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Suzuki franchise expanding at taxpayers' expense

By KRIS SIMS, Parliamentary Bureau

OTTAWA - The David Suzuki franchise is expanding into public schools at taxpayers' expense.

The geneticist was being beamed into classrooms, Tuesday, using the National Film Board and live video links. Suzuki held court for nearly an hour, speaking to thousands of students about the oilsands, climate change, and the Occupy movement.

"I am very, very excited about the Occupy movement, because it seems to be a continuation of the Arab Spring," Suzuki told the virtually gathered teenagers. "In their Occupy movement, they are beginning to point out the enormous inequities in a democratic society - why is it that corporations have so much influence on affecting government policy?" The television host, author and creator of the David Suzuki Foundation, said corporations and rich people are running the show in Canada.

"Corporations are what are putting money into supporting political candidates," he said. "Rich people pour a huge amount of money into supporting political candidates, and so when they get into office, they then, the politicians, tend to reflect the priorities of the people that are giving them money." The federal government banned corporate and union donations to federal political parties and candidates in 2006.

The scientist went further and said people shouldn't give money to politicians of their choosing either.

"I personally don't think that individuals should give money to politicians.

I think taxpayers should have certain abilities, tax dollars should support all kinds of people who want to run for office," Suzuki said. "When you have people who are incredibly wealthy often not paying anything like the taxes that the middle class or even the poor are paying, there's something unfair about that." The National Film board is a not for profit organization funded by the Federal Government, they are also promoting Suzuki's biographic movie, Force of Nature: The David Suzuki Movie, that depicts the 72-year-old's life before and after discovering his calling to science and activism.

The NFB's mandate, as set forth in the National Film Act of 1950, is "to produce and distribute and to promote the production and distribution of films designed to interpret Canada to Canadians and to other nations."



Dr. David Suzuki (SCOTT WISHART/QMI Agency)