

Channeling Quebec's True

ENERGY

THEMATIC DOCUMENT

31st Members' Convention
of Quebec Liberal Party



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CHANNELLING
QUEBEC'S TRUE
ENERGY

INTRODUCTION

The world is being redrawn under our very eyes.

The financial crisis of 2008, which led to the deepest worldwide recession since the '30s, has now morphed into a debt crisis in Europe, the United States and Japan, and hints at a long period of slow economic growth in those countries. In decades to come, we cannot expect developed western economies to be the engines of global growth.

On the other hand, other countries are undergoing a burst of accelerated growth, fed by population increase, added production capacity, the widespread use of new technologies and the boost in domestic demand that comes with rapidly improving living standards. Those emergent economies, Brazil, Russia, India and China prominent among them, will be the ones propelling the world economy forward in years to come.

Elsewhere, notably in the Middle East and Africa, the winds of revolt are blowing, fed by calls for freedom. Those winds are shattering dictatorial regimes, bestowing hopes of modernity and democracy.

In the meantime, our lives are transformed by technology that ceaselessly shrinks space and time and heralds major progress in all walks of life, from the way we move around, to the way we produce, consume or seek medical treatment. A new environmental consciousness is transforming our vision of economic development. No longer can prosperity be achieved on the back of our natural heritage, which we want to leave intact for future generations.

It is therefore a new world in which Quebec will have to find its place.

It is with that in mind that the members of the QLP have been asked to envision the kind of Quebec we want to build, and to determine the best means to get there. Over the last few months, more than 2500 members have taken part in the events initiated by four taskforces set up by the Party's Policy Commission.

Out of this vast consultation exercise, a vision of what Quebec is now and could be tomorrow is emerging: that of a nation seeking nothing less than excellence in all respects, so as to prevail on the challenges brought by this new world around us.

A Quebec that seeks excellence in economic performance, thanks to an ambitious and visionary project, the North Plan; a Quebec that stands out in education and healthcare; a Quebec generating the wealth that sustains and builds a compassionate and inclusive society.

To realize this vision for Quebec's future, we will need to overcome major challenges over the next 10 years.

The first of those challenges is international competition. Emerging economies already represent a new and ferocious form of competition, while our traditional export markets in the United States and Western Europe will no longer provide the same boost to our growth prospects.

We will therefore have to break into new markets, clear up new territory. We need to give new impetus to entrepreneurial ventures and develop a business climate where corporate leaders can achieve the level of productivity they need to prevail amongst the world's best performers.

The second major challenge is a demographic one. The people of Quebec are getting older. That is not a tragedy, but the consequence of success: people are leading longer and better lives. But it calls upon us to rethink working conditions, social services and savings promotion policies to meet the needs of people who will live and work longer.

The demographic challenge also entails preventing labour shortages. If we simply stand by, in 30 years time, there will only one working age person in Quebec left to provide the taxes to finance the services required by four retirees. We need to continue adapting our immigration policies to attract and retain the talents we will need to keep our economy vibrant.

Those two challenges may find part of their answer in a third: the technology challenge. We need to find the best ways to break into new markets and achieve better value for money in all we do in order to meet the demographic challenge. The issue cuts across all aspects of government, from the way we will learn, access healthcare, support economic growth or interact with the state in this Web 2.0 era.

More than ever, Quebec is in a position of strength to make its mark in the world. We have an abundance of talent and creativity, the same for natural resources and renewable energy.

Above all, we have the willingness to succeed.

Inspired by the rich history of the QLP and our deeply-held values, we have the determination to build an even better society. QLP members have always found a way to meet the challenges of their era and succeed. This generation too, is up to the new challenges facing us, and we know they will proceed with enthusiasm and confidence, all in the aim of building a society the rest of the world will envy.

This document is divided into four main sections.

In the first chapter devoted to the economy, we focus on the determination we share to conquer new markets and be among those nations that know how to thrive in this new world.

In the second chapter, devoted to our children, our quality of life and sustainable development, we propose testing our children every year to keep tabs on how well they learn; new means to develop the daycare network; breaking our dependence on oil; and give unprecedented support to the worldwide presence of Quebec artists.

In the third chapter, devoted to healthcare, we establish the right conditions to complete the turnaround in healthcare initiated by the Government of Quebec. We seek to change the culture in the healthcare network, through public performance assessments that will bolster competition and enable the emergence of new ideas.

In the fourth chapter, we propose to leverage the influence of Quebec's diaspora to improve our reputation abroad, and we outline our desire to play an active role in the evolution of the Canadian federation and the protection of Quebec's influence in federal institutions.

This thematic policy document belongs to QLP members. In coming months, out of this document, the QLP government will craft an election manifesto to be submitted to Quebec people at the next ballot. Quebecers will then be asked to renew their confidence in a Party, a government and a leader that have succeeded in channelling Quebec's true energy to propel our society forward along the path of sustainable development and shared prosperity, all while around us the worst economic crisis in generations was engulfing the world.

I

GENERATING THE WEALTH
THAT QUEBECERS SHARE

1- Opening new wealth creation horizons

Despite a difficult economic climate following the 2008 financial crisis, which led to the most important global recession since the 1930's, Quebec has displayed an enviable economic track record over the last few years.

Quebec has come out stronger than most of its partners from the worldwide crisis. Quebec has recovered all the jobs lost during the recession period and has even managed to create new ones. Quebec will be among the first to return to balanced budget, as soon as 2013-2014, four years before Ontario.

Today, Quebec is displaying unemployment rates lower than both Ontario and the United States, a first in over thirty years. In fact, Quebec has seen the biggest lowering of its unemployment rate since 2003, the rate going from 9.2% to 7.3%.

This enviable performance is not the result of sheer blind luck. It is the result of a series of measures taken since 2003, all meant to boost Quebec's economic potential.

These measures include:

- The Employment Pact, with investments of over 1.5 billion dollars allowing tens of thousands of Quebecers to benefit from training and employment access programs;
- The reduction of the tax burden on families and the reintroduction of family allowances, which sustained growth in Quebecers' disposable income;
- The revival of large hydroelectric projects, propelling Quebec to the rank of global leader in renewable energies;
- The launching of the Quebec Plan for Infrastructures, which more than doubled annual investments in the rebuilding and maintenance of our roads, schools and hospitals;
- The abolition of the capital tax and the introduction of specific measures meant to stimulate entrepreneurial investment. Within Canada, Quebec is the province in which new investments are the least taxed.

Many special measures meant to sustain and support economic activity throughout the recession also proved judicious.

These measures include:

- The mobilisation of the SGF and Investment Quebec in order to support our businesses during the credit crunch;
- The home renovation program, which contributed to maintaining domestic demand;

Today, Quebec finds itself in an excellent position to pursue its economic development and assert itself in the new global economic space shaping up before our very eyes. But to do so, we will have to collectively take on some important challenges.

A world reshaped

The consequences of the last global financial crisis are many, fundamental and long lasting. The United States, Europe and Japan will all have to respond to their public debt crisis with important structural adjustments. This will, in turn, impact the global economy. This means that over the next few decades, the West will no longer be the engine of the world economy as they have since the period follow the Second World War. This task will then fall upon emerging economies, the likes of Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRIC).

This new global economic context implies many things for Quebec, including:

- Quebec will have to diversify its export destinations in order to minimize its commercial reliance on the United States and Europe, who currently take up more than 80% of our export market, and aim for growing markets;
- Quebec will have to face brutal competition on the part of BRIC countries and other emerging economies in order to secure its share of markets worldwide;
- Emerging economy's thirst for natural resources will open up new doors for Quebec and Canada, but will change dynamics in such a way that we will have to adjust to the reality of a consistently strong Canadian dollar;
- Healthy public finances are central to the reduction of international shocks and pressures. Quebec must hold the course on returning to balanced budgets in short order, and then proceed to ease the public debt burden.

Quebec's fundamental repositioning: Sustainable Development, new alliances, North Plan

The QLP has brought forth a visionary action plan in order to position Quebec in this new world.

It has set itself at the forefront of the battle against climatic change with global action that has defined Quebec as a North American leader in greenhouse gas emissions reduction, inspiring innovation and breathing new life into Quebec's businesses.

It has taken on an important leadership role in the development of new markets, having notably triggered negotiations between Canada and the European Union in order to draft a new economic partnership between the two.

It has launched the North Plan, a multi-faceted project. In an unprecedented alliance between Quebec's North and South, First Nations, Inuit and Quebecers, the North Plan enables Quebec to seize opportunities presented by the growth in demand for natural resources; it enables the continuing development of clean, renewable energies through which Quebec becomes a North American solution to the struggle against greenhouse gas emissions; it creates a coordinated development dynamic to improve the quality of life for Quebec's northern populations; it brings to light new activity sectors such as ecotourism; it ensures the preservation of our natural heritage for generations to come and finally, creates an environment ripe for responsible international investments that in turn, become sources of wealth for the whole of Quebec.

The North Plan represents economic activity that will generate 14 billion dollar to be reinvested in the province's health services, education, family services and as a tool in our battle against poverty, much to the benefit of the whole of Quebec. It's a 162 billion dollar contribution to Quebec's GDP over a 25 year span. It's a project with repercussions on every region of the province, with jobs being created and contracts being drawn up for suppliers.

First and foremost, it's the groundwork for a vaster Quebec, more aware of its resources, of its strengths, of its wealth and more conscientious and responsible in their maintenance and preservation.

Taking the right steps

Quebec is currently in a position of strength in its quest to elevate itself to the highest ranks of the world's most prosperous nations, but it will have to take action in order to capitalize on its assets and rise to the challenges and opportunities ahead. Above all, Quebec must aim for excellence in order to hold its own and measure up to the best.

It is in this context that QLP members have identified key economic priorities.

1.1 Broadening our horizons

The government of Quebec's will is to broaden its horizons in order to allow Quebec talent and business to shine and thrive in every corner of the globe.

Actions taken by the QLP government over the last few years have aimed at creating new spaces by reinforcing relations with France, the European Union, emerging economies, its Canadian neighbours and the United States.

Amongst agreements struck by the government we find:

- A France-Quebec agreement on the recognition of professional credentials and labour mobility;
- A Quebec-Ontario trade and cooperation agreement;
- Agreements with New-Brunswick relating to public markets and labour mobility;
- A long term agreement with the State of Vermont on the sale of hydroelectric energy.

These agreements improve upon the North-American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which grants us privileged access to the North-American continent.

Moreover, the government of Quebec was the instigator of negotiations that will lead to the striking of a new global economic and trade accord between Canada and the European Union.

We must keep working in this direction and move ahead still. We believe a QLP government must seek to multiply agreements and accords of economic, scientific and technical cooperation both inside and out the Canadian federation's borders.

We believe a QLP government must notably seek to increase trade relations with Latin America and Asia, with particular emphasis on the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India and China).

PROPOSITION 1

Go beyond our borders and strike agreements with our partners the world over, and:

- 1.1 Negotiate multiple economic, technical and scientific cooperation agreements in areas of Quebec jurisdiction;***
 - 1.2 Lead efforts to conclude a specific economic partnership agreement between Canada and China;***
 - 1.3 Maintain efforts to conclude negotiations towards a new economic partnership between Canada and the European Union;***
 - 1.4 Cooperate with the federal government and the members of the Council of the Federation so as to promote the conclusion of trade agreements with Latin American countries, especially Brazil;***
 - 1.5 Intensify economic cooperation with New England states, with a view to increase the fluidity of commerce;***
 - 1.6 Conduct a greater number of trade missions in those countries and regions;***
-

In order to penetrate new markets, it is also essential to promote Quebec's products and to accompany and support our exporters in their efforts, especially in the case of small to medium enterprises.

Many organizations and ministries are mandated to promote Quebec's products abroad. This applies, notably, to the Ministry of International Relations (MRI) through the network of Quebec Abroad delegations, and of the Ministry of Economic Development, Innovation and Exportation (MDEIE), by means of the Director General of International Economic Trade.

Moreover, Quebec and Canada's government jointly support Regional Organizations for the Promotion of Exports (ORPEX). These organizations are regrouped at the heart of the Network of Commissions for Quebec Exports (RECOMEX), which represents 16 organizations promoting exports throughout Quebec. The RECOMEX is aimed at Small to Medium Enterprises throughout Quebec and is the result of the members' desire to share their expertise and international networks. Financed by the Canadian and Quebec government, some organizations also receive financial support from Local Development Centers (CLD) and from Regional Conferences of Elected Officials (CRÉ).

Some public corporations, such as Investment Quebec, with the mandate of canvassing foreign investment, and Hydro-Quebec, have an in-depth understanding and expertise in foreign markets. Montreal International has also developed an important network of contacts worldwide.

We believe the Quebec government should put its export forces together in order to develop an emerging market penetration strategy meant to increase and diversify Quebec's international exports.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 2

Hold a national exportation forum so as to elaborate a new market penetration strategy. This forum will also be tasked with identifying key obstacles to export success and offering solutions:

- 2.1 This forum will include the government of Quebec, the federal government, public corporations, members of the ORPEX network, export financing organizations, as well as experts and business leaders in international trade from the public and private sectors;***
 - 2.2 This forum would also seek to develop various tools to facilitate access to valuable information, such as a centralized portal for the various aid programs targeted at exporters;***
 - 2.3 It would also be tasked with developing a market strategy for Quebec products, including the development of a common brand;***
-

A business looking to cater to new markets can stumble onto many obstacles along the way. Linguistic barriers, technical and environmental legislation and distinct business cultures can all prove to be deterrent to exports.

For a small to medium enterprise, the information gathering can prove tedious and discouraging for many. More often than not, SMBs do not dispose of the tools or expertise to engage in an export venture. The business would benefit greatly from easily accessed and centralised information resources.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 3

Elaborate, in collaboration with the federal government and other public agencies, a centralized research database on business intelligence for export markets, easily accessible to small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs);

1.2 Exploiting our natural and energy resources in a sustainable development perspective

The dynamic growth of emerging economies has led to strong global demand for natural resources.

During the 2010 Montreal World Energy Congress, it was established that the growth in demand for energy was expected to accelerate. That same growth in demand will add up to the equivalent of Japan's annual energy consumption; a rise expected to hold steady until 2030.

Demand for metals and minerals should also keep growing at a high pace. In aluminum markets, for example, global industry will have to build installations the size of those housed in Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean every nine months to keep up with demand.

This strong demand results in large parts from the rise in living standards in emerging countries. For instance, in western countries, people typically make use of 20 kilos of aluminium a year for every person. On the other hand, average per capita consumption is 10 kilograms a year in China, 5 in Brazil and one kilogram a year in India.

In other words, the richer a country gets, the more energy and mineral resources it will consume. So we can expect global demand for natural resources to keep growing, and world prices to stay high.

Quebec has natural resources aplenty.

Quebec is the fourth largest producer of hydro power in the world. The Development potential is just as large as the capacity already installed.

Quebec is the world's third largest aluminium producer.

Quebec is a mining superpower, and stands among the world's ten largest producers. Yet, only 40% of Quebec's mining potential has been properly canvassed.

Nearly all metals can be found in exploitable quantities in Quebec : nickel, zinc, cobalt and iron ore, as well as precious metals and gemstones such as gold, platinum and diamonds. One can also find exotic but valuable minerals such as lithium, vanadium and rare earths.

Quebec is in a great position to take advantage of strong global demand and firm prices. But our mining and energy potential must be realized.

The North Plan is all leveraging that potential, while protecting the environment and improving living standards across Quebec, but especially in Northern Communities.

The North Plan was developed in partnership. It is the outcome of consultations among elected officials in the government of Quebec and the regions, as well as among Inuit and First Nation communities, all of whom along with key actors, took a hand in dreaming and planning the North of tomorrow.

The North Plan will be deployed over 25 years. It features planned investments of over 80 billion dollars over this period, enough to create 20,000 jobs a year on average, for 25 years. It's huge!

