

Charities & Nonprofits Propose Measures to Prime Minister to help Canadians and Communities during Economic Downturn

*Urge Federal Government to maintain existing levels
of funding and provide special giving incentives*

OTTAWA, Thursday, November 20, 2008 — Canada's charities and nonprofits will publish an open letter to Stephen Harper in select newspapers across the country on Friday urging the Prime Minister to consider the important role of charities and nonprofits in assisting Canadians and communities, particularly during periods of economic hardship.

The letter comes as the Government prepares to release its Economic Statement and is endorsed by dozens of CEOs and volunteer Chairs of many of Canada's most well-loved and well-known charities and nonprofits. Every Canadian in every community across our country is touched in some way by the work of mission-based charitable organizations. They educate our children, feed the hungry, provide emergency and social services, research cures for diseases, promote physical activity, and preserve our cultural and artistic heritage. These organizations provide services and programs in every corner of the country, from homeless shelters to arts and culture, health charities, environmental networks, United Ways, community foundations and many more.

The letter, which is being published in the Calgary Herald, Ottawa Citizen and La Presse, urges the Prime Minister to maintain existing levels of funding to Canada's charities and nonprofits through its grants and contributions programs, and to consider special short-term measures that will have an important stimulative effect on individual and corporate giving. The signatories note that during the past two years, the federal Government has introduced tax measures that have, in those economic circumstances, proven very effective in stimulating new charitable gifts. Short-term stimulative tax measures can leverage private giving and assist in preserving and increasing critical donor revenues at a time when these funds will be needed most.

“Over the past days and weeks, Canadians have heard and read in the media that demands on charitable organizations have begun to rise,” says Marcel Lauzière, President & CEO of Imagine Canada. *“The ability of these organizations to deliver services and programs to Canadians may be at risk in light of the difficult economic circumstances.”*

The Government of Canada plays a central role in funding important programs and services for 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.

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“Canada’s charitable and nonprofit sector touches every aspect of Canadians’ lives in every corner of the country,” adds Marcel Lauzière. *“We are very committed to working with the federal government to find solutions to help support Canadians during these difficult economic times.”*

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Imagine Canada is a national charitable organization that *looks into* and *out for* Canada’s charities and nonprofit organizations. It advances knowledge and relationships to foster effective and sustainable charitable and nonprofit organizations.

Additional Materials:

Letter to Prime Minister Harper with charity and nonprofit supporters:

http://www.imaginecanada.ca/files/en/publicaffairs/open_letter_to_PM_20081121.pdf

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Marcel Lauzière, President & CEO of Imagine Canada, is available for interviews.

Please call the contacts above to schedule an interview with Mr. Lauzière.