

PETITION TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED

We, the undersigned electors of Canada, draw the attention of the House of Commons to the following:

THAT, in 2010, the Government eliminated the Statistics Canada mandatory long-form census, which was a critical source of information to understand the diverse circumstances of Canadians and therefore essential to the effective formulation and evidence-based evaluation of both federal and provincial policies and programs as well as many private-sector activities;

THAT, while allocating significant government funding towards industrial-academic partnerships and research, the Government has cut funding for basic environmental and social science research through agencies and projects such as Environment Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Library and Archives Canada, National Research Council Canada, Statistics Canada, National Council of Welfare, First Nations Statistical Institute, and the world-renowned Experimental Lakes Area Research Facility;

THAT the free flow of information among scientists is fundamental to scientific progress, including international cooperation, and unfettered media access to those scientists is equally fundamental to the ability of Canadians to understand potential implications for their lives and their futures;

THAT the current practice of requiring prior vetting of scientific communications by public relations officers for the purpose of ensuring consistency with the Government's message slows and disrupts that free flow of information, is contrary to past Canadian practices and those of other OECD governments, was tried and subsequently reversed by the United States, and hence reflects poorly on Canada internationally;

THAT the Access to Information Act guarantees Canadians the right to access information in records under the control of government institutions, including the outcomes of tax-funded research, and requires that any exceptions be limited and specific.

