

For immediate release

QCGN Applauds Priorities in Commissioner's Annual Report

Montreal – May 28, 2018 – The Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN) applauds the priorities set forth in the Annual Report of Canada's new Commissioner of Official Languages, Raymond Th  berge.

In his report released this morning, the Commissioner said he plans to keep a close watch on how the government coordinates and implements initiatives described in its Action Plan for Official Languages 2018–2023: Investing in Our Future and work to ensure that official languages and linguistic duality continue to be a fundamentally Canadian value and a national priority.

Commissioner Th  berge makes two recommendations. One concerns the implementation of recommendations contained in the Clerk of the Privy Council's report on language of work entitled *The next level: Normalizing a culture of inclusive linguistic duality in the Federal Public Service workplace*. Th  berge is critical of the report which suggests issues regarding language-of-work rights are limited to French-speaking employees. The Commissioner notes that while language-of-work issues tend to affect more French-speaking employees, they also affect English-speaking employees who work in designated bilingual regions in Quebec.

Th  berge's second recommendation calls on the Minister of Canadian Heritage and the President of the Treasury Board to review the tools they use to evaluate federal institutions in terms of official languages.

Th  berge notes considerable progress has been made on OCOL's review on the modernization of the Official Languages Act which turns 50 in 2019. QCGN and its members, who have participated widely in the review of the Act, agree with the Commissioner that the Act needs to be updated to reflect changes in Canadian society.

Appearing before the Senate in late May, the QCGN noted that the Act is the only language rights legislation that protects the interests of English-speaking Quebecers as a community. It sets out quasi-constitutional rights for English-speaking Quebecers, including the right to access federal services in English, the representation of English-speakers in the federal public service, and those workers' right to work in English. Read our [press release](#).

The 2017-2018 annual report of the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages marks the transition Interim Commissioner of Official Languages Ghislaine Saikaley's tenure and his arrival in January.

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