



# 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