

## QCGN Board Responds to Public Withdrawal of Board Members

**MONTREAL, November 5, 2019** – The Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN) profoundly regrets the very public departures of a half dozen board members.

“This is not surprising. We advised them last week they were no longer directors of the QCGN board,” said QCGN President Geoffrey Chambers. He noted that members of the dissident group are affiliated with five of the groups which withdrew their memberships last week.

“I find it most regrettable that these former board members feel the need to engage in this very public squabble while our community faces significant challenges,” added QCGN Vice-President Gerald Cutting, who is also President of Townshippers’ Association. “If you are committed to fighting for the vitality of our community, we need all hands on deck at this critical juncture.”

Chambers and Cutting pointed to yesterday’s announcement by Quebec Language Minister Simon Jolin-Barrette of cuts to government services in English. In addition, they noted, hearings on Bill 40 to abolish our English school boards are under way in Quebec City this week.

“As these former board members invest their time and efforts in this dispute, important work lies ahead to ensure access to health and social services for English-speaking Quebecers in our language,” said Eric Maldoff, who heads the QCGN’s Health and Social Service Committee: “To achieve the best possible result, our community needs to be on the same page and not disparaging each other.”

“This revolt is ill-conceived and does no good for our larger English-speaking community – particularly vulnerable communities like the Black community in Montreal who cannot fight these battles on their own,” commented Board member Clarence Bayne, who is President of the Black Community Resource Centre.

“The QCGN has been an active and vital advocate for the fundamental rights of our communities,” added QCGN Treasurer Marlene Jennings. “I am saddened that some organizations have decided to sever their relationship with QCGN, but I am confident that QCGN and the English-speaking minority community will weather this storm.”

Jennings, who joined the board in September, said the leadership of QCGN has “demonstrated enormous dedication to ensuring English-speaking minority communities across Quebec –

whether they be in the regions, in rural areas, in urban centres – have everything they need to ensure their ongoing vitality.”

“This is a time we need to be unified to defend the type of inclusive Quebec to which we aspire,” she added. “Members of the Network are discouraged by this public display of animosity. We have to put a lid on this and get on with the important work of advocating for the rights of our community.”

The Quebec Community Groups Network ([www.qcgn.ca](http://www.qcgn.ca)) is a not-for-profit organization bringing together English-language community organizations across Quebec. As a centre of evidence-based expertise and collective action it identifies, explores and addresses strategic issues affecting the development and vitality of the English-speaking community of Quebec and encourages dialogue and collaboration among its member organizations, individuals, community groups, institutions and leaders.