Economic repercussions will be huge as well across the Quebec territory. For instance, the mining sector currently accounts for 50,000 direct jobs in all regions of Quebec : 15,000 jobs actually exploring and digging, but 35,000 in foundries, research institutions and countless suppliers.

The impacts will be felt on the wages paid, which stand at \$70,000 a year for every job on average in the mining industry, as well as in all the taxes paid, royalties levied, and purchases made with local suppliers. The government has taken action to make sure the implementation of the North Plan leads to sustained benefit for Quebecers. It has for instance:

- Raised the level of royalties on mining companies, to the extent that the overall tax burden on mining companies in Quebec is now 28% higher than the Canadian average;
- Provided Investment Quebec with seed funds totalling \$500 million to invest in upcoming mining ventures;
- Planned for direct contributions of the mining industry to the development of Northern infrastructure.

The agreement reached between Investment Quebec and the Stornoway Diamond Corporation is an eloquent illustration of the economic impact of such a project. The company plans to exploit a major diamond-bearing deposit 350 kilometres north of Chibougamau. Investments of 400 million dollars will be made, creating 300 permanent jobs. Investment Quebec has acquired 37% of Stornoway stock, giving it access to a similar proportion of benefits. Investment Quebec will also receive royalties equivalent to 2% of the value of the diamonds extracted.

For all future projects, we believe we can go further along the path of maximizing the economic benefits for Quebecers.

PROPOSITION 4

Exploit our natural resources to the benefit of all Quebecers, and:

- 4.1** *Seek ways to increase Quebecers' financial involvement in mining investment projects, similar to Investment Quebec stock purchases; more precisely, the government should explore ways to establish a tax-advantaged fund encouraging Quebecers to invest directly in the sustainable development of the North;*
 - 4.2** *Develop a network of suppliers and equipment-makers to mining firms. Developing such an upstream network would lead to the emergence of a cluster of Quebec SMBs capable of exporting their know-how far and wide;*
 - 4.3** *Support the development of downstream transformation businesses in the mining sector, notably in the case of iron, diamonds and rare earths;*
 - 4.4** *Support technology transfer on behalf of Quebec businesses, with the help of university research organizations;*
-

Hydro power as a source of social and economic development

The birth of the windpower industry, and the rebirth of the hydro industry, under the Charest government is well on its way to making Quebec a world renewable energy superpower. It is a form of economic development that helps Quebec reduce its greenhouse gas emissions, as well as creating jobs and wealth in every region.

With the North Plan, the government is moving ahead with the development of clean and renewable energy generation, adding 3,500 MW, 3,000 MW of hydro power, 300 MW of windpower and 200 MW coming from other sources.

We believe the government should consider realizing further development goals from hydro power development, especially for communities on the North Plan territory.

Ironically, while the lion's share of Quebec's installed hydro power generation capacity is located on the North Plan territory, the communities dotted through the territory often do not have access to it.

Indeed, some 7,000 electricity consumers purchase power generated by diesel engines, which leaves a dirty mark of the region's environmental record. Various initiatives are currently underway to better protect the environment while reducing electricity costs. For example, Hydro-Québec is working on pilot projects testing diesel-windpower hybrid systems. Should those solutions deliver on their promise, it could lead to a substantial reduction in fuel consumption in 14 villages in Nunavik, with hopes of a 42% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

Moreover, some native and local communities place great hopes in the potential of small hydro projects (50 MW or less) to stimulate local economic and social development. We believe those communities ought to be allowed to move ahead and realize those projects, insofar as those projects are supported by the communities, operated by them, and generate local benefits.

We believe the time has come to harness the energy of the North to the benefit of social and economic development in the North. With access to hydro power, the development potential is enormous.

For instance, it would be possible for local and native communities to develop greenhouse cultivation, and benefit from diversified food products at a much lower cost than is the case with imported products transported and warehoused at great cost.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 5

To support social and economic development among communities in the North Plan territory through small hydro projects:

5.1 Such projects should be initiated and managed by local communities, for their own benefit;

Preparing the workforce that will make the North Plan happen

The implementation of the North Plan represents an unprecedented challenge for Quebec when it comes to attracting, develop and training the required workforce. All of the many development projects described in the North Plan will lead to a boost in demand for qualified workers.

This is a formidable opportunity to improve upon the marketable skills of the people in the communities in the North Plan's territory. Indeed, jobs are the contribution of the North Plan to the improvement of living standards north of the 49th parallel. This is why improving basic education for local people is a priority. Particular attention ought to be paid to native people, especially women and young adults, who have a chance to open new career horizons.

Since 2003, the QLP government has stepped up its efforts to provide education and training to Inuit and First Nation people. Many major projects have been completed, such as the Cree Professional training centre in Waswanipi, The First People Pavillion at the Quebec University in Abitibi-Témiscamingue in Val-d'Or, the Wendake Professional training centre, as well as the newly opened First Nations Postsecondary Institute in Odanak.

The government of Quebec can also boast an original solution: that of the worksite school set up by the Department of Transportation to help with extending Road 138. We need to leverage that

kind of success and develop similar training schemes in the area of mining, roadbuilding, hydro projects and tourism.

Local workers can fill a large share of the jobs available. Yet, we will need to look elsewhere to fill all of the most specialized positions, elsewhere in Quebec and around the world. The North Plan insists that all economic development projects should be designed from the outset with a complete list of the requisite skills. The aim is to have a workforce ready to get started at the moment each projects gets underway.

The success of the North Plan is predicated on the capacity of Quebec and local government authorities, along with business and training establishments, to develop the labour pool necessary to meet the demand for thousands of jobs.

*This is why, above and beyond the measures described in the North Plan,
we propose that a QLP government...*

PROPOSITION 6

Prepare the workforce to execute the North Plan, and:

- 6.1 Improve training programs aimed at Quebec first nations, especially in respect to the North Plan and any other natural resources projects;***
 - 6.2 Increase the number of worksite training centres along the lines of the model developed by the Quebec Department of Transportation;***
 - 6.3 Allow regional cegep and universities to develop clusters of excellence to meet the labour needs of the North Plan;***
 - 6.4 Promote labour needs and employment opportunities related to the North Plan to the people in the South of Quebec, through a dedicated web portal;***
-

Supporting agriculture

SGenerating wealth out of our natural resources also means leveraging the talent of our farmers and transformers, and the great agricultural potential of our territory.

Like other industries, the farm business is facing a shortage of new entrepreneurs to take over existing operations.

Once limited to farmers under supply management, the problem of farm succession is now widespread and raises legitimate concerns in many rural regions. Most farmers will reach retirement age over the next few years.

They hope to retire knowing they have transferred ownership to neighbours or loved ones so the work of generations does not come to an end.

Moreover, food transformation businesses in Quebec have been losing market share on the domestic market to imported products over the past years, mostly as a result on the strength of the Canadian dollar.

In recent years, resources have been invested in the promotion of Quebec food on the domestic market, through a major advertising campaign and specific “Made in Quebec” labelling allowing consumers to readily identify Quebec products on the shelves. Those efforts appear to be bearing fruit.

This is why we propose that a QLP government...

PROPOSITION 7

Maintain the viability of farm and agrifood businesses:

- 7.1 By developing an agricultural policy aimed at the dynamic occupation of the territory through modern and competitive operations;***
 - 7.2 By encouraging major grocery store chains to increase the presence of Quebec products on their shelves, since they account for 70% of food spending;***
 - 7.3 By making it easier to transfer ownership of farms to the next generation;***
 - 7.4 By supporting innovation to drive down costs in greenhouse agriculture, so Quebecers can purchase Quebec-made fresh products all year long;***
-

1.3 Focusing on business productivity and creativity

Quebec is renowned the world over for its creativity and capacity to innovate. Whether it is in the area of culture, video games and special effects, medical and pharmaceutical research, energy, aerospace, optics and photonics, Quebec has given birth to world-class industries thanks to the creativity and sense of innovation of the people of Quebec.

Despite this, it is well known that Quebec lags behind other economies worldwide with respect to the growth of productivity gains in businesses, and has done so for quite some years now. Indeed, in spite of improvements in 2009 and a closing of the gap with the rest of Canada, Quebec ranks dead last among OECD countries for its rate of productivity growth over the past decade.

To diversify our exports and meet the threat of international competition from newly-emerging economies, we absolutely must accelerate productivity gains. The strength of the loony, now on par with the American dollar, has noticeably widened the productivity gap with U.S. competitors. The American market accounts for 75% of Quebec exports. Closing the productivity gap with the nations around us requires priority attention. In this area as in others, Quebec must aim for first place.

To achieve that paramount goal, the Quebec government must rely on many simultaneous levers: innovation, investment in capital goods, the skill set of the workforce, business taxation and regulation.

We also need to come to a clear common agreement on what productivity exactly means. Productivity is not about telling someone who already works too much that he or she needs to put in even more hours. An overtaxed workforce is not more productive, just the opposite. Being more productive means accomplishing more in the way of useful work in the reasonable amount of time available, thanks to up-to-date skills, better tools, better methods. It is all to the workers' benefit, as well as Quebec society.

Since 2003, the QLP government has taken a number of key decisions with respect to each of those levers. Notably:

- The Quebec Research and Innovation Strategy, updated last year, that calls for investments of \$1.2 billion over the 2010-13 period and seeks to translate research results into business advantage;
- The adoption of the Employment Pact;
- The phasing out of the business capital tax;
- The introduction of various tax changes to reduce the effective marginal tax rate on business investment, which is now the lowest of all Canadian provinces;
- The adoption of a policy on reducing the regulatory burden on businesses, with such specific measures as the introduction of a single information web portal for businesses and the merging of two forms every business needs to send to the Office of the business registrar and Revenue Quebec every year.

These measures are a step in the right direction. Yet, given the urgency and the size of the productivity gap we need to close, QLP members feel that the government of Quebec needs to elevate productivity and innovation to the rank of core priorities. It is incumbent on the Quebec government to exercise leadership, mobilize all actors in society and rally Quebecers around this major challenge.

This is why we propose that a QLP government...

PROPOSITION 8

Act decisively to accelerate productivity gains across the Quebec economy, and:

- 8.1 Mobilize all economic actors around the issue of productivity by holding a national forum on productivity and innovation so as to elaborate a new collective strategy, and issue a decree making 2013 the year of productivity and innovation;***
 - 8.2 Revise all programs providing support to businesses in order to channel more resources towards investment projects directly linked to innovation and improvement in business productivity;***
-

Reducing the cost of regulation

Despite the progress achieved in reducing the regulatory burden, a lot remains to be done. Regulation is necessary, but it should not be excessive or feature extraordinary compliance costs for businesses.

Studies conducted by the Canadian Federation of Independent businesses (CFIB) show that administrative procedures add \$30 billion dollars a year to the operating costs of Canadian businesses. The corresponding figure for Quebec is \$7 billion a year. The burden falls most heavily on smaller firms. It is estimated at \$6,500 per employee in firms with 5 workers or less, compared to \$1,100 in firms with 100 workers or more.

A survey conducted earlier this year by the Entrepreneurship Foundation revealed that the willingness to go into business is waning in Quebec, and lagging the rest of the country. The study indicates that the legal, fiscal and administrative complexities are a major obstacle on the path of starting or taking over a business venture for 26.6% of would-be entrepreneurs in Quebec, compared to 16.9% in the rest of Canada.

Recently, the government of Quebec has set up a task force on regulatory reform and paperwork reduction. The group is to report to the President of the Cabinet Committee for economic prosperity and sustainable development, Mr. Sam Hamad.

This is why we propose that a QLP government...

PROPOSITION 9

Remove regulatory obstacles to the launching and subsequent growth of small businesses, and:

- 9.1 Complete the process of standardizing definitions, thresholds and timetables for businesses that must forward payments and wage deductions to provincial and federal tax authorities;***
 - 9.2 Proceed with an assessment and review of all forms that business must fill, with a view to reducing compliance costs;***
 - 9.3 Establish pilot-projects whereby any business of 10 employees or less in a given region would be paired with an exclusive case officer able to help that business navigate through support programs, tax and regulatory issues on behalf of all Quebec government departments and organizations;***
-

Sustaining entrepreneurship

Quebec is having difficulty developing a genuine entrepreneurial culture. Only 6.9% of young Quebecers surveyed have any plan to start a business of their own, compared to 11.2% for young Canadians. The rate of new enterprise creation has slowed from 14.6% in 1991 to 11.2% in 2006. This is a worrisome trend given that 70% of currently active entrepreneurs are expected to retire over the next decade.

This is why we propose that a QLP government...

PROPOSITION 10

Make it easier for the ownership of existing businesses to be transferred to the new generation of entrepreneurs, and:

- 10.1 Set up a Entrepreneurial Succession Portal in collaboration with local and regional entrepreneur organizations. The portal would allow businesses seeking new ownership to be matched with people with the willingness and the means to go into business;***
- 10.2 Designate a section of that portal specifically for the transfer of ownership in farm businesses, in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture;***
- 10.3 Review business tax policy in order to discourage dissolution and encourage transfer of ownership;***

10.4 To extend the Home Buyers' Plan concept to business ownership, allowing people to draw upon their own RRSP funds tax-free for starting or purchasing a business for the first time, so long as they reimburse their RRSPs over a given timeframe. The initiative should be :

- **Regulated in such a fashion as to minimize risks;**
- **Limited to 10 % of the value of RRSP funds;**
- **Designed to prevent the acquisition of stock in a company owned by a spouse;**
- **Designed to prevent the further acquisition of stocks in a company following a second transaction;**

10.5 Develop a new feature of the Quebec Entrepreneurship Contest, aimed at consolidating the growth of winning firms. The initiative would twin every one of the 7 finalists of the Youth Entrepreneurship Grand Challenge to an established business renowned for its contribution to Quebec economic development so as to provide them with:

- **Mentoring services for the 3 years following the contest where they were finalists;**
- **Formal support to increase those entrepreneurs' credibility with financial institutions;**
- **The broadcasting of the Quebec Entrepreneurship Contest so as to improve promotion and provide greater visibility to youth entrepreneurship. The broadcast could be accomplished by Télé-Québec in collaboration with private sponsors;**

10.6 Support educational establishments wanting to set up entrepreneurship-study programs and reintroduce economic and financial literacy courses in secondary schools;

Developing a network of suppliers and equipment-makers

The low rate of productivity growth in Quebec is mostly attributable to the historically lower rate of private business investment.

As we have seen, the government has considerably modified the tax regime of businesses in order to stimulate private investment. The abolition of the capital tax and tax relief on new investment are some of the key measures.

The results are good, but we believe that we need to go beyond tax measures to encourage and further accelerate private investment.

We believe should rely on its existing world-class businesses and industry to develop and strengthen networks of suppliers and equipment-makers in Quebec.

The aluminium and aerospace industries are good examples of global industries where big producers require a network of accredited parts and services suppliers, businesses in a position to develop and widely export know-how of their own. The idea is to solidify the whole value chain, from industry leaders to small businesses.

The development of the AP-60 technology by Rio Tinto Alcan in Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean or the C-Series planes by Bombardier are good illustrations of technological innovations that lead to the development and strengthening of a network of outsourced suppliers.

We believe the Quebec government should identify industrial sectors suitable to the development and strengthening of suppliers. Particular attention should be paid to the mining sector, given the size of upcoming investments in this area.

This is why we propose that a QLP government...

PROPOSITION 11

Reinforce the industrial fabric of Quebec by stimulating private investment and supporting the emergence and strengthening of a network of suppliers and equipment makers, and:

- 11.1 Support the most promising projects as a matter of priority, through financial support and the granting of electricity blocs;***
 - 11.2 Pay particular attention to the development of suppliers and equipment makers in the mining sector;***
-

1.4 Preventing labour shortages

Quebec has made great strides since 2003 when it comes to jobs and the labour market.

