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## NATIONAL PHILANTHROPY DAY

**Statement by:**

**The Honourable Claudette Tardif**

**Wednesday, November 18, 2009**

## THE SENATE

Wednesday, November 18, 2009

### NATIONAL PHILANTHROPY DAY

**Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):**

Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to National Philanthropy Day, which was celebrated on November 15. I commend our honourable colleagues, Senators Grafstein and Mercer, as well as Mike Savage, MP for Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, for their initiative and persistence in introducing, reintroducing and supporting — in five different sessions — a bill to recognize throughout Canada, in each and every year, the fifteenth day of November as National Philanthropy Day. Such strong work was obviously the inspiration behind the statement made on October 21, 2009, by the Minister of Canadian Heritage, declaring November 15 as National Philanthropy Day, while this bill continues to languish in committee in the other place.

According to the Association of Fundraising Professionals, “Canada is the first country to officially recognize National Philanthropy Day since its creation in 1986.” National Philanthropy Day “is celebrated around the world as a day to recognize the work of charities and remember the extraordinary achievements that philanthropy — giving, volunteering and social engagement — has made in all aspects of life.”

[*Translation*]

Honourable senators, the word “philanthropy” is Greek in origin and means “love for mankind.” I would like to honour Canadians’ generosity by recognizing the importance of National

Philanthropy Day. According to Imagine Canada, 84 per cent of Canadians donate to charitable organizations and 12.5 million Canadians do volunteer work.

Philanthropy has become even more important during this time of economic crisis. More than half of those responding to a Barclays Wealth survey were demonstrating social responsibility during this difficult economic period. I have no doubt that Canadians appreciate volunteer work, and I would like to thank all volunteers and donors for their contributions that make Canada a better country.

[*English*]

The worldwide importance of giving, volunteering, social engagement and compassion has recently been emphasized by the Charter for Compassion, unveiled on November 12 of this year. The Charter for Compassion is a cooperative effort to restore not only compassionate thinking but, more important, compassionate action to the centre of religious, moral and political life. The charter, crafted by people all over the world and drafted by a multi-faith, multinational council of thinkers and leaders, seeks to change the conversation so that compassion becomes a key word in public and private discourse.

I encourage all Canadians to continue their volunteer work and philanthropic endeavours, and to continue to recognize National Philanthropy Day by contributing some time or resources to positive change.

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