

For immediate release

English-speaking Quebecers like to see themselves reflected on CBC

Montreal – November 6, 2014 – Quebec’s English-speaking communities need to see themselves reflected on the airwaves, the Quebec Community Groups Network told the Transport and Communications Committee, which is in Montreal conducting a study on the challenges faced by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

In preparation for its presentation, the QCGN consulted a cross-section of members from across Quebec. “We were not surprised by the level of attachment we heard to the CBC in general, and CBC radio in particular,” said QCGN Board Secretary Walter Duszara. “CBC Radio is the media glue that binds us; a proactive and welcome presence, whose importance – especially to isolated communities and vulnerable populations like seniors - cannot be overstated.”

Duszara said the community did not find itself reflected in CBC’s non-news programming, however high praise was recorded for CBC news and current affairs programming, which was described as “the most credible source of information” and the medium that “connects us to the rest of Canada”.

“We are a unique community, not an extension of the English majority in the rest of Canada, or the Francophone majority in Quebec,” noted Duszara. “CBC - and in particular CBC Radio and CBC News – is a real and physical presence in our communities. This is where parents find out about school closings, church socials, arts events; the daily details that bind communities together. CBC Quebec can and wants to do more, and we believe CBC has an obligation under their conditions of license to provide the necessary resources. “

“English-speaking Quebec, despite its heterogeneous nature is a unique culture within Canada, and possesses an identity different from the majority society in which we live,” Duszara explained. “We are not - nor do we wish to be - unassociated or unattached from Quebec; we are integrationists by nature. But we are particular and special, and have always been recognized as

such, from Canada's beginnings 150 years ago," said Duszara. "That is why CBC's conditions of license require the Corporation to provide local programming that reflects our community, and it is why we applaud the Federal Court's decision of 9 September that confirms CBC's duty to our community under Part VII of the Official Languages Act."

"English-speaking Quebec is a unique official languages community whose culture the CBC is obligated to reflect in its programming," commented Duszara. "We would like to see more resources provided to CBC Quebec that will permit this important community resource to continue and expand the central role it plays in our daily lives."

The Quebec Community Groups Network (www.qcgn.ca) is a not-for-profit organization bringing together 41 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.

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