

Dear chapter activists,

Faced with climate change and diminishing resources globally, we are at a critical juncture for energy policy. Our government is gambling with our future, allowing flawed free trade agreements, free market rules and big oil to set the agenda with serious social and environmental consequences. The stakes are high. Now, more than ever, we need a Canadian Energy Strategy that ensures energy security and helps transition to sustainable energy production and consumption.

That is why the Council of Canadians has organized the second annual, *Take Charge! A National Day of Action to Demand a Canadian Energy Strategy* on Wednesday, February 4, 2009 – it is time to have our voices heard!

Last year was a success! Thirty-five chapters organized 40 actions across the country, and the call for a Canadian Energy Strategy was covered widely in the media. Activities ranged from public forums to tabling in public places, marches and rallies. Prime Minister Harper was flooded with mittens, sent as part of last year's national action to underscore the need for a national strategy. Although many Canadians heard and have joined our call, big oil still has the ear of our government. Rather than developing an energy strategy in the public interest, Harper continues to support a free market approach to energy policy.

**The tide is turning.** We are at a unique political moment with two significant opportunities for positive change in line with the principles of energy security and ecological sustainability. The election of Barack Obama as President of the United States has opened the possibility of renegotiating the NAFTA, which contains energy provisions that undermine Canadian energy security, gives energy corporations more control, and ensures oil and gas flow south with little direction from governments.

The growing international awareness of the impacts of the tar sands and momentum coming out of the Council of Canadian's annual meeting in Edmonton also presents an opportunity to be heard. As does the current context of the economic slowdown, which provides a brief pause in the alarming pace of development in the tar sands. At this time we must engage in a frank and open discussion across the country and gain momentum supporting the call for no new approvals of tar sands operations or expansions. This is only a first step in reducing further environmental and social destruction caused by the tar sands – ultimately increased tar sands production must be prevented and the damage caused must be reversed. We need to turn away from fossil fuel dependency and create green jobs in renewable energy production, greater conservation and energy efficiency.

Given the political moment before us, the feature topics of this year's day of action will be on the **NAFTA and energy**, and the **tar sands**. The theme for this year's day of action is "Games." Why? Because adopting a market-based approach to our energy is tantamount to playing games, or gambling, with our future – games where big oil profits while Canadian energy security and ecological sustainability is undermined. This day of action toolkit centres on these topics and incorporates the theme in providing creative and effective activity suggestions, media tips and materials.

**The toolkit includes:**

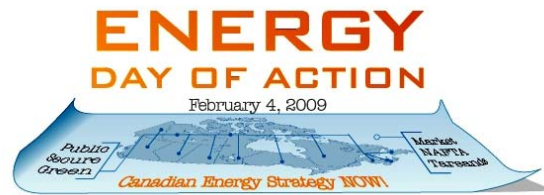
- Introductory letter
- Ideas for action
- Talking points on energy issues
- Tips on how to get your message to the media about energy including a sample press release
- Declaration in Support of a Canadian Energy Strategy
- Petition calling on the Prime Minister to renegotiate NAFTA
- Fact sheets focused on the tar sands, NAFTA and energy, and a Canadian Energy Strategy
- Tar sands discussion questions
- High resolution photos of the tar sands on a CD

We are very excited about launching a national action in the lead-up to February 4, 2009. We are calling on chapter activists to collect signatures from municipal, provincial and federal representatives and politicians for a **Declaration in support a Canadian Energy Strategy** based on the principles of energy security and ecological sustainability. The goal is to get as many signatures as possible across the country to release publicly on February 4 (the campaign for more declarations will continue after the day of action). The declarations can be used by chapter activists and Council staff to encourage elected officials to support or reject concrete measures on a community, provincial and national level that are in line with the principles of energy security and ecological sustainability.

**Join us on Wednesday February 4 and tell the Harper government that Canada needs a Canadian Energy Strategy now! Send in your request for Energy Day of Action materials today!**



Andrea Harden-Donahue  
Energy Campaigner, the Council of Canadians



## Take Charge! A National Day of Action in support of a Canadian Energy Strategy

### Ideas for Action

Faced with climate change and diminishing resources globally, we are at a critical juncture for energy policy. Our government is gambling with our future, allowing flawed free trade agreements, free market rules and big oil to set the agenda with serious social and environmental consequences. The stakes are high. Now, more than ever, we need a Canadian Energy Strategy that ensures energy security and helps transition to sustainable energy production and consumption.

That is why during the week of February 4, 2008, Council of Canadians' chapters and members will be participating in events across the country as part of *Take Charge! A National Day of Action in Support of a Canadian Energy Strategy*.

It will be a great way for activists across the country to raise awareness about energy issues, hold events, and strengthen the profile of the Council's energy campaign in the media. Together we can tell the federal government that Canada needs better control over our energy resources, and a national strategy that guarantees energy supplies, protects the environment, provides a fair share of energy revenues, protects our citizens and natural resources, and ensures the energy needs of Canadians are put ahead of profits.

#### How your chapter can get involved

Many chapters will be planning events and actions in their community. If you haven't already started thinking about your event, below is a list of action options to get you started. Don't forget to have copies of the Renegotiate NAFTA petitions available for signature. Make sure to get copies of the signed petition to your regional organizer.

#### Declaration of support

As a joint action, we are asking Canadians across the country to get municipal, provincial and federal representatives and politicians to sign the declaration of support for a Canadian Energy Strategy (see the *Declaration of support* handout included in this kit). You can use the materials in this toolkit to prepare and organize a group of citizens to meet with elected officials and request they sign the declaration. Alternatively, work with your regional organizer to divide up a list of politicians at all levels of government in your province and assign chapter members the challenge of getting the declaration signed by a specific individual. Talk to your regional organizer about developing a strategy to encourage the signing of this declaration. Don't forget to deliver the signed declarations (either by mail or fax) to your regional organizer by January 29 so we can include it in our day of action activities.

