

Tax Justice Newsletter - July 2011

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Press conference at Parliament puts the spotlight tax fairness

As MPs debated the budget on June 13, Canadians for Tax Fairness held a [press conference at Parliament](#) outlining the fair tax alternative to massive cuts in public services and the ongoing denial of new services that Canadians need. The press conference was covered by CBC, CTV, radio and newspapers.

CTF spokesperson Chandra Pasma said “in recent decades the management of public finance has been largely driven by an agenda focused on cutting taxes and shrinking government. Most of our political leaders, either in agreement or because of electoral fear, have played along. Taxes were cut, more loopholes added and – surprise – we’re told that the public treasury doesn’t have adequate funds for existing programs, let alone others that are needed.”

She outlined how reforms to make the tax system fairer and more progressive could generate more than \$84 billion over three years, and provided examples of new public services that could be funded, such as pharmacare, community health care for seniors, low-cost childcare and eco-friendly urban infrastructure.

Chandra was joined at the press conference by David Macdonald, coordinator of the Alternative Federal Budget project of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, and Joe Gunn, representing Dignity for All, a national anti-poverty campaign supported by 540 organizations.

Canadians for Tax Fairness planning Fair Tax Summit in Ottawa

The CTF board held its first in-person meeting in Ottawa on June 13. The board adopted an ambitious plan for fundraising and actions in the coming six months.

In addition to maintaining an active media relations program and developing popular education materials, CTF is currently contacting potential co-sponsors for a major Fair Tax Summit in Ottawa later in the year. The objective is to bring together academic experts, economists, NGOs, labour, students, activists, politicians and journalists for a comprehensive array of presentations and discussions.

“This is the time to put the political spotlight on the growing concentration of wealth and economic disparities and how a fairer, more progressive tax system could fund the public services we need for a healthy 21st century society,” said CTF coordinator Larry Gordon. Further details will be available in September. “

New book in the works

CTF staff and volunteers are pushing forward with another major project - a new book with the working title: “Saving the Canada We Love: Why everything Canadians cherish about our country depends on tax fairness”.

The book will feature chapters written by leading experts and journalists, providing a plain language overview of why a more progressive tax system is an urgent priority and what reforms are needed. A detailed book outline will soon be circulated to potential contributors.

Distinguished Canadians join the CTF Advisory Council

We’re pleased to announce the first four members of the Canadians for Tax Fairness Advisory Council: Karen Hamilton, General Secretary, Canadian Council of Churches; Alex Himelfarb, former Clerk of the Privy Council and Secretary of Cabinet for three Prime Ministers; Tom Kent, CC, former principal policy advisor to Prime Minister Lester Pearson, and former royal commission chair; and Douglas Peters, former Secretary of State (Finance) and former TD Bank Chief Economist.

A number of Canada’s leading economists have also joined our Technical Advisory Committee: Andrew Jackson, Chief Economist, Canadian Labour Congress; Marc Lee, Senior Economist, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, BC Office; David Macdonald, Coordinator, Alternative Federal Budget project; Hugh Mackenzie, Chair and President, Atkinson Foundation, and economic consultant; Toby Sanger, Senior Economist, Canadian Union of Public Employees; Jim Stanford, Economist, Canadian Auto Workers; Erin Weir, Chair, Progressive Economics Forum; and Armine Yalnizyan, Senior Economist, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.

Membership/donor drive begins this week!

In a few short months Canadians for Tax Fairness has set up a web site, organized an online petition against corporate tax cuts (with nearly 3,000 signers at this point), launched a lively Facebook page with daily postings on the latest fair tax news, attracted a growing team of experienced activists, experts and volunteers committed to developing an effective national advocacy campaign on tax fairness, and begun work on a number of major outreach projects.

We have momentum – but whether that momentum continues depends on you!

Later this week, we begin our first membership/donation drive. Winning the fight for a fairer, more progressive tax system will not be easy. And one critical factor will be our ability to organize a well-funded, sustainable national advocacy organization that can reach out to all sectors of society, as well as work in conjunction with other related campaigns.

To make this happen, Canadians for Tax Fairness must have a solid and growing based of members and donors – people making one-time donations and regular monthly donations.

[So if you support the cause, please support Canadians for Tax Fairness at whatever level you can afford. And you don't have to wait for our drive to begin: here is the donation link – thanks!](#)