

Title: "Policy Matters: Stella Bowles"

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Policy Matters: Stella Bowles

By Stella Bowles

Later this year, Canadians will vote in the 43rd federal election. Many non-profit organizations, networks, and coalitions see elections as a critical opportunity to raise relevant public policy issues. Recently, the rules for charities engaging in public policy have become a prominent source of debate and discussion in government and the sector. As we countdown to the next election, The Philanthropist will be asking non-profit leaders what public policy issues are top of mind for them.

Name and organization: Stella Bowles, youth environmental advocate and collaborator with Coastal Action and others.

What current election issues might impact your work?

Climate change and the health of our world is what every politician should be talking about as a priority.

One of the reasons I received attention for my river testing project is because I actually caused positive environmental change for my river, involving three levels of government. I have learned that positive outcomes for the environment don't happen very often.

The environment needs to be the priority for every decision in government moving forward. This should include a complete overhaul of the mindset that dumping substances into our waterways is a solution. It is not.

What issues would you like to bring more attention to in the election?

There is a lot of talk about climate change, clean energy, cleaning the oceans, etc., but there doesn't seem to be enough action. As Greta Thunberg said, "We have to treat it like our house is on fire and we are running for a fire extinguisher!" I do not see this panic from many politicians in Canada and now we have oil expansion off the Atlantic coast! Expansion of oil and threat of spills to our oceans is not moving in the right direction.

There needs to be a fast and progressive move toward green jobs for future generations. The time to act is now. It's our last chance.

Where can we learn more about these issues?

Greta Thunberg's TED talk: The Disarming Case to Act Right Now on Climate

Canada warming at twice the global rate, leaked report finds, CBC News

Benefits of Renewable Energy Use, The Union of Concerned Scientists

Stella Bowles: Young Citizen Scientist