



2020 ANNUAL REPORT





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ABOUT THE CANADIAN TAXPAYERS FEDERATION

The Canadian Taxpayers Federation (CTF) is dedicated to lower taxes, less waste and accountable government.

The CTF was founded in Saskatchewan in 1990 when the Association of Saskatchewan Taxpayers and the Resolution One Association of Alberta joined forces to create a national organization. At the end of 2020, the CTF had 286,000 supporters nationwide.

The CTF maintains a federal office in Ottawa and regional offices in British Columbia, Alberta, Prairie (Saskatchewan and Manitoba), Ontario, Québec and Atlantic Canada. Regional offices conduct research and advocacy activities specific to their provinces in addition to acting as regional organizers of Canada-wide initiatives.

CTF offices field hundreds of media interviews each month, hold press conferences and issue regular news releases, commentaries, online postings and publications to advocate on behalf of CTF supporters. CTF representatives speak at functions, make presentations to government and organize petition drives, events and campaigns to mobilize citizens to effect public policy change. CTF offices send out Let's Talk Taxes commentaries to hundreds of media outlets and personalities across Canada.

Any Canadian taxpayer committed to the CTF's mission is welcome to join at no cost and receive emailed Action Updates. Financial supporters can additionally receive the CTF's flagship publication, The Taxpayer magazine, published three times a year.

The CTF is a federally incorporated, not-for-profit citizens' group that's independent of any institutional or partisan affiliations. All CTF staff, board members and representatives are prohibited from donating to or holding a membership in any political party. In 2019-20, the CTF raised \$4.8 million on the strength of 31,655 donations. Donations to the CTF are not tax deductible as a charitable contribution.

Taxpayers
Federation

CANADIAN TAXPAYERS FEDERATION'S TEAM

- | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| Scott Hennig
President and CEO | Aaron Wudrick
Federal Communications Director | Paige MacPherson
Atlantic Communications Director | Brenda Smith
Administrative assistant |
| Melanie Harvie
Executive Vice President | Kris Sims
British Columbia Communications Director | Jeff Bowes
Director of Digital Marketing | Sydney Baran
Administrative assistant |
| Shannon Morrison
Vice President, Operations | Franco Terrazzano
Alberta Communications Director | Kris Rondolo
Generation Screwed Executive Director | Rick Pepper
Director of Legacy Programs |
| Todd MacKay
Vice President, Communications & Prairie Communications Director | Jasmine Moulton
Ontario Communications Director | James Wood
Investigative Journalist | |
| Rod Cunningham
National Field Manager | Renaud Brossard
Québec Communications Director | Elizabeth Zemlak
Administrative assistant | |

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- | | |
|--|--|
| Ken Azzopardi | Maxime Robert (appointed July 2020) |
| Sunira Chaudhri (appointed July 2020) | Adam Daifallah (resigned January 2020) |
| Michelle Eaton | Melissa Mathieson (resigned March 2020) |
| George Marshall | |



Adam Daifallah (left) and Ken Azzopardi (right) receiving their five-year recognition plaques for serving on the CTF board from CEO Scott Hennig.



National field manager Rod Cunningham (left) and Manitoba field manager Kerry Maxwell (right) presenting Earl McGregor with a recognition of his 15 years of service to the CTF.



FROM THE CHAIR

While the Canadian Taxpayers Federation (CTF) faced many challenges during the pandemic, I am pleased to report that we are exiting 2020 in a strong position, having weathered the brunt of the storm. As the world around us changed, we pivoted to take on the emerging challenges 2020 brought.

High debt, record spending and unprecedented government powers mean that Canadian taxpayers need to work together to push back and ensure the coming decades won't be lost for the next generation.

Thankfully, you have the CTF in your corner. Having reached our 30th anniversary in 2020, the Federation continues to find new and innovative ways to fulfil the mandate handed down from our founders. The Federation is supported by an exceptional team who fight tirelessly for lower taxes, less government waste and more accountability.

I have been proud of the way our staff responded to the challenges of 2020 and know that, thanks to the support of tens of thousands of our donors, they will be up for the battles that taxpayers will be facing over the next few years.

I am pleased to chair a strong board of directors who hold the values of accountability and fiscal responsibility close to their hearts. Our board was fortunate to add Sunira Chaudhri and Maxime Robert to our ranks this past year. Sunira is a labour lawyer in Toronto, Ont., and Maxime is a government affairs professional from Québec. Both bring a wealth of knowledge and strong support of our mission to the board.

It is my continued honour to be Chair of the board of directors of the CTF. This organization plays a very important role in our country and I am grateful to be part of it.

In closing, I would like to congratulate and thank CTF's employees, volunteers, members of the board of directors and our donors, without whom we could not fulfill our mission of enhancing accountability, putting an end to government waste and an unjustified fiscal burden on us all.

Michelle Eaton
Chair of the Board
Canadian Taxpayers Federation



Michelle Eaton

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Twenty-twenty was a weird year for the world, but it proved an interesting year at the Canadian Taxpayers Federation (CTF).

Despite the challenges presented by the global COVID-19 pandemic, I'm pleased to report the organization is healthy, growing and continuing to fulfil the mandate our founders set out three decades ago.

This year also marked our 30th anniversary. While we had plans to hold an in-person event (yes, this is now a term we use to differentiate between the normal way of meeting and the new virtual meetings we've all become accustomed to), the pandemic thwarted those plans.

We were able to produce an excellent 30th anniversary edition of *The Taxpayer* magazine to recognize all that the CTF and our supporters have achieved since 1990.

The issues that we were dealing with in early 2020 certainly changed with the onset of the pandemic. While we took a few weeks to adjust to the new world we were facing, our staff responded to these new challenges with the same vigour as we have in the past.

The number of Canadians supporting the CTF continues to grow and we grew rapidly in 2020. Impressively, more than 602,194 Canadians signed a CTF petition this year, and our supporter numbers now top 286,000.

Those Canadians taking action and taking part in CTF campaigns were the reason we were able to gain ground for taxpayers in many areas this year. This annual report details some of the more significant campaigns and victories of the past year.

We got our first victory at the Supreme Court of Canada in 2020 with a ruling that provinces are able to reject judge pay demands (see page 20). We won another court victory in Alberta when the Court of Appeal sided with us on the constitutionality of the federal carbon tax (see page 7). We were also the only non-governmental intervener against the federal carbon tax when the case was presented to the Supreme Court.



Scott Hennig

In Montréal, Que., we were able to convince the city to freeze property taxes for the first time in more than a decade (see page 26). In Calgary, Alta., after a multi-year fight, we were successful in getting the mayor's second pension (that's right, that position had multiple pensions) shut down (see page 22). In New Brunswick, our support helped get "ability to pay" legislation passed, requiring arbitrators to take taxpayers' ability to pay into account when making decisions on wage demands from government employee unions (see page 27). And, in Alberta, the CTF was instrumental in pushing members of the legislative assembly (MLAs) to support a repeal of a ban on paying plasma donors – a move that will increase domestic plasma supply and lower costs for taxpayers (see page 30).

Nationally, some excellent reporting work by our investigative journalist, James Wood, led to the repealing of a tax on imported personal protective equipment early in the pandemic (see page 16). And we were able to collect a huge petition telling the Trudeau government not to cover the security costs for Prince Harry and his wife Meghan, that ultimately led to the government stating that it would not longer cover any more costs (see page 9).

Without question, we don't win every fight we take on. We continue to be outnumbered by lobbyists, socialists, government employee unions and big-spending politicians. But, the number of fedup Canadians is growing and so too is our ability to harness that dissatisfaction into action.

Despite the challenges, the CTF is up to the task and will continue to be a force to be reckoned with in the future.

Scott Hennig

President and CEO

Canadian Taxpayers Federation

21ST ANNUAL TEDDY WASTE AWARDS

On March 5, Federal director Aaron Wudrick, Ontario director Jasmine Moulton and our mascot, Porky the Waste Hater, hosted the 21st annual Teddy Waste Awards on Parliament Hill in the West Block's Press Conference Room.

We had a total of 18 examples of cringeworthy government waste, up by two from last year. Every year, there is no shortage of nominees.

Runner-ups included Senator Donna Dasko, who spent \$15,000 to find out Canadians thought the senate was pointless, and the Ontario Cannabis Retail Corporation, for losing \$42 million trying to sell drugs.

Other nominees were Québec's environment ministry, which spent millions of dollars trying to go paperless before completely reversing course, the Privy Council Office, for spending \$12,000 on a glitzy gala for federal communications staff, and Parks Canada, for spending \$65,000 on a failed fence that former CBC Television personality Rick Mercer described as "stunning in its ugliness."