- The unemployment rate in Quebec is now lower than the rate in Ontario and the United States, something unprecedented in over 30 years;
- The employment rate, which measures the proportion of people aged 15 and over currently holding a job, has reached 60.3% in Quebec, compared to 62% in Canada and 58.5% in the United States.

In fact, the big challenge over the coming years will not be the need to create enough jobs for everyone, but rather to make sure that labour shortages do not break Quebec's economic momentum.

As a consequence of population ageing, Quebec is vulnerable to labour shortages, especially for qualified personnel. The group of people aged 20 to 64, which makes up the available labour pool, is predicted to start shrinking in 2016, barely five years from now.

According to a Conference Board study entitled "From the babyboom to labour deficits : imminent labour shortage in Quebec", our province is facing a shortfall of 363,000 workers by 2030, if current trends continue.

Needless to say, serious labour shortages would undermine all of the progress we can achieve with regards to the other factors impinging on productivity. To remain a prosperous society, Quebec must deal with this issue as a matter of urgency.

There are essentially 3 ways to deal with the issue:

- In the short term, getting more people aged 15 to 65 years old into the job market;
- In the medium term, increasing immigration;
- In the longer term, increasing the birth rate.

Over the last few years, the proportion of working age Quebecers actually holding a job has crept up. Yet, in some age brackets, Quebec needs to do a lot better to catch up with the Canadian average.

This is especially true of workers aged 55 and older. As a group, their labour participation rate went up from 26.5% in 2003 to 31.5% in 2010. Despite this progress, the figures remain noticeably lower in Quebec than in Ontario (37%) and Canada (36%).

It is therefore vital that we re-examine the relevant tax rules, which should be designed to encourage every experienced worker who wants to stay on the job market to do so.

This is why we propose that a QLP government...

PROPOSITION 12

Provide incentives for greater labour market participation, especially by experienced workers aged 55 and over, and:

- 12.1 Conclude an agreement with federal authorities whereby workers 60 years and older and eligible to earn pension income can do so concurrently with employment income in the context of a progressive retirement scheme;***
 - 12.2 Rethink taxation in such a fashion as to encourage the participation of older people to the labour market. Tax measures should encourage part-time employment after the normal retirement age and provide incentives for those who wish to push retirement back;***
 - 12.3 Conclude an agreement with federal authorities whereby workers 65 years and older earning employment income the choice to continue contributing to the Quebec Pension Plan or to contribute the same sums to their own RRSPs;***
 - 12.4 Change the rules governing public sector pensions so as to encourage public servants to stay in employment longer and opt for retirement later;***
-

Improving the labour market integration of immigrants is another way to sustain a vibrant labour pool.

In this respect, the most recent data from Statistics Canada is encouraging. Unemployment went down for immigrants between 2009 and 2010, with an increase of nearly 8% in the number of immigrants in employment. In fact, over half of net new job creation last year can be attributed to immigrant workers.

Nevertheless, the unemployment rate among immigrants remains higher than the rate for Quebec-born citizens, and higher than in the rest of the country. A report by the Quebec Auditor General in 2010 reveals that some 40% of immigrant workers back in 2006 were "overqualified", meaning they had more years of schooling and diplomas than were customarily needed for the job they held or sought. The situation has improved since, but matching the demand and supply of relevant skills is something Quebec must still improve upon.

As the numbers suggest, the skill sets of newcomers do not always correspond to the demands of the Quebec labour market. In the interest of newcomers and society as a whole, we need to keep making adjustments to improve skills adequation even further.

This is why we propose that a QLP government...

PROPOSITION 13

Improve the selection and integration process for new immigrants by:

- 13.1 Granting more points in the selection criteria for immigration candidates holding a valid job offer from an employer located outside the Montreal metropolitan area;***
- 13.2 Granting student visas in an expedited fashion and with more latitude on financial conditions to newcomers who want to register to complete a diploma in Quebec vocational schools that do not fill their classes with a full complement of students in fields where employers' demand is strong;***

Selection criteria and process remain, at the end of the day, tools designed to make better predictions on integration prospects. The real business of integration takes place when newcomers find an employer willing to hire them and provide them with their first chance.

This is why the QLP government has developed a number of programs to entice employers into hiring newcomers. There is the PRIIME scheme, which provides wage subsidies to employers who hire newcomers and visible minorities, which helped 5 500 people to find a job. Another, Passerelle pour l'emploi en région, targets recent immigrants residing in Montreal who wish to test the job market outside of the metropolitan area. More recently, the government has also introduced the IPOP initiative, to provide internship opportunities to professionals trained abroad who want to join a profession regulated by professional corporations in Quebec.

These programs are effective, but most employers and job-seekers do not know about them. We believe the government has every interest in improving awareness of those initiatives.

This is why we propose that a QLP government...

PROPOSITION 14

Provide for better promotion and awareness by employers of support programs for hiring immigrants, and:

- 14.1 Organize, in collaboration with chambers of commerce and labour market partners, "Quebec newcomer workers job fairs" so that prospective employers and job seekers can readily be matched and to encourage immigrants to settle beyond the Montreal metropolitan area;***
 - 14.2 Better develop support and mentorship programs for employers with respect to French language learning and diversity management in workplaces;***
-

Other programs aimed at helping newcomers connect with the labour market have been established. Besides PRIIME and Passerelle pour l'emploi en région, the international portal of the Online Placement Service, the Practical guide to international recruitment and Diversité + are new initiatives established by both the Employment and Immigration Departments. In May of 2011, the minister launched 10 new projects as part of the Défi Montréal program, which helps employers navigate through the recruitment and integration process, a total investment of 976,000\$.

We believe that such programs need to be scaled up and become more available outside of Montreal. In particular, we believe that French courses in the workplace will often suit the needs and schedules of immigrant workers than courses offered in the community. We further believe that what employers want above all from the government is sound practical advice and guidance on best practices in diversity management.

Recognizing the value of immigrants' credentials and experience is the key to making sure their skills and competence contribute fully to Quebec's prosperity. In this respect, a great deal of progress was made over the last few years to avoid attracting qualified workers to Quebec only for them to experience the disillusion of unemployment or deskilling. Immigration candidates are better informed nowadays about the conditions and procedures regarding access to regulated professions. New tools have been developed to help them prepare for exams, while access to short term training, especially in French as a second language, has been considerably widened. It is worth keeping in mind that immigrants seeking to access a regulated profession represent less than 10% of all immigrants to Quebec, and that 94% of them eventually manage to be admitted to the ranks of professional corporations.

In Quebec, the vast majority of newcomers who seek access to regulated professions are first awarded "partial recognition", which simply means they will need to complete additional courses before they can practice the profession for which they originally trained for. In the meantime, that immigrant will not be allowed to work in the field, in any fashion. Recently, though, some notable exceptions have emerged. Namely, graduates from Canadian and French universities can expect their university credentials recognized as if they were Quebec diplomas. When it comes to immigrant workers from elsewhere, agreements have been reached with the Quebec Bar, the College of Physicians, as well as the Orders of Chartered Accountants and Agronomists to smooth the transition.

One of the most interesting avenues to improve matters further would be to establish an intermediate path for immigrant professionals, one where they could occupy a position in the same professional domain, in contact with the sought after trade or profession, but at an inferior level of qualification until they complete their remedial training. This approach, known as the "restricted practice" authorization, would certainly be more advantageous for Quebec's economy than the now proverbial – if largely legendary – case of the foreign-born doctor driving a cab. The foreign credentials recognition process, and the agreements under discussion with various professional corporations, should seek to make wider use of restricted practice authorizations.

This is why we propose that a QLP government...

PROPOSITION 15

Improve upon and accelerate the process of foreign credentials recognition, through restricted practice authorizations delivered to immigrants professionals completing their remedial training;

Presently, only 18% of people residing in Quebec on a temporary basis, as students or workers, opt to make Quebec their permanent home. One of the means available to the government to improve integration would be to seek better retention of temporary immigrants. Whether in school or in workplaces, these immigrants are already in contact with Quebec culture, often learning French, and are already either holding a job or earning a job-ready diploma.

It makes plenty of sense to make sure that some immigrants among them who wish to stay and build a life in Quebec can benefit from an accelerated procedure, with selection criteria that take account of the process of integration to Quebec society they have already begun.

Particular attention should be paid to foreign research scientists and academics who are living in Quebec on temporary assignment, working in institutions of higher learning in Quebec. Accelerated procedures and additional points in the selection criteria could be awarded to those working on research projects deemed a priority by the government. Eventually, more researchers who want to stay in Quebec could continue to contribute to scientific progress here.

PROPOSITION 16

To improve upon and accelerate the process of moving from temporary to permanent resident status for those newcomers who have already shown their ability to learn French and secure employment;

1.5 Restoring our transportation infrastructure

A modern and sturdy transportation infrastructure is essential to an efficient economy. A study released in 2010 by the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Montreal puts the overall cost of traffic congestion in metropolitan Montreal at \$1.4 billion.

Transport Canada, in a study released in 2006 entitled *The Cost of Urban Congestion in Canada*, came to similar conclusions. The cost of traffic congestion in Canada's nine largest urban areas was estimated at between \$2.3 and \$3.7 billion in 2002 dollars.

As a point of interest, this study estimated that 90% of the cost of congestion represents the value of the time lost in traffic. The value of the fuel consumed represents 7% of the congestion cost and GHG emissions represent 3%.

Quebec is an economy open to the world. We need to have an infrastructure that allows the efficient transportation of people and goods if we are to continue to prosper.

In an economy where inventory management is dominated by "just-in-time," the costs of congestion can greatly reduce the competitiveness of businesses and cause the loss of supplier contracts. Moreover, congestion is a big hindrance for exporters.

With the introduction of the Quebec Infrastructure Plan in 2007, the government committed to restore our infrastructure over a 15-year timeline.

To achieve this goal, it launched a major economic initiative, entailing \$37.7 billion of investment over five years. In January 2009, the government increased the investment to \$41.8 billion for the 2008-2013 timeline, almost \$20 billion of which is for highways and public transit.

Furthermore, legislation was passed in the National Assembly requiring that any future government complete the repair of our infrastructure and continue to maintain it.

There is still one hurdle to cross to ensure the longevity of our transportation infrastructure after it has been restored: we must ensure permanent funding for our infrastructure to prevent a recurrence of past mistakes.

This is why we propose that a QLP government...

PROPOSITION 17

Provide Quebec with modern infrastructure, through stable and predictable financing, and:

17.1 Initiate frank and open discussions with the federal government, municipalities and other agencies involved in the management of transportation infrastructure, with the aim of establishing a permanent financing formula for transportation infrastructure;

The Champlain Bridge represents a strategic infrastructure for Montreal's economy. This is the bridge with the most traffic in Canada. A major share of shipments to the U.S. market crosses the Champlain Bridge. The strategic importance of this infrastructure is indisputable.

Meanwhile, the federal government, which owns the Champlain Bridge, is slow in making a decision to replace this outdated structure. Given the bridge's strategic importance to the future transportation of people and goods in the greater Montreal region and that it will take 10 years to replace it, this situation is untenable.

PROPOSITION 18

Increase the pressure on the federal government so it comes to a decision on replacing the Champlain bridge and commits to financing the project. To achieve that goal, the government must mobilize the economic and opinion leaders of the Montreal greater metropolitan area;

1.6 Healthy public finances and a fair tax system

The 2008 financial crisis, which turned into a public finance crisis in Europe and the U.S., shows how important it is to keep public finances healthy.

Fortunately, Quebec has one of the lowest budget deficits due to its careful administration of the Quebec economy during the global recession. In fiscal 2010-2011, Quebec's budget deficit represented 1.4% of GDP, compared to 3.3% for Ontario, 3.2% for Canada, 10.6% for the U.S., and 7.8% for the OECD countries.

As a result, Quebec will be one of the first jurisdictions to return to a balanced budget, which will be as of 2013-2014, four years earlier than Ontario.

Given the heavy tax burden borne by Quebecers, we are pleased that 62% of the effort needed to return to a balanced budget comes from spending restraint and the battle against tax evasion. But Quebec is still deeply in debt. Whether in terms of the accumulated deficits compared to GDP (35.4%) or the gross debt expressed as a percentage of GDP (53.8%), Quebec is the most indebted province in Canada.

The government has set itself a dual debt reduction objective.

The first objective concerns the debt representing accumulated deficits. This is the debt that was used "to pay for the groceries," the one that does not correspond to an asset. The government's goal is to reduce this ratio to bring it down to 17% in 2025-2026.

The second objective concerns gross debt. The government's goal is to reduce the gross debt-to-GDP ratio to 45% in 2025-2026.

The government has already announced that to reach its debt reduction goals, the price of heritage pool electricity will be increased gradually as of 2014-2015. This increase represents 1¢/kWh over five years. The entire amount will be deposited in the Generations Fund. In addition, the government will make additional deposits to the Generations Fund as of 2014-2015 derived from the increase in mining and oil and gas royalties.

We believe that the targets the government has set for debt reduction represent minimal targets.

Moreover, given the importance of keeping the tax system competitive in order to help business compete and encourage effort, we believe that these objectives should not be achieved by making the tax burden any heavier than already planned.

This is why we propose that a QLP government...

PROPOSITION 19

Announce a clear and detailed debt reduction plan, which should:

- 19.1 Confirm that the goal of returning to balanced budgets by fiscal year 2013-14 is unmovable;***
 - 19.2 Confirm that the targets established by the government represent unmovable and minimal objectives;***
 - 19.3 Provide details on the means decided upon to meet those targets, by giving precisions on the share of the whole debt reduction effort attributed to economic growth, spending restraint and increases in the tax burden;***
 - 19.4 Commit to allocating any extra revenues arising from a level of economic growth surpassing predictions to accelerate debt reduction as a matter of priority;***
-

Making the tax system fairer and encourage saving

The collection of all of the State's revenues is not only necessary to attain budget balance and debt reduction targets, but it is also a matter of fairness amongst taxpayers. Everyone should pay their share.

We believe that fraud and tax evasion have baneful and very harmful effects on the public's confidence in our democratic institutions and on the business climate.

Much work has already been done to offset the most abusive types of tax evasion. In particular, the government has announced the creation of the Quebec Revenue Agency, which will have the administrative flexibility required to achieve the targets. It has also pioneered the battle against what is known as abusive tax planning. In addition, the government's plans for restoring budget balance include a tax collection target of \$1.4 billion in 2013-2014.

To achieve these objectives, the government has targeted the sectors where tax fraud is most widespread, in particular black market tobacco and the restaurant and construction industries. Furthermore, since June 1, 2010, government departments and agencies have required bidders on public contracts of \$25,000 or more to submit a certificate from the Ministry of Revenue. The legislative provisions governing the awarding of public contracts for \$25,000 and up will be expanded to bidders throughout the public sector, including public corporations and municipalities. From now on, a tax certificate will also be required for subcontractors working on public construction contracts governed by these legislative provisions. We believe we should go even farther.

Channeling
Quebec's True

ENERGY

PROPOSITION 20

Re-examine and toughen up the fines levied for tax fraud so they become a greater deterrent;

Fair treatment for taxpayers also dictates that tax rates increase with income. In other words, the higher the taxable income, the higher the rate. This is how our tax system works, and it is one of the most progressive in North America.

However, tax transfer mechanisms can produce incongruous results. Thus, when household income exceeds a certain threshold, the household loses various tax benefits intended for low-income families, such as the GST-QST refund. For such families, the transfer mechanisms make the effective marginal tax rate on \$1,000 of additional income very high.

This situation can discourage effort and the will to improve one's working conditions by looking for a better-paying job. However, considering the expected workforce shortages, we should be encouraging effort and self-improvement instead.

The tax system should also encourage saving, so that Quebecers will be in better financial health when they leave the job market. Quebecers live longer, which has a direct impact on financial planning for retirement.

