

QCGN Statement on Government of Canada's Proposed Changes to the Official Languages Act

MONTREAL, June 15, 2021 – The Quebec Community Groups Network recognizes the federal bill tabled this morning in the House of Commons to amend the Official Languages Act for what it is – a clear attack on the equality of Canada's official languages.

Traditionally, the Official Languages Act has given life to constitutional official language rights. These rights define much of the relationship between Canadians and our federal government. The Act has been grounded on the principle that English and French are equal in law.

However, *Bill C-32 - An Act to amend the Official Languages Act and to make related and consequential amendments to other Acts* - territorializes language rights and extends language rights into the private sphere only for Francophones. Such a significant shift will have profound effects for years to come on the official language rights of English-speaking Quebecers.

The QCGN is an ardent advocate of the need to protect and promote French in Canada, and we have strongly defended French linguistic minority communities in the courts, and the public square.

We acknowledge that C-32 includes some measures aimed at supporting the vitality of the English-speaking community of Quebec.

The QCGN will take the necessary time to fully analyse Bill C-32. Amending a quasi-constitutional Act which is a fundamental pillar of the nation is a delicate undertaking, and we will give this bill the careful attention it deserves.

The Quebec Community Groups Network (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.

For further information:

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