



QUEBEC FEDERATION OF HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS INC.
LA FÉDÉRATION QUÉBÉCOISE DES ASSOCIATIONS FOYERS-ÉCOLES INC.

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October 27, 2014

To whom it may concern,

Re: under Bill 10, *An Act to modify the organization and governance of the health and social services network, in particular by abolishing the regional agencies*

The Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations, Inc. (QFHSA) has been monitoring the changes the Commission of Health and Social Services of the National Assembly of Quebec is proposing regarding the re-organization of the Health and Services Network in Quebec under Bill 10, *An Act to modify the organization and governance of the health and social services network, in particular by abolishing the regional agencies*. We have serious concerns on how this could affect our parent members.

Anglophone children with special needs already face a challenge in receiving Health Services on the Island of Montreal and surrounding regions and are even more hard-pressed to receive services in more rural regions, due to their distance from service centres. Currently we have confidence in the volunteer boards of our health and social service institutions, as they are aware of the needs within their community and are able to respond to them. We have serious concerns, however, should the current institutions be amalgamated and the resultant regional boards be appointed by the Ministry, rather than elected by the communities in which they serve.

In 2013, the QFHSA wrote a brief to express its concerns, on behalf of its members, regarding Bill 14 *An act to amend the Charter of the French language, the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms and other legislative provisions*. One of the concerns we raised to the Committee on Culture and Education at that time was the proposed change to the wording in the Charter of the French Language, that would no longer recognize **ethnic minorities**, but to refer to them instead, as **cultural communities**. We understood, only too well, that **ethnic minorities** were protected under the current Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, whereas **cultural communities** were not. We see disturbing similarities in Bill 10 in the Commission's interest to no longer refer to "**recognized and designated institutions**" in the Charter of the French Language but instead, to refer to them as "**designated facilities**". Facilities have no guaranteed

protection under the Charter, whereas institutions do have that protection. Facilities deliver programs but institutions play key leadership roles in the community. Advisory Committees, as proposed in article 131 of Bill 10, would not, in our opinion, adequately replace the capacities of the current volunteer boards to meet the needs of the English-speaking communities. Designated facilities have no guarantee of being able to maintain bilingual status where recognized and designated institutions currently do, a right that is paramount to our communities.

The Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations, Inc. is an independent, incorporated, not for profit volunteer organization dedicated to enhancing the education and general well-being of children and youth. It promotes the involvement of parents, students, educators and the community at large in the advancement of learning and acts as a voice for parents.

Home and School, as an institution, benefits from the grass roots support of its parent members and its success depends solely on the volunteer service of community individuals on its governance structures. The whole tone of Home and School would change if the leadership positions were appointed by the government rather than by the school communities that they serve. We remain doubtful that the appointed directors on Regional Integrated Health and Social Service Centres (RIHSSC) would be able to inspire the same grassroots community participation in designated facilities that they have traditionally demonstrated for their beloved English institutions.

We strongly urge the government to continue to support community participation in the governance of the Quebec health and social services networks.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations,

Sincerely,



Lawrence DePoe,
President QFHSA

