

Ottawa Journal ? encouraging Canadians to give

Canadians have many things to be proud of: our economy is almost universally regarded as a model for the rest of the world, our country is consistently ranked as one of the best places to live and raise a family, and we're known around the globe as a kind and generous people who strive to make the world a better place.

This is why it would probably surprise no one to hear that Canada?according to a report released in 2012 by the U.K's Charities Aid Foundation?ranked as the third most charitable country in the world based on the percentage of people who donated time or money to a charity in the previous year. In fact, on average Canadians give roughly \$446 per person to charity each year and Canadians aged 75 and above give roughly \$725 per year. Those are remarkable numbers that we should be truly proud of.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper and our Government are also tremendously proud of Canadians and that's why we want to encourage even more giving?particularly from those who have yet to give. As a part of Economic Action Plan 2013, we've set out to achieve this through our First-Time Donor's Super Credit.

The First-Time Donor's Super Credit is a temporary, one-time credit that provides an additional 25 per cent tax credit?over and above the normal amount?on charitable donations under \$1,000, so long as it is made by someone who has not made a donation since 2007. This means that young Canadians and new Canadians have an opportunity to connect with the causes they believe in or have an opportunity to go out and find a cause to support.

It's my belief that this initiative could spark a lifetime of giving by those who were previously unengaged and it is estimated that charitable donations will increase by \$110 million per year until the Super Credit expires in 2017. This is \$110 million more per year to help make Canada a better place!

Charities across Canada have come out in support of our Government's initiative. In fact, Imagine Canada, an organization representing thousands of registered charities, said that our Government's Super Credit, ?is a real step in the right direction.?

Our Government believes in the important role that charities play in our communities. In fact, the First-time Donor's Super Credit is just one of the many measures we've introduced to support Canadian charities. In years past, our Government put in place several measures which increased the transparency and accountability of charities, allowing the public to have increased trust in their operations and encouraging them to give more.

I encourage everyone who has not donated to charity since 2007 to take advantage of the First-Time Donor's Super Credit. Together we can make Canada the most charitable country in the world.

By David Tilson, MP