

We are facing an unprecedented climate emergency around the world, and time is running out to take action.

This election is Canada's opportunity to elect a government that will rise to the challenge.

The next government must urgently reduce our dependence on fossil fuels, ensure a just transition to jobs in renewable energy for workers and our communities, and address environmental racism.

Devastating impacts of climate change

The last few months have once again shown us the frightening impacts of climate change.

Towns burned as parts of Canada experienced record-breaking heat waves, intense wildfires and a lack of rainfall.

Hundreds died from the heat and thousands more were displaced by the fires that threatened and devastated whole communities.

The severe drought has led to a decline in crop yields and is expected to increase food insecurity.

Climate change is also increasing the transmission of serious diseases like Lyme disease, which has been spreading more rapidly in recent years as ticks thrive in warmer temperatures and expand their geographic reach northward.

These are just some of the devastating effects of climate change. There is no time to waste.

Canada must take action

As part of the global effort to address the crisis, Canada needs to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and make steady progress by hitting clear milestones along the way.

One of the best ways to do this is with a national carbon pricing system that discourages people from using fossil fuels.

We also need programs to reduce emissions from some of Canada's biggest polluters in industries like oil and gas that are responsible for the largest share of Canada's carbon output.

Putting workers first

The transition to a low-carbon economy cannot leave energy workers behind.

As union members, we're calling for strong programs to support workers and communities moving out of fossil fuel industries with skills training, career support and an expanded social safety net.

At the same time, we know that ambitious public investment in transit, sustainable building construction, and renewable energy production will create good jobs for the green economy.

As the largest employer in Canada, the federal government also has to step up to reduce its carbon footprint and set an example for other organizations by supporting public service workers with remote work arrangements, public transit passes, and energy-efficiency equipment in workplaces.

Addressing environmental racism

The climate emergency also continues to have a disproportionate impact on low-income communities – often overrepresented by Indigenous, Black and racialized peoples.

A recent study showed that Indigenous residents in Vancouver, low-income residents in Toronto, and immigrant residents in Montreal are all exposed to higher levels of air pollution.

Indigenous communities also continue bearing the brunt of pollution from the oil and gas industry and climate change.

People of the Aamjiwnaang First Nation near Sarnia – surrounded by oil refineries and petrochemical plants – have experienced higher rates of cancer, reproductive defects and asthma.

In Fort Chipewyan, a predominantly Indigenous community in northern Alberta, higher cancer rates have been linked to oil sands contaminants.

And rapid melting of ice in the arctic is already having profound consequences for Indigenous peoples in the north.

We need to proactively assess the impacts of the climate emergency and transition measures on marginalized communities, and prioritize addressing any negative effects.

Conservatives still don't think climate change is real

Despite deadly heat waves, wildfires and Parliament declaring a national climate emergency more than two years ago – Erin O'Toole's Conservatives still won't acknowledge that 'climate change is real'.

This continues a pattern of denial and contempt for climate research that began under the Harper government, which slashed environmental regulations, muzzled climate scientists, and promoted oil and gas developments.

With predictions of more extreme and dangerous climate change in the coming years, we can't afford to delay action any longer.

We need leaders who will commit to net zero emissions by 2050 while ensuring a just transition and addressing environmental racism.

O'Toole's climate change platform falls well below the mark. Instead of a straightforward carbon pricing plan, the Conservatives are pitching a complicated rewards scheme that promotes rather than discourages fossil fuel consumption.

And incredibly, the platform is completely silent on reducing high methane emissions from the oil and gas industry, even though methane's warming effect is over 80 times greater than that of carbon dioxide.

That simply isn't good enough.

This is our chance to choose a government that will put Canadians first by urgently addressing the climate emergency.

