



PRESS RELEASE

CANADA'S FIRST HOME ENERGY JUSTICE FORUM

April 12, 2023, Vancouver, BC, on Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Territories – At the first-ever Home Energy Justice Forum, over 80 attendees explored the latest research, statistics, and lived experiences on the issue of energy insecurity. This all-day event allowed policymakers to engage directly with impacted communities, subject matter experts, and advocates. Together, the attendees reviewed the policies, actions, and initiatives that need the most attention to ensure that in the near future, all British Columbians will have access to clean, affordable energy and safe, climate-resilient homes.

Access to affordable, clean energy should not be a luxury in Canada. Yet, 272,000 BC households in British Columbia experience energy insecurity. Families are suffering from high rates of asthma, cardiovascular disease, and mould-related illnesses caused by living in cold, poorly-ventilated homes. In many cases, people must choose between paying their heating bills or paying for life's other essentials — and these households are more vulnerable to extreme heat and a changing climate. At the Energy Justice Forum, we envisioned an end to energy insecurity, with a focus on British Columbia, where low-carbon home retrofits, energy affordability, and extreme heat resilience are increasingly seen as critical and holistic policy issues.

Yasmin Abraham, President, Kambo Energy Group: *“Without intentionally considering equity in our approaches to energy cost burdens and energy efficiency, we simply won't be able to reach our climate goals. This forum is a first step towards becoming aware of these inequities and then rolling our sleeves up to change what we do.”*

Rowan Burdge, Executive Director, BC Poverty Reduction Coalition: *“Energy insecurity, affordability, and justice is a vital, pressing issue for many folks across BC, especially those on low incomes. The right to heating and cooling, affordable energy for cooking, lighting, and other fundamental, essential household tasks should be assured. Yet, this is not the case for many in BC. The Home Energy Justice Forum was a critical opportunity to move forward policy, education, and sharing from many stakeholders in this critical area.”*

Dylan Heerema, Senior Policy Advisor, Ecotrust Canada: *“Building a more just and equitable energy system in Canada starts at home. We need to ensure that everyone has the right to a healthy, comfortable, and energy-efficient place to live. Working together to break down silos and increase our ambition will help us to achieve our climate, housing, and resiliency goals – all while making life more affordable for Canadians in need. That's what this Forum is all about.”*

About Ecotrust Canada

Ecotrust Canada is an enterprising charity that works with rural, remote, and Indigenous communities toward building an economy that provides for life. Over the past five years, our Community Energy team has been facilitating projects on the ground, building relationships with communities, and researching best practices in policy and program design. ecotrust.ca

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