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WIN for climate action in Canada!

Today is a good day!

 By Paul Kershaw | March 25, 2021

Canada's top court has thrown its support behind the kind of unified climate action younger generations want and need. It's a good day for intergenerational solidarity.

In a 6-3 ruling, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled in support of minimum national standards that require all provinces to curb carbon pollution, including by putting a price on it.

This decision is critical, because the evidence shows that pricing pollution is a key approach for helping Canada achieve its net zero emissions goal by 2050. Gen Squeeze believes pollution pricing is part of an overall shift to raise revenue for governments by placing higher taxes on things we want less of (like unhealthy home prices and pollution) in order to decrease taxes on things we want more of (like higher incomes for lower and middle-income Canadians).

That's why we led a coalition of youth and health-focused organizations to Ottawa to intervene in this case last fall (and in similar cases in Ontario and Saskatchewan before it). Our Intergenerational Climate Coalition argued that unified action is necessary to protect younger and future generations who will be hit hardest by climate change. If Canada is serious about dealing with the climate emergency and helping young people thrive, we need a price on carbon pollution that is supported by even bolder government leadership.

You might be thinking, but I thought Canada already had a national carbon price? We do, but it was challenged by a handful of provinces that see a national price on pollution as unnecessary and unconstitutional.

Unfortunately for them (and fortunately for the climate), the Supreme Court didn't agree. **In its ruling, the Court said "Climate change is real. It is caused by greenhouse gas emissions resulting from human activities... The only way to address the threat of climate change is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions."**

Our coalition went even further and argued that failure to price pollution discriminates against younger Canadians, because it puts in jeopardy our reasonable aspiration to thrive in the future.



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-From the SCC's ruling

The Supreme Court agreed, observing at the very beginning of its decision that climate change "poses a grave threat to humanity's future."

Canada still has a lot of work to do if it wants to tackle the climate crisis. Carbon pricing is a vital piece in a larger climate solutions puzzle. But in order to deliver on our 2050 targets, the federal government has to be able to develop national policies that cut back carbon pollution and ensure all provinces and territories are doing their fair share.

That's what we fought for, and now won, at the Supreme Court. 🙌

Learn more about the history of this case in our previous blogs:

- [What good is the Constitution if it can't protect us from climate change?](#)
- [Taking the fight for climate action to the Supreme Court](#)
- [WIN: Saskatchewan court gives 🙌 to carbon price](#)
- [WIN: Ontario court gives another 🙌 to pricing carbon pollution](#)
- [Gen Squeeze jumps into federal carbon price showdown](#)

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Our partners in the Intergenerational Climate Coalition include:



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Dr. Paul Kershaw is a Professor in the University of British Columbia's School of Population and Public Health, and the Founder of Generation Squeeze.

 Wins

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