Saving also facilitates the funding of investments which, in turn, drive economic growth and job creation.

We believe it would be beneficial for Quebec's economy to provide greater tax exemptions for every form of savings, including those used to finance skills training and professional development.

PROPOSITION 21

Re-examine the personal income tax regime so that it rewards effort for all income categories, and so that it provides greater encouragement for saving, investment and growth;

Improve government efficiency through technology

The government must constantly improve its processes in its efforts to offer the best services at the lowest possible cost. Priority must be put on the use of new information technologies in order to improve the delivery of public services.

In recent years, the QLP government has taken steps to modernize Quebec's public service through various initiatives, such as putting the government online and digitizing health records.

Meanwhile, social networks (Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, etc.), wikis, and blogs are well on the way to becoming the preferred communication tools of the younger generation, not to mention their elders. This set of applications has become known as Web 2.0 – where the user not only takes in information, but also puts it out, and broadcasts new information on the Web. The user becomes part of a network.

For a government, this means it can be in constant contact with the citizens and instantly learn their reaction to the measures it plans to implement.

It also means the government can benefit from the creativity of its citizens when it comes to finding solutions to the problems our society faces.

Finally, the use of Web 2.0 within the government machinery will allow it to break down the compartmentalization of the individual departments and improve the efficiency of public service employees.

Like numerous other governments, such as those of the U.S., the U.K., Australia and, closer to home, New York State and British Columbia, the QLP government needs to take full advantage of these new opportunities to improve the internal operations of the government and the quality of services for the citizens, by benefiting from all of our fellow citizens' innovative capabilities.

PROPOSITION 22

Leverage the potential of Web 2.0 applications to provide better public services and improve exchanges with citizens, and:

- 22.1 Make government data part of the public record. To that end, the government should entrust the task to a central agency such as the National Library or the Quebec Statistical Institute (ISQ) to format and organize this data in a uniform fashion to facilitate research. All Departments and agencies need to contribute, and the project should be completed within a year;***
 - 22.2 Provide an appropriate framework for citizen participation so that people can directly contribute to the elaboration of public policies. A directive to that effect should be in place within 12 months, and features safeguards to keep transactions secure;***
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II

A QUEBEC
FOR ITS CHILDREN

INTRODUCTION

Every government's principal function is to prepare society for future generations. This is expressed through the development of a strong and modern economy that creates jobs for tomorrow and generates the wealth necessary for the fulfilment of the younger generations and Quebec's future success.

It is also expressed through a permanent concern to provide youth with the tools and environment they need if they are to take over the reins.

In this section, we combine the four areas of political action that directly impact the quality of life for future generations.

These areas are part of a continuum. There is education, which develops talent and makes dreams possible. There is assistance for the family, where every individual is first nurtured. There is the environment and sustainable development, through which we can guarantee a healthy place to live for our descendants and safeguard our natural heritage. And there is culture, which defines us as a nation and helps every one of us stay in touch with our roots.

In each of these areas, the government has laid solid groundwork. The QLP is proud of this accomplishment and proposes a roadmap for doing even more.

1- Education as a lever for prosperity and fulfilment

Quebec has made great strides in economic and social progress since the early 1960s, and this is largely due to its great advances in education.

In 40 years, from 1966 to 2006, progress has been truly extraordinary:

- The percentage of individuals between 25 and 44 who never graduated has decreased from 56% to 12%;
- In 2006, no less than 69% of the individuals in this age group had a post-secondary diploma versus only 30% forty years earlier; and
- The high-school dropout rate has decreased from 56% to 12% over this same period.

In terms of education, Quebec now compares favourably to the OECD countries. This great leap forward in the field of education has made it possible for francophones to become enfranchised, achieve a North American standard of living, and take charge of the affairs of State and the economy.

Today, as in the past, the key to Quebec's future prosperity lies in education and training. The global economy is increasingly dominated by knowledge. The countries that will be most successful will be those that can best adapt their education and training systems to the economic and technological realities.

Throughout its history, the QLP has made education one of its main issues. It is the Liberals that built the education system, the key factor in the Quiet Revolution.

As a worthy steward of this heritage, since 2003 the QLP government has striven to ensure a better pairing between professional training and the needs of business, has implemented an ambitious plan to ensure that everyone completes their schooling, and has had the political courage to raise tuition fees to guarantee our universities' future while keeping a university education within reach. Then, at the point where education and health converge, the government gave historic impetus to the development of university medicine with projects to renew the Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal, the McGill University Health Centre and Sainte-Justine Hospital.

We also invested major sums of money in specialized personnel, reduced the number of students in each class, reintroduced a standard percentage-based report card, strengthened the teaching of English as a second language, added one hour of teaching in elementary school, developed school sports, and initiated a major plan for upgrading our school infrastructure.

Comparisons show that the education received by Quebec schoolchildren is as good as in other parts of the world, as evidenced by the performance of Quebec students on the well-known international PISA test.

But there is still much to be done. The dropout rate is still higher in Quebec than in the rest of Canada. And the overall scholastic performance of boys is worrisome. We need to continue to bring schools closer to the students and the community and build a living environment that is favourable to fulfilment and learning.

If Quebec is to stand out internationally and take up the challenges of the demographic transition, we need to foster a culture of excellence, perseverance and success.

1.1 Rate student and school performance

To aim for success and excellence, it is necessary to rate the performance of both students and schools. Then we need to compare the various schools, having regard to the socioeconomic background, in order to determine, prescribe and apply the appropriate remedies.

We believe that schools should be rated by rating the students rather than the teachers. The students can easily be rated annually by administering a single ministerial exam. This is an objective rating that measures student learning.

In our view, there is no better way to rate schools. Rating the teachers involves too many subjective variables to devise a proper benchmark for comparison that would be reliable, objective and accurate. We believe that the best way to rate a teacher is through the performance of his or her students.

This is why we propose that a QLP government...

PROPOSITION 23

Rate our schools based on student performance, and:

- 23.1 Administer a single ministerial exam in English and math every year for all students in elementary and secondary schools;***
 - 23.2 Establish a comparison of the schools' performance by comparing the results obtained on the ministerial exams after weighting the socioeconomic factors;***
 - 23.3 Reward the schools with the best performance through budget allocations;***
-

1.2 Give school principals more autonomy

Academic research on success factors is unanimous: the dynamics of the school and the quality of the teaching staff remain decisive factors on which policy-makers can act. The key player is the principal of the institution, provided he or she has enough latitude to mobilize the staff.

Quite logically, if we establish a comparative school rating system, we must give more autonomy and control to the school administration over the factors that directly influence the institution's performance.

Accordingly, we believe that elementary and secondary school principals should have greater latitude to give their institution its own personality and a special vocation by relying on its strengths: the characteristics of the teaching staff, the academic programs, the after-school activities and any other distinguishing factors.

It is by developing an individual personality that the principal can make a school more dynamic and motivate the teachers and students through common identification factors.

To do this, we believe it is necessary to distribute students with learning disabilities more evenly amongst public and private schools. School principals should also have more control over the hiring of professional resources so that the staff they recruit can better meet the specific needs of the school and its special vocation.

To encourage good school performance, we believe that the most worthy schools should be rewarded financially when budgets are allocated. And we believe it is necessary for parents to be able to compare their school's performance and question the school principals about the results obtained.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 24

Grant more autonomy to public school principals, and:

- 24.1 Give each elementary and secondary school principal greater latitude to "personalize" their institution and give it a special vocation by relying on the characteristics of the teaching staff, study programs, after-school activities or other distinguishing features;***
 - 24.2 Distribute students with learning disabilities more evenly amongst the schools and classrooms, notably by involving private schools;***
 - 24.3 Give more control to school principals over the hiring of professional and specialized resources to better meet their specific needs;***
-

1.3 Refocus the action of school boards

School boards play an essential coordinating role at the regional level. For instance, they are responsible for organizing school buses, ensuring that the school infrastructure is maintained and upgraded and administering the payroll for all of the schools under their jurisdiction.

Those who advocate the abolition of school boards forget to mention that they would have to be replaced by another regional structure that would administer their services, which are better off being combined for reasons of efficiency and cost.

Moreover, after it abolished its school boards, New Brunswick brought them back four years later.

We in the QLP find that energy and limited financial resources should not be wasted on structural reform. At the end of the day, the savings would not be significant and do not warrant such upheaval.

Instead, we propose reviewing the mandates and responsibilities of the school boards. This would achieve substantial savings, more than what would be derived by abolishing them, and without useless upheaval.

What we would like is to reduce the bureaucracy, which would make it possible to direct more financial resources into student services.

This review of the school boards' mandates and responsibilities is a corollary to our willingness to give the schools more autonomy so they can develop a special vocation and hire professional and specialized resources.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 25

Review the mandate and responsibilities of the school boards:

- 25.1 In order to achieve \$100 million of annual savings in the bureaucracy over three years. Ultimately, recurring savings of \$300 million per year should be achieved;***
 - 25.2 In order to give more autonomy to school directors in the elementary and secondary school systems;***
 - 25.3 While assessing the possibility of simultaneously holding school board and municipal elections to encourage greater electoral participation;***
-

1.4 Encourage the use of new technologies

Although the vast majority of Quebec schools have at least one computer, our computer equipment has gotten old. Almost one-quarter of the computers in our schools are not connected to the Internet, while half of our high-school students only use a computer once a week.

The obsolescence of the computer equipment does not encourage the use of new technologies in education. In fact, students are often better equipped at home than at school. It is no wonder that their interest is waning.

However, the reason the QLP government advocated the systematic replacement of the blackboard by the interactive whiteboard (IWB) was to prepare the school environment for the necessary integration of ICTs in education. With this technological choice, the government began the shift to School 2.0.

As a logical outcome of this choice, the initiative must be continued by adopting technologies to heighten children's interest in reading, especially young boys. We believe that to modernize teaching, stimulate students' interest in school and foster equal opportunity, every child should have an electronic book reader. Introduced gradually, such an approach would enable not only the diversification of reading options for our schoolchildren, but would allow parents to save on the purchase of textbooks and the schools to save on their library collections.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 26

Expand the use of new technologies in our schools, and:

- 26.1 Provide an electronic book reader to every student attending a public secondary school;***
 - 26.2 Offer teachers continuing education on the use of digital technologies in teaching;***
 - 26.3 Improve teacher training so the use of IT for educational purposes will be more widespread;***
-

1.5 Fight harder to keep boys in school

Girls do better at school than boys. That is true not only in Quebec, but in the OECD countries as a whole. Indeed, girls systematically get better grades than boys on the international PISA tests, which rate students 15 years old and over in some 60 countries.

Boys are also more likely to drop out and never complete their high-school education.

Since 2003, the QLP government has taken many steps to deter students from dropping out of high school. Some examples are the introduction of homework assistance, which was very successful, the hiring of specialized staff in schools, the reduction of class sizes, and the research program on student perseverance and success.

But more must be done, and special attention must be paid to boys. For despite the progress achieved since 2003, the dropout rate is still higher in Quebec than in other parts of Canada.

One of the theories often put forward in the specialized literature to explain the different results obtained by boys and girls is that young boys lack motivation and spend little time reading. Thus, those children who have trouble reading at the end of grade one will be at the bottom of their class throughout elementary school. Reading being essential to the acquisition of knowledge across the academic spectrum, a direct link has been established between reading skills and scholastic success.

In 2005, the government initiated the Action Plan on Reading in School to facilitate learning to read. This program was renewed in 2008.

We believe that more must be done. The government should use the success factors from the homework assistance program to create a reading assistance program aimed specifically at the problems experienced by boys. Thus, it is recommended that communities, retirees and parents become involved in setting up reading assistance programs in all of Quebec's elementary schools.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 27

Initiate a reading assistance program inspired by the homework assistance program, and:

- 27.1 Involve communities, retirees and parents to help boys acquire better reading skills;***
 - 27.2 Take action as of the first year to maximize the success of this initiative;***
 - 27.3 Make parents aware of the importance of introducing children to reading and the importance of good reading skills as an educational success factor;***
-

1.6 Adapt education to gifted students and promote excellence

Excellence promotion efforts in our trade schools have given students who excel new confidence. This can be seen in many trades, for example, in the field of cooking, where talented young chefs are raised to the level of stars.

It would be good for such a culture of excellence to also be the prerogative of our elementary and secondary schools. Some students distinguish themselves through their hard work, and that is worth praising. Others stand out due to their exceptional talent, and this calls for some adjustments.

Our schools are not always ready for or adapted to the special needs of gifted students. Although they are well regarded by the teaching staff, gifted students get bored in school, where they are seldom presented with suitable challenges through which they can develop their full potential.

While resources are made available to children who have problems, there is nothing similar for gifted students, no doubt out of a fear of elitism. This attitude also has an impact on the lack of attention paid to giftedness when future teachers are being trained. The current solution of making gifted students "skip" grades in school is not without its drawbacks, for being gifted is not synonymous with social and emotional maturity. Integration in regular classes can be difficult and become a source of disruptive behaviour, or even lead to a gifted student's¹ dropping out. The conclusions of recent studies have shown that almost half of the students who repeat a grade are gifted!

Moreover, students who systematically obtain high scholastic results and hand in exemplary work receive little recognition. This is especially true in high school, where praise from the teacher and stars on the report card no longer have the same impact, and honour rolls disappeared a long time ago.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 28

Provide more support for gifted students and more rewards for effort and excellence:

28.1 By instituting programs to identify gifted students in order to offer them educational measures adapted to their learning curve;

28.2 By allowing the creation of enriched programs (in math, science, languages) for gifted students in schools willing to set them up;

28.3 By awarding 500 excellence scholarships to the highest achievers at the elementary, secondary and collegiate level;

¹- Vie pédagogique, no. 150, p. 72. Studies have pointed out (Jeanne Siaud-Facchin 2006) that 45% of the students who repeated a year were highly gifted, 20% dropped out and 20% had psychological problems.

1.7 Place more value on the teaching profession

As we have pointed out, one of a school's success factors is the quality of its faculty. If we want to improve our schools' performance, we have to place more value on the teaching profession.

In order to achieve this, the best students should be encouraged to go into the teaching profession. Also, working conditions for young teachers should encourage them to persevere in their chosen career. Over 20% of new teachers are no longer in the profession five years later.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 29

Place more value on the teaching profession:

- 29.1 *By raising the education faculties' entrance criteria for university teacher training programs;***
 - 29.2 *By awarding excellence scholarships to the best students in the Faculties of Education who complete their studies within the allotted time;***
 - 29.3 *By allowing school administrators to develop retention measures so they can keep their best teachers;***
 - 29.4 *By negotiating clauses with the unions to improve job stability for young teachers;***
-

1.8 Adapt technical training to the clientele's reality

Of new registrants in technical training programs at the college level, only 38% obtain their college diploma (DEC) within the allotted time, namely after three years. Barely 50% obtain their diploma after five years.

These figures are very low. And given the specialized labour needs forecast in the coming years, we have to do much better.

We believe it is necessary to adapt technical programs to the realities of the student clientele and the needs of the job market.

The vast majority of students studying technology in college are adults who have gone back to school to complete their education or learn new skills after spending some time on the job market. The average age of technical college students is 24.4 years old.

Often, these students are also parents and have dual responsibilities. To them, registering in a full-time program for three years can be a hardship. Meanwhile, these students do not necessarily have to complete all of the DEC requirements to improve their situation on the job market or to meet their employer's requirements. Sometimes, just one year of continuing education will be sufficient.

Conversely, others will want to complete all of the college diploma requirements, and some will even go on to university.

Not all employers are looking for someone with a DEC. Some are looking for students who have the skills and basic techniques for their profession, and that does not always mean they have to complete the full DEC program. Moreover, many students are hired even before they have completed their studies and then find themselves without a diploma, notwithstanding the skills they have acquired.

