

WE Charity's Response to Ethics Commissioner

Today, the Ethics Commissioner confirmed that the decision to award the contract to WE Charity was subject to extensive scrutiny and that WE Charity was the only organization equipped to deliver the Canada Student Service Grant (CSSG) to support Canadian youth during a global pandemic.

"Politics is not the issue – 100,000 Canadian students losing their summer jobs during a pandemic is the issue," said Craig Kielburger. "After all the efforts to advance partisan agendas, I hope we can focus on Canadian youth who a year later still do not have summer service opportunities and who have lost so much."

Through this procurement process, WE Charity did not determine the value of the contract, or the decision to sole-source. WE Charity did not have any input into the government's procurement process, including the decision whether to recuse.

The job of WE Charity was simple: do what we could to support as many Canadian youth as possible at a time of a national emergency.

It has been nearly one year since politics derailed a national service program for young people. During that time no political party or organization has created a program at a similar scale to help students with employment. As COVID-19 rates continue to be elevated across the country, young people are facing another summer with precarious employment prospects and charities are without crucial support to deliver programs to support the most vulnerable Canadians.

If today's conclusions had been reached a year ago, tens of thousands of students would have volunteered to help charities and had jobs last summer, and an entire generation might be more focused on service and volunteerism. Instead, a global children's charity focused on making the world a better place has been irreparably harmed.