### **Host a public forum on the tar sands**

Have a screening of the 10-minute tar sands video included in this toolkit, or use the high resolution photos to help “show” people across the country what the tar sands really look like. Follow this with a discussion about how the tar sands affect your community. (It may be helpful to start by reviewing the “Boom for Whom?” tar sands fact sheet). Use the tar sands discussion questions provided in this tool kit to help get the discussion started. Support the petition calling for no new approvals in the tar sands and make the connections with our demand for a Canadian Energy Strategy that transitions Canada away from fossil fuel dependency to less harmful energy alternatives.

### **Host a panel discussion on NAFTA and energy**

Identify and ask two to four knowledgeable individuals on NAFTA and energy in your community to participate in the panel discussion. Don't know who to ask? Why not try contacting unions, environmental and faith-based organizations, or ask your regional organizer for advice. Panel discussions typically involve speakers making short presentations, followed by discussion or questions from audience members. Don't forget to have copies of the NAFTA petition included in this toolkit available for signature. Make sure to share copies of the signed petition with your regional organizer.

### **Host a games evening in your community**

Want to try something a little different? Why not invite family, friends and colleagues to a fun-filled games night! Use this year's Energy Day of Action theme of “games” as an opportunity to have a chapter-building event that reaches out to new people. Arrange to have a number of different games set up for the evening – games like Scrabble, Chocinole, Boggle and Pictionary are great. Alternatively you could make your own energy focused trivia. Use our fact sheets and materials to develop a 10 to 15 minute introduction about why you are hosting a games night given the theme of this year's day of action explaining to people that adopting a market-based approach to our energy resources is tantamount to playing games, or gambling, with our future; games where big oil profits while Canadian energy security and ecological sustainability is undermined. Make sure to have a table set up with fact sheets, materials and petitions as well as a sign-up sheet for your chapter.

### **Energy issues in your community**

Want to use this day of action to focus on an energy issue in your area? Why not host a public discussion, organize a rally, media stunt or other creative action to get your message out and build further support for the campaign. Your regional organizer can help identify ways the energy issue you are focusing on – be it uranium mining in Nova Scotia, Ontario or Saskatchewan, private Run-of-River projects or coal bed methane exploration in B.C., liquid natural gas terminals, or the push for more nuclear right across the country – is connected to our call for a Canadian Energy Strategy.

### **Hand out materials**

We have some great materials available for distribution. Pick a popular, well-frequented location and get out and talk to people about energy concerns. Informal conversations are a great way to share information, and printed materials give people something to take away with them. You can download materials from [www.canadians.org](http://www.canadians.org) under our Energy Day of Action section on our website, or order copies from your regional office, or from Jeannette Muhongayire, Regional Organizing Team Assistant, at 1-800-387-7177, or by e-mail at [jmuhongayire@canadians.org](mailto:jmuhongayire@canadians.org).

### **Keep us in the loop**

Let us know what kind of event you are planning so we can share success stories with other chapters across the country. Don't forget to take pictures of your event and send them to us. Most important of all, have fun!

### **For further assistance**

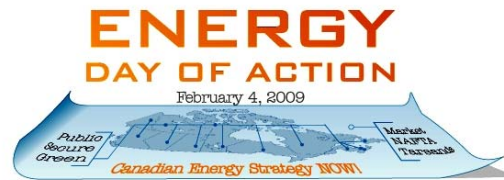
Contact your Regional Organizer if you need further assistance:

British Columbia-Yukon: 1-604-688-8846 (toll free) 1-888-566-3888

Prairies: 1-780-429-4500 (toll free) 1-877-729-4500

Ontario-Quebec: 1-416-979-5554 (toll free) 1-800-208-7156

Atlantic: 1-902-422-7811 (toll free) 1-877-772-7811



# Take Charge! A National Day of Action in support of a Canadian Energy Strategy

## Talking Points

### Canadian Energy Strategy

#### Why do we need a Canadian Energy Strategy?

- Faced with climate change and diminishing conventional resources globally, now more than ever we need a strategy that ensures Canadians energy security and plans for a transition to more sustainable energy production and consumption.
- Canadians do not have control over our energy resources. Governments have signed this control away through multilateral agreements such as NAFTA and the Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America (SPP). This undermines public policy in the interests of ensuring Canadian's energy security and environmental sustainability.
- Canada has been without a national energy strategy for more than 20 years, opting instead for a market-based approach to the energy sector. Our government has not even considered policies such as export limits, strategic reserves, Canadian energy sharing arrangements and restrictions on foreign ownership.

#### Are national energy strategies unprecedented?

- The United States, a net importer, has a national energy policy. Mexico also has a national energy policy. The two countries Canada is most closely tied to through NAFTA and the SPP have protected their energy interests.
- According to energy expert Michael Klare, in the face of climate change and diminishing conventional energy resources, major energy consuming nations have undertaken reviews of energy policies in recent years coming to the same conclusion – governments have an important responsibility in satisfying important national energy requirements and that market forces alone cannot be relied on to do this.
- Since the early 1980s, our political leaders have adopted a market-based approach to energy policy that has fostered an energy gold rush – the tar sands being a prime example. The federal government even subsidizes the oil and gas industry close to 1 billion annually! This is money that could be spent, under a Canadian Energy Strategy, investing in just transition programs supporting the shift to greater conservation, energy efficiency and renewable energy production and consumption.

### Tar sands

#### How can we call for no new approvals in the tar sands during a time of economic crisis?

- Equating the tar sands with economic strength fails to recognize that most of the profits derived from the tar sands go directly into corporate pockets; Canadians are not getting their fair share of energy revenues. Canada has some of the lowest royalty rates in the world and public subsidies to the oil and gas industry

persist. Norway collects two to three times more revenue per barrel than Canadian jurisdictions! Further, more than half of the tar sands projects are foreign-owned by big oil businesses such as Exxon and Shell. This also fails to recognize the impacts the fast paced development of the tar sands has had on manufacturing and forestry sectors in driving up the value of the dollar. Equating the tar sands to an economic driver in Canada also fails to recognize the negative economic and social impacts of labour migration from Atlantic Canada to the tar sands.