Restructuring the offer of some college programs into a gradual succession of separate segments attested by a certificate of proficiency or a diploma appears to be the route to take. Thus, a student who comes from the job market and wants to improve his or her knowledge and skills will be able to register for a one- or two-year program leading to a certificate of college studies in a specific discipline.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 30

Revamp technical training programs so that there is more than one route towards a certificate of proficiency or college diploma (DEC) in order to better meet the needs of the student clientele and the job market;

2- The family

Since it came into power, the QLP government has nearly doubled the resources allocated to its family policy, making those resources twice as high as in Ontario in proportion to the GDP.

Quebec is the only place in North America where parents can find low-cost day care for pre-schoolers. Elsewhere, those services are either very expensive or non-existent.

It was also the QLP government that introduced the parental insurance program, restored the family allowance and developed the daycare system. Financially, the combination of these three measures has made Quebec a family paradise. Thus, taking the example of a couple who are both working and have two children, it can be seen that in six years, their disposable income has increased by:

- slightly more than 13% for a family with two incomes totalling \$75,000;
- 28% for a family with two incomes totalling \$35,000; and
- 43% for a family with two incomes totalling \$15,000.

The family policy put in place by the government since 2003 has contributed to a mini baby boom, and made Quebec the Canadian champion of job participation by women with young children.

Indeed, according to the OECD, low-cost daycare explains, in particular, the full-time participation of Quebec women in the job market, which is 10% higher than in the other provinces. This gap widens to 34% for mothers of children under three years of age².

Given the current context of the public finances, the family policy could not be any more generous. In the coming years, priority should therefore be put on developing subsidized daycare spots to better meet demand and adopting certain measures designed to facilitate the still complex issue of balancing work and family.

2.1 See to the development of daycare spots

The government has been developing daycare spots since 2003, adding thousands of spots. However, growth in demand has exceeded growth in the supply, primarily due to a significant rise in the birth rate.

We find that the development of daycare spots must once again become a priority and that resources for developing the system must be made available on a foreseeable basis in a spirit of fairness and shared responsibility. Right now, parents who send their children to \$7 a day daycare centres set up as CPEs (Centres de la petite enfance, or early childhood education centres) contribute less than 20% of the real costs. Given the natural rise in costs due to, for example, inflation, a freeze on parental contributions is actually a decrease in their contributions. As a result, it is the costs borne by the State that increase, thus impeding the development of the system at the expense of parents who are desperately waiting for a spot.

2- [Babies and Bosses – Reconciling Work and Family Life, A Synthesis of Findings for OECD Countries, 2007](#); [Bilan 2003-2006, DES RÉALISATIONS GOUVERNEMENTALES EN FAVEUR DES FAMILLES ET DES ENFANTS](#), Ministry of the Family and Seniors, 2007, page 25; and [OECD Thematic Review of Early Childhood Education and Care – Canadian Background Report, October 26, 2004](#), and [Ingrid Peritz, "Public daycare helps fuel Quebec workforce," Globe & Mail, May 1, 2006](#).

PROPOSITION 31

See to the development, funding and availability of daycare spots:

- 31.1** *By increasing the parental contribution from \$7 to \$10 a day in the first year of a future mandate and by indexing that contribution thereafter, setting the fee at 20% of average total cost, in order to ensure that resources will be available to develop the system;*
- 31.2** *By creating regional Web sites so that parents can easily find out where spots are available in subsidized daycares or find alternative solutions that are eligible for the child care tax credit;*
-

2.2 More flexibility for dealing with family obligations

Simultaneously with the evolution of new family models, the work world has also undergone a great transformation: unconventional schedules, self-employed workers (15% of the total), double jobs, continuing education, and career change highlight new needs for balance between work and family life.

More and more women aspire to hold a career and raise a family. This is a legitimate choice and it has provided a tremendous pool of talent heretofore unavailable to employers. However, despite the progress made in flexible work schedules, this choice appears to have held back the careers of a good many women.

Jane Waldfogel, an economics professor at Columbia University, has analyzed the pay for women as a whole over their lifetime. She has found that the average pay for women is equal to that of men at the start of their career, in their early to mid-twenties. After a few years on the job market, in the 25-29 age group, women's average pay is 87% of the men's average. However, looking at the 40-44 age group, once women go back to work full time after having babies in their thirties, she finds that on average women's salaries are 29% lower than men's³.

Almost one in two women is unable to return to the job market full time at the same level as when she left after giving birth, and three in four women go back to work for a different employer. Overall, women who have had children will spend an average of 5% less time working than men over their active lifetime, but will finish their career with an income that is 25% to 30% lower, the "gaps" in their resumés and their choppy career paths sometimes precluding them from promotion or advancement opportunities.

3- Jane Waldfogel and Susan Harkness, "The family gap in pay: evidence from seven industrialised countries," London School of Economics, November 1999, Table 3.

In the last few years, after numerous talks with employer groups, the Ministry of the Family tasked the Bureau de normalisation du Québec (BNQ) with developing an analytical grid of the measures for balancing work and family life offered by various employers. The grid allots different scores based on the presence or absence of policies that allow greater flexibility to young parents who work. This grid, which grants recognition to employers based on the score they obtain and distributes them over four levels, is the right approach to adopt in our view. It makes it possible to distinguish and recognize those that make more of an effort than others, while allowing the flexibility needed to take account of the great diversity of working environments. However the ISO Family Standard grid is designed to recognize short-term measures, those that allow parents to adapt to family obligations while maintaining their bond of employment. But the grid is silent on the programs and measures designed to allow parents to resume their career without being penalized forever due to their choice to have children and devote their time to them at the critical stage. We would not only like to correct this situation, but also see to it that employers have a greater interest in adhering to this new standard, and that the standard as such become better known in the job market.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 32

Help parents achieve their professional ambitions and:

32.1 Amend the Labour Standards Act to include a declaration on the duty of accommodation for parental and family obligations;

32.2 Add a fifth level to the Work-Family Balance standard developed by the Bureau de normalisation du Québec at the request of the Ministry of the Family. To qualify for this higher level would require the satisfaction of criteria intended to ensure real career advancement opportunities for women who have children. This level would entitle the employer to a tax holiday on the payment of contributions to the Health Services Fund;

2.3 Respond better to the needs of parents with unconventional schedules and working conditions

The development of daycare services has had a tremendous impact on family life by providing quality daycare and facilitating the pursuit of young mothers' professional careers.

Nevertheless, these services are basically only available during standard hours. Meanwhile, more and more parents have unconventional schedules.

Solutions could be put forward for better meeting those parents' needs without incurring additional costs for the State.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 33

Incorporate flexibility in the provision of daycare services, and:

- 33.1 Facilitate the establishment of workplace daycare centres, whether for the medium or large corporation or for a consortium of small companies located at or near the same physical location, by cutting back on wait times for approval;***
 - 33.2 Allow CPEs to extend their business hours if demand permits and allow them, for that sole purpose, to bill the extra costs to the parents who avail themselves of the extra service on a voluntary basis;***
 - 33.3 Allow municipalities to promote the creation of "transit daycares" by encouraging non-subsidized daycares to become established near commuter parking facilities and reserve access to parents who use public transit;***
-

2.4 Recognize today's realities

Quebec society is changing, and our multi-racial schools are a reflection of this change. In this environment where our future is being shaped, it is vital that we vehemently affirm our ideals of openness and respect. In recent years, instances of bullying and rejection have been reported, sometimes with dramatic consequences for the victims and perpetrators. There are also new forms, like cyber-bullying. We must firmly repudiate such occurrences and commit to preventing them.

Meanwhile, it is society that is sometimes ill-adapted to the reality of today's family. Thus, it is now common for children who are in shared custody to live part-time with one parent, and part-time with the other. However, for all practical purposes, it is impossible to obtain duplicates of State documents such as a health insurance card. School boards, amongst other examples, have adapted to such situations by sending a copy of the report card to both parents.

Also, a number of merchants and companies offer "family packages." However, the prevailing format is almost always two parents / two children, which results in a form of discrimination against "non-traditional" families, who have to pay more than the others.

We need to uphold our values and take action to facilitate the lives of parents.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 34

Protect those who are most vulnerable and recognize the realities of today's family, and:

- 34.1 Institute a new policy in the public education system to prevent all acts of physical and psychological violence and every form of intimidation, including cyber-bullying, and, in such instances, make sure that the victim's rights are protected;***
 - 34.2 Instruct agencies that issue official documents, such as the Régie de l'assurance maladie or the Directeur de l'état civil to deliver a duplicate health insurance card or birth certificate upon request;***
 - 34.3 Amend the Consumer Protection Act (CPA) so that merchants that promote family packages will make them available to any group of parents and their offspring, regardless of the number of offspring;***
-

2.5 Intensify early detection of learning disabilities and behavioural problems

The experts unanimously agree that the earlier a cognitive disability or behavioural problem is detected, the better the chances that the child will overcome it quickly and eventually succeed scholastically just like other children. In a 2008 study, Montreal's Public Health Department found that one in three children in Montreal starts grade one ill prepared. With early detection, parents could be better equipped for such problems and receive guidance for their child's progress.

At the infant stage, it is often the nurses and social workers assigned to prenatal care and infant follow-up who are in the best position to instil confidence in young parents about their skills, encourage exposure to reading and detect early signs of future learning disabilities.

Four-year-old kindergarten (K-4) has existed for 10 years and has proven itself in Montreal's and Quebec City's disadvantaged neighbourhoods. But it is not available everywhere, even in Montreal, much less in more remote centres. It is especially for children who have not yet attended daycare, for it allows those children to get used to group life in a structured context before they are exposed to it in five-year-old kindergarten, which all will attend.

Similarly, the Passe-Partout facilitation program, created by the Ministry of Education in 1978 and adapted in 2003 to the goals of educational reform, pursues a dual objective of helping people acquire parenting skills and preparing four-year-olds from disadvantaged backgrounds for kindergarten. Less intensive than K-4, this program, which relies on community involvement, has nevertheless proven itself.

Meanwhile, parents should also be made aware of their responsibility for stimulating their children, especially for sparking their interest in reading at a very early age, which later on is a factor for scholastic success in their mother tongue, and in every other subject.

PROPOSITION 35

Intensify early stimulation for reading and early detection of behavioural and language problems, and:

- 35.1 Substantially increase salaries for professionals who specialize in the detection and treatment of behavioural and language problems throughout the system and develop models by which daycare coordinating offices can access the services of remedial teachers and psychologists in private practice and in the CLSCs;***
 - 35.2 Offer upgrading courses to teachers and daycare workers on early detection and facilitate the development and sharing of expertise in the subject;***
 - 35.3 Expand access to four-year-old kindergarten, beginning with the neighbourhoods targeted by the disadvantaged communities map;***
 - 35.4 Continue and expand access to the Passe-Partout program for parents and children from disadvantaged backgrounds, develop a web-based tool analogous to the "Allô Prof" homework assistance service, but designed for parents, and encourage school boards to develop workshops for parents, to be held on weekends and in a more festive framework;***
 - 35.5 Give every child, as of birth, their own municipal library card providing free access;***
 - 35.6 Invite the nurses and social workers who visit young parents who have just had their first child to convey more information and advice to those parents about awakening an interest in reading, and take this opportunity to give every child their first book;***
-

2.6 Encourage alternatives to medication for hyperactive child

Although there are pharmaceutical treatment protocols for a diagnosis of ADD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder), the unfettered application of those protocols induces disparities from one school to another and also depending on the specialized resources available. Doctors and other professionals active in the school setting are short of time, and diagnoses are sometimes made too quickly. A child psychiatrist should take 45 minutes to diagnose a case of ADD requiring medication, but diagnoses are made in just five to ten minutes. However, a misdiagnosis can follow a child for a long time and have dramatic consequences on the child's learning and, ultimately, his or her active life.

Meanwhile, the number of resources in schools is not sufficient to properly follow students who are on medication and ensure effective monitoring. This lack of specialists can be explained both by the low number of graduates in that field and by the appeal of private practice, which is more financially rewarding.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 36

Provide support for parents of hyperactive children and a better medication framework, and:

- 36.1 Make professional development workshops available to educators in collaboration with the school's remedial teachers, to facilitate early detection and diagnosis;***
 - 36.2 Increase the availability of the medical staff assigned to evaluation and diagnosis in schools and daycare centres, so they can take the necessary time for the diagnosis using the best medical practices;***
 - 36.3 Encourage professionals working in the school system to give intervention plans, parental support and behavioural solutions a chance before prescribing in the case of an ambivalent diagnosis;***
 - 36.4 Adapt the daily school routine to make more room for dynamic activities that will allow children, especially boys, to expend their energy. In that regard, raise the tolerance level for more turbulent male activities in a recreational context;***
-

3- Sustainable development and renewable energy

The emergence of environmental awareness is probably one of the most important changes our societies have seen in the last 20 years.

Our relationship to the economy, consumption, transportation and our resources has been entirely transformed.

Since 2003, the government has been in tune with the citizens and truly repositioned Quebec, which is now emerging as a North American leader in sustainable development.

Its achievements in this realm are innumerable.

Thus, the QLP government has:

- Adopted a Sustainable Development Act, even amending the Charter of human rights and freedoms to guarantee the right to live in a healthy environment;
- Adopted a plan to fight climate change, lauded as one of the best in the world;
- Implemented a plan to develop clean and renewable energy, which will make Quebec a North American powerhouse; in particular, this plan has given rise to the windpower industry and it has been associated with an unprecedented initiative for the development of energy efficiency;
- Set greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction targets that are some of the most ambitious in the world; thus, in 2012 Quebec will be one of the only States in North America to meet the Kyoto Protocol targets; and when the Copenhagen Conference was held, it set a GHG reduction target of 20% by 2020. Since 1990, the reference year for the Kyoto Protocol, Quebec's population has increased by 10% and its GDP by 43%. However, during this period, Quebec has reduced its GHG emissions by 2%, including industrial reductions of 20% and real estate reductions by 5%. In the short interval since 2004, Quebec has reduced GHGs by 9.4%.
- Instituted the strictest antipollution standards for automobiles (California standards);
- Put a new forestry system in place which will ensure the sustainable exploitation of our forests;
- Introduced a public transit development plan, which has led to a 19% increase in available service, all within the three year period between 2006 and 2009;
- Introduced a plan promoting the shift to electric cars and the electrification of our public transit systems;
- Established a carbon market, in partnership with the most willing North American States; and
- Introduced the North Plan, the biggest sustainable development project in the world, announcing upon its introduction the creation of a new national park, the extension of protected areas and the sheltering from industrial development of half of the huge territory located north of the 49th parallel.

The combined effect of all these initiatives is to completely reposition Quebec and confirm it as one of the societies participating in the definition of a new way of living and growing.

To say that much has been done would be an understatement.

What is at stake is maintaining Quebec's leadership.

3.1 Break free of our dependence on petroleum products

Our steps towards sustainable development should reduce our dependence on oil. Quebec must still import all of its oil. The environmental impact is huge; so is the economic impact. No less than \$12 billion leaves Quebec every year to procure our fossil fuel. We make this a priority issue.

To reduce our dependence on imported fossil fuel, we have to act on every front:

- We need to use more replacement fuels;
- We need to convert equipment to other forms of energy; and
- We need to make use of our own hydrocarbon resources.

By working on these three aspects, we will consume and import less oil.

One avenue to be prioritized is the reclaiming of residual materials. Studies have shown that biogas produced by reclaiming putrescible materials could meet as much as 16% of the annual demand for natural gas in Quebec.

This biogas could be utilized in domestic and industrial heating equipment and in vehicles used for public transit or trucking.

Quebec has significant assets to succeed with this shift, starting with hydroelectricity, which enables the clean production of such biogas at a competitive cost. Quebec's territory is also suitable for the generation of energy from biomass.

The electrification of transportation is another way of reducing our dependence on oil.