The municipal Teddy award went to the City of Toronto, Ont.'s euchre-gate crackdown. The city put significant resources into investigating an illegal gambling operation at some of its community centers: seniors paying \$1.25 to play three hours of euchre. The investigation kept going, despite Mayor John Tory saying he had called off the "fun police."

The provincial Teddy went to the Yukon Territory's department of tourism, which spent \$139,000 to promote and stage a tourism campaign that involved putting gold in a creek and flying in social media influencers to look at it. The whole thing had originally been meant to be paid

for by \$100,000 worth of crowdfunding, with only \$4,500 materializing. The Yukon government then stepped in with taxpayer money to cover the rest of the plan to pay for three social media influencers and one reporter to document the sparsely attended event.

The federal Teddy went to Global Affairs Canada's Mission Cultural Fund, which spent \$11.2 million (grossly over its \$4.5 million budget) over three years for various cultural initiatives, including a program to fly chefs around the world to cook at various Canadian diplomatic missions. Those trips included a chef flown to New Delhi, India, in 2018 to cook Indian food at a cost of \$17,000.

Last, but definitely not least, ex-Montréal, Que., Mayor Michael Applebaum took home the Lifetime Achievement Teddy. He briefly served as acting mayor in 2012 before being arrested and charged in June 2013 with 14 charges, including corruption and bribery. He was ultimately convicted on eight charges, serving a brief prison sentence.

In 2019, the City of Montréal went to court to try to force Applebaum to repay his \$260,000 taxpayer-funded severance package, to no avail (the city is planning an appeal).

Applebaum remains eligible for a provincially managed pension and stands to collect more than \$1 million in pension payments by age 90.



Federal director Aaron Wudrick along with Porky the Waste Hater and Ontario director Jasmine Moulton during the 2020 Teddy Awards on Parliament Hill.

CARBON TAX FIGHT CONTINUES

This year saw the continuation of our long running battle against the federal carbon tax. For years, the CTF has been one of the most vocal opponents of this harmful tax and 2020 was no exception.

In February, we won a big legal victory when the Alberta Court of Appeal released its ruling and sided with us, finding, in a 4-1 majority decision, that the federal carbon tax is unconstitutional. This was the first time a provincial appeal court had ruled against the carbon tax and came on the heels of split decisions in 2019 in Saskatchewan and Ontario that found the carbon tax to be constitutional.

With conflicting provincial decisions failing to resolve the issue from a legal standpoint, it was left to the Supreme Court of Canada to have the final say and, in late September after several months of pandemic-related delays, the court finally held its hearings. The CTF, represented by our counsel, Bruce Hallsor, made submissions as an intervenor opposing the tax – the only non-government entity to do so, in contrast to dozens of intervenors in support of the tax. The decision is expected in early 2021.



The CTF's Aaron Wudrick and Christine Van Geyn, along with CTF counsel Bruce Hallsor, in the Ontario Court of Appeal prior to the carbon tax hearing.

Outside the courtroom, there were other major developments on the carbon tax file, with the Trudeau government announcing in December that it would be increasing the federal carbon tax to a whopping \$170 per tonne by 2030, in spite of the fact that, just prior to the 2019 election, the government explicitly claimed it had no plans to increase it.

Perhaps even worse, the Trudeau government also pressed ahead with the implementation of a second carbon tax – the so-called clean fuel standard, which will require reductions in the carbon content of fossil fuels. If these requirements aren't met, businesses will have to pay for "compliance credits" at a cost of \$350 per tonne.

CPC LEADERSHIP CANDIDATES SIGN CTF'S NO CARBON TAX PLEDGE



Then-CPC leadership candidate Erin O'Toole signing the CTF's Carbon Tax Pledge to repeal Trudeau's carbon tax and not replace it with any other carbon tax or cap-and-trade scheme.

When the Conservative Party of Canada (CPC) launched its 2020 leadership race, the CTF took the opportunity to challenge leadership candidates to sign our No Carbon Tax pledge – to make a promise that, if elected Prime Minister, they would scrap the harmful federal carbon tax and not impose any similar national carbon tax or cap-and-trade system.

All four candidates – Leslyn Lewis, Peter MacKay, Erin O'Toole and Derek Sloan – accepted our challenge, and Federal director Aaron Wudrick travelled to Toronto in June to secure their signatures. In August, O'Toole was elected Conservative leader.

The last time the CTF secured such a commitment, during the 2018 leadership race of the Ontario PC Party, Doug Ford emerged as the winner and, within months, became premier of Ontario. He honoured his pledge by immediately scrapping the province's cap-and-trade carbon tax. With a potential federal election on the horizon for 2021, we will be holding O'Toole to the same standard, should he succeed in becoming prime minister.

MEGHAN AND HARRY

It all began with a splashy scandal in the British tabloids and ended up with a Duke and Duchess (temporarily) moving to British Columbia.

Prince Harry and Meghan Markle, the Duke and Duchess of Sussex, decided they had had enough of the cramped spotlight in the United Kingdom and wanted to trade their His and Her Royal Highness titles for some hiking boots and go live in the colonies.

While many Canadians have a deep affection for Prince Harry, a son of the late Princess Diana, and we appreciate his dedicated charity work for veterans of our armed forces, we also believed that the average hardworking Canadian taxpayer shouldn't be paying for the lifestyle choices of the rich and famous couple. And rich they are, as their personal wealth is about \$30 million. To their credit, Harry and Meghan said outright that they wanted to be financially independent and, to our knowledge, they hadn't asked for a nickel of our money.

Prime Minister Trudeau, however, is not known for his frugality. He blows millions of dollars on everything from celebrity causes to costumed dance trips to India. Canadian taxpayers were rightly concerned that Trudeau would haul out the royal welcome wagon, filled to the brim with our money.

The Canadian Taxpayers Federation fastened our finest fascinators and tied on our jauntiest ascots and we leapt into the fray. We launched a petition demanding that, while we warmly welcomed Prince Harry, Meghan and their baby son, Archie, they needed to pay their own way. Taxpayer dollars should not be financially supporting them in any way. Canadians responded overwhelmingly. More than 80,000 people signed the petition in just a few days! The international media picked up the story.



B.C. director Kris Sims live on Channel 7 Sunrise News in Australia discussing our campaign for taxpayers to not have to cover the costs of Meghan and Harry's security.



Jan. 23, 2020 story in the UK's Daily Mail newspaper.

Federal director Aaron Wudrick was featured in the British press, speaking to *The Telegraph*, *The Express* and the *Evening Standard*. The media in the United States, India, Sweden, Hong Kong, Japan and even Australia picked up our petition story and sent our message around the world: "Royals welcome, but not on our dime."

The media here at home picked up the story too, with the CTF doing dozens of interviews telling the federal government not to spend taxpayers' money on the couple.

We even collected items like blankets and socks for the same Vancouver, B.C., women's shelter that Meghan had visited and then we donated them in the couples' names on behalf of CTF supporters. Friendly, but firm.

It worked.

After weeks of relentless pressure, Trudeau finally fessed up and said that, while the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) had been used for the couple's stay in Canada thus far, that taxpayers would not be on the hook for their security or expenses, going forward. Our investigative journalist, James Wood, discovered that between Oct. 1, 2019 and Feb. 27, 2020, the RCMP spent at least \$93,203 on security for the royal couple.

In a strange twist, the couple are now living in sunny California instead of the rainy Pacific Northwest.

Former United States President Donald Trump immediately said that American taxpayers wouldn't be foot the couples' security bills there, either.

See? Supporters of the CTF stood up and were heard – all the way to the White House.



Front page of the Feb. 28, 2020 *Daily Mail* newspaper in the UK.



Story in the Swedish newspaper *Aftonbladet* about the CTF's petition on Feb. 29, 2020.

PODCASTING FOR TAXPAYERS

In the first weeks of the pandemic, politicians and reporters were completely consumed with health issues. Budgets were delayed or cancelled. So, our directors used the time to develop and launch the Canadian Taxpayers Podcast. That work is already paying off.

Podcasts are online audio shows listeners can download on their phones or listen to online. They're increasingly popular and influential. Retired news anchor Peter Mansbridge isn't hosting CBC Television's *The National* anymore, but he has a successful podcast. And, the podcast *CanadaLand* broke the WE Charity scandal before the mainstream media commenced coverage.

The Canadian Taxpayers Podcast is already getting traction.

All four of the Conservative leadership candidates did interviews for the podcast, including eventual winner Erin O'Toole. We've also interviewed Cassandra Parker, a small business owner who is taking the federal government to court to stop the gun ban and confiscation policy. Canadians for Affordable Energy president Dan McTeague joined the podcast to explain the second carbon tax. Neal Winokur, author of the *Grumpy Accountant*, broke down the complexity of the tax system. And, National Police Federation president Brian Sauve talked about concerns frontline police officers have with Ottawa's gun policy.

The Canadian Taxpayers Podcast is doing more than asking questions: it's also answering them.