- The current economic slowdown can provide a brief pause in the alarming pace of tar sands development. Energy experts and financial analysts agree that the current drop in oil prices caused by the economic slowdown is not permanent. Because of the reality of diminishing conventional energy resources, oil prices will again surpass \$50, \$100 and even \$200 dollars a barrel in some predictions, ensuring the tar sands development has a future. In the meantime, we must engage in a frank and open discussion across the country and gain momentum supporting the call for no new approvals of tar sands operations or expansions. This is only a first step in reducing further environmental and social destruction caused by the tar sands. The tar sands are the fastest growing source of greenhouse gases in Canada – the top three greenhouse gas emitters in Canada are tar sands operators and a five-fold increase in operations is being proposed under the Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America. The tar sands also destroy vast tracks of boreal forests (carbon sinks that absorb the very carbon the tar sands emits), depletes and contaminates vast quantities of water, and communities downstream from production are getting sick.
- Even the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), in its 2008 Survey of Canada, encourages a change in how Canada manages the tar sands. The OECD warns that the Alberta government should invest resource rents in investment funds like Norway's in order to avoid the negative "Dutch disease" effects on the rest of the economy when a resource boom busts. The OECD advocates ending subsidies to the oil sector and is critical of the Alberta and federal governments' emission intensity targets in the tar sands and calls for strong action to reduce carbon emissions.

#### **What does the Council of Canadians Energy Campaign call for?**

- The Council of Canadians joins a number of organizations and concerned citizens across the country in calling for no new approvals of tar sands development. This is a first step in reducing further environmental and social destruction caused by the tar sands. The ultimate goal is to prevent increased tar sands production and reverse the environmental and social damage caused.
- Public subsidies to the oil and gas industry in and beyond the tar sands must end. This money should go towards investing in green jobs and public, less harmful energy alternatives like greater energy efficiency and renewable energy. Royalties in the tar sands should be increased so that Canadians see their fair share of energy revenues.

## **NAFTA and Energy**

#### **What is wrong with NAFTA energy provisions?**

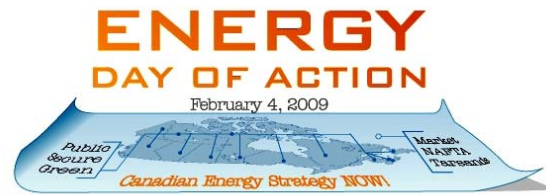
- Under NAFTA, market forces drive Canada-U.S. trade in energy with NAFTA limiting the ability of the Canadian government to intervene except in extraordinary circumstances. In line with free market ideals and as directed by NAFTA provisions, oil and gas exports have been deregulated, restrictions on American foreign ownership of energy resources removed, import or export restrictions undermined, and the influence of energy corporations has been enhanced. One of the main implications of NAFTA's energy policies has been a disconnection of energy production from consumption in our country. Two-thirds of oil and 61 per cent of natural gas produced in Canada is exported to the U.S. Meanwhile, Quebec and Atlantic Canada rely on imports to meet 90 per cent of their oil needs.
- NAFTA's proportional sharing clause (Article 605) obligates Canada to continue exporting non-renewable hydrocarbons to the U.S. in the same proportion of total supply as were sold to the U.S. over the three previous years. Our ability to get the energy we need could be at risk if imports were reduced or we were

faced with the reality of an energy crisis. We could not prioritize the use of Canadian supplies if this required reducing the proportion of our supplies that get exported to the U.S.

- NAFTA's Chapter 11 allows corporations to sue governments for compensation in secretive NAFTA trade tribunals over almost any state measure that impacts predicted profits. This works both preventatively and punitively against government measures to encourage local investment and strong environmental protection measures. The impact of Chapter 11 in relation to energy policy is particularly significant at a time when our governments must take immediate action to address climate change.

**What does the Council of Canadians call for?**

- The removal of energy provisions from NAFTA.
- The removal of Chapter 11 from NAFTA.
- The exclusion of water from NAFTA.



## Getting Your Message to the Media

Getting local media coverage for your *National Day of Action in Support of a Canadian Energy Strategy* event is a great way to bring more attention to Canada's energy issues. Below, you will find tips and media samples that you can use to help promote your action. Staff in the Council of Canadians' national office will also be working on a national media strategy.

### Definitions and deadlines

- **A public service announcement (PSA)** is distributed to media outlets for use in promoting your event to the public.
  - Identify the media that runs PSAs and check their deadlines – magazines or bi-weeklies may have deadlines as many as two or three weeks before the event. For radio or TV, it may only be 2-3 days before the event.
- **A media advisory** is intended to get media out to your event (press conference, rally, public forum, etc).
  - Send the media advisory the week prior to the event. If it is on the weekend, send the advisory on Wednesday. If it's a weeknight event, send the advisory two to three days beforehand.
- **A press release** is intended to give reporters the information they need to write a story (and ideally call you for further information).
  - Send press releases the day of the event. Your aim is to gain attention, and to give the media an idea of what is newsworthy about your story.

### Tips for public service announcements

Public Service Announcements (PSAs) are a way to get your message out on radio or television. Most local electronic media outlets have a community calendar or designated time for event announcements. They can be helpful for getting people out to your event, but there is no guarantee they will be used, so don't rely on them exclusively. They are only one of your outreach and publicity tools. PSAs should be written in a way that you would imagine them read live on-air — they are a script rather than a press release. Make sure to include the "who, what, where, when and how as well as contact information that you're willing to have broadcast.

#### [SAMPLE] PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

run until [fill in day of event here]

#### **Citizens' group calls for Canadian Energy Strategy**

The [your city] chapter of the Council of Canadians will be hosting a public forum/rally/event on [date] to help inform people about Canada's energy issues and the need for a Canadian Energy Strategy. The event starts at [time], at the [venue]. Admission is free.

For more information contact [name] at [phone number].

