time (again, absent LNG).

The ecological, human health and safety, and climate costs associated with producing all that fossil fuel is generally very poorly appreciated by those of us living in the urban southwest corner of the province. But ask people living on the front lines about the consequences—First Nations, farming families and rural communities in the northeast region of BC—and a litany of problems is quickly listed off:

- Record-setting induced earthquakes at BC fracking operations,
- Contaminated groundwater and surface water sources,
- A sprawling network of unauthorized dams,
- Rapidly escalating industrial water use and contamination,
- Massive fragmentation of Indigenous lands,
- Troubling increases in methane emissions, and
- Ongoing threats of sour gas leaks that can kill and maim.

BC is long overdue for a wide-ranging formal Public Inquiry into how natural gas is produced in the province.

In the fall, the CCPA-BC brought together a coalition of community, First Nation and environmental organizations to

call for such an inquiry. And through an online tool available at policyalternatives.ca/fracking-inquiry, more than 2,500 people added their voices to the call.

We ask that the new BC government broaden its promise—made by the NDP in its election campaign platform—to initiate a scientific review of fracking. That commitment is a starting point, but to be meaningful and effective it must go well beyond simply appointing a scientific panel.

Rather, a broad formal Public Inquiry or Commission of Inquiry is necessary to investigate all the risks and harms associated with fracking. Such an inquiry should focus squarely on the risks associated with fracking and what should be done about them, including taking a hard look at the adequacy of provincial regulatory oversight and enforcement, and the compliance of fracking companies with existing laws and regulations. It should also cast a wider net addressing important questions such as:

- Is the natural gas industry being conducted and regulated with respect to First Nations in a manner that complies with both Canadian law and the UN Declaration on the →

Rights of Indigenous Peoples?

- What is the true extent of public health and safety risks associated with fracking, including the risks posed by industry-induced earthquakes?
- Where are outright bans on fracking warranted and what other steps should be taken to comprehensively protect human health and safety?
- What are the environmental and water impacts?
- How much could accelerated gas drilling and fracking increase BC's overall greenhouse gas emissions and what should be done to ensure that industry emissions move steadily down, not up?
- Does BC's Oil and Gas Commission adequately monitor the fracking industry, ensuring that it complies with all relevant laws? Is it transparent and does it keep the public sufficiently informed?
- If current monitoring and enforcement actions are inadequate, what changes are necessary to ensure that natural gas companies comply with all relevant laws and regulations?

To be effective, such an inquiry must have powers and sufficient funds to compel legal testimony and commission professional, independent research. Public meetings should be held across BC, including hearings where witnesses are called and testify under oath; independent experts should be called upon; and a final public report should be issued.

/// We ask that the new BC government broaden its promise to initiate a scientific review of fracking, and launch a full public inquiry.

The previous government ignored a call for such an inquiry in 2011, and to-date government scrutiny has hardly been focused on the province's oil and gas sector. Our new provincial government would provide a valuable public service in immediately rectifying that.

It's past time for BC to take a critical look at the risks associated with fracking and what should be done about them, and reexamine the province's existing laws and enforcement. A thorough and transparent inquiry is the solution we need.

Ben Parfitt is the CCPA-BC's Resource Policy Analyst.

The CCPA-BC is among 17 organizations that have called for a full public inquiry into fracking in BC. You can join the call by writing a letter to your representatives via policyalternatives.ca/fracking-inquiry. Through this tool, you can send a letter (we have a template, but you can choose to write your own) to your local MLA and key decision-makers in the BC Government.

Inclusive growth and the future of work

A recap of our 2017 Rosenbluth Lecture with Armine Yalnizyan

BY IGLIKA IVANOVA

The CCPA-BC's 2017 Gideon Rosenbluth Memorial lecture featured one of Canada's leading progressive economists, Armine Yalnizyan, who shared some insights on the changing world of work. In her lecture, Armine explained that the benefits of growth have become concentrated in the hands of a wealthy few, leading many to rightfully conclude "the game is rigged" and throw their support behind populist parties, Brexit, and Trump. The resulting geopolitical uncertainty—combined with the pressures of climate change and population aging—has slowed growth globally, and made the dangers of rising inequality even more apparent.

However we have not yet found a way to shift to an inclusive growth model.

