

My name is Zoe Keary-Matzner, I'm 13 years old, and I live in Toronto. I believe it is vitally important we fund a just recovery that fights climate change and listens to science.

In 2018, the IPCC (International Panel on Climate Change) report stated that we need to cut our carbon emissions in half by 2030 and reach net zero by 2050 or climate change will be irreversible. That means my future and the future of my friends will be one of horrific fires, floods, droughts, diseases, food shortages, and storms, and we won't be able to stop it. We need to act on climate change NOW before it is too late. All the solutions are there, they just need to be implemented. We have all the solutions, and it would be really sad if we don't cut emissions in half by 2030 and climate change becomes inevitable. We could have stopped it, but we didn't. The longer we wait, the harder it will be to stop climate change. We need to do something now. If Canada will ever choose to put its finances towards building a clean future without mass extinction and horrible weather events, then now is the time. Or Canada could choose to ignore the climate crisis, and continue to build its fossil fuel economy. That choice will impact my life and my friend's lives so much.

It will take a lot of work to shift our economy. It will cost us money. But isn't it worth it? Isn't it worth fighting a little so our children can live in a safe world? Also, the world's top economists say it will cost Canada SO MUCH MORE if we don't act. We'll have to pay billions and billions of dollars cleaning up after storms and fires, and giving people money for food and rebuilding their building their livelihoods. We could either pay a little now or pay a TON later.

We need to help fossil fuel workers shift to jobs in renewable energy, and we need to make sure everyone comes out of this transition at the same level. We need to fund public health care so that everyone has access to good health care after natural disasters. Also we have to fund education so people have the tools to deal with disasters, and so they understand the issue and can help. We also have to listen to Indigenous peoples and let them tell us how to grow forests and take care of the Great Lakes. They know better than anyone seeing as they've been here for thousands of years. We can make our society equitable and fair, and we have a chance right now. The economy has stopped, so we can look at it and fix it, so now's our chance. Please, we can't waste a chance like this one.

Canada could be a leader and fight for it's children's futures, or it could ignore us and go down in history as a country that didn't care enough to do anything when it had the chance. Don't let Canada go down in history this way. My future and my friend's futures depend on it. Please fight for our futures.