Moreover, earlier this year, the government unveiled a huge plan for the electrification of transportation, which includes, most notably, the roll-out of recharging terminals in urban areas and the electrification of a number of commuter train corridors. The members of the task force have found it advisable to improve the plan by adding factors that push the envelope.

PROPOSITION 37

Initiate determined and sustained action to reduce oil consumption, replace oil, and convert equipment to other forms of energy, and:

- 37.1 Roll out a network of electrical charging terminals in Quebec's highway rest stops;***
 - 37.2 Change the Quebec Construction Code to require the installation of electrical charging terminals for vehicles in all new buildings or developments of a certain size;***
 - 37.3 Promote the conversion of heavy vehicles registered in Quebec to natural gas;***
 - 37.4 Authorize Hydro-Québec to finance the conversion of public transit equipment and facilities to electricity;***
 - 37.5 Develop an action plan for the exploitation of biomass, including forest residues and plants harvested for that purpose, to generate energy in industrial environments or remote areas, as a substitute for oil and gas;***
 - 37.6 Require that Hydro-Québec prioritize the supplemental supply of facilities generating fuel from residual materials, thus providing an opportunity for the energetic reclaiming of such materials, which would otherwise just be buried;***
 - 37.7 Allow Gaz Métro to sign long-term contracts with companies that transform residual materials for the transmission of the natural gas produced from residual materials;***
 - 37.8 Introduce regulations on minimum biogas content for all of the natural gas distributed in Quebec, similar to the Renewable Fuels Standard;***
 - 37.9 Offer all of Quebec's citizens living in urban areas an OPUS card containing a certain number of free passes so they can try it out;***
 - 37.10 Increase the availability of public transit in the regions by bringing the school bus fleet into play;***
-

In addition to helping lessen our dependence on oil imports, some of these propositions offer solutions to complex problems. The prevalence of biogas would thus, as a side benefit, convert what are now residual materials into jobs and wealth, while the electrification of transportation would also cut noise pollution, a nagging problem in urban centres.

Reducing our dependence on fossil fuel must become a priority, but we also need to recognize that we will still need fossil fuel for many years to come.

In this context, the right choices need to be made.

3.2 Responsible exploitation of our non-renewable resources

Quebecers believe, and rightly so, that the exploitation of natural resources, especially non-renewable ones, whether hydrocarbons or minerals, should benefit Quebec society and be carried on with respect for the host communities. Quebecers also want these resources transformed into intermediate or final products within Quebec's manufacturing sector, as is the case for the copper refined by Xstrata at its Valleyfield electrolysis plant, or the titanium dioxide extracted from the Rio Tinto mine in Havre-Saint-Pierre, which is transformed into pigment or a nutritional supplement at the Sorel metallurgical complex.

In the transformation of renewable resources, either from forests, the ocean or the land, Quebec has a long tradition and outstanding companies. With a wise blend of patience and firmness, it will be possible to do the same thing for minerals or hydrocarbons, thus maximizing the spinoff for Quebec while extending the benefits of the mining boom at the same time.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 38

To develop a separate royalty system for petroleum resources and commit to setting aside the net proceeds from such royalties into two equal shares: to build a reserve fund to deal with the financial impacts of a major environmental accident, and for a contribution to the Generations Fund;

3.3 Bring real estate into play

First begun on the U.S. west coast at the start of the new millennium, the LEED standard has now become the tool for promoting environmental performance in the real estate sector — a sector that is responsible for almost one-third of GHG emissions on the continent.

Unlike most other standards, like Energy Star, Boma Best or Green Globes, which are based on qualification thresholds, the certification levels (LEED, Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum) correspond to a weighted score attributed based on various criteria, covering not only effective energy performance but also the reduction of residual materials, proximity to materials production sites, urban mobility and public and alternative transportation, the reduction of wastewater treatment, and even the regulation of the dust produced by a construction site. Therefore, the LEED standard offers property managers more flexibility in choosing how best to reduce their ecological footprint.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 39

Reduce energy consumption in the real estate sector, and:

- 39.1 Instruct the Bureau de normalisation du Québec, in conjunction with the relevant ministries and agencies, to identify criteria adjusted to climatic constraints, environmental and urban issues so as to develop a standard equivalent to the LEED;***
 - 39.2 Encourage public administrations to set the example by adopting the LEED standard or its equivalent for the construction or renovation of their own properties;***
 - 39.3 Empower municipal administrations to promote the attainment of levels in excess of the equivalent to the LEED standard by using urban planning tools, such as various waivers (density premium), or a property tax rebate or tax holiday;***
-

The Société immobilière du Québec, which manages the Quebec government's own properties, has already adopted the LEED standard for a number of construction projects, notably the new police stations for the Sûreté du Québec. This is a movement that should be applauded and extended.

As a property owner and major lessee in the Quebec market, the government needs to set an example and lead the way to a carbon-free future.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 40

Set the example with public and government buildings, and:

- 40.1 Design and build government buildings so they will have "zero carbon emissions" as of the first day they open;***
 - 40.2 Set a goal for 2020 to replace, in all buildings, the main heating systems running primarily on fuel oil with systems that use renewable energy;***
 - 40.3 Give priority to space leases in buildings equipped with heating systems fuelled by a renewable energy source, by granting a preferential margin of 5% on the rent when calls for tenders are issued;***
 - 40.4 Prioritizing wood for the structure and cladding of public construction projects that lend themselves to that material and for which wood is the best environmental option;***
-

In conjunction with this commercial and institutional real estate goal, we need to push the boundaries for residential energy efficiency by financially supporting property owners when they buy cost-effective but expensive devices to realize significant savings on their electricity bill.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 41

Support residential property owners who want to invest in the energy efficiency of their home, and:

- 41.1 Create an energy efficiency fund for the owners of family residences and rental properties so they can recuperate the costs of the work and equipment related to energy efficiency from their savings on electricity. Accordingly, the electricity bill would remain unchanged unless and until the amounts saved have equalled the cost of the initial investment, for up to 10 years;***
 - 41.2 Foster the micro production of renewable energy by developing a smart energy distribution system for all new residential developments;***
 - 41.3 Develop pilot projects for solar and geothermal houses in an urban and rural setting to test their viability;***
-

3.4 Triple water royalties

Water is designated as the collective heritage of Quebecers in the Quebec Water Policy. The government, as steward, makes sure to preserve the value of water, which is vital to human health and our economy.

Today we are aware of the value of water and of our responsibility for its protection.

At the start of the year, the QLP government instituted a royalty system on the use of water by companies. Two rates apply: the higher one is charged to companies that bottle water and incorporate it into beverages or products; the lower one is charged to companies that use water for cleaning, cooling or other applications related to production. Although it is much higher than that of our neighbours, we believe this second rate is too low and does not reflect the real cost of the supply.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 42

To triple, over five years, the royalties on the volume of water used for production so as to bring them up to the level in effect for bottlers;

3.5 The social acceptability of investment projects

Some investment projects in the field of energy (i.e., gaz exploration) or the environment (i.e., waste disposal sites) have in the past met with significant opposition from nearby citizens.

We believe it is worthwhile to introduce new mechanisms to allow citizens to voice and characterize their concerns and see to it that projects are located where they are most readily accepted by local communities.

We think a reversed auction scheme could be a promising solution to allow the successful implementation of otherwise acceptable projects in environmental and social terms.

The scheme would work as follows : if, for instance, a dozen of communities share the features that would technically make them a suitable location for such a project, the elected leaders of those communities would be asked to consult their fellow citizens and propose to the project's promoter a suitable compensation amount, in exchange for which the community would accept to play host to the investment. The promoter would then commit to pay compensation equivalent to the lowest amount proposed and locate the project in the area featuring the lowest compensation bid. In this scenario, both parties can feel confident the compensation amount settled for is reasonable, and the project can be located in the one place where it is deemed the most acceptable. It is a solution worth exploring.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 43

Make selective use of the reverse auction mechanism in order to arrive at a fair compensation price, in the case of energy or environmental projects carrying risks or nuisances and that can be located in many settings;

4- Culture as a lever for asserting our identity... and prospering

Culture is Quebec's cornerstone. The first criterion for defining Quebec within Canada, North America and internationally, is that it is the only nation in America with a francophone majority.

This situation of a minority people, representing less than 2% of the continent's population, used to be viewed as fragile.

But the reality is something else altogether.

In their desire to uphold their language and culture, Quebecers have found a creative energy that has fuelled all aspects of our economic and social life. Quebecers are recognized worldwide as a creative people.

Like the Premier said during his inaugural speech on February 23, 2011, "Quebec is, for instance, Robert Lepage at New York's Metropolitan Opera, Danny Laferrière and the Prix Médicis, Arcade Fire dominating at the Grammy Awards, Denis Villeneuve and his film *Incendies* at the Oscars and Céline Dion back on stage in Las Vegas. We Quebecers are at home on the biggest stages in the world."

4.1 Culture creating wealth

Today our culture appears as a force, a way of standing out, a way of charming, a way of inventing.

Our culture is a source of wealth and prosperity and our artists' success resonates throughout Quebec, instilling in our entrepreneurs, researchers and industrialists a feeling of confidence and a determination to confront all challenges.

In recent years, the Quebec government has backed this policy to make culture a lever for prosperity.

It did so, most notably, through a remarkable project that laid the groundwork for a new wave of success: the construction of the Quartier des spectacles and the new concert hall for the Montreal Symphony Orchestra in the very heart of our metropolis.

These projects, which involved investments in excess of \$0.5 billion, have redesigned an entire section of downtown Montreal and created, in the heart of the city, one of the world's densest concentrations of artists, creators, and venues for presenting and creating cultural events.

The construction of the Quartier des spectacles and the concert hall, along with Place des arts and Place des festivals, the modern layout and lively fountains, has already put a new stamp on Montreal and materialized this vision of Montreal as a world-class cultural metropolis.

The government must continue to view culture as a factor in the creation of wealth.



PROPOSITION 44

Stimulate public and private investment in culture, and:

- 44.1 Continue to develop the Quartier des spectacles in Montreal;***
 - 44.2 Encourage greater private sector involvement in the financing of the arts and culture, either by improving the Placement Culture program or developing new incentives;***
-

4.2 Culture, Quebec's ambassador

Quebec artists who travel abroad are superb ambassadors for our society. The promotional and advertising impact for Quebec of a sold-out hall at the Olympia in Paris, or a palm at Cannes, benefits our entire society and opens doors for other Quebecers in other fields of activity.

It was on the strength of this conviction that the government took up the slack when the federal government abolished its support for the financing of international tours by our artists.

This initiative should be maintained and developed. We believe it advisable to organize more cultural missions abroad. Copied from the well established and successful trade mission model, the primary objective of these missions would be to foster cultural and artistic exchanges between Quebec and its foreign partners, primarily in the major artistic centres of the world. Through such cultural missions, many artists would find some doors open to them that would otherwise remain shut.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 45

Develop support for the presence of our artists abroad, and:

- 45.1 Make the resources granted to support international tours by Quebec artists permanent;***
 - 45.2 Develop these initiatives by granting Quebec companies that do business abroad the possibility of sponsoring certain artistic tours to heighten their importance;***
 - 45.3 Send cultural missions, modelled on our trade missions, to various major cultural centres of the world;***
-

4.3 Be better seen and better heard

Culture is our soul. Culture adds to our prosperity. By better spreading our culture we better affirm who we are. With the surge of the Internet and the advent of the digital age, new ways of spreading our culture are within our grasp.

WebTV is one phenomenon that is in full growth in Quebec and elsewhere in the world. For instance, look at the e-zine 33mag, the video blog le Tapis rose de Catherine and the digital wire service Webpresse. Since 2008, growth of the WebTV sector has been notable in Quebec as well as abroad. Moreover, a display of international and francophone content created exclusively for the Web, the WEBTV festival⁴, was recently organized in France. WebTV, as it evolves, could become an excellent tool for spreading and promoting Quebec's culture.

The government has undertaken to invest to help cultural organizations shift to digital. In the last Budget Speech, \$10 million was committed to support the digital broadcast of works by Quebec artists in the fields of cinema, music and variety programming.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 46

Broadcast our culture in the modern media, and:

- 46.1 Adapt Quebec's cultural policy to the digital age by revising all of the existing programs with a view to maximizing the exposure of our artists and their works on the Web and facilitate their digital broadcasting;***
 - 46.2 Work on developing first-rate Quebec expertise in the field of WebTV, initially targeting the international francophone market;***
 - 46.3 Implement measures to expand and expedite the digitization of our cultural heritage, like our libraries and museums, to make them accessible to the world and to all Quebecers, showcasing our culture and memory;***
-

4- <http://www.webtv-festival.tv/>

III

TAKING CARE
OF THOSE WE LOVE

1- A Quebec in good health

The QLP has always considered the Quebec healthcare system as a pillar of social justice. Historically, the key milestones on the path to our modern system have occurred under QLP governments. One needs only think of the establishment of universal coverage, thanks to hospital insurance, then medicare. These hallmarks of modern Quebec remain to this day a matter of pride for Quebecers and a distinctive feature of our society the world over.

Yet, in the mid- to late 1990's, the government of the PQ has taken decisions that have proven disastrous. Only in Montreal, seven hospitals were closed. Some 1500 physicians and 4200 nurses were forced into retirement. Quebecers were compelled to seek treatment in the United States by the hundreds. Furthermore, infrastructure was neglected across the whole network. When the QLP came to power, over 40,000 patients had been waiting for surgery for over six months. More than half cancer patients had to wait more than four weeks for their first radiation therapy treatments.

The QLP government has acted to rectify the situation. Since 2003, more than 11 billion dollars of new money was invested in the healthcare system. The number of admissions in medicine faculties has doubled, and 3 new teaching faculties have been opened. Investment in the upgrade of healthcare infrastructure jumped 1700%!

Thanks to this reinvestment, genuine progress was recorded. Overall, the number of people on a waiting list for surgery was cut in half. For cardiac surgery patients, the waiting list was reduced by 38%. Whereas some 26% of cataract surgery patients were on a waiting list, that is now true of only 4% of them. Finally, over 97% of cancer patients waiting for a first radiotherapy treatment get it within 4 weeks...and nobody needs to cross a border to get treatment.

The QLP government has made great strides in rebuilding the capacity and efficiency of the healthcare system. Nevertheless, trends such as population ageing and the increase in the birthrate have continued to create strong pressure on the network. Demand for care is still growing.

Whereas there were 2.2 million emergency visits in 2002, there were 3.5 million ER visits in 2010, a increase of nearly 60%. Since 2003, half a million people have been added to Quebec's population. Every year, an extra 50,000 people reach retirement age, and 8,000 seniors are no longer autonomous and need particular care.

New challenges are also emerging. Quebec, like many other western societies, is facing an epidemic of juvenile obesity, while some pollutants are exacerbating the increase in chronic diseases.

Continuous improvement in healthcare will require a new kind of medicine, one where patients are not so much cured once and for all so much as taken care of their whole life long, depending on

the health issues facing them and the family realities they live with. Improving access to a family physician remains a priority. As long as it remains the safe option, caring for elderly patients at home is what we need to mobilize efforts around. We must ceaselessly strive to support Quebec seniors, and keep them active and healthy for as long as possible.

For some vulnerable patients, proper care can prove more complex, and bring to bear the talents of a great many healthcare professionals. That is generally true of chronic patients, whose condition requires a great deal of care. Moreover, mental health problems are becoming more widespread, and call for exploring new models of continuous care and support. Finally, we need to attend to improving palliative care to provide everyone with dignity in their last days, free from suffering but close to their loved ones, in the most humane environment possible.

The healthcare system remains far and above the biggest spending item in the Quebec government's budget. It is therefore critical to always get value for money, which means a system that remains performant and responsive.

These are the issues we would like our fellow QLP members attending our convention to discuss and debate, and keep Quebec in good health.