Armine makes a compelling case that business as usual cannot produce inclusive growth. And our government's go-to policy response—promoting skills-training and education—is woefully insufficient. In addition to educational opportunities, workers need higher minimum wages, a strong collective voice, benefits and paid time off, and affordable, quality basic services. Yet so far, the public debate has been too focused on (limited) redistribution and not enough on making the economy fairer to begin with.

In the end, Armine sees the future of work as bright if we manage to reverse the erosion of workers' power—and less so if we fail. I think she's right.

Iglika Ivanova is a senior economist at the CCPA-BC.

You can find an audio recording of the lecture and Armine's slides at: policynote.ca/armine2017

BC First Nations are poised to lead the renewable energy transition

BY KARENA SHAW, DANA COOK, ERYN FITZGERALD & JUDITH (KEKINUSUQS) SAYERS

First Nations-led renewable energy generation offers a promising path forward for BC's transition to a sustainable, just and climate-friendly energy system.

That is the overarching finding of our recent research into First Nations' involvement in the renewable energy sector. The vast majority of respondents to a survey of 203 First Nations in the province (which yielded 105 responses) are already involved or interested in becoming involved in the renewable energy sector, with 78 operational projects, 48 in development and nearly 250 being planned.

A renewable energy project is defined as the development of power through solar, wind, geothermal, run-of-river, tides or biomass. Such projects are key to building sustainable, just and climate-friendly energy systems, allowing a shift away from a corporate agenda driven by the needs of a massively energy-intensive fracking and LNG industry towards one that prioritizes action on climate change, community self-determination and local economic development. First Nations-led renewable energy generation offers a promising path forward for each of these.

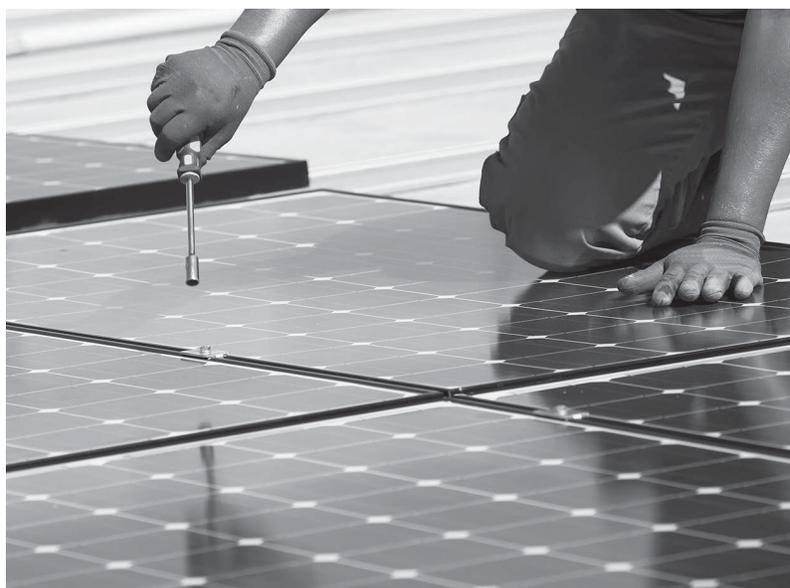
BARRIERS TO FURTHER PROGRESS

Survey respondents identified three primary barriers to increasing their involvement in the renewable energy sector: limited opportunities to sell power to the grid via BC Hydro, difficulties obtaining financing, and a lack of community readiness.

Perhaps the most urgent of these is the significant decline in BC Hydro's interest in facilitating independent power production, which arises in part from the commitment to build the Site C dam.

Although Site C does offer a return to publicly-owned electricity generation, it does not represent a sustainable or progressive path towards climate change mitigation. Site C is being developed to power a potential LNG industry that will be fed by fracked gas from Northeast BC. And as Site C will produce such a large amount of power (1,100MW), it forecloses opportunities to produce alternative forms of power, threatening to halt the expansion of benefits that First Nations have accrued from developing renewable energy projects.

Investing even a small portion of the funds allocated to Site C could have led to substantial progress in relation to the other two barriers: difficulty obtaining financing and community capacity building.