## Tips for media advisories

If you choose to open your event to the media, you could send a media advisory. Use your judgment as to when or whether to send this out. It could be as early as two or three weeks before your event, or as late as a few days before your event, depending on the nature of the media outlets you send it to (weekly publications need more lead-time, for example). In any case, the follow-up calls are crucial to getting journalists' attention. Make sure you are available when reporters call or, if you do miss a call, return any messages from journalists as promptly as possible.

<b>[SAMPLE] MEDIA ADVISORY - [Date]</b>	
<b>Citizens' group to host public event for a Canadian Energy Strategy</b>	
<b>WHO:</b>	The [your city] chapter of the Council of Canadians
<b>WHAT:</b>	A public forum/games night/information booth that engages local residents on [enter your event focus here, for example: the Canadian impacts of the tar sands, or what NAFTA means for Canada's energy]. This event is part of a National Day of Action in support of a Canadian Energy Strategy.
<b>WHEN:</b>	[date and time of event]
<b>WHERE:</b>	[venue]
- 30 -	

## Tips for press releases

Keep in mind when you write your release what makes a story newsworthy: dramatic human interest, controversy, local angles, calendar tie-ins and major events, to name a few. In terms of timing, think about what your goal is. If the goal is to get people out to your event, you should send your press release at least one week in advance. This will give reporters time to do an advance story. If it is to raise awareness about the issue, a couple of days in advance should be sufficient.

Follow-up calls to reporters, or "pitching" can help you get in the news. Reporters receive dozens of press releases a day and your call can help make your event stand out from the pack. It's not always easy, though. Take some time before you call to formulate your thoughts.

These tips will help you get your message across:

- **Target your reporter.** Your best bet is to call reporters you know, or have worked with in the past. If they can't cover the story, they'll likely refer you to someone else.
- **Be timely.** Do not call reporters when you know they are on deadline. Mid-morning and early afternoon are good times to make pitches. If they sound rushed, offer to call back later. If you get the answering machine, leave the basics and call back at a better time.
- **Hooks galore.** What makes a story newsworthy? Again, it's dramatic human interest, controversy, local angles, calendar tie-ins and major events. Be sure to let the reporter know if there is a photo opportunity at the event – they may be interested in coming out for this.

Here is a sample press release you may want to use, or you may want to write your own to reflect local issues:

**[ SAMPLE ] PRESS RELEASE**

PRESS RELEASE  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[ DATE ]

**Communities across the country 'Take Charge' in a National Day of Action in support of a Canadian Energy Strategy**

On February 4, 2009, the [ ] chapter of the Council of Canadians will be joining more than [ ] communities across the country for a National Day of Action in support of a Canadian Energy Strategy.

"Faced with climate change and diminishing energy resources globally, now more than ever we need a Canadian Energy Strategy that puts people and the environment first." says [name] of the [ ] chapter of the Council of Canadians. "Instead, our government is gambling with our future allowing free trade agreements, free market rules and big oil to set the energy agenda, and the stakes are high."

The Council of Canadians has launched a campaign collecting signatures of municipal, provincial and federal representatives and politicians for a declaration in support of a Canadian Energy Strategy. Over the course of a month, more than [ ] declarations have been signed, indicating strong support for energy policy that is in line with the principles of energy security and ecological sustainability.

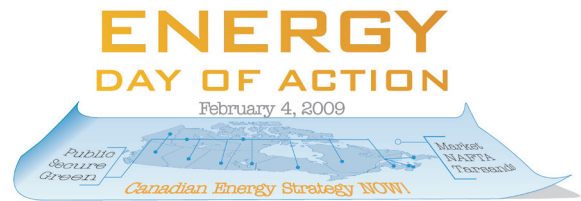
Canada, unlike many other countries, simply doesn't have any strategy that addresses where our energy comes from, where it is going, or the high price of environmental devastation that can come with producing it. Our country does not have strategic reserves or an energy sharing strategy. Meanwhile, the North American Free Trade Agreement contains energy provisions that undermine Canadian energy security. The proportional sharing clause obliges Canada to continue supporting the same proportion of non-renewable hydrocarbon exports to the U.S., even in times of Canadian need. Currently two-thirds of Canada's oil is exported to the U.S. while Quebec and Atlantic Canada rely on imports to meet 90 per cent of their oil needs. The lack of a clear strategy grounded in the public and environmental interest is fostering an energy gold rush, particularly in Alberta's tar sands which are widely regarded as a central reason why Canada cannot meet its Kyoto commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs).

The tides are turning. The election of Barack Obama as President of the United States has opened the possibility of renegotiating the NAFTA and domestic and international pressure is coming to bear on the continued reliance on fossil fuels, particularly non-conventional sources such as the tar sands that produce three times as much greenhouse gases as conventional sources.

"We are at a pivotal moment for energy policy in Canada," says [ ]. "Canadians across the country are telling the federal government that we need a Canadian Energy Strategy," says [ ] "A strategy that gives Canadians security of their energy supplies, guaranteed access to reserves in times of need, strong policies that protect our environment and transitions to more sustainable energy production and consumption."

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For more information contact [name] at [phone number].



## **Take Charge: A National Day of Action in support of a Canadian Energy Strategy, February 4, 2009**

### **Declaration of Support**

Eighty-nine per cent of Canadians agree that Canada should establish an energy policy that provides reliable supplies of oil, gas and electricity at stable prices and protects the environment, even if this means placing restrictions on exports and foreign ownership of Canadian supplies (EnviroNics, April 2008).

**On February 4, 2009 for the Council of Canadians' second annual Energy Day of Action, get your municipal, provincial and federal representatives to sign a declaration supporting a Canadian Energy Strategy!**

#### **The purpose:**

In the lead up to the February 4 day of action, work with your chapter to get politicians at all levels of government to sign this declaration. You can print copies of the declaration for signature and deliver them (either by mail or fax) to your regional organizer when they are signed.

On February 4, the Council of Canadians will **publicly launch** this important campaign action. We plan to release the number of declarations signed across the country. Getting declarations signed will continue to be an energy campaign tool beyond this year's day of action.