1.1 For a Quebec opting for a healthy lifestyle

Of all the means we can deploy to keep Quebec healthy, the most effective ones will always be to keep Quebecers themselves in good health, by focusing efforts upstream of the apparition of disease, either to keep it at bay or to mitigate its effects otherwise. Getting the citizens of Quebec to make healthy lifestyle choices is the keystone to individual quality of life. Moreover, keeping disease at bay for the greatest possible number among us remains the best way to control cost increases in what remains by far the largest spending item in the government's budget.

When we look at the situation, we see that children in Quebec are more sedentary than they used to be, that many of our seniors unfortunately grow old in loneliness, and that our lifestyles have generated an increase in some atmospheric contaminants. This is why we believe it is crucial to entice Quebecers, young and old, to adopt healthier lifestyles so all of us can live long and healthy lives.

A healthy and active lifestyle

The manner in which we plan for the organization of our territory has a major impact to the health and quality of life of the citizens who live there. Urban planning decisions therefore should be made with a view to encourage active mobility: actually walking to the corner store nearly to buy a gallon of milk. In Quebec, more than one child in every four is suffering from obesity or is considered overweight. According to data from the National Public Health Institute of Quebec (INSPQ), the proportion of young Quebecers considered overweight has increased by 55% in the

5- Obésité chez l'enfant (<http://msss.gouv.qc.ca/sujets/santepub/nutrition/index.php>)

last 25 years, from 14.6% to 22.6% between 1978 and 2004 . The phenomenon has progressed so rapidly over the last decades that the WHO has called obesity a worldwide epidemic. In Quebec, for instance, some 55% of adults walk less than 60 minutes a week .

Whereas the Department of Education's five-year plan calls for the building of 20 new schools before 2015, we believe it is critical to design those new facilities with a view to enable safe and active mobility, as well as to plan for sports infrastructure that can accommodate more after school activities and physical education courses.

In addition, neighbourhoods where one can find plenty of bike paths, wide sidewalks, pedestrian streets, as well as easy access to services and shops, are generally neighbourhoods that exhibit a healthy and active lifestyle. Decisions regarding transportation and leisure facilities such as parks, playgrounds and swimming pools have an effect on the obesity statistics and the general well-being of citizens. We think those effects should be given greater consideration in planning decisions.

The immediate built environment matters, and not only when it comes to the prevalence of a sedentary lifestyle. It also has an impact on eating habits. In underprivileged neighbourhoods, one finds more fast food outlets and corner stores, and fewer public markets and grocery stores with a wider selection of healthy food. Correcting that would go a long way towards the adoption of an healthy lifestyle.

To stay healthy, one needs to stay active. That is a given. The WHO recommends 60 minutes of moderate to strenuous physical activity every day. In Quebec, 49% of girls and 26% of boys aged 6 to 11 do not meet that standard, according to self-reported data collected in 2004. Data from the Canadian Institute for Research on Physical Condition and Lifestyle show that only 34% of children walk or ride to school, as opposed to 80% back in 1971.

Currently, legislation calls for a recommendation of 120 minutes of physical education a week in every elementary and secondary school in Quebec. Yet an investigation by the Department of Education reveals that only 25% of School boards meet the required minimum. Time allocated to physical activity also tends to decline as children get older. Toddlers aged 4 or younger are out moving some 22 hours a week on average, but that diminishes to 15 hours for children aged 5 to 12, down to 7 hours for teenagers aged 13 to 17. Senior citizens also need to stay active to stay healthy. Whereas many medical conditions find their root cause in social isolation and a sedentary lifestyle, moving out of the house to take part in social activities does wonders for one's health. For many seniors, deprived of their own car for one reason or another, two factors can impede their desire to go out and about and break their isolation: money and personal mobility. The need to fork out, even a small amount, to get out of the house is enough to deter many seniors from doing so. Small obstacles to mobility need only be removed to make a significant difference in social isolation.

6- Mémoire portant sur l'avant-projet de Loi sur l'aménagement durable du territoire et l'urbanisme, réalisé par Coalition québécoise sur la problématique du poids et le Centre d'écologie urbaine de Montréal, Avril 2011

PROPOSITION 47

Implement a series of measures to enable the widespread adoption of an active and healthy lifestyle, and:

- 47.1 Make sure that new schools are built in the cores of well-provided neighbourhoods and located so that most students can safely walk or ride their bicycles to school;***
 - 47.2 Make sure, in the context of the ongoing reform of the Sustainable Urban Planning Act, that planning regulations enacted by municipalities take full account of the importance of active mobility, so walking and riding in the neighbourhood is safe and pleasurable;***
 - 47.3 Encourage the development of multifunctional neighbourhoods where everyone can purchase everyday items without using a car;***
 - 47.4 Seek to improve access to healthy food in neighbourhoods that are not well provided for in this respect;***
 - 47.5 Increase the amount of time dedicated to physical activity in elementary and secondary schools;***
 - 47.6 Implement a free transit scheme for seniors in urban areas;***
 - 47.7 Establish a parking vignette for temporary disability;***
-

Grassroots prevention

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. The old dictum is truer than ever nowadays. Sensible preventive measures help reduce the number of potential patients requiring evermore expensive treatments. In an economic context where healthcare spending is the biggest spending item in the government's budget, and where the most expensive interventions yield to preventative measures, investing in prevention is the best way to improve the quality of life of all Quebecers and preserve the disposable income of all taxpayers.

When it comes to prevention, physicians have a critical role to play, given their know-how and expertise. When a doctor tells a patient that he should seriously consider changing habits, exercising more and staying away from certain foods to avoid health problems in the future, this advice will carry more weight than almost any other, coming from anybody else.

In the workplace, prevention is often best achieved through Employee Help Programs (PAE). High level of stress in the workplace can lead to mental health problems, which in turn are associated with much higher levels of psychological distress, loss of productivity and absenteeism. In 2006, a typical full-time worker in Quebec failed to show up for work for health reasons an average of 9.3 days a year, 30% more than in the rest of Canada . Employee Help Programs are therefore valuable to employees and employers alike, but the cost of setting one up is often prohibitive for small and medium-sized businesses. This is why we would like the government explore options whereby such programs could be financed and operated on behalf of a group of small firms.

7- [Report of the taskforce on healthcare financing](#)
(Castonguay Report), 2008

Improving the healthcare system will also mean more prevention with regards to senior citizens. While a large majority of retired and elderly people live their years in perfect health, not all healthy seniors can shake off negative thoughts about feeling no longer useful to loved ones and society at large, and such can sometimes lead to tragic outcomes, such as depression and suicidal thoughts. This is why we believe there are myriad small changes to structures, policies and methods that would enable seniors willing to do so to contribute to society thorough out their retirement years. The « Senior-friendly Cities » (MADA) scheme is a case in point. Today, some 179 municipalities across Quebec rally around a program aimed at listening to seniors, combating age discrimination and making adjustments across a range of features, from housing to leisure to the amount of seconds available to cross over a busy intersection, so seniors can live an active life.

Recently, the government has launched the «Senior-friendly Hospitals » scheme, inspired by the same concept. The initiative is a brainchild of the McGill University Health Centre, and focuses on reducing the incidence of dementia and loss of autonomy following surgery. It also seeks to make adjustments to standard procedures to account for the special needs of seniors, such as new tools to monitor loss of autonomy, more frequent hydration and getting hospitalized but mobile seniors to walk more often.

Moreover, whether they live at home, in a seniors' home or a nursing home, seniors must go on taking good care of themselves. Some gentle reminders can do a lot of good, especially with respect to oral hygiene. Many seniors who wear dentures feel, wrongly, that they no longer need to pay as much attention to oral and dental health.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 48

Deploy prevention measures to improve the well-being of Quebecers and:

- 48.1 Allow physicians more leeway in the use of their professional time so they can participate directly in certain prevention initiatives targeting, among others, newly diagnosed chronic patients, employees in at risk workplaces and schools in underprivileged areas;***
- 48.2 Enable groups of small and medium-sized businesses to set up a collective Employee Help Program so as to improve monitoring and prevention of mental health disorders;***
- 48.3 Pursue the efforts to develop senior-friendly hospitals, inspired by the senior-friendly cities model, and enable hospitals to offer seniors specific support services;***
- 48.4 Promote more frequent visits by specialized practicing nurses in private and public nursing homes and in seniors' homes catering to a certain number of intermediary resources (RI) patients;***
- 48.5 Develop a new set of incentives to allow dental hygienists to make home visits and more frequent visits in nursing homes and seniors' homes, for the purpose of offering basic care and prevention, and referrals as need be;***

Rooting out obesity and respiratory diseases

Health promotion and prevention go beyond individual habits: we can improve environmental quality to stop some diseases in their track. That is especially true of air quality. In 2006, a study conducted to assess respiratory health in Montreal children aged 6 months to 12 years old by the Health and Social Services Agency in Montreal showed that environmental factors had a direct impact on the incidence of asthma, allergic rhinitis and respiratory infections. The 2002 Montreal Island health record indicates that poor air quality accounted for over 1,500 premature deaths, 400 of which linked to pollution peaks, the remaining 900 to chronic exposition. Moreover, in urban areas, paved over areas are taking over zones of vegetation, which increases the density of heat urban islands. It has been demonstrated that heat islands lead to excess fatalities during heat waves. In 1987, 1994 and 2002, 100 premature deaths have been recorded over a 48-hour period.

Living in close proximity to dense automobile traffic increases the risk of respiratory disease. The Montreal HSSA concluded in a study that death for cardiovascular disease increased 53% among people 55 to 77 who live within 100 metres of a busy highway. A increase of 21% in the rate of hospitalization for respiratory ailments has also been noticed among people over 60. In a 200 metre radius near busy thoroughfares, the number of low birth weight babies spikes 17%.

Another study, by the World Health Organization, reveals a close link between respiratory ailments and excess humidity, often in association with mould infestation. Most cases of water infiltration and fungal contamination lead to visible mould result from poor building maintenance, especially in the case of those with flat roofs.

In addition to fatty foods, energy drinks are among the least recommendable food for young people. They contain vast amounts of caffeine, to which children and teenagers are more sensitive. These drinks are linked to worrisome symptoms, such as anxiety, cardiac palpitations, sleep disorders, high blood pressure and others. Unfortunately, those products are appealing to their targeted young audience, thanks to slick advertising, taste and reasonably low prices.

Over 20 studies carried out in high income countries support the general conclusion that taxing certain food items at a higher rate has a significant impact on consumption patterns, and in the desired direction. The higher the tax, the deeper the changes in consumption habits, and therefore the bigger the impact on body mass and disease prevention .

PROPOSITION 49

Establish new rules and practices to improve quality of life and promote healthy lifestyles, and:

- 49.1 Work to reduce the most noxious forms of air pollution at the source, beginning with the reduction in dense automobile traffic in proximity to residential areas;*
 - 49.2 Work in concert with large Quebec cities to reduce the impact of urban heat islands, for instance by increasing the proportion of white roofs ;*
 - 49.2 Ban henceforth the building of any residential dwelling within 200 metres of a highway;*
 - 49.3 Properly document mould infestation in flat roof residential buildings and develop a strategy to mitigate the consequences (asthma and other respiratory diseases);*
 - 49.4 Insist that a health impact study be conducted for major investment projects liable to contribute large quantities of noxious atmospheric emissions;*
 - 49.5 Levy a tax on soft drinks and energy drinks, used to finance initiatives related to healthy lifestyles for young people;*
-

2- A medicine of caring for all Quebecers

Caring for someone means a commitment to take care of someone for the long haul and in all aspects of his well-being, in both preventive and curative dimensions. It also means simple and efficient access to the right healthcare professional, who will provide the best treatment and advice at the opportune time. The great challenge ahead to improve caring medicine is to see to it that the whole system is centered on each patient, and in accordance with each patient's medical condition and socio-economic realities.

Caring starts with the family physician. The number of Quebecers with their own family physician is constantly growing in Quebec, thanks notably to the deployment of Family Medicine Groups, all of them practicing medicine centered on the patient. Work is organized to guarantee comprehensive caring and teamwork.

We believe we also need to expand home visits by physicians and strengthen homecare. Keeping patients living at home, while improving the patient's well-being, has a huge positive impact on cost control in the system. To make it happen, though, support and follow-up services need to be in place. Patients suffering from chronic diseases are susceptible to consume vast amounts of healthcare services. For instance, in the Laurentians region, studies found that a group of patients making up 3% of the population accounted for 50% of all the region acute care hospital beds . Studies conducted by the Quebec Statistical Institute reveals that 30% of Quebecers aged 12 and older suffer from a chronic disease . The number of people suffering from multiple chronic diseases is on the upswing : 13.7% of Quebecers say they suffer from at least two. Their condition typically requires the involvement of numerous healthcare professionals and much closer monitoring. Improving those people's health and well-being will demand a coordinated approach to both medical and social interventions.

This kind of comprehensive medicine of caring is the avenue of solution if we wish to optimize the performance of the healthcare network, while keeping costs under control.

2.1 Family Medicine Groups

FMGs have been set up by the government of Quebec following one of the key recommendations in the report of Health and Social Services Inquiry Commission (Clair Commission). The objective of FMGs is to improve access to a family physician in particular, and quality of care in general.

Despite the difficulties citizens encounter in finding a family physician, the ratio of family physician to 100,000 people is higher in Quebec than in most Canadian provinces, as the following table illustrates .

9- Point de repère Express, volume 3 numéro 14, octobre 2008, Projet Défi Santé – CSSS des Sommets

10- Maladies chroniques au Québec et au Canada : évolution récente et comparaisons régionales, ISQ, 2009

11- La pénurie réelle ou ressentie de médecins de famille au Québec (<http://www.cfo.ca/content/53/11/1871.full>) | Le médecin de famille, vol.53, novembre 2007

People 12 years and older without family physicians in Canada in 2005

LOCATION	TOTAL POPULATION (000 000)	RESIDENTS WITHOUT FAMILY PHYSICIANS (%)	NO. OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS PER 100 000 POPULATION*
Québec	7598	25,1	109
Alberta	3257	17,6	102
Manitoba	1178	16,1	94
Saskatchewan	994	15,7	89
Newfoundland and Labrador	516	12,8	99
British Columbia	4255	11,0	111
Prince-Edward Island	138	10,3	89
Ontario	12541	8,9	85
New Brunswick	752	6,7	102
Nova Scotia	938	5,4	118
Canada not including Quebec	24673	10,95	94
All of Canada	32271	-	98

* Canadian Institute for Health Information.1 Data from Statistics Canada, June 2006.

In 2005, one Quebecer out of every four did not have a family physician. In 2007, the proportion had already improved to one out of five. Efforts by the government of Quebec to keep improving access to a family physician are progressing in the right direction, and a good part of the improvement is to be credited to the creation of FMGs.

In 2011, there were 224 accredited FMGs in Quebec. These healthcare teams are the main portal into the healthcare network for a million and a half Quebecers. Their role is a critical one. "A patient without a family physician is often compelled to seek a consultation in hospital emergency wards, which explains why more than half of consultations in emergency wards are not in fact urgent. Yet, such visits are five to ten times more costly to the government than similar consultations with a family physician in his private office".

12- Qui n'a pas un médecin de famille au Québec?, Institut de la statistique du Québec, octobre 2008

13- La pénurie réelle ou ressentie de médecins de famille au Québec (<http://www.cfp.ca/content/53/11/1871.full>) |Le médecin de famille, vol 53, novembre 2007

PROPOSITION 50

Keep improving access to a family physician and better coordination of services, and:

50.1 Encourage, through financial incentives, the sharing of services and caseloads among many physicians, both to improve care and avoid patients finding themselves without access to a physician for too long;

50.2 Complete the Family Medicine Groups Network : 300 accredited FMGs by 2013;

2.2 Homecare

Quebecers would much prefer being cared for at home, in familiar surroundings. That is perfectly understandable. Close to their loved ones, people feel more secure, and a familiar environment diminishes stress and improves the speed of recovery. Homecare is also the financially sensible alternative, since it costs \$969 a day to treat someone in a Quebec hospital on average, compared to \$247 a day in a nursing home, and \$70 at home .