BC has an opportunity to produce new power through a model of energy system development that takes advantage of emerging cost-effective technologies and public ownership at a community scale. Doing so would enable an energy system that can be scaled up incrementally as demand projections increase. It would also support First Nations' leadership in an industry in which they have already built substantial momentum, and help respond to past injustices of energy development in our province.

Karena Shaw is Associate Professor and Director of the School of Environmental Studies at the University of Victoria, and a co-investigator with the Corporate Mapping Project. Dana Cook and Eryn Fitzgerald are MA Candidates in the School of Environmental Studies. Judith (Kekinusuqs) Sayers is president of the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council, and an Adjunct Professor in the School of Environmental Studies at the University of Victoria.



Hopeful recommendations for BC Budget 2018

BY ALEX HEMINGWAY, IGLIKA IVANOVA, SETH KLEIN, MARC LEE & BEN PARFITT

The first full BC Budget from the new BC NDP government will be released in February—and we are hopeful that it will address our province’s most pressing social and environmental challenges. Our submission to the 2018 BC Budget Consultations made the case for action in key areas that we’ve focused on in recent years. Here are some highlights.

RECOGNIZE THAT WE CAN AFFORD TO MAKE LIVES BETTER

Fortunately, our province has the economic and fiscal capacity to make significant reinvestments in our public sector. The government’s September Budget Update projected surpluses over the next three years, and it can create substantially more fiscal room by fully replacing MSP revenue with a combination of fairer personal and business taxes, as we have recommended.

The provincial government can also afford to borrow in order to make the urgent investments described below. Such investment would strengthen BC’s economy, and improve quality of life for everyone.

GET STARTED ON A UNIVERSAL, AFFORDABLE CHILD CARE SYSTEM

While the full build-out of a new child care system in BC will take some time, we recommend five budget measures to get started as quickly as possible:

1. Adopt the \$10-a-Day Child Care Plan as a framework for action;
2. Invest in quality programming, high standards of service, and accountability mechanisms;
3. Invest in an early childhood education workforce development strategy;
4. Immediately freeze fees at current levels, eliminate fees for lower-income families and develop a strategy for reducing parent fees; and
5. Build new child care spaces across the province.

FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE

If we are going to make major reductions in BC’s greenhouse gas (or carbon) emissions, the province needs much more than a carbon tax: we need new public investments and regulations, and to say no to fossil fuel expansion projects. Increases in the carbon tax (with credits to lower- and middle-income households) should be part of that package, but they cannot be the whole thing, or even the centrepiece.

Half of carbon tax revenues should flow into a reformed carbon credit, so the tax doesn’t hit lower- and middle-income folks hardest, and the other half should fund climate action initiatives. In addition, BC must plan for climate change, including budgeting for the ongoing need to fight forest fires.

If we are going to make major reductions in BC’s greenhouse gas (or carbon) emissions, the province needs much more than a carbon tax: new public investments, regulations, and saying no to fossil fuel expansion projects.

REDUCE POVERTY

Development of a robust poverty reduction plan is underway in BC, but urgent actions need not wait. The 2018 Budget should immediately increase income assistance (welfare) and disability rates beyond the initial boosts announced last summer; remove barriers that discourage and delay applications for income assistance; ensure low-income post-secondary students receive adequate support; better enforce and improve the Employment Standards Act; and implement recommendations from the Fair Wages Commission.





END THE HOUSING AFFORDABILITY CRISIS

BC Budget 2018 needs to launch a comprehensive housing affordability plan for Metro Vancouver and other parts of BC facing high real estate and rental prices. It should make stronger annual commitments toward the new government's election promise of 114,000 new units over ten years, and focus on a diverse range of housing options, especially rentals, social housing and co-ops.

STRENGTHEN PUBLIC EDUCATION

Budget 2018 should ensure that students with learning disabilities, special needs and those for whom English is not a first language receive the supports they need to reach their full potential. We should also fast-track investments to relieve overcrowded schools in some districts, to complete necessary seismic upgrading, and to cover deferred maintenance needs that piled up during the long period of underfunding.

The Budget should also expand the tuition waiver program for youth aging out of the foster care system to the age of 30, and increase funding for colleges and universities with a view to reducing tuition fees.

BC Budget 2018 should make stronger annual commitments toward the new government's election promise of 114,000 new units over ten years, and focus on a diverse range of housing options, especially rentals, social housing and co-ops.