Our investigative reporter, James Wood, broke the story about the 18% federal tariff being charged on personal protective equipment (PPE) at the start of the global COVID-19 pandemic. The Department of Finance Canada removed the charges soon after. We also broke the story about taxpayers' money being spent on a sex-toy art exhibit in Germany as well as millions of dollars in subsidies going to Tesla because it made a lower-quality car.

It usually takes years for a podcast to gain momentum. And, the Canadian Taxpayers Podcast is certainly a work in progress. But it's already getting hundreds of listeners for every episode and sits solidly among the top Canadian political shows on Apple's podcast charts.

FIRST NATIONS FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY

There are two options in a tough fight: quit or fight harder.

Charmaine Stick is a fight harder kind of person. And, that's how the Canadian Taxpayers Federation (CTF) works. So, we're stepping up our fight for accountability and transparency in First Nations communities.

Charmaine went on a 13-day hunger strike to push for accountability at the Onion Lake Cree Nation. Despite her stand, her chief and council refused to respect the federal First Nations Financial Transparency Act and release the band's audited financial statements as well as salaries and expenses paid to its leaders.

That's when Charmaine partnered with the CTF.

Hundreds of CTF supporters chipped in to cover legal costs when we took Charmaine's band to court. We won at the Court of Queen's Bench. We won again at the Appeal Court. Ultimately, the band had to release the documents for two years.

Those documents confirmed Charmaine's concerns. The chief had given himself a big raise. The band had lost more than a million dollars investing in a New Zealand tech company.

Tough fights are always back-and-forth affairs.

When Charmaine went back to the band office to demand up-to-date documents, her leaders again refused. We went back to court and, despite an earlier victory, the Appeal Court ruled that we'd have to start again at the Court of Queen's Bench to get the documents.



Federal director Aaron Wudrick and Charmaine Stick on Parliament Hill, delivering more than 30,000 petitions to Prime Minister Trudeau's office.

That raised a disappointing point: we may have to go to court every single year to get documents that the vast majority of First Nations bands release routinely. While CTF supporters have been touchingly supportive of Charmaine's fight, asking them to pay thousands of dollars for court fights every year simply wasn't feasible. We had to find another way to move the fight forward.

That's where our new investigative reporter, James Wood, comes in. We found out about Charmaine's hunger strike because of James' stories when he was a newspaper reporter. In fact, that's a big reason we hired him.

James is now working with Charmaine to use Access to Information and Privacy Act (ATIP) requests to bring to light documents regarding Onion Lake Cree Nation. It will take a lot of hard work. And, it will take time. But, both Charmaine and James have worked on this issue for a long time and they're committed to keep working on it.

BC LEGISLATURE ACCOUNTABILITY

After years of flying under the radar when it comes to expenses, the officers of the British Columbia legislature must now post their expenses online for all to see.

If the clerk, the sergeant at-arms or the Speaker spends taxpayers' money, they now have to post that spending for us to examine.

It's something the Canadian Taxpayers Federation pushed for in the wake of the bombshell "wood splitter" spending report that was delivered by then Speaker of the legislature, Darryl Plecas.

Officers of the legislature are the unelected staff wearing the black and white robes in the halls of power. They are responsible for the daily administrative functioning of the legislature and the security of the building.

Up until 2020, the officers of the legislature spent whatever they wanted to on whatever they wanted and there was no way for us to see where they were spending our money.

That previous lack of transparency provided the cover that allowed the former clerk to spend taxpayers' money on everything from a \$3,200 wood splitter to a \$714 men's luxury watch during a fancy trip to Hong Kong.

After Plecas blew the whistle, the CTF backed him up, demanded an outside investigation and, further, requested that all future spending be posted online.

The CTF wrote columns in the newspapers, we did interviews in the media and our supporters sent emails to the premier and demanded accountability.

It worked.

An outside investigation was conducted by former Supreme Court of Canada Chief Justice Beverly McLachlin, and spending by officers of the legislature is now posted online.



B.C. director Kris Sims with the infamous B.C. Legislature wood splitter purchased by Legislature Clerk Craig James.

TRUDEAU BREAKS THE NATIONAL DEBT CLOCK

In late December, the Canadian Taxpayers Federation marked a sombre milestone when Canada's federal debt reached \$1 trillion.

This was thanks in part to the global COVID-19 pandemic and the sharp increase in government spending to deal with it. However, the Trudeau government had racked up more than \$100 billion in additional debt during its first four years in office.

By reaching 13-digits in debt, our National Debt Clock could no longer display the federal debt – having only 12 digits.

“When we refurbished the National Debt Clock in 2011, never in our wildest dreams – or nightmares – did we think the federal government would more than double the debt while this clock was still in service,” said CTF President Scott Hennig.

The CTF marked the occasion by taking our now-obsolete National Debt Clock to Parliament Hill, where Federal director Aaron Wudrick held a press conference at the exact time of the clock rolling over to \$1 trillion.

The CTF has undertaken an effort to build a new National Debt Clock, which we expect will be up and running in early 2022.



Federal director Aaron Wudrick holding up a makeshift \$1 sign to signify the crossing over to the \$1 trillion federal debt on Dec. 21, 2020.

FIREARMS CONFISCATION

The Canadian Taxpayers Federation joined legal firearms owners across Canada to oppose the Trudeau government's sudden seizure of guns.

In the wake of the attacks in Nova Scotia, the federal government suddenly passed an order-in-council making dozens of firearms and accessories illegal in Canada.

There was no debate in the House of Commons or no examination of the new firearms law in committee on Parliament Hill. There was just sweeping change approved by Trudeau's cabinet.

One day several firearms were legal and the next day they were not.

Not only are firearms owners and retailers stuck with stock that they can't sell or trade, but they are also now waiting on the feds to spend taxpayers' money on "buying back" the guns they suddenly banned.

The CTF took aim at the flawed Canadian Firearms Registry in the 1990s, when the federal government targeted long gun owners and tried to force them to register their rifles and shotguns on a national database. As with most government managed schemes, costs quickly ballooned.

That long gun registry boondoggle eventually blew more than \$2 billion in taxpayers' hard-earned money.

The CTF's B.C. director, Kris Sims, drove up to Prince George, B.C., to speak with small business owner Cassandra Parker about the sudden firearms seizure. Parker owns a hunting and target shooting store in B.C.'s northern capital and she's taking the government of Justin Trudeau to court because of the huge hit she's taken to her business and her way of life.

The mother of five goes hunting and fishing with her family all year round and she feels the sudden ban on products she sells at her business and the tools she uses for her way of life is unfair.

The CTF announced it would be seeking intervenor status in Parker's legal fight.

Our video interview and podcast with Parker has been listened to and shared thousands of times and you can watch it on YouTube.



B.C. director Kris Sims (left) interviewing Cassandra Parker about her legal fight against Trudeau's gun ban and buy back plans.

PPE TARIFF VICTORY

We likely saved peoples lives back in April and May after our victory over taxes being imposed on personal protective equipment (PPE).

This was at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in Canada, when multiple levels of government, business and private citizens were all trying to bring in PPE to defend against the COVID-19 virus. We had an email come in one evening towards the end of April from Stewart Young, the mayor of Langford, B.C., on Vancouver Island.

He had copied us on a letter he was sending to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, blasting the federal government for charging import taxes on mask shipments that he was trying to bring in from overseas.

He was faced with a frustrating choice: pay an 18% tariff or cut through a tangle of bureaucratic red tape to get a waiver. After seeing his message, we kicked into high gear, getting Young on the phone and reading up on federal import regulations.

It became clear that the federal import fees were a significant obstacle for anyone trying to bring in PPE, so we put our investigative journalist, James Woods, on the case. He blew the whistle, publishing our findings on Apr. 27, 2020. On May 5, the federal government announced it would be dropping the tariff.

We think we can take a good chunk of the credit for getting rid of this particular bureaucratic barrier. Hopefully, at least one person was better able to protect themselves with the equipment we smoothed the way to more easily and affordably purchase.

This story was only brought to light through the work of our investigative reporter, supported by our generous donors.



Veteran Ottawa journalist David Akin crediting us for breaking the story about the 18% tax on PPE.

ICBC MONOPOLY

Just before global COVID-19 pandemic restrictions shut down most of our in-person interviews and stunts, the Canadian Taxpayers Federation sent a strong message about B.C.'s government auto insurance monopoly – Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC).

We set up a projector and beamed the running tally of financial losses for the government crown corporation onto the side of the ICBC headquarters building in North Vancouver, B.C. The animation of a dumpster fire was a feisty touch.

It made a media splash and the message was heard.

For the first time ever, a major political party in B.C. made opening ICBC up to competition a key plank in their policy platform.

The British Columbia Liberal Party is now committed to opening ICBC up to competition and it included the pledge in its election campaign this past October.

