



For immediate release

APPELE-Québec Disappointed with Government’s Hasty Decision to Reject Court Reference

Montreal, February 4, 2020 – APPELE-Québec is disappointed with the Government of Quebec’s hasty decision to reject the proposal for a court reference to decide whether Bill 40 is constitutionally sound.

APPELE-Québec had asked that the Quebec government to submit a reference to the Court of Appeal in relation to Bill 40; An Act to amend mainly the Education Act with regard to school organization and governance. APPELE-Québec maintains that it is reasonable and responsible to seek the Court’s guidance before Bill 40 is adopted or at least before it is implemented.

Under the Court of Appeal Reference Act, only the government can submit such a reference.

APPELE-Québec emphasizes that other provinces have often referred issues related to French-language education to their courts of appeal.

In rejecting this approach Education Minister Jean-François Roberge is seemingly acknowledging that Bill 40 does not respect Quebec’s English-speaking community’s constitutional right to “manage and control” its school system. If that is not the case, why refuse to submit a reference, an approach which has been frequently adopted by other jurisdictions? We urge the government to reconsider its decision.

Securing guidance from the courts before moving forward is prudent and justified and would ensure a costly and prolonged court battle is avoided.

About APPELE-Québec:

APPELE-Québec – the Alliance for the Promotion of Public English-language Education in Québec – is a broadly-based, Quebec-wide community coalition to promote the continued existence of English school boards, to ensure they are governed by commissioners who are democratically elected by the English-speaking community at large. Our Alliance is comprised of 16 supporting organizations and nine observer groups. For more information about APPELE-Québec, go to www.appelequebec.org.

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