

For immediate release

Bell Media Must Restore Local Sports at CTV Montreal: QCGN

Montreal – June 21, 2017 – The Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN) today called on broadcasting giant Bell Media to reverse its decision to kill local sportscasts on CTV Montreal. Simultaneously, the federally regulated broadcaster on Tuesday eliminated regional and local sportscasting across the country.

“This is simply about respect and fair play,” said QCGN President James Shea. “This same company eliminated CJAD’s National Assembly news bureau in late 2015. Clearly, the Bell empire has taken cost-cutting too far.”

“Local, professional and amateur sport knits our communities together,” QCGN Vice-president Geoffrey Chambers said. “Enough is enough. This constant erosion is being done to all of our local media. This hemorrhage has to stop.”

Federal Heritage Minister Mélanie Joly and Hedy Fry, Chair of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage, have been studying our shrinking media for more than a year. “They are going to have to come up with some effective solutions soon,” Chambers said. “And the Conseil de la radiodiffusion et des télécommunications canadiennes (CRTC) has to step in now to ensure that Bell Media respects both the letter and the spirit of its broadcasting licence conditions.”

“If Bell Media is allowed to devalue local sports into such a one-size-fits-all, cookie-cutter national operation, then it is clear locally rooted, locally produced TV news is next on the chopping block.”

“This process has already gone too far. We are forced to remind Bell Media that its access to our public airwaves is not a right, but a privilege. Acting as it has, Bell Media has betrayed its responsibility to treat its local audience with respect.”

The Quebec Community Groups Network (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.

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