This is a very big deal, but that battle hasn't been won yet.

The CTF will keep up the pressure on all parties to commit to opening ICBC up to competition so that the next government will set B.C. drivers free to shop for their own auto insurance.

We have made some important headway wringing some fairness out of the government forced ICBC monopoly.

Last spring most of us were stuck at home, having lost our jobs or trying to work from home while following the rules imposed during the initial months of COVID-19.

Since there were fewer people driving on the roads, there were fewer crashes. With fewer crashes that means there were fewer claims and payouts, which means the insurance company is saving money.



The CTF's dumpster fire projection on the side of the ICBC headquarters in North Vancouver on Mar. 10, 2020.

In other parts of Canada where drivers are allowed to shop around and choose their own auto insurance, they got an average of \$250 back in rebates between March and July of last year.

In B.C., since we are stuck with ICBC, the government took its sweet time giving ratepayers' money back to them.

The CTF wrote columns in newspapers and did interviews on radio and TV throughout the summer and fall, demanding that ICBC cough up the money and give it back to drivers.

After harassing the government for many months, drivers were promised an average \$190 rebate, with the money to come in March 2021.

HARRINGTON LAKE/ RIDEAU HALL

Canadians would still be in the dark about the total price tag for renovating the Prime Minister's cottage retreat at Harrington Lake, Que., and the governor-general's residence at Rideau Hall in Ottawa, Ont., if we hadn't gotten involved.

Harrington Lake first got our attention in the early months of 2020, when stories emerged about a major new building being put up there.

Reaction from the federal Liberals about concerns over the construction were mainly in response to mockery by Conservative Party of Canada (CPC) finance and National Capital Commission (NCC) critic and Carlton Member of Parliament (MP) Pierre Poilievre, who had tweeted satellite images from Apple Maps showing the building going up.

Our investigative journalist, James Wood, submitted access to information requests about the work, which revealed a price tag of more than \$10 million dollars for the construction project. The bill included thousands for window designs, garden planting plans, photography services and nearly \$200,000 to remove a ruined outbuilding's broken-down foundation.

As for Rideau Hall, more exclusive records obtained by the CTF showed a total cost of \$502,395 for renovations asked for by Gov.-Gen. Julie Payette's office after she was sworn in. Despite the expensive work, Payette still refused to live in her official residence.

The bill included nearly \$60,000 for a space exhibit and a "mission control boardroom," as well as \$108,000 for a multimedia study of Rideau Hall's ballroom.

The most expensive project cost \$139,000 for the design of a private staircase for the governor-general that was never actually built.

A security project was also undertaken for \$104,000 for the building's Monck Wing.

For the Harrington Lake and Rideau Hall projects, the final price tags have never been tracked down by reporters in the mainstream press, but more exclusive access to information requests are in the works to gather more details about this wasteful work.

This information was only brought to light through the efforts of our investigative reporter.

PUSHING POLITICAL PARTIES TO PAY BACK THE WAGE SUBSIDY

During the initial stages of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the feds announced a wage subsidy to help businesses keep their employees on staff through the COVID-19 lockdowns. The intent of the program wasn't to force Canadians to subsidize political parties that already receive special taxpayer treatment.

Once we found out that four of the five federal political parties helped themselves to the wage subsidy, we began hammering them in the media, launched a petition and asked our supporters to email each party leader and demand they pay the subsidy back.

After our advocacy, every candidate running for leader of the Conservative Party of Canada (CPC) spoke out against the party's use of the wage subsidy. Eventual leadership contest winner Erin O'Toole promised that he would make sure the CPC paid back the subsidy.

"O'Toole believes the wage subsidy was designed to help businesses survive the economic side-effects of the COVID-19 pandemic lock-down, not to subsidize political parties," now retired CPC Member of Parliament Peter Kent told the media.

The Liberal Party also agreed to stop taking the federal wage subsidy, but said it had no plans to pay it back.

CTF WINS AT THE SUPREME COURT ON JUDGES' PAY

In July, the CTF got a win following its first appearance as an intervenor at the Supreme Court of Canada, confirming that the buck stops with elected governments, even when it comes to pay raises for judges.

The basic issue was whether governments can refuse to give judges a pay raise. Unlike other government employees, judges' salaries are usually based on a recommendation from an independent committee. Recently, in both British Columbia and Nova Scotia, the independent committee recommended big pay hikes for judges, even though both governments were implementing across-the-board spending cuts. The provincial governments refused to give them the recommended raises, so the judges took them to court.

Represented by our counsel, Adam Goldenberg, the CTF intervened in the case to argue that governments don't need to disclose confidential documents to justify not giving big pay raises if they're taking a similar approach of controlling spending across the whole of government.

In its decision, the Supreme Court ruled against the judges, refusing to compel disclosure of B.C. cabinet documents while only ordering the release of a few specific documents from Nova Scotia.

It's a landmark ruling that reinforces the principle that elected officials are ultimately responsible for spending taxpayer dollars, and the CTF is proud to have participated in it as a voice for taxpayers.



Federal director Aaron Wudrick (centre) with lawyers Adam Goldenberg and Stephanie Willsey at the Supreme Court of Canada.



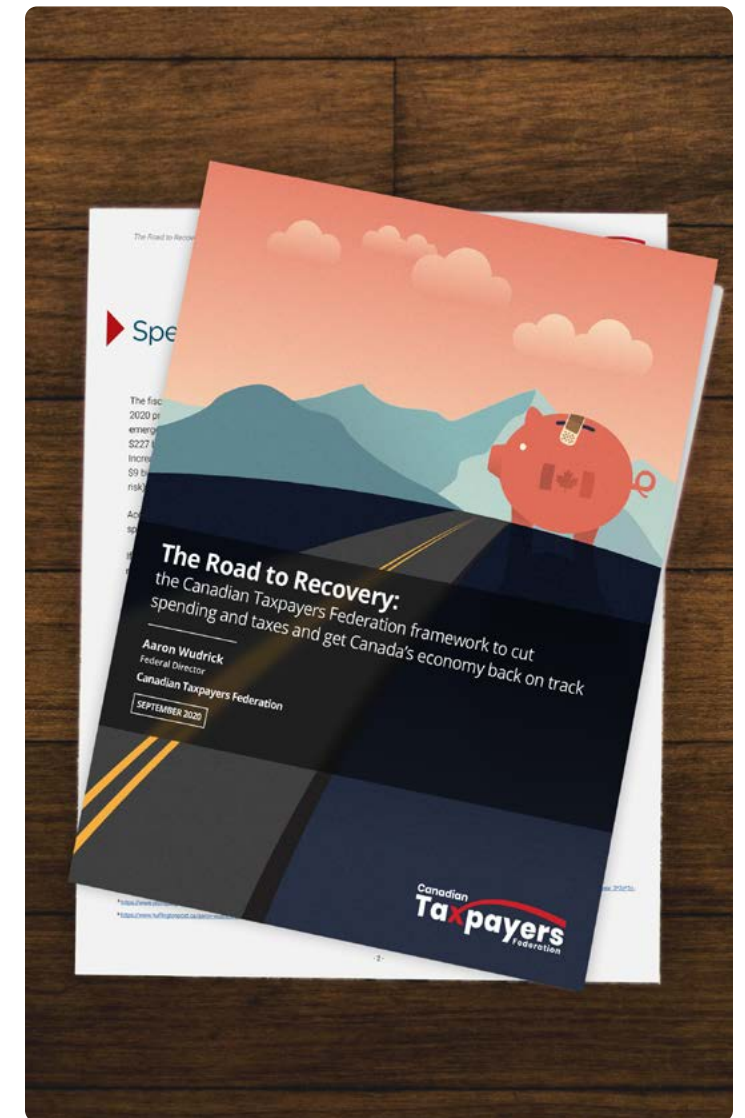
CTF PROPOSED FRAMEWORK FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY

In September, the CTF released an important framework to provide recommendations for the federal government as it plots a post-pandemic economic recovery, focusing on cost controls for spending and a suite of tax reduction measures to ensure the economic recovery is led by Canadian families and businesses, rather than government.

The Road to Recovery framework comprises two major elements. First, winding down emergency measures and imposing additional spending discipline across the entire federal government, including reducing operational expenses to 2016-17 levels and ending corporate welfare. Second, helping businesses survive and thrive by reducing the burden they face, including a temporary elimination of small business taxes, a reduction of the general business rate and income tax cuts.

Specifically, the framework identifies cutting elected representative and civil servant salaries as a key way to reduce costs as well as reducing spending in lower priority departments such as Canadian Heritage and Global Affairs Canada, and crown corporations such as the National Capital Commission (NCC) and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC).

With the federal debt crossing the \$1 trillion mark in December and the federal deficit more than \$300 billion, the CTF continues to push for the Trudeau government to adopt its framework recommendations in the lead up to the next federal budget.