INVEST IN BC'S HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

If we want to tackle the opioid crisis, enhance seniors care, reduce surgical wait times and decrease drug costs, government leadership and investment are needed. Budget 2018 must provide the funding to bring programs and supports online as rapidly as possible.

Budget 2018 should also prioritize development of a drugs program—as the first phase in creating a universal pharmacare program.

TACKLE INEQUALITY THROUGH TAX FAIRNESS

Last but not least, we recommend that all MSP revenue be replaced with fairer personal and business taxes. We also recommend a shift to a natural gas royalty regime that ensures a minimum royalty to the province for each unit extracted. And finally, we recommend convening a Fair Tax Commission to review the entire provincial tax system, in order to meaningfully engage with British Columbians about the services they want and how we can pay for them together, fairly.

Learn more about any of these recommendations by reading our BC Budget 2018 series at: policynote.ca/budget2018

Lifting tuition fees for adult basic education is just the beginning

BY SUZANNE SMYTHE

The August 8, 2017 announcement that the new NDP government was fulfilling a promise to end tuition fees for Adult Basic Education and Adult English Language learners in time for September classes is welcome indeed. This is the first step in undoing an educational wrong.

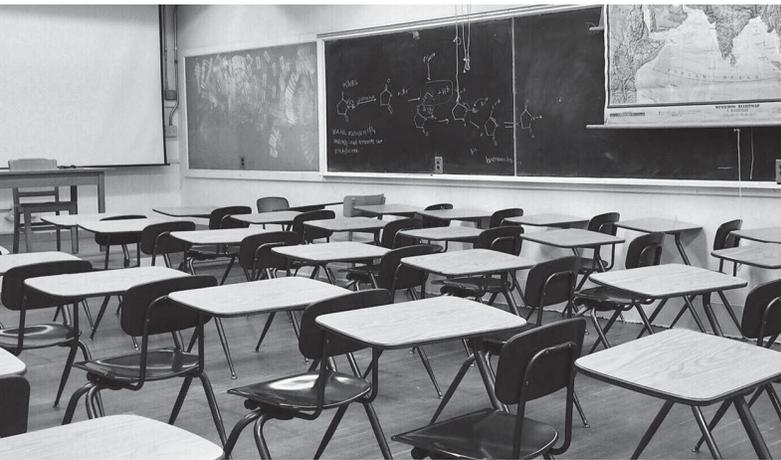


PHOTO: WOKANDAPIX / PIXABAY

The BC Liberals announced in late 2014 that “adults with the means to do so” would be required to pay up to \$1,600 per semester to take courses leading to high school graduation in colleges and post-secondary institutions. Courses leading to high school graduation remained free in school districts, but with reduced access due to what some school boards identified as budget pressures that made adult education “unsustainable.”

Adult education can be a path out of poverty, but to fulfill this mission attitudes need to change and systematic inequalities in funding need to be resolved.

It soon became clear that few adults in need of high school upgrading courses “had the means” to pay the exorbitant tuition fees after all. Demand for the Adult Upgrading Grant—which was introduced alongside the new tuition fees to cover costs for adults earning less than \$24,144 per year—soared among those who qualified. And thousands of potential students who earned just over the cut-off rate left the system.

Unfortunately, the misconceptions and prejudices toward adult basic education that led to this punitive policy won’t disappear with the tuition fees.

Adult education can be a path out of poverty, but to fulfill this mission attitudes need to change, systematic inequalities in funding need to be resolved and social distance between policy makers and citizens needs to be breached. Here are some possible steps to get this work started:

Equitably fund adult education. Currently, adult education students are funded 40 per cent less than students in the K–12 system.

Improve equitable access to adult basic education. There should be multiple ways for people to upgrade their basic education. Centres need to be located close to affordable transit, and access to affordable child care is vital. Online learning is an option for some, if the courses are well-designed and complemented by face-to-face meetings, and if people have equitable access to the internet and digital skills. This is not the reality in BC at present.

Build new capacity for skilled adult educators. The past several years have seen the dismantling of adult literacy and basic education programs in all sectors and communities. Experienced and dedicated educators have left the system. We will need to build new capacity for skilled educators who can work successfully with older youth and adults.

