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## Hockey Moms, Young People and Doctors Defend Pricing Pollution in Saskatchewan Court

The pricing pollution debate heats up as the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal hears arguments about the constitutionality of the federal *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act*.

The court has granted leave to hear from Generation Squeeze. We are a voice for younger Canadians in politics and the market, backed by cutting edge research. “Our network has over 33,000 allies, including 2,600 in Saskatchewan,” explains Dr. Paul Kershaw, the organization’s founder, who will be in the Regina Court on Feb 13 and 14, and available to engage with media.

Generation Squeeze is leading an Intergenerational Climate Coalition of groups representing younger Canadians, children’s rights and health professionals, including the Saskatchewan Public Health Association. “We will argue that the health threats to children and future generations are vastly disproportionate to their contribution to greenhouse gas emissions, and their ability to shape political decisions that determine emissions in the coming years,” explains Wanda Martin, Past President of the Saskatchewan Public Health Association.

“That is why we are representing children and young people’s voices in the courts in support of pricing pollution,” explains Dominique Souris of the Youth Climate Lab.

“Growing up in a healthy environment is an essential part of children’s right to health. All governments have a legal duty to give high priority to the impacts of climate change for children in order to protect that right under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which both federal and provincial governments have ratified,” observes Kathy Vandergrift, Chair of the Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children.

**Some express heartfelt concerns that pricing pollution hurts hockey moms, commuters and office workers.**

“As the founder of Generation Squeeze, I get it,” explains Kershaw. “Our organization represents thousands of hockey moms, commuters, and office workers. Many of us feel pinched in the pocket.”

By comparison with when our beloved parents and grandparents started their careers and families, research shows that younger Canadians earn less (after inflation), despite going to school more, start more often with student debt, pay way more for housing, and accept longer commutes because we are priced out of many places where we grew up.

So the prospect of paying for our pollution as part of the fight against climate change can feel like one more hand in our pocket, reaching for a wallet that is already anemic.

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**Dr. Paul Kershaw, Founder**

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# GENERATION | squeeze

At Generation Squeeze, we are devoted to releasing the vice-grip of money pressures on hockey moms and commuters. We do so by campaigning to adapt policy to make parental time at home more affordable; reduce the costs of child care to no more than \$10 a day; rein in home prices; and build more homes, including rental units, closer to where we work and study. We are proud to lead these campaigns.

“But we know we can’t solve our wallet problems by neglecting climate problems, because that is like playing Russian Roulette with our future,” observes Kershaw.

For those who are skeptical about what scientists predict climate change will bring, talk of environmental risks may seem like a revolver empty of most bullets. Spin the cylinder, pull the trigger, and...

While nothing happens most of the time, most hockey moms don’t play Russian Roulette with their kids.

Doing too little to prevent the acceleration of climate change is just as risky. Climate change threatens to swamp our coastal cities, when young people do not have gills to swim.

Climate change burns our forests, when our skin can’t fend off fire, and our lungs can’t breathe smoke.

Climate change threatens the fertility of our soil, risking more hunger and malnutrition.

Climate change brings bugs for which our immune systems are not prepared.

Climate change disrupts our economy, making it even more stressful to pay higher home prices with lower earnings and more student debt.

These climate threats are frightening, and the risks to mental health are real.

When Canadian governments do not use all available tools to fend off the worst that climate change has in store, we discriminate against younger Canadians and future generations. Why? Because not pricing pollution puts at risk our reasonable aspiration to thrive in 2030 and beyond.

“The World Health Organization has identified climate change as the greatest risk to human health in the 21<sup>st</sup> century,” explains coalition partner Kim Perrotta, Executive Director of Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment. This makes pricing pollution an important health intervention. The logic is simple: people pollute more when pollution isn’t priced – as demonstrated by Nobel prize-winning research.

At Generation Squeeze, we think pricing pollution should be pursued as part of a broader #TaxShift. The idea is to tax less of what we do want (like better earnings for typical people), while taxing more what we don’t want (like pollution and crazy home prices), in order to pay for better investments in young and old alike.

We pursue this multifaceted approach, because hockey moms in our network encourage us to ease the environmental and financial squeeze *simultaneously*. So we continue efforts to:

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# GENERATION | **squeeze**

- ✓ bring down family costs (like the historic investment in child care we helped to achieve in BC, which is already saving people hundreds a month), and
- ✓ slow down out of control housing costs (by dialing down harmful demand and dialing up suitable supply as we've been doing in cities across Canada).

The more we succeed in these affordability campaigns, the better we position ourselves to deal financially with costs that come from fending off the worst that climate change will otherwise throw our way. This multifaceted approach can address our wallets and our climate together, ensuring we all have a chance to live up to our potential, enough time and money to enjoy life, and leave our provinces, country and planet better off than we found it.

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## Partners:



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