By collecting signatures supporting this declaration, chapter activists are helping to build a groundswell of support for a Canadian Energy Strategy and policies that are in line with the goals of energy security and ecological sustainability. This will provide the groundwork for following up with elected officials on community, regional and national energy demands in line with the declaration.

#### **The plan:**

Use the materials in this toolkit to help prepare a group of citizens to meet with elected officials and request the declaration be signed. Bring copies of the declaration to events you know elected officials will be attending. Alternatively, work with your regional organizer to divide up a list of politicians at all levels of government in your province and assign chapter members the challenge of getting the declaration signed by a specific individual. Talk to your regional organizer about developing a strategy to encourage the signing of this declaration.

**Timeline:**

Please ensure that you submit all of the signed declarations to your regional organizer no later than **Thursday, January 29, 2009**

**Contact your regional organizer at:**

British Columbia-Yukon: 1-604-688-8846 (toll free) 1-888-566-3888

Prairies: 1-780-429-4500 (toll free) 1-877-729-4500

Ontario-Quebec: 1-416-979-5554 (toll free) 1-800-208-7156

Atlantic: 1-902-422-7811 (toll free) 1-877-772-7811

**Background information:**

Faced with climate change and diminishing resources, governments across the world are taking a more active role in developing strategies and policies to protect their energy security, limit the impact on the environment and move away from fossil fuel dependency. Market forces alone cannot satisfy essential energy requirements; the state must assume more responsibility for performing this role. Although the Conservative government often refers to our country as an energy super power, Canada does not have an energy strategy, and our country does not have strategic petroleum reserves or an energy sharing arrangement. Free trade agreements and free market rules have helped create a situation where energy production and consumption in Canada are disconnected – where Canada imports almost half of its oil needs, even though Canada exports two-thirds of the oil it produces to the U.S. Meanwhile, 89 per cent of Canadians agree that Canada should establish an energy policy that provides reliable supplies of oil, gas and electricity at stable prices and protects the environment, even if this means placing restrictions on exports and foreign ownership of Canadian supplies (Envionics, April 2008).

# DECLARATION OF SUPPORT

I support the development of a Canadian Energy Strategy based on the principles of energy security and ecological sustainability. This includes energy policy that is guided by the public interest in ensuring Canadian's access to energy resources and helps to transition to more sustainable energy production and consumption in a manner that is good for the environment and people. The federal government must work collaboratively with provincial, territory, municipal governments and First Nations to ensure Canadian's energy security is met. Developing a plan for reducing dependency on fossil fuels and transitioning to greater conservation, more energy efficiency and renewable energy production in a manner that is good for people must be prioritized.

Signed,





# Five reasons why Canada needs Canadian Energy Strategy now

**F**aced with climate change and diminishing resources globally, we are at a critical juncture for energy policy. Now, more than ever, we need a Canadian Energy Strategy that ensures energy security and helps transition to sustainable energy production and consumption. Instead, Canada is taking a “free market” approach to the oil and gas industry with no energy strategy that addresses where our energy comes from, where it is going, or the high price of environmental devastation that comes with producing it. Governments have signed this control away through multilateral agreements such as NAFTA and the Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America (SPP).

Former Prime Minister Brian Mulroney declared Canada “open for business” in 1984 when he signed the Western Accord with the three western-most provinces. Since then, Canada has functioned with a free market approach to the oil and gas industry. Our political leaders have left us without policies for strategic energy reserves, restrictions on foreign ownership and export limits.

Market forces alone cannot satisfy essential national energy requirements; our government must assume more responsibility for performing this role. The two countries Canada is most closely tied to through NAFTA and the SPP – the United States and Mexico – both have energy policies to protect their energy interests. So why doesn't Canada?

**Here are five reasons we need a Canadian Energy Strategy:**

## 1. To give Canadians energy security.

Canada now produces about 40 per cent more oil than it consumes, yet Quebec and Atlantic Canada rely on imports to meet 90 per cent of their oil needs. Thanks to NAFTA, Canada now exports two-thirds of the oil and close to 60 per cent of the natural gas produced each year to the U.S. NAFTA limits the ability of the Canadian government to impose import or export restrictions, or to intervene in energy trade issues except in extraordinary circumstances. We also can't cut back on the

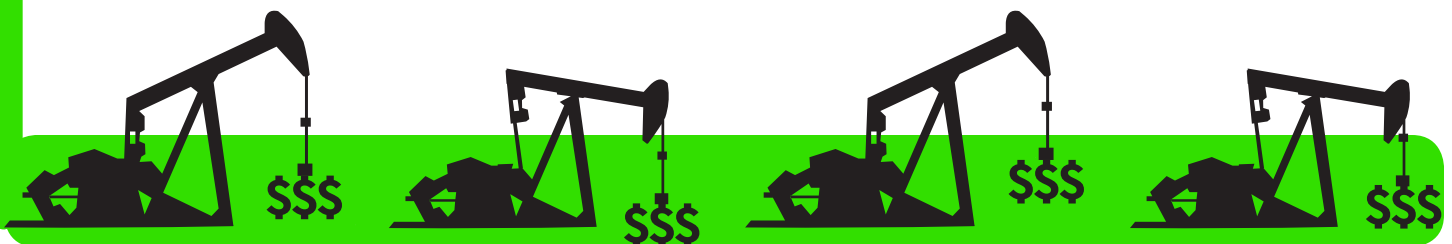


proportion of energy we produce and sell to the United States, even to meet Canadian needs or green house gas reduction targets. Even if the SPP is abandoned in name (in large part due to widespread public opposition), the deep integration agenda it represents will live on as long as corporations and free market supporters have the ear of our government. This means more energy integration, which transforms Canadian energy resources into North American resources. It also means a five-fold expansion of tar sands production (as proposed under the SPP) and more deregulation and privatization of the electricity sector with profound effects on the public systems of many Canadian provinces.