ENDING THE CALGARY MAYOR'S SECOND PENSION

Calgary, Alta., taxpayers scored a big victory in 2020 by putting an end to their mayor's second pension. In 2018, the Canadian Taxpayers Federation discovered that Calgary's mayor was the only mayor of a major Canadian city eligible to receive a second pension. This second and completely taxpayer-funded pension was added on top of the already lucrative council pension plan that cost Calgary taxpayers more than the council pensions in Edmonton, Alta., Vancouver, B.C., and Ottawa, Ont., combined between 2007 and 2016.

Since we discovered this golden perk in 2018, our Calgary supporters never let up the pressure. We put up a billboard showing taxpayers that Calgary was the only Canadian city that offered this perk, wrote multiple op-eds, made a presentation to council that called for an end to this second pension and did numerous media interviews.

After two years of continued pressure from the CTF and our supporters, Calgary council finally voted to end the mayor's second pension. Considering Calgarians have been struggling with five-plus years of economic hardship, complemented by the fact that most workers outside of government don't have any workplace pension, this was a necessary step for city council.

VICTORY!



Former Alberta director Colin Craig holding a press conference in 2018 on Calgary council's golden pensions

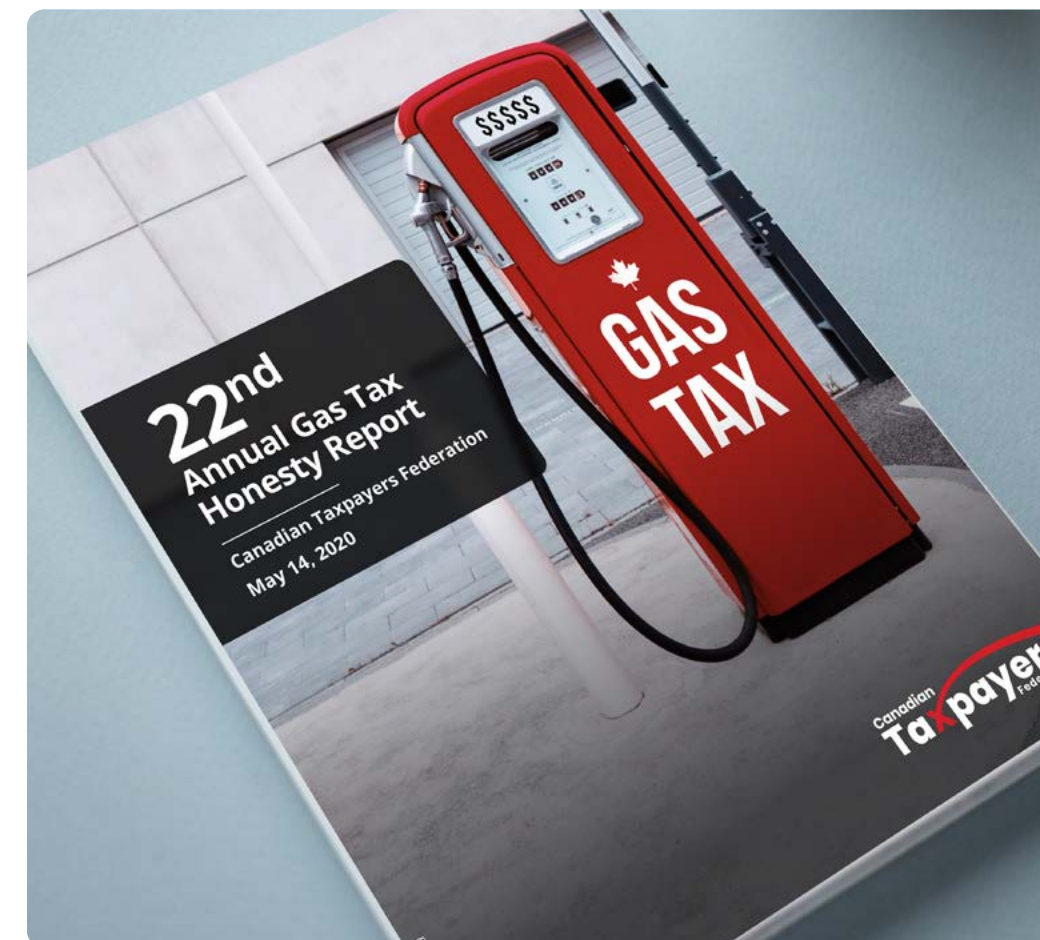
GAS TAX HONESTY DAY

Grumbling about gas prices is a proud Canadian tradition that normally enters into most conversations when the weather finally warms up around the Victoria Day holiday long weekend. That's when the Canadian Taxpayers Federation held its 22nd annual Gas Tax Honesty Day.

However, this Gas Tax Honesty Day was unlike others in the past. With work from home orders in place, and media relying on Zoom interviews rather than in-person events, hosting press conferences at gas stations across the country wasn't in the cards in 2020.

Yet, the CTF took the opportunity to hammer the Trudeau government for doing something that no other country did at the beginning of the global COVID-19 pandemic: raise taxes.

Specifically, our 2020 Gas Tax Honesty Day report took aim on the high and rising carbon tax imposed by the Trudeau government.



PUSHING EDUCATION REFORM IN ONTARIO

Monopolies, like the one held by Ontario teachers' unions over the province's public education system, drive prices up and quality down. School choice improves education outcomes for students while reducing costs for taxpayers. That's why improving school choice was a major focus for our Ontario director in 2020. The teachers' strikes leading into COVID-19 lockdowns and the challenges the public school system faced during these lockdowns, also highlighted the need for change.

Ontario's teachers' unions ran expensive advertising campaigns critical of the government during contract negotiations. They wanted bigger raises than the province was offering, even though Ontario couldn't afford to offer raises in the first place.

To counter their rhetoric, our Ontario director submitted countless freedom of information (FOI) requests to Ontario's ministry of education. The information she obtained was not only insightful, but some of it was also jaw-dropping. It provided great fodder for an endless slew of news releases, op-eds, videos and social media content to capture the attention of media, taxpayers and parents across the province.

Blasting out frequent news releases was critical to obtaining the wide-spread media coverage needed for our message to gain traction. From sending out factchecks to revealing the food tab taxpayers picked up during government bargaining sessions with the unions, our Ontario director gained ample media coverage. Some of her most successful news releases exposed the number of Ontario teachers on the sunshine list and the average compensation for Ontario's secondary school teachers.

Our Ontario director also penned many opinion pieces published across various news sources calling for education reform in Ontario. She also called for more school choice and charter school legislation in her pre-budget submission to the Ontario government.

All of these actions supported the same goal: to raise awareness that Ontario's public education system needs to be reformed by increasing school choice.

While this campaign remains an uphill battle with teacher unions opposing our every move, there are signs our hard work is paying off. Recent FOI requests indicate that the government has been considering our demands.

LABOUR DAY REALITY CHECK

Each year before the Labour Day long weekend we release a report that compares government employee benefits to what the rest of us get. But, this year we decided to do something a little different. With the feds and provinces facing massive deficits, we released reports showing how governments could tackle their deficits by reducing labour costs.

Our federal report showed that labour costs have outpaced inflation plus population growth since 2005 and now cost taxpayers more than \$50 billion every year. We don't think it's fair to keep asking struggling families and businesses to pay higher taxes and that's why we recommended the federal government save taxpayers \$14 billion every year by taking a "15 and 15 approach" – cut 15% of the bureaucracy and reduce the salaries of the remaining bureaucrats by 15%.

We also released a provincial report for Alberta, which detailed three different ways that Premier Jason Kenney could reduce labour costs to pre-NDP levels and save taxpayers \$3.5 billion annually. We also found that, while total workers' pay has declined in Alberta by 5% between 2014 and 2019, government labour cost increased by 15%. With labour costs making up more than half of the Alberta government's day-to-day spending, Kenney won't be able to balance the budget and begin paying down the debt unless he takes some air out of the government's ballooning labour costs.

MONTRÉAL FREEZES PROPERTY TAXES FOR FIRST TIME IN OVER A DECADE

The last time Montréal, Que., property taxpayers had their tax bills frozen was in the midst of a different crisis back in 2009. Ever since, they have been subject to a series of tax hikes of varying intensity, which has led to local business owners paying the highest property tax rates in the country, at an average of \$36.99 per \$1,000 of assessed property value, resulting in more and more shuttered commercial spaces around the city.

The CTF made a series of representations and reports to city hall, as well as a few stunts to focus media attention on the issue.

We issued a report outlining the need for lower commercial property taxes to help bring shopkeepers back to the city's historic commercial avenues.

