

For immediate release

QCGN Expresses Serious Misgivings About Vague Government Consultation Plan

Montreal – July 26, 2019 – The Quebec Community Groups Network is pleased the Coalition Avenir Québec government is planning to reach out to Quebec’s English-speaking community and looks forward to sitting down with the Premier’s parliamentary assistant for relations with English-speaking Quebecers to discuss the most appropriate process to address our community’s concerns.

At a meeting with community health care groups in the Magdalen Islands this week, Premier François Legault’s representative for the English-speaking community, Christopher Skeete, announced a consultation tour this fall to develop an action plan focusing on the needs of the English-speaking community. In an earlier media interview, Skeete said he had put the QCGN front and centre in helping him plan the consultation.

The announcement of the consultation tour took Chambers by surprise; the concept had only been mentioned in passing during an informal meeting with Skeete. The QCGN and other provincial advocacy groups have not been consulted and have not, as yet, been formally invited to participate either in the planning process or the consultation.

“We are pleased that the government is reaching out to our community, and we are certainly willing to help,” said QCGN President Geoffrey Chambers: “The QCGN has a lot of expertise organizing these types of consultations and would be happy to help design an inclusive process that will meet the needs of English-speaking Quebecers and achieve buy-in from our community.”

“For starters, we need a process to discuss concerns identified by our community – not those identified by the Coalition Avenir Québec government. Any other approach is seriously flawed,” Chambers said. “They’ve got it the wrong way around. The government should not be telling our community what it should care about.”

“The result needs to be a community plan for government action and not a government action plan for our community,” said Chambers. “This is why the consultation process needs to be community designed and driven.”

“We are eager to hear more about this,” Chambers said. However, he cautioned, “the QCGN will be critical of any public relations tour that will likely coincide with the tabling of legislation to abolish our community’s school boards.”

The Quebec Community Groups Network (www.qcgn.ca) is a not-for-profit organization bringing together 60 English-language community organizations across Quebec. Its mission is to identify, explore and address strategic issues affecting the development and vitality of English-speaking Quebec and to encourage dialogue and collaboration.

For further information:

Rita Legault, Director of Communications | rita.legault@qcgn.ca

Telephone: 514-868-9044, ext. 223, cellular: 514-912-6555