Bring future education leaders on board with the goals and contributions of adult learning. Education decision-makers should visit adult learning settings, and include adult education in curricular and policy plans; new teachers should learn about the role that adult learning plays in a democratic society and in supporting the K–12 system.

Adult education is not only an educational policy issue—it is integral to economic and social policy, essential to meet ever-changing workplace and societal learning needs, an engine for poverty reduction, and an essential piece of an inclusive vision for public education. Let’s start thinking bigger, wider and deeper.

Suzanne Smythe is an assistant professor of education at SFU, and a research associate with the CCPA–BC.

20th anniversary retrospectives

Twenty years ago last year, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives' BC Office opened and quickly published its first reports. Since then, we have published about 300 research reports, 1,500 opinion articles, 1,000 blog posts and more.

To mark this significant anniversary we asked some of our research associates to look back and comment on what's happened or changed since they undertook their research. In some cases there has been progress, in others the jury is still out, and unfortunately there are examples of steps backwards even when the CCPA-BC and other organizations have offered evidence about the need to improve the lives of British Columbians.

But just as when the CCPA-BC was launched, our staff policy analysts and research associates continue to investigate a wide range of issues—proposing fearless policy ideas and research for a better world—and our ideas are being spread and discussed more than ever.

You can find the retrospective series at policynote.ca/20years

Making our voice heard on unauthorized dams, the minimum wage, Site C, the provincial budget and electoral reform

RESPONSE TO PROGRESS ENERGY'S ATTEMPT TO AVOID ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEWS

Resource Policy Analyst Ben Parfitt recently sent a letter to BC's Environmental Assessment Office in response to Progress Energy's extraordinary request to retroactively exempt two dams from environmental reviews. Such reviews should have been conducted before the dams were built—but not only did those reviews not happen, the company also failed to obtain other required authorizations. Both dams were built to store water for use in fracking operations. Read Ben's letter at: policynote.ca/dam-troublesome

SUBMISSION TO THE BC FAIR WAGES COMMISSION

CCPA-BC Director Seth Klein and Senior Economist Iglia Ivanova made a submission to the BC Fair Wages Commission highlighting the need for speedy and ambitious increases to BC's minimum wage—which is currently a poverty-level wage. They recommend that British Columbia adopt a \$15 minimum wage by March 2019. Low-wage workers need a significant boost to their income and they have been waiting a long time. And low-wage jobs that contribute to working poverty impose high costs on society more broadly. Read the full submission at: policyalternatives.ca/bc-fair-wages

EIGHT REASONS THE SITE C DAM IS NOT NEEDED: PRESENTATION TO THE BCUC

Senior Economist Marc Lee appeared in the fall before the BC Utilities Commission (BCUC) in Vancouver, presenting his findings on the economics of the (now-approved) Site C dam. Marc argued that the Site C dam is not necessary, and that moving forward to completion is likely to have adverse impacts on BC Hydro and ratepayers of all classes. Find highlights of his presentation at: policynote.ca/eight-reasons-SiteC

SUBMISSION TO THE CONSULTATIONS FOR BC BUDGET 2018

Several of our researchers got together to produce a submission outlining what we'd like to see in the 2018 BC Budget. The submission highlights key findings from our research, provides an overview of BC's current economic situation, and outlines seven priority areas for action by the provincial government. Read more on page 6.

AND MORE...

We've also been asked to engage with the new government on its poverty reduction plans, the development of public child care, and gave advice on the reinstatement of the BC Human Rights Commission. And we've shared our ideas for how to structure BC's fall 2018 referendum on electoral reform, which you can find at: policyalternatives.ca/bc-electoral-reform

CCPA-BC Gala 2017

Our 2017 Annual Fundraising Gala took place on October 19, with keynote speaker Senator Murray Sinclair. We're incredibly grateful to all who came out—over 700 people, plus several dozen energetic volunteers who worked so hard to make the event successful. And thanks to all who couldn't be there in person but support the CCPA.

You can visit policyalternatives.ca/senatormurraysinclair to watch the video of Senator Sinclair's inspiring talk, "The truth is hard. Reconciliation is harder," or to download his slides.

PHOTOS BY JOSHUA BERSON & TERRA POIRIER



Senator Murray Sinclair delivering his keynote speech.



Cecilia Point, Musqueam Nation.



