

**For immediate release**

## **QCGN Welcomes Creation of new Secretariat in Premier's Office**

**Montreal – June 15, 2017** - Four years ago, the Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN) passed a resolution requesting formal representation within the government of Quebec to give voice to the policy-development interests of the English-speaking community. Today, Quebec Premier Philippe Couillard shared plans to establish a secretariat within the Conseil Executif - the highest level of government in Quebec.

"This offers our community a door on which to knock to express and explain the potential impact of government policy proposals on our community before they become set in stone," said QCGN President Jim Shea, who heard the news as he was attending the 22<sup>nd</sup> annual meeting of the QCGN in Montreal.

"We are both grateful and delighted with the Premier's decision and we offer our full support and collaboration for the implementation of an effective structure to respond to our community's needs," Shea said.

"This is an important first step towards a more inclusive Quebec. Such a structure could have also prevented the community backlash to education reforms that would have trampled the constitutional rights of English-speaking Quebecers.

In addition, the approach the Premier has adopted is likely to have several positive effects, added QCGN Vice-president Geoffrey Chambers. "In particular, we believe this could help unblock the longstanding bottleneck in the hiring and advancement of English-speaking Quebecers in the provincial civil-service. It is a sad and continuing fact that English-speaking Quebecers remain severely under-represented throughout our civil service. We hope this will help change that."

The Quebec Community Groups Network ([www.qcgn.ca](http://www.qcgn.ca)) is a not-for-profit organization bringing together 53 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.

**For further information:**

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