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Campaign Plan for Canadians for Tax Fairness

A. Goals:

1. Significant media profile for Canadians for Tax Fairness and for the message of tax fairness.
2. Develop and communicate clear common messages on tax fairness and the importance of public services in collaboration with a wide alliance of NGO, labour and social movement community.
3. Develop presence and associated groups across the country.
4. Build a strong membership base of activists and donors.
5. Adoption of fair tax policies by opposition parties at the federal level and by provincial governments and political parties.
6. Achieve progress on some specific tax fairness issues.
7. Influence public opinion in favour of tax fairness and increased revenue to support public services.

B. Framing the tax fairness message:

Linking the tax fairness issue with public concern about growing inequality and cuts to public services is key to building public support. We need to show that there are positive alternatives in terms of raising more revenue to expand public services and reducing inequality through fairer taxes. For campaigning purposes we need to focus on several specific tax fairness issues that could be easily explained and that could get broad public support.

C. Develop a media strategy to communicate our message about tax fairness:

We need to develop a quick-response capacity to counter right wing initiatives on further tax cutting and the demonization of taxes and “big government” and a pro-active capacity of creating our own space in the media and forcing the other side to respond to us. Canadians for Tax Fairness will organize a core group of academics, commentators, economists and prominent citizens from many walks of life who we could call upon to disseminate the key messages of tax fairness and enhanced public services. This effort would include: the use of opinion articles, letters to the editor, appearances on key radio and television public affairs programs, and the engagement of key media figures to influence them on the issue.

D. Develop a series of popular campaigns on specific tax fairness issues and that could be focused on key constituencies

Possible campaigns that could be developed include: Tackle Tax Havens, Robin Hood Tax, green taxes, wealth taxes, or the corporate entertainment deduction. These campaigns would include an online action, political lobby efforts, production of campaign tools such as videos, buttons, bumper stickers, etc. and the implementation of a media strategy including media stunts, opinion articles, etc. Certain campaigns such as the green taxes campaign could target constituencies such as youth and environment groups.

Campaigns would include the extensive use of social media – Facebook, YouTube, twitter, our WEB site, email campaigns, etc. as well as more conventional materials and communications tools. The mix of media tools would be determined by the specific campaign and the demographic we are trying to influence. Creating large email lists of people willing to write letters to the editor or letters to politicians would be a priority.

Canadians for Tax Fairness will also organize public education events in collaboration with regional groups and develop a speaker's bureau to help educate and engage the public.

E. Strengthen government relations and lobbying efforts

Canadians for Tax Fairness will take part in opportunities provided by government hearings, engage in discussions with politicians and the public service on tax fairness issues. Particular efforts will be made to influence opposition party tax policy-making, and on trying to get some movement from government on issues such as tax havens and the Financial Transaction Tax. Online actions encouraging supporters to email messages to government leaders and Members of Parliament will be undertaken to boost our credibility and lobbying influence.

F. Coordinate tax fairness campaigning with key allies

Canadians for Tax Fairness will coordinate its tax fairness campaigning with key allies including the Canadian Labour Congress, NUPGE, CUPE, PSAC, CCPA, Halifax Initiative, Publish What You Pay, Échec aux paradis fiscaux , Attac Quebec, Leadnow.ca, and provincial taxfairness campaigns such as the Nova Scotians for Tax Fairness, the NB Common Front for Social Justice, the Better Way Alberta Campaign, the CCPA BC Just Economy Project and the Stand Up for Public Services and Tax Fairness campaign in Ontario.

Working closely with our allies, funders and the broad progressive organization community would be a major priority with the aim of having every progressive voice repeating the same fair tax messages as part of their communications goals and strategy. Our aim would be make getting the consistent message out as easy as possible, recognizing that organizations have limited resources for their existing mandates let alone adding new messaging to their burden. We would be continuously engaging key organizations to encourage both internal and external fair tax messaging.

Canadians for Tax Fairness will also participate actively in key international campaigns and networks including the Tax Justice Network and its Tackle Tax Havens campaign and the global Robin Hood Tax campaign.