## 2. To protect our environment.

Allowing the market to direct energy production has led to an energy gold rush with serious consequences. According to Statistics Canada, energy production and consumption accounted for more than 80 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions in 2005. Canada's oil and gas industry –the tar sands in particular – will prevent Canada from meeting its obligations under the Kyoto Protocol on climate change. On average, Alberta's tar sands require two to five barrels of water to produce one barrel of crude oil. The separation of bitumen from tar sands also produces large amounts of toxic water stored in massive tailings ponds. Close to three times more greenhouse gases are produced to process bitumen than conventional oil production.

There are already devastating environmental impacts to our



shores and sea by offshore oil development, including the destruction of natural habitats for massive pipeline and transmission line projects. Uranium and coal mining create air pollution (including the release of acid-rain causing pollutants) and produces waste that can have long-term ecological impacts.

### 3. To help our economy.

Although costly on the environmental and social fronts, in financial terms, there is no doubt that Canada's energy sector makes substantial contributions to the national economy. However, Canadian royalties are some of the lowest in the world – the oil and gas industry has lower taxation levels than all other major industries in Canada. To help our economy, we need to ensure that oil and gas companies pay a fair share of taxes in the country relative to their profits, and we need to divert significant federal subsidies to the oil and gas industry (according to KAIROS, these subsidies were close to 1 billion a year) to help Canada become an international leader in renewable energy. Our economy will benefit if we transition to more sustainable energy production that provides quality, public "green" jobs.

### 4. To protect our health and future.

Allowing corporations and the market to set the agenda for energy policy puts our health and future at risk. It fosters an energy gold rush that also has serious health impacts. For example, in Fort Chipewyan, Alberta, located downstream from the tar sands, local physicians have sounded the alarm about unusually high cancer rates. The recent surge of interest in uranium mining also raises serious health concerns. Radioactive waste from the mining process can put mine workers and nearby communities at risk. The International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is clear about the urgent need to address climate change and reduce greenhouse gases in order to avoid widespread harm. The infamous Stern Review Report on the Economics of Climate Change likens the impacts of climate change on the world economy – if unchecked – to that of the world wars and the Great Depression. To protect our future we need a plan to transition away from fossil fuel dependency to more conservation of conventional energy resources, increased energy efficiency and renewable energy production and consumption. Yet the Canadian government continues to



subsidize the oil and gas industry and helps foster an energy gold rush while setting greenhouse gas reduction targets that fall far below the IPCC's recommendations.

### 5. To put people in control, not corporations.

Thanks to our historical free market approach to energy, Canadians do not have control over our country's energy resources. The Harper government continues to let oil and gas companies set the agenda. A NAFTA lawsuit by Exxon-Mobil and Murphy Oil shows that big oil companies will use trade agreements to resist even moderate government demands for reinvestment. The companies are suing the Canadian government over the actions of the Newfoundland and Labrador government requiring the corporations to spend some of their soaring profits on local research and job development. As with all NAFTA disputes, the outcome of the lawsuit will be determined by a secret panel of trade experts behind close doors.

Without a Canadian Energy Strategy – a strategy that will give Canadians security of their energy supplies, guaranteed access to energy reserves in times of need, and strong policies that protect our environment and focus on transitioning to sustainable energy production and consumption – our country will continue to be a victim of an energy gold rush. Politicians cannot let corporations and the market set the agenda for energy policy in our country.

#### Take action!

Contact Prime Minister Stephen Harper today and demand a Canadian Energy Strategy that puts people and the environment ahead of corporate interests.

Office of the Prime Minister  
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K1A 0A2  
E-mail: pm@pm.gc.ca  
Fax: 613-941-6900

*For more information about our Energy Campaign visit [www.canadians.org](http://www.canadians.org) or call us toll free at 1-800-387-7177.*



# Five reasons to support no new approvals in the tar sands

**N**orthern Alberta's tar sands are home to 173 billion barrels of recoverable bitumen, a tar-like substance that requires intensive processing to become gas. The mining process spans an area twice the size of New Brunswick, where close to 1.4 million barrels are produced daily.

A diverse group of voices are calling for no new approvals in the tar sands. This is a first step in reducing further environmental and social destruction caused by the tar sands. The ultimate goal is to prevent increased tar sands production and reverse the damage caused.

## Here are five reasons to support no new approvals in the tar sands:

### 1. First Nations, Métis and Inuit rights are overlooked.

First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples in Alberta, Saskatchewan, British Columbia and the North West Territories are directly experiencing the negative impacts of tar sands development. Faced with environmental, health and social problems connected to mining, processing and pipeline construction, communities are not receiving adequate support and compensation, nor have they had a say in the approvals process. In Fort Chipewyan, Alberta, downstream from the tar sands, unusually high rates of rare forms of cancer in community members, and high levels of carcinogens in Lake Athabasca water and fish are recorded. Three of the five First Nations that make up the Athabasca Tribal Council are calling for a moratorium on new approvals, as does the all Chiefs Summit of Alberta. Tar sands expansion within aboriginal traditional territories is not recognizing the process of aboriginal title and treaty rights.

### 2. There are dramatic environmental impacts.

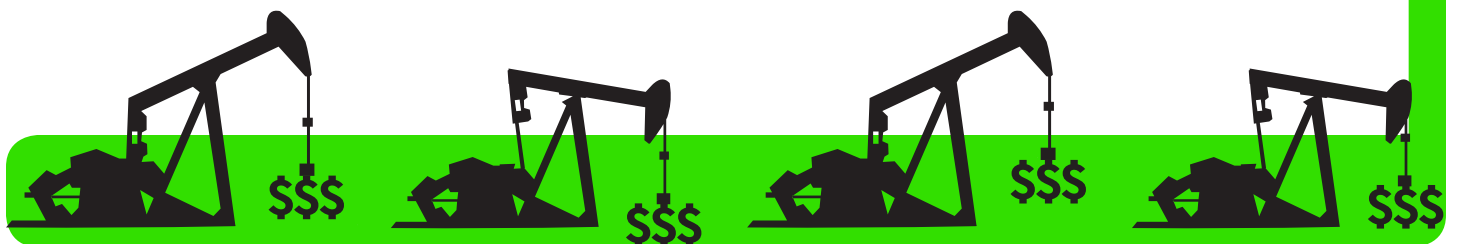
The tar sands are the fastest growing source of greenhouse gas emissions in Canada and threaten our country's capacity to meet Kyoto Protocol commitments. Up to approximately three times more greenhouse gases are produced to process bitumen than conventional oil production. For open pit mines in the tar sands to produce one barrel of oil, four tons of material is dug up. Large tracts of boreal forest are also being ripped up. Despite assurances, "land reclamation" – attempts to replace the torn-up earth –