When the pandemic hit, City of Montreal Mayor Valérie Plante was one of the first to cry poor. To her credit, she managed to cut spending by delaying some less urgent projects and freezing bureaucrats' salaries, saving \$123 million. Nevertheless, this was not nearly enough to cover the loss in revenue associated with the pandemic, and she was quick to ask Montrealers what they would prefer between cuts in garbage collection and snow removal or massive property tax hikes.

We put forward a third solution: cut spending in the city's many nice-to-have programs and services, reduce bureaucrats' compensation, bringing it in line with what's being done in the private sector and use any additional savings to give Montréal residents and business owners a tax break to help them recover from the pandemic.

And, while Montréal's elected officials did not follow through on every one of our proposals, we were happy to see them abandon their plans for massive tax hikes in favour of a tax freeze and some spending cuts.

Not only did this victory help prevent a tax hike in Montréal but, once it was announced, other towns and cities in Québec decided to follow Montréal's example. The suburbs of Laval, Terrebonne and Longueuil, as well as Québec City and Lévis also elected to freeze their property tax rates in 2021.



PASSING ABILITY TO PAY LEGISLATION IN NEW BRUNSWICK



New Brunswick municipalities are at a significant disadvantage when negotiating with their unions. When municipalities and unions can't come to an agreement, they are subject to a provincially mandated arbitration process which doesn't take the municipalities' ability to pay into consideration.

This leads to a situation where municipal employees can get raises, no matter how poorly the city's finances are doing, leading to chronic tax hikes to cover said raises.

Whenever local government reform would come up as a topic in New Brunswick, we'd make sure to raise the issue with a series of news releases and op-eds explaining how cities wouldn't need to advocate for shiny new ways to take taxpayers money if they could only get their staff's salaries under control.

This led to the government bringing Bill 13 to the table, which would have added ability to pay to the list of things to take into consideration during the labour arbitration process. Unfortunately, the government couldn't get the bill to pass all readings before 2019's snap election, meaning the whole process would have to start again under a new government.

We got to work pushing for those changes again, explaining how ability to pay legislation was an essential measure to protect both municipalities and local taxpayers from the excesses of powerful labour unions.

Thankfully, the government understood the message and moved swiftly, reintroducing the old Bill 13 – now Bill 21 – and adopting it before the legislative assembly took its Christmas break. From now on, taxpayers' ability to pay will be taken into account during municipal labour negotiations, bringing further protection to local homeowners against new tax hikes.

KENNEY COMMITS TO HOLDING EQUALIZATION REFERENDUM

As soon as Alberta Premier Jason Kenney announced his Fair Deal Panel, we had a clear message for his government: there is no fair deal for Alberta without tackling the current equalization scheme.

The panel was tasked with looking into nine specific measures to improve Alberta's position within Canada. But, none of these nine measures included equalization. In fact, the word equalization wasn't even mentioned in the panel's mandate letter.

We made it our mission to ensure the panel recommended holding a referendum on equalization. We made sure our supporters were able to give their feedback to the Fair Deal Panel, presented at the Fair Deal townhalls, submitted an in-depth report to the panel, published op-eds and did a bunch of media interviews.

With all of our pressure, there was no way the Fair Deal Panel could ignore the equalization referendum. When the Fair Deal Panel released its final report, it made 25 recommendations about how Albertans could get a better deal. And, its second recommendation was to hold the equalization referendum.

Kenney immediately accepted the Fair Deal Panel's recommendation to hold an equalization referendum on Oct. 18, 2021. Kenney also acknowledged the Canadian Taxpayers Federation's work on this issue by including our quote in his news release.



Alberta director Franco Terrazzano presenting to the Fair Deal Panel on the importance of an equalization referendum.

BEST INVESTIGATIVE STORIES

Throughout the year, we had a series of exclusive stories broken by our investigative journalist, James Wood.

Here's a sampling of the best of those stories.

Tesla takes Canadian taxpayers for \$60-million subsidy ride

Canadians are on the hook for millions to support sales of Tesla cars after the company received federal money by making a lower-quality car. James found taxpayers were being asked to subsidize fancy cars for wealthier people after the company gamed the subsidy system.

RCMP bill for Meghan and Harry rises past \$93,000

A series of access to information requests has started to get a better picture of just how much it cost the RCMP to protect the Duke and Duchess of Sussex during their short Canadian stay.

So far, the bill is \$93,203, and rising.

Ottawa pays for rock star photo exhibit, German sex toy art show, and more out of over-budget foreign service slush fund

In March, James received a list from Global Affairs Canada detailing the department's "Mission Cultural Fund."

While the fund is meant to promote Canada abroad, money has flowed to a Toronto photo exhibit put together by musician Bryan Adams and showcasing his famous friends as well as a solo art show by Canadian artist Peaches, titled "Whose Jizz is This?" in Hamburg, Germany, in 2019.

Yukon government spends thousands to throw gold in creek

Some tourism ideas work and some spend taxpayer's money to throw 3.5 oz. of gold in a creek.

That was near Dawson City, Yukon, in 2019, as part of a \$139,000 marketing effort the Yukon government put together.

The idea was to crowdfund for gold, throw it in in a local creek and have visitors pan for it.

All told, 150 people took part, including "influencers" and a reporter from Vancouver, B.C., who all had their travel north paid for by the territory.

When James asked, the Yukon government said it had no plans to repeat the costly stunt.

ROLLING BACK COSTLY BLOOD DONATION BAN

Imagine legislation so bad that it creates shortages in essential healthcare treatments, forces taxpayers to subsidize international companies and chases away new investment. This became a reality in 2017 when Alberta's New Democrat government outlawed compensating Albertans for their blood donations.

Under the NDP's ban, Albertans can voluntarily donate blood and blood plasma (plasma makes up about 55% of your blood) for free, but it's illegal to compensate donors to encourage a greater local supply of plasma.

The result: Alberta is heavily dependent on plasma therapies that are imported from other countries like the United States. The kicker: those American plasma donors are being paid with our tax dollars. In 2018 alone, Alberta taxpayers paid about \$145 million for imported blood plasma products.

We dove into the research and found that allowing Albertans to be paid for their blood plasma could significantly reduce taxpayer costs. First, Health Canada found that voluntary collections are about two to four times more expensive than paid collections, due to differences in labour and advertising costs. That right, it's cheaper for taxpayers to buy foreign blood plasma than it is for us to get it for free from Canadians.

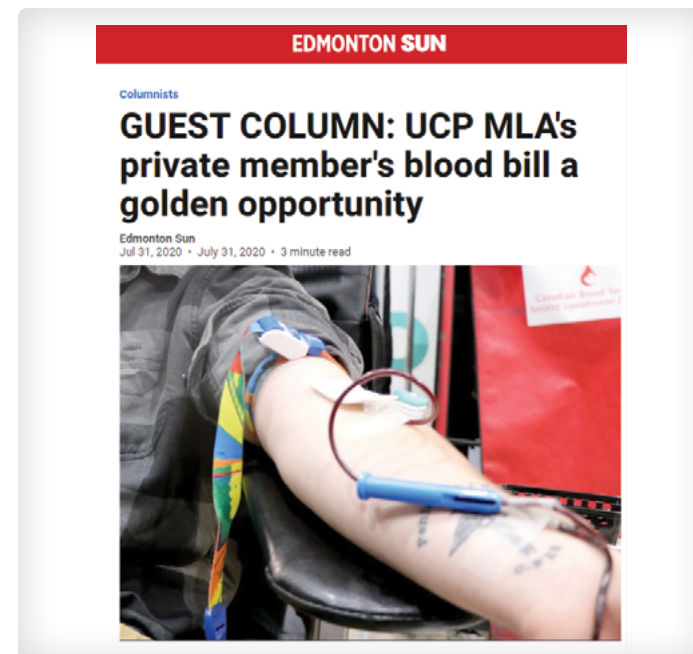
Second, Canadian Blood Services (CBS) is inefficient. It plans to collect 600,000 litres of plasma from 40 new donation centres with an operating budget of \$247 million. That's \$412 per litre. Canadian Plasma Resources (CPR), the company that pays donors in Saskatchewan and New Brunswick, publicly offered to sell its plasma to CBS for \$166 per litre.

Fortunately, a private member's bill was brought forward by United Conservative Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) Tany Yao to repeal the NDP's blood donations ban. Private member's bills are never a sure thing, so we knew we had to drum up support for Yao's bill.

We wrote a column in the *Edmonton Sun* on this issue, interviewed a leading expert, Peter Jaworski, on our Canadian Taxpayers podcast, made the case for allowing Albertans to be compensated on social media and blasted politicians' email inboxes. Fortunately, the Alberta government listened to our supporters and passed Yao's bill to eliminate the NDP's blood donations ban.

Not only will this improve our healthcare system, but it will also create much needed jobs.

We spoke to CPR and they told us that removing the ban will lead to tens of millions of dollars in new investment and more than 200 jobs.



