

The Ontario Government Should Fully Respect the Province's French-Speaking Minority: AQ

Montreal, Quebec, July 17, 2000--Alliance Quebec wrote to Ontario Premier Mike Harris today asking him to reconsider Ontario government policy as it relates to the Montfort Hospital. "The Montfort Hospital is an important symbol to Francophones in Eastern Ontario," stated Alliance Quebec President, Anthony Housefather. "We support the French-speaking community in their desire to retain the hospital as is."

Housefather stated that Alliance Quebec disagreed with the Ontario government's perception of its constitutional responsibilities to its linguistic minority community as expressed in their appeal of the Montfort decision. "We believe very strongly that linguistic duality and promotion of minority rights is one of the cornerstones of Canadian federalism. All governments within Canada have a duty to uphold these principles and the Supreme Court of Canada clearly agreed in its recent judgement in the Quebec secession reference."

Alliance Quebec stated clearly that it found the Ontario government comments that young Francophones were happy to be served in English offensive. "Most people of all ages want to be served in the language in which they are most comfortable", stated Housefather, "particularly when it comes to health care. The government should be committed to serving all French-speaking Ontarians, across the province, with health care services in French."

Alliance Quebec will be writing to the SOS Montfort group expressing its support.