has seen very little progress. Carbon capture and storage (CCS) has been used as a "catch all" for continued support for tar sands development. Combined, the Canadian and the Albertan governments are spending \$2.5 billion on CCS. Yet when the CBC filed an access to information request, a government document was discovered saying that reducing greenhouse gas emissions using CCS will be much more difficult than industry and some politicians suggest. The report reveals that only a small percentage of carbon dioxide released by the tar sands can be captured.

### 3. Market interests are put ahead of Canadian interests.

The tar sands are the centrepiece of post 9/11 energy integration with the United States (the American administration includes energy in their calls for "security"), which hands over control of Canadian energy resources to corporations and the market at the expense of Canadian needs and the environment. This agenda is being relentlessly pursued through free trade agreements and free market rules. It is estimated that close to three quarters of tar sands produced-oil is exported to the U.S. – the US Department of Defense is now the largest single consumer of oil in the world. NAFTA's proportional sharing clause ensures that we cannot cut back on the proportion of energy we export to the U.S., even if this is done to meet



Canadian needs, or Kyoto commitments. The Oil Sands Working Group with the Security and Prosperity Partnership (SPP) calls for a five-fold increase of tar sands production.

#### 4. Tar sands production wastes and contaminates water.

Tar sands production is responsible for both the depletion and contamination of water in Alberta. On average, two to five barrels of water are needed to produce one barrel of oil while some extraction methods require as much as seven barrels of water. Tar sands mining projects are licensed to withdraw 2.3 billion barrels of freshwater per year. According to Natural Resources Canada, planned expansions will increase this to 3.3 billion barrels per year. The Athabasca River will not be able to sustain this volume of withdrawal. The separation of bitumen from tar sands also produces large amounts of toxic water which is then stored in massive tailings ponds that cover an area of approximately 20 square miles. According to several reports, these ponds have already leaked toxins into rivers and groundwater. Toxins connected to tar sands production have been found as far downstream as the Athabasca delta – one of the largest freshwater deltas in the world. With production growth and an increased strain on groundwater, the potential for accidents leading to the contamination of one of the largest aquifers (which many in situ projects sit below), is very high.

#### 5. Boom for Whom?

Energy, in particular the tar sands, is often touted as a major driver of Canada's economy. Although lucrative to large corporations, oil and gas production is very costly on environmental and social fronts. Canadian oil and gas royalties are some of the lowest in the world. Norway has significantly higher royalties (while maintaining investment interest) that are invested into "green" energy and diversifying their economy to plan for the eventual bust of a resource boom. While the rapid pace of tar sands development has helped increase the value of the Canadian dollar, there are serious impacts on the manufacturing sector. Housing and infrastructure needs in Alberta have lagged behind development, leaving people in a crunch and temporary guest workers in the tar sands are faced with the threat of deportation at the discretion of employers. Pipeline construction and work migration also have cross-Canada environmental and social impacts.



#### Take Action!

Join the call for no new tar sands approvals! Visit our web site at [www.canadians.org/energy](http://www.canadians.org/energy)

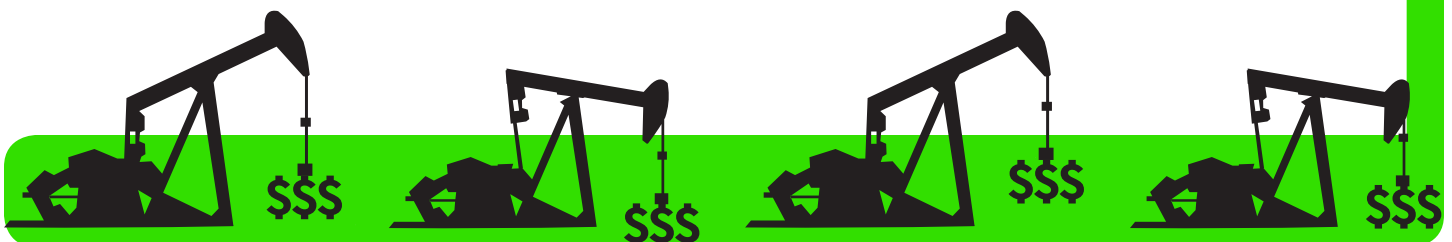
#### Resources

*Too Close for Comfort* by Maude Barlow; [www.canadians.org/energy](http://www.canadians.org/energy); <http://www.ienearth.org/cits.html>; [tarsandswatch.org](http://tarsandswatch.org); [tarsandstimeout.org](http://tarsandstimeout.org); <http://www.dominionpaper.ca/articles/1474>; [www.oilsandstruth.org](http://www.oilsandstruth.org); [www.environmentaldefence.ca](http://www.environmentaldefence.ca); [http://www.nrdc.org/energy/dirtyfuels\\_tar.asp](http://www.nrdc.org/energy/dirtyfuels_tar.asp)

#### Join the Council of Canadians.

The strength of the Council is in our membership. We do not accept funding from corporations or governments, so membership donations are vital to our activities. We work with community groups, seniors, students, unions and other organizations across the country to promote progressive policies on public health care, fair trade, secure energy, clean water and other issues of social and economic concern to Canadians. Visit [www.canadians.org](http://www.canadians.org), or call us at 1-800-387-7177 to become a member today.