Op-ed from Alberta director Franco Terrazzano in the *Edmonton Sun*, encouraging MLAs to support Yao's bill.



STUDENT INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Twenty-twenty was the 12th year for our formal student internship program. Interns get the opportunity to work alongside our communications staff, doing research and helping with advocacy work. This provides valuable help for our staff, but is also a great opportunity for students. They get to establish, widen and improve on their communications, research and interpersonal skills and learn about how wasteful governments are across the country.

Interns learn how to find the details of government waste and incompetence by filing freedom of information (FOI) requests. They also learn how to get the message out and how to put pressure on politicians to do the right thing. These are skills that the next generation will need to keep up the fight for lower taxes, less waste and more accountable government. Since this fight isn't going to be won in the short term, we need to do our part to prepare the next generation.

This year the program had four participants — Jay Goldberg, a PhD candidate from the University of Toronto, Lucus Riccioni from the University of Calgary, Adrian Vourkoutiotis from Carleton University and Mathieu Kazan-Xanthopoulos from Concordia University.

Unfortunately, the internship program was cut short in 2020 when we temporarily closed our Ottawa office due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. The internship program restarted in early 2021.



Intern Lucus Riccioni helping Alberta director Franco Terrazzano deliver a Christmas present of a lifetime supply of Q-tips to Calgary City Council.

The CTF internship program is only possible because of the support of our donors, especially the John Soloninko Legacy Fund.



GENERATION SCREWED



Last year certainly started like any other year at Generation Screwed – by early January we had a training and campaigns program ready to go, with events in Ontario, Québec, Saskatchewan and British Columbia organized and scheduled for February and March.

Our year started with a political trivia night at the University of Saskatoon, Sask., an energy pub night in Vancouver, B.C., and a pub night in Montréal, Que. By the time we were organizing our Ottawa, Ont., pub night in March, schools in Ontario and Québec were shutting down and sending students home.

To say that the global COVID-19 pandemic was a challenge would be the understatement of the new decade. Generation Screwed's advocacy bread and butter was always the campus environment but, with emergency public health measures shutting down schools across the country, it had to adapt its campaigns fast. Pivoting towards a predominantly digital program and campaign was a first for the organization.

We reorganized our plans for in-person events and quickly organized Zoom events like our Public Choice Q&A, our Crisis Economics Panel, a virtual trivia night, weekly virtual hangouts and our "Trillion Dollar Recovery" event with the Macdonald-Laurier Institute.

We had also had to adapt our entire retreat and training curriculum this year by rolling out our first Generation Screwed webinar, where CTF directors were able to train 21 coordinators about how to file Access to Information and Privacy Act (ATIP) requests, research and strategic communications.

Despite our initial concerns, our digital advocacy efforts performed much better than we expected. Collectively, our memes, infographics, articles and short videos were seen by more than 744,000 Canadians over the past year. We grew our social media following by more than 13%, with our combined 18,106 followers on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. We also improved our website views for MyTaxburden.ca and Generation Screwed.ca at more than 27,000 unique visitors, with more than 6,000 MyTaxBurden.ca calculator results, thanks in part to the new and improved Generation Screwed website.



Generation Screwed at USask ending the night after their successful political trivia event.

We also increased Generation Screwed's share of CTF's shared media, with four published articles in major regional news outlets, by motivating and training our students to write about debt, deficits and government waste.

Our nationwide campaign continues to reach thousands of young Canadians from across the country because our students were successful in their campaign for intergenerational fairness. Despite halting all our advocacy efforts on-campus, our digital campaigns still made a difference. Our Generation Screwed student leaders went above and beyond to adapt to the new normal so that the horror story that is runaway government debt could be told.



Our Montréal Regional Coordinator, Mathieu Kazan-Xanthopoulos, moderating our pub night event with Federal director Aaron Wudrick and Québec director Renaud Brossard.

The Generation Screwed movement could not have done all of this without the passion and dedication of our young volunteers who, despite facing challenges of their own during the pandemic, stepped up and continued fighting for their generation. Their resilience and dedication continues to inspire us here at the CTF.

Of course, none of this could have been possible without the support of our generous donors. Thank you for standing shoulder to shoulder with young Canadians across the country in their fight for fairness.

The Toronto Sun ■ FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2020 ■ COMMENT 15

Politicians can't blame the pandemic for their spending problem

KRIS RONDOLO
Guest Opinion

Deficits seem to be a particularly infectious aspect of the global COVID-19 pandemic and Canada is especially hard hit with the highest proportional borrowing in the world. But deficit spending is not a pandemic symptom; it's a chronic illness that's infected all political parties. And worse yet, it threatens to harm generations to come.

The federal government was already on track to run 17 consecutive deficits by 2025, resulting in a string of deficits second only to the 27-year streak from 1970 to 1997, according to a Fraser Institute report released in 2019.

From 2010 to the end of 2019, both Conservative and Liberal governments added over \$128 billion to the federal debt, representing a 23% increase. By the time the pandemic emergency spending was announced in March this year, the federal govern-

ment was already \$756 billion in debt.

Additionally, the federal government's program spending also reached record-setting highs in the years before the pandemic. From 2018 to 2020, the Trudeau government recorded the highest levels of per-person federal program spending outside of a major recession or crisis. In its 2019

budget projections, the government had projected to spend up to \$9,306 per-person in 2020. Adding in the additional pandemic spending, that figure is projected to rise as high as \$13,226 for each and every Canadian.

Even without the record-setting deficit of (at least) \$343 billion this year, the federal government was already facing a long rehabilitation back to balanced budgets. In its 2019 report, the Parliamentary Budget Office projected that Canadians wouldn't see a balanced budget until 2040.

While there was certainly a speedier path to balance before the pandemic, a federal debt of more than a trillion dollars by March 2021 could put us on track to easily break that longstanding 27-year streak of consecutive deficit spending.

Provincial politicians haven't done so well either, contributing a total of \$229 billion in new debt from 2019 to 2019. The problem was especially obvious in Western provinces where governments spent booming oil revenues as quickly as they came in and saw borrowing soar when oil prices dropped. Alberta leads the pack with a 1,102% increase in spending, adding over \$57 billion dollars to its provincial debt, followed by Saskatchewan with a 213% increase that added \$9 billion to its provincial debt.

This pandemic has served as an eye-opener for Canadians by exposing governments as being woefully unprepared for a legitimate disaster due to its chronic overspending problem.

In nine years, governments across the country added more than \$357 billion in new debt. Politicians, especially those in Ottawa, failed to accomplish what many families wisely do for their own households: save for a rainy day.

Instead of saving during the good days, politicians spent every dollar that came in, and when that wasn't enough, borrowed as if the rainy days were never going to come.

With no plan to deal with the pandemic debt, the current government in Ottawa has resorted to assuring anyone who would listen that "the government took on debt so that Canadians wouldn't have to," a statement that is as self-serving as it is misleading.

The simple truth is that our governments have a chronic spending problem and have been piling up debt long before the pandemic ever arrived. Politicians will continue to borrow and spend because they can always pass the debt burden down the line.

Despite claims that governments will bear the brunt of its spendthrift ways, it will be the next and future generations who will eventually pay for our debt and not politicians like Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

There's no time to wait and recover for the next crisis, because frankly, we can't afford to face another one. It's time Canadians come together for an intervention and demand a real plan from politicians to get our finances back in order.

Rondolo is the executive director of Generation Screwed, the youth advocacy initiative from the Canadian Taxpayers Federation

Generation Screwed Executive Director Kris Rondolo's first op-ed was published in the Toronto Sun in November 2020.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Our Facebook page (@TaxpayerDOTcom) grew to 111,944 fans in 2020. Our French page, Alberta page and Generation Screwed pages, combined, had another 28,561 fans. Canadians engaged with our 1,833 posts with 245,228 comments, 659,039 reactions and 209,176 shares. That engagement meant our Facebook content had nearly 18 million impressions and 800,000 video views.

On Twitter, our main account (@TaxpayerDOTcom) had more than 9,600 followers at the end of 2020. But, many of our communications directors rivaled or exceeded that. Federal director Aaron Wudrick had 14,900, B.C. director Kris Sims had 10,200 followers and Ontario director Jasmine Moulton had 7,500 followers. Our Instagram account (@canadiantaxpayersfederation) had more than 6,300 followers at the end of 2020.



TRADITIONAL MEDIA

Communications directors across the country work with the media to put our campaigns and ideas in front of Canadians.

Number of appearances in 2020:

TV – 927 (English), 153 (French)

Radio – 5,975 (English), 361 (French)

Print – 508 (English), 54 (French)

Note: Media counts are determined from a search of 27 English newspapers, six French newspapers, 130 radio stations and 123 TV stations.

