



Canadian Cancer Society
Société canadienne
du cancer

September 17, 2008

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper, P.C., M.P.
Conservative Party of Canada
#1204-130 Albert Street
Ottawa, ON
K1P 5G4

Re Canadian Cancer Society 2008 Federal Election Survey

Dear Prime Minister,

By speaking out with courage and vision, the Canadian Cancer Society improves the lives of Canadians affected by cancer. We use our influence to encourage governments to pass public policies that will help prevent cancer and help people living with cancer. We would like to know what your Party is doing to achieve these goals.

This 2008 federal election survey was prepared in consultation with our national election working group and focuses on three of our federal policy priorities. The over 200,000 volunteers of the CCS would like to know where your Party stands on these issues. Please respond to the following five questions and return your answers to:

The Canadian Cancer Society
National Public Issues Office
Suite 1010, 116 Albert St.
Ottawa, ON K1P 5G3

Support for Unpaid Caregivers

1. Increasingly, Canadians are taking on the duty of unpaid caregiving for family members with illness and risk of death. This often results in lost income, as well as the increased financial burden of unforeseen expenses such as, transportation, medical equipment and supplies, pharmaceuticals, help with housework, respite, etc. In addition, recent research reports indicate that 48% of family caregivers find it difficult to balance caregiving and employment. Given the substantial economic input that unpaid caregivers contribute to our health care system (estimates range between \$6 and \$9 billion per year); it is time for the federal Government to make a reciprocal investment in the well-being of caregivers.

116 Albert St., Suite 1010, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5G3
Telephone (613) 565-2522 / Fax (613) 565-2278

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What measures will you take to support caregivers and show leadership on this important issue for Canadian families?

Tobacco Control

2. Cigarette contraband. Canada has a very serious and growing cigarette contraband situation, with cigarettes available illegally for as little as \$6 per carton of 200 cigarettes compared to the fully legal price of \$50-70 per carton (depending on the brand) in Ontario and Quebec. Cheap cigarettes are having a devastating adverse impact on smoking rates, with the decline in smoking now stalled. In terms of public revenue, federal and provincial governments are easily losing at least \$1 billion per year, and likely much more, because of contraband. Contraband is an issue of public health, public revenue and crime prevention.

What new measures will your party take to get tobacco contraband under control?

3. Flavoured cigarillos/tobacco products. There has been a startling growth in sales of cigarillos (little cigars), increasing from less than 50,000 in 2001 to more than 80 million in 2006. These products come in ice cream (chocolate, vanilla, strawberry), candy (i.e. mint), and fruit (i.e. peach, cherry) flavours. National surveys show that youth are particularly attracted to these products. Flavours are being used to “make toxins tasty”, that is to make it easier to consume addictive, cancer causing (carcinogen), lethal products.

Would your party support a ban on flavoured cigarillos and other tobacco products?

4. Tobacco advertising and packaging. A ban on tobacco advertising has been implemented by most developed countries, such as Australia, New Zealand, Great Britain, Ireland, France, Belgium, among many others. A tobacco advertising ban is now the international standard, having been included in the new international tobacco treaty, the *WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control*. Canada, however, only has partial advertising restrictions, and tobacco companies have resumed advertising. Tobacco companies are also placing attractive images on cigarette packages. Youth are exposed to this advertising and to these packages.

Would your party support stronger laws to curb tobacco advertising and to better control tobacco packaging?

Consumer Right to Know and Product Labeling

5. The Canadian Cancer Society is concerned about the presence of cancer-causing substances in products. The CCS supports a Community Right to Know. In particular, we believe that people have the right to know if they are being exposed to substances that are cancer causing (carcinogen). To ensure this right, the CCS calls for all ingredients in consumer-based products to be fully disclosed with a full ingredient list. In addition, when cancer-causing substances are present in products, they should be identified through the presence

of a hazard symbol as well as a clear, plain language statement about the presence of the substance of concern. This messaging should be plainly visible to the consumer at point of sale and at point of use. We recognize that in many cases substances of potential concern are necessary ingredients of products and as such will continue to be used in their formulation but are concerned about the lack of communication to consumers about the presence of these hazards.

What does your Party intend to do to ensure that citizens are made aware of the chronic health hazards associated with the products that they use?

I appreciate you taking the time to respond to our questions and can assure you that your answers will be distributed to CCS supporters so that they can make a better informed choice on October 14th.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Barbara Whylie". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "B" and "W".

Barbara Whylie
Chief Executive Officer