Gala volunteers extraordinaire: Shayna & Penny (left), Essya & Qara (right).



Tanys & Pai making sure everyone stays hydrated.



The Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC accepting their Community Leadership Award.

Recipients of the 2017 Power of Youth Awards

The Power of Youth Leadership Awards recognize and celebrate young progressive leaders in British Columbia who are driving change toward a more socially, economically, and environmentally just society. The Awards for 2017 were presented at the CCPA-BC Gala, and honoured the following recipients.



FOR SOCIAL MOVEMENT BUILDING: CICELY-BELLE BLAIN

Cicely is an anti-racism, Black liberation, and queer justice advocate whose work centres on accountability, accessibility, anti-oppression, and art as politics.

Cicely is the founder of Black Lives Matter Vancouver and a queer youth worker who has led many community-building events, protests, vigils, workshops, and public education sessions—offering a powerful approach to social justice work that amplifies voices from marginalized communities.

“My vision is to create conversations and action in Vancouver that have been ignored or erased, to re-visibility the Black community, to decolonize my art and poetry, to hold organizations and governments accountable to real anti-racist work and to lift up the voices of the most marginalized,” writes Cicely.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AWARD: COALITION OF CHILD CARE ADVOCATES OF BC

The Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC (opposite) was celebrated for their advocacy, education and policy development work on public, affordable child care for BC.



FOR RESEARCH, ANALYSIS, AND SOLUTIONS: KHELSELEM

Khelsilem is a respected community leader and bridge-builder who engages in research, analysis, and advocacy relating to the protection of Indigenous languages, particularly the Squamish and Halkomelem languages.

His work involves connecting younger generations to the knowledge and memories of elders, with a view to securing a continuum of growth and learning—and to advance and protect Indigenous cultural identity and governance.

He is currently a lecturer at Simon Fraser University in a first-of-its-kind Squamish language immersion program, and is the founder and programming director of Kwi Awt Stelmexw, a non-profit organization dedicated to Squamish language, heritage and art.

“I would identify my work as breaking off from the normal systems that structure and inform our learning. For me, pulling from our past strikes at the true meaning of being innovative in the work we do,” he explains.

Khelsilem has just been elected to the council of the Squamish Nation.

A crucial time of year for us

BY LEO YU

The start of each year is a crucial time to lay the groundwork for our annual fundraising campaign. It is when we ask members of the BC Solutions Donor Circle to renew their pledge early so that we have a strong financial base to build on for the year.

Over the past few years the number of BC Donor Circle members who donate annual gifts of \$1,000 or more has doubled to almost 70 individuals, and the number of Patrons who donate \$5,000 or more has increased to eight individuals. These leadership gifts have been foundational for our organization, to which a growing number of British Columbians also give generously.

Thanks to your support, we achieved more last year than ever before, but there's so much more that needs to be done. Please contact me if you would like to make a pledge for a leadership gift in 2018 (contact info below).

Make social, economic and environmental justice a part of your legacy

Please consider joining the Visionaries—a group of loyal supporters who have chosen to make a planned gift to the CCPA.

By including the CCPA as a beneficiary in your will, you are laying the groundwork to ensure we can continue to develop solutions that benefit your loved ones, community, and the environment for years to come.

We encourage you to designate a part of your bequest for both the BC and National offices of the CCPA (undesignated gifts go entirely to our National Office).

You can download a printer-friendly brochure at policyalternatives.ca/BC-Legacy.

We would be grateful to know if you have planned a legacy gift to the CCPA. Get in touch with Leo Yu at the number/email below.

 Contact Supporter Engagement Specialist Leo Yu with any questions or to discuss making a contribution to the CCPA-BC: leo@ccpabc.ca / 604-801-5121 ext. 225

A personal note

TO THE CCPA—

Congratulations on 20 years! Thank you for the amazing work you do, and on a more personal note, thank you for changing my life. Finding the CCPA and the Next Up leadership program you co-founded was a pivotal point in my life's work and career, and opened my eyes to the wide world of social and environmental justice and a network of amazing people (and dear friends) who I'm honoured to support when I can.

With gratitude always,

Amy Lubik

PhD in cancer research and alumna of Next Up leadership program

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News and commentary from the Canadian
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Cover image: Foxes discussing best way to guard
hen house. By Victor Huang / iStock.

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