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# The Canadian Impacts of the Tar Sands: Pipelines, Refineries, the Manufacturing Sector and Worker Migration

**N**orthern Alberta's tar sands are home to 173 billion barrels of recoverable bitumen. The mining process spans an area twice the size of New Brunswick, where close to 1.4 million barrels are produced daily. But the impacts of this massive project stretch much further than just Alberta. Here is a cross-Canada look at how tar sands development is affecting our country.

## The west coast and Northwest Territories

Plans are already underway to ship tar sands crude and refined products through B.C. to U.S. and Asia-Pacific markets. This involves significant expansions to existing pipelines (like Kinder Morgan's Trans-Mountain Pipeline Expansion) and building of new infrastructure (such as Enbridge's Gateway Project.) Pipeline leaks and spills risk contaminating local ecosystems and more refineries mean more toxic emissions. The Dogwood Initiative outlines five reasons to stop the use of Northern B.C. coastal waters as a hub for shipping tar sands. This includes the impacts of the inevitable spills on a unique ecosystem that is home to a number of endangered species as well as thriving tourist and fishing industries. Enbridge's Gateway Project will violate a moratorium in place to protect the Douglas Channel. Alberta is running low on natural gas, a relatively clean burning source of energy used to heat many Canadian homes that also helps fuel tar sands production. In addition to transporting gas from B.C., plans are being proposed, and some are underway, to bring natural gas to the tar sands from Alaska through B.C. as well as from the Northwest Territories via the Mackenzie Gas Project. These projects are dominated by, and will profit, corporate oil and gas giants and propose tapping into natural gas supplies in sensitive eco-systems. Groups like the Arctic Indigenous Youth Network and impacted aboriginal peoples such as the Dehcho First Nation have been voicing their environmental, social, economic and treaty rights objections to the Mackenzie Gas project.

## Prairies

People living in Alberta and Saskatchewan are directly impacted by the pollution and contamination of their land, water and air, and



the social consequences of unbridled development of Alberta's tar sands. First Nations and Métis communities are not receiving adequate support, compensation or having a say in tar sands development and pipeline construction within or near their traditional territories. Downstream from the tar sands, the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation is experiencing unusually high cancer rates, and the water they rely on from Lake Athabasca has high levels of carcinogens. Air quality in Fort McMurray and the tar sands region is deteriorating as massive amounts of pollution fill the air. Social services and infrastructure are lagging far behind the community needs, and health and environmental concerns with tar sands upgraders persist. The tar sands are responsible for both the depletion and contamination of water in Alberta and have long-standing impacts on people and the environment. The threat of deportation keeps the many temporary foreign workers in the tar sands in an unstable situation. Saskatchewan is experiencing acid rain as a direct result of the tar sands, which is bad for human and ecosystem health. There are also proposals moving forward for tar sands development in Saskatchewan.

## Ontario and Quebec

The destructive pace of tar sands development has helped to increase the value of the Canadian dollar, which has had serious impacts on the manufacturing sector and jobs in the pulp and paper industry. This impact has been particularly harsh in Ontario and Quebec with job losses causing hardships on families. The possibility of expanding the transportation of crude oil to Ontario and Quebec is raising alarm bells. A report by the University of Toronto, *How the Oil Sands got the Great Lakes*, outlines the serious risks associated with expanded refineries in the area of the Great Lakes to process tar sand's bitumen, including concerns with severe water depletion and contamination, and a significant increase in greenhouse gas emissions. A refinery near Sarnia, Ontario that processes tar sands products is contributing to pollution that is impacting surrounding communities including the





Aamjiwnaang First Nation. In Quebec, debate has been spurred over Enbridge's proposed plan to reverse the flow of a pipeline from Sarnia to Montreal to give refineries in Quebec access to tar sands products as well as for shipment to U.S. markets. Ontario, Quebec and the Atlantic provinces rely heavily on imported oil, and increasing consumption of Canadian oil in these provinces is a more reliable strategy for meeting energy security needs. Energy expert Gordon Laxer argues that conventional oil could meet Ontario, Quebec and Atlantic Canada's needs if matched by greater conservation efforts, bringing consumption of oil in line with production of oil in Canada. Currently close to 70 per cent of Canada's oil and 61 per cent of our gas is exported to the U.S.

### Atlantic region

Worker migration from Atlantic Canada is not new. Faced with the collapse of local industries such as fisheries and coal mining, this region has a history of workers leaving their family and friends to seek employment in the current economic "boom" region of the country. *Hard Times Sold in Vending Machines* (January 2008) in *The Dominion: News From the Grassroots* addresses the impacts of the most recent migration of workers to the tar sands. In addition to drawing young workers away from local jobs – labour shortages are occurring in some sectors – this pattern causes hardships on families, exposes workers to dangerous jobs (workplace deaths in Alberta are one of the highest in the country), and contributes to low population growth rates in the region. In the end, the long-term impacts of this migration are largely unknown. In addition to the worker migration issues, Atlantic Canada also relies heavily on imported oil to meet the region's needs. Faced with diminishing reserves globally and Canadian commitments to export oil to the U.S. thanks to free trade agreements like NAFTA and free market rules, Atlantic Canada is in a vulnerable position in terms of oil energy security.

### Take action!

To learn more about the tar sands and to add your voice to the call for no new approvals of tar sands development and a Canadian Energy Strategy that prioritizes policies that protect Canadian's energy security, our environment and plans for a transition to less harmful energy alternatives, visit [www.canadians.org/energy](http://www.canadians.org/energy)

### Resources:

- [www.canadians.org/energy](http://www.canadians.org/energy)
- [www.dogwoodinitiative.org/notankers](http://www.dogwoodinitiative.org/notankers)
- [www.tarsandsfreebc.org](http://www.tarsandsfreebc.org); [www.mackenziewild.ca](http://www.mackenziewild.ca)
- [www.tarsandswatch.org](http://www.tarsandswatch.org); [www.dominionpaper.ca/topic/tar\\_sands](http://www.dominionpaper.ca/topic/tar_sands)
- <http://oilsandstruth.org/taxonomy/vocabulary/2>
- <http://www.ienearth.org/cits.html>

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