“The Canadian Taxpayers Federation has punched way above its weight over the course of its existence... it is consistently quoted in, and featured by, mainstream media organizations across the country whenever there is a dollar of government spending worth talking about.”

– Max Fawcett (National Observer) December 9, 2020.



BY THE NUMBERS



Number of copies of *The Taxpayer* magazine printed in 2020:

75,313



Number of donations received in 2019-20:

31,655



Number of people who signed CTF petitions in 2020:

602,194



Number of downloads of our podcast episodes in 2020:

138,606



Number of freedom of information (FOI) requests filed:

2,147



Number of unique visitors to Taxpayer.com in 2020:

1,373,079

179,579

Number of unique visitors to DebtClock.ca in 2020



Number of news releases issued by CTF directors:

182



Number of videos produced by the CTF:

53



Number of op-eds penned by CTF directors:

152

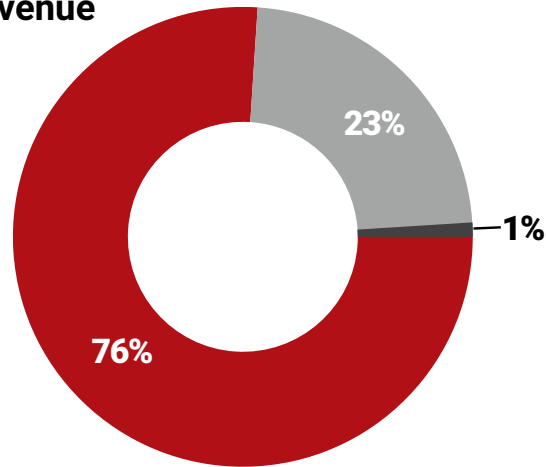


Amount the federal debt increased in 2019-20:

\$35,910,000,000

2019-20 FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Revenue



Donations under \$1,000	\$ 3,662,271
Donations \$1,000 or greater	1,103,946
Events, Interest & Other	30,499

Total Revenue \$ 4.8M

Donations < \$1,000	31,021 (98%)
Donations > \$1,000	634 (2%)

Expenditures

Publications & supporter services	\$ 1,776,598
Communications & campaigns	1,180,821
Development & events	719,260
Administration	484,707
Student programs	176,659
Technology	101,403
Meetings & travel	95,058

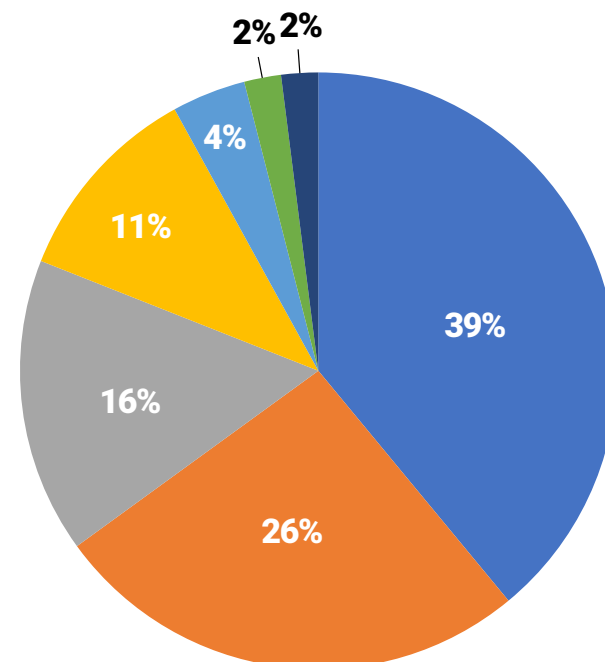
Total expenses \$ 4.5M

Statement of Financial Position – Summary up to June 30, 2020

Current assets	\$ 963,067
Capital assets	2,325
Long-term investments:	0
	\$ 965,393

Liabilities

Accounts payable and accruals	\$ 115,825
Net assets	849,568
	\$ 965,393



HOW TO SUPPORT THE CTF

The Canadian Taxpayers Federation (CTF) is entirely supported thanks to after-tax donations from tens of thousands of Canadians. We don't seek or accept any funding from foreign entities, political parties or governments. We only exist because enough Canadians want their voices to be heard.

As former United States President Ronald Reagan said, "When you can't make them see the light, make them feel the heat." The CTF does both. But we can't do it alone. We need hundreds of thousands of Canadians to bring the light and the heat to our politicians.



Sign up to get our Action Update emails. It's not a newsletter and it's not spam. We only email you when we're launching a new campaign and need you to take part. You can join at no cost at Taxpayer.com



Make a donation toward our efforts. Join with tens of thousands of Canadians and chip in a few dollars to help us hire the people and run the campaigns that move public policy forward in Canada.

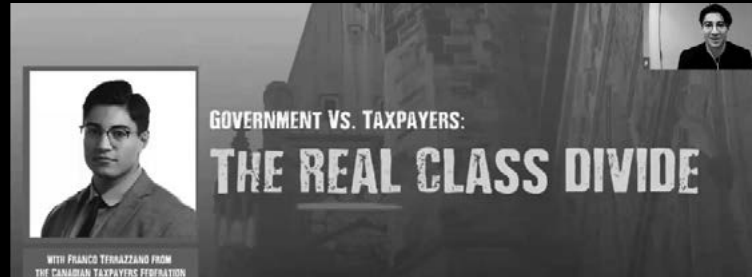
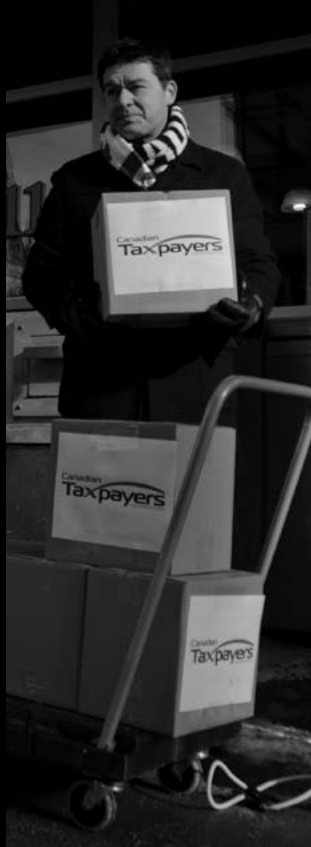
- 1) You can donate online at: taxpayer.com/donate
- 2) You can donate via mail at:
#501, 2201 11th Ave, Regina, SK S4P 0J8
- 3) You can donate over the phone by calling: 1-800-667-7933
- 4) Or contact us and we can arrange an in-person meeting with one of our field representatives



If you donate \$100 or more, we will send you our magazine, *The Taxpayer*, three times a year. The CTF is not a charity and donations do not qualify for a charitable tax credit.



Donors interested in leaving a legacy gift in their estate or providing a living legacy can get more information by visiting taxpayer.com/Legacy or by emailing Rick Pepper, Director of Legacy Programs, at rpepper@taxpayer.com.



GENERATION SCREWED.ca STUDENTS FOR LIBERTY

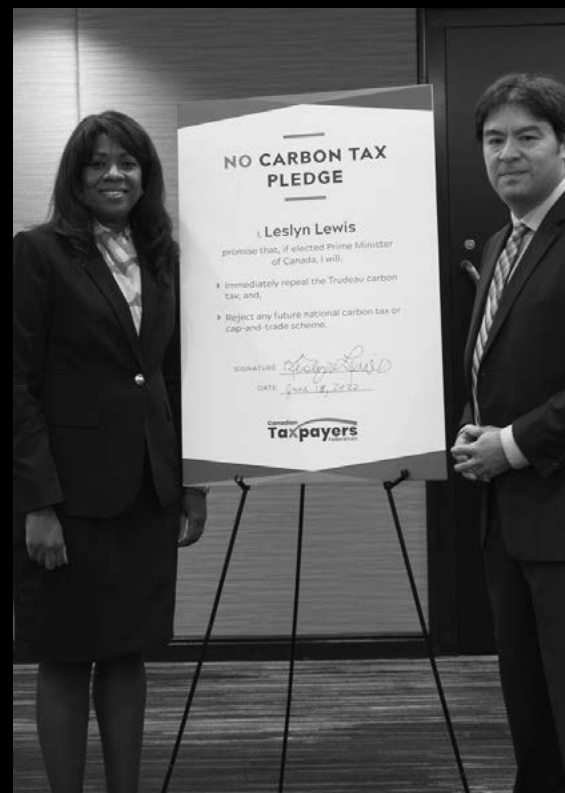
Visit our websites:

Taxpayer.com
DebtClock.ca
GenerationScrewed.ca

Contact us:

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1-800-667-7933

Ottawa office
Suite 712 - 170 Laurier Ave W
Ottawa, ON K1P 5V5
1-800-265-0442



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