If we want doctors to make more frequent house calls, the whole service must be properly networked with the CSSS in a collaborative endeavor. In this fashion, it would be possible to establish priorities for house calls in every region, based on the most urgent and appropriate cases, especially patients who are not mobile.

In impoverished neighborhoods or in situations where there are no peers or relatives to provide support, complementary visits could be undertaken by other healthcare professionals, such as social workers, dieticians or relevant community organizations. Such visits would provide for better monitoring without exacting more demand on physician's time. Needless to say, the infrastructure necessary for more home visits must be implemented without subtracting from the volume of services available in hospital and clinical settings.

Moreover, compensation needs to be modified in order to enable more home visits and the development of a medicine of comprehensive caring. Time needed to move around and conduct follow-up consultations over the phone are time-consuming and caseload-reducing activities that are not financially rewarding in the existing fee-for-service system.

As a result, caring medicine, especially for the vulnerable patients who would benefit the most from it, is not something most physicians are attracted to. The latter, compelled to spend 12 hours a week or the equivalent, meeting the requirements of particular medical activities (AMP), which are not established under current legislation to give priority to caring medicine, house calls and homecare.

14- Le Devoir, 13 mai 2011, À la défense de la santé des Québécois

15- Médecins de 0 à 15 ans d'expérience : 12 h / sem. Médecins de 15 à 20 ans d'expérience : 6 h / sem. Médecins de plus de 20 ans de pratique : effectue une partie de sa pratique dans les secteurs reconnus comme prioritaires.

Presently, most homecare services are handled by CLSCs. Depending on the resources available in every region, such services are sometimes outsourced to private organizations through service agreements with the public sector. When it comes to homecare, a number of community organizations are also involved. In order that citizens, patients and healthcare professionals have a better sense of what is available where, we believe it is important that all homecare services be entrusted to CLSCs, so that operations can be coordinated and centralized.

To improve on the management of homecare services, efficient information sharing is critical. In many areas, especially for homecare, progress is closely linked to the development of technology. Domotics, for instance, helps with homecare by helping make residential dwellings more secure at a reasonable cost. A study conducted in Corrèze with over a hundred patients revealed that installing the right devices in the home was enough to reduce the number of falls by 30%. Whenever new devices and technologies can make a difference, we need to implement tools that will allow for rapid evaluation and dissemination of relevant information.

Information sharing is not limited to healthcare professionals. One of the key players in the success of homecare remains the individual caregiver, friends or relatives who provide a great deal of support on a private and volunteer basis. Recently, the QLP government has announced the opening of 8 "caregiver centres", the first phase in the development of a network of 20 such facilities across Quebec. On location, caregivers will be able to find information about the tax credits they are eligible to, obtain the support of a psychologist and talk to a practicing or clinical nurse to receive personalized advice about the symptoms of the patient and the ways to alleviate them. In other words, practical first line care advice.

Caregivers also need to be able to find information, psychological support and a period or rest beyond the opening hours of the caregiver centres. Not unlike the Info-Health phone service available to the general population, which guides, informs and reassures, we believe a similar and distinct service should be provided to caregivers.

This is why we propose that a QLP government...

PROPOSITION 51

Support homecare and the healthcare professionals who provide homecare services, and:

51.1 Promote and support, across the territory of Quebec, home consultations and visits by physicians, targeted at vulnerable patients, notably those unable to move on their own or especially vulnerable to hospital infections;

51.1.1 See that those services are properly coordinated with the relevant Health and Social Services Centres (CSSS) so that home visits are focused on patients identified as chronic or vulnerable patients;

51.1.2 Make sure that social workers, dieticians, kinesiology professionals and community organizations can contribute with interventions in situations where living conditions are inadequate or social support networks are absent;

- 51.1.3** *Make sure home consultations are complementary to the current global provision of physician services, and that they do not subtract from the volume of consultations available in clinics and hospital settings;*
- 51.2** *Improve the compensation of physicians making home consultations and providing homecare services, so as to account for transportation time and consequently a reduced caseload;*
- 51.3** *Give greater importance to home consultations and homecare services within the priority list of particular medical activities (AMP);*
- 51.4** *Make sure that the responsibility for homecare be exclusively attributed to CLSCs across Quebec, increase the volume of services to improve the frequency and duration of visits as well as to increase the number of people being cared for, and do so through budget reallocation and in the context of efficient networking, reference and follow-up;*
- 51.5** *Establish a centralized information and evaluation centre, aimed at healthcare professionals, so they can provide better advice on technological devices that enable homecare, especially in the area of domotics;*
- 51.6** *Improve support to caregivers, with better opportunity for weekly relief and the establishment of a direct telephone helpline;*
-

2.3 Seniors

The government has adopted many initiatives to highlight the contribution of active seniors to Quebec society. In his last inaugural address, the Prime Minister has announced the upcoming unveiling of a “growing old at home” policy featuring a number of adjustments to current practices.

In this respect, we believe one of the key issues is to break the social isolation many seniors are confronting. This is especially important when seniors are released from hospital and go back home, where they may often be left to their own devices.

When the social network of a senior is limited and few people ever pay them a visit, there is a high risk that a senior will drift towards self-neglect.

In addition to this private network of support, there are accessible resources on offer, but most seniors are not aware of them. The local pharmacist, for instance, is a credible and trustworthy source of expertise when it comes to medication, and pharmacists are often the most accessible healthcare professionals. Pharmacists are, after all, trained clinicians. Thanks to collective prescriptions, pharmacists could adjust prescriptions on their own initiative, visiting some patients at home to provide advice on medication management .

PROPOSITION 52

To provide adequate support and monitoring to senior citizens with health problems, and:

52.1 Set up systematic monitoring of the presence of a network of social support or established homecare services for all seniors leaving hospital following a major intervention;

52.2 Reinforce the role of pharmacists as first line providers towards senior citizens with health problems, notably with home visits to help with medication management and surveillance;

2.4 Caring for chronic patients

Caring for vulnerable patients, as we saw, is not currently considered a priority particular medical activity. Indeed, that option only becomes available to physicians once staffing requirements have been met for the four priority activities (emergency, hospital, services for homecare, readaptation centres or nursing homes, and obstetrics). Caring for chronic patients needs to move up the priority list.

Moreover, caring for vulnerable patients requires more time for the physician: follow-up consultations over the phone, coordination with other professionals, drafting clinical notes, filling forms and renewing prescriptions, in addition to traditional tasks. All of those tasks are time-consuming, but not reflected in the way physicians are paid. It is no surprise, therefore, that newly-minted family physicians consider taking on vulnerable patients is demanding and unrewarding.

Compensation conditions are not the only obstacle to improved caring for vulnerable patients. We need to rethink practices to make better use of available resources without driving up costs. The CSSS des Sommets provides a great example of what new methods can deliver. In a context of acute shortages, the HSSC set up a pilot project, the Défi-Santé project. The core objective of the project is to offer "personalized and comprehensive services to patients whose deteriorating health condition leads them to require emergency and other hospital medical services on a regular and repeating basis ". The project called for the establishment of alternatives to hospitalization and a different structure: a home visit clearinghouse, new hospital stays management systems, the introduction of a "complex case manager" position within the team, the sharing of expertise among professionals and of information contained in the patient file. After 9 months of implementation, the results speak for themselves: among the 200 participating patients, the percentage of ER visits went down from 5.3% to 1.6%, and the occurrence of hospital stays from 11.5% to 3% .

17- La collaboration avec une infirmière et un pharmacien, Le Médecin du Québec, volume 46, numéro 2, février 2011

18- Point de repère Express, volume 3 numéro 14, octobre 2008, Proj. Défi-Santé CSSS des Sommets

The most notable innovation to improve monitoring and follow-up as part of Défi-Santé, one that was critical in developing a customized action plan for every patient, is the complex case manager position .

This is why we propose that a QLP government...

PROPOSITION 53

Improve work practices and the rules regarding treatment and care of chronic diseases, and:

- 53.1 Adjust the classification and hierarchy of particular medical activities (AMP) so as to increase the importance of taking responsibility for patients requiring a great amount of continuous care;***
 - 53.2 Modify the fee structure for medical acts associated with the responsibility for chronic care patients and patients requiring a great amount of continuous care, so as to make it more financially attractive;***
 - 53.3 Deploy a comprehensive package of multidisciplinary services aimed at chronic care patients in all regions of Quebec, inspired by the pilot-project of the CSSS des Sommets and the CSSS de Gatineau among others;***
 - 53.4 Establish « care broker » or « complex case manager » positions in all Health and Social Services Centres (CSSS), for healthcare professionals who will be responsible for the personalized supervision of chronic care patients;***
-

2.5 Mental health

A number of epidemiological studies have been conducted around the world in recent years, all pointing in the same worrisome direction: mental health disorders are becoming more common and represent a major cause of disability. Among the most prevalent problems are depression and anxiety disorders. According to the World Health Organization, "first line mental health interventions yield satisfying results in the case of anxiety and depression, as well as alcohol dependence ". Despite this, in Quebec now, most mental health disorders are handled in the second line.

Extent of mental health disorders in Quebec

- Nearly 8% of people aged 12 and older has suffered a major depression period over a 12 month period;
- Approximately 3% of Quebecers entertain serious suicidal thoughts;
- Some 1,300 people die every year from suicide in Quebec. Death by suicide is three to four times higher for men than for women. From 2000 to 2002, Quebec had the highest suicide rate in Canada;
- Some 28% of people aged 15 and older suffer from a high level of daily stress, while some 14.4% of people aged 12 and older lack social support.

19- Point de repère Express, volume 3 numéro 14, octobre 2008, Projet Défi Santé – CSSS des Sommets

20- Point de repère Express, volume 3 numéro 14, octobre 2008, Projet Défi Santé – CSSS des Sommets

21- Site web de l'OMS (<http://www.who.int/fr/>)

22- Avis scientifique sur les interventions efficaces en promotion de la santé mentale et en prévention des troubles mentaux, INSPQ

In looking at most studies dealing with patients who have consulted for a mental health problem, it becomes obvious that their first point of contact with the healthcare system is through a family physician. A number of studies have estimated that some 20% to 25% of patients making up a physician's caseload consult for mental health issues.

Therefore, physicians need better continuous training, while specialists and specialized institutions need to become more accessible. Around the world, the most promising examples and best practices tend to be focused on teamwork and the sharing of information among experts. In Australia, where mental health became a major issue, a national foundation was set up to cater to youth aged 12 to 25, called Headspace Centres. These comprehensive services units, established in the community, unite social workers, nurses, psychiatrists, psychologists and physicians.

Caring for youth with mental health problems requires good collaboration and information sharing with schools as well. In every school, there should be an efficient referral system whereby competent observers can refer a child with special needs to additional help. This is particularly true in cases where cognitive or motor impairment is light, or behavioral difficulties subtle, and where important clues are often missed.

In Quebec, there are a number of community organizations involved in the area of mental health. They have a role to play in the deployment of comprehensive services units. They have expertise and resources to help physicians with referral, and they can set up meetings and relationships between patients and a supporting peer. It is therefore critical that such organizations can continue to rely on sufficient funding to carry out their missions.

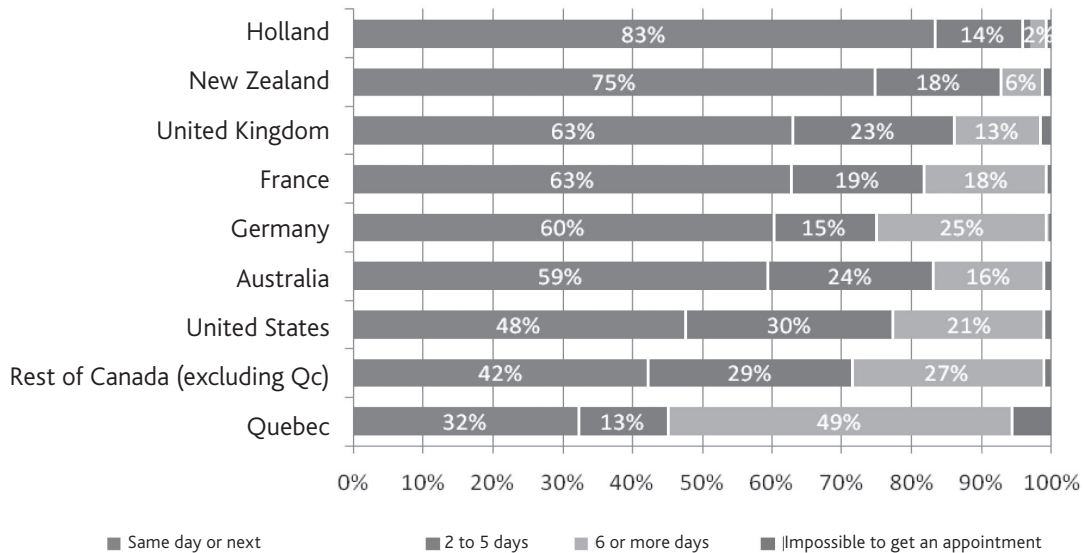
For people coping with mental health problems, the presence of a supporting peer can make a big difference. In most cases, patients want to remain in control of their lives, learn to cope with the disease and preserve their autonomy. Proof that this model works comes, among other sources, the ADAM program targeted at social anxiety and panic disorders. It consists of group sessions and self-treatment with the help of a supporting peer.

Mental health cries out for more teamwork and interdisciplinary collaboration. In practice, though, most psychologists act as second-line specialists. Patients go to a psychologist following referral by a family physician, and in most instances consultations are not covered by insurance, and therefore less accessible.

Yet Quebec accounts for half of all psychologists in Canada: the Quebec order boasts over 8,000 members. If only a fraction of them were transferred on medicare's payroll, their services would be free for patients and it would be easier for physicians to work along the lines of an interdisciplinary model. Such medicare psychologists would offer first line services and provide support to physicians and FMGs.

In this way, patients could either start treatment with the psychologist, or be quickly referred to the appropriate resource in the second line. Either way, waiting time would go down.

Time span between front line consultation and appointment with mental health care specialist



Source: *The Health and Welfare Commissioner and Commonwealth Fund 2008*

In Quebec, there have been two main waves of de-institutionalization, a first one in the 1960's, and a second in the '70s. The whole movement was meant to break with the de-humanizing influences and patterns that were felt to characterize mental institutions at the time. De-institutionalization was inspired by a philosophy that put the emphasis on individual liberties.

Yet, the truth of the matter is that some mental health patients require a more rigorous monitoring framework by healthcare professionals in order to cope with the disease. In practice, de-institutionalization left this task to street workers. For some homeless people suffering from mental health disorders, that is simply not enough.

Montreal streets are home to a fairly large number of homeless people. In 1987, the Canadian Council for Social Development estimated that some 40% to 50% of Montreal's 10,000 homeless people suffered from a mental health problem – 10% with a severe one. In fact, homelessness and mental health problems are closely linked, both as a result of substance abuse and of de-institutionalization. Infrastructure to shelter, monitor and care for these people needs to be built.

23- Note au ministre, MSSS

24- Publication du MSSS, Annexe 1, 35 ans de désinstitutionalisation au Québec 1961-1996.

25- Idem

PROPOSITION 54

Implement a series of measures aimed at improving services to mental health patients, and:

- 54.1 Improve continuing education on mental health for family physicians;***
 - 54.2 Develop community-base comprehensive multidisciplinary services, in collaboration with schools and school boards, so as to offer better support to young Quebecers dealing with mental health or substance abuse problems;***
 - 54.3 Provide for the rapid referral of the most severe cases of learning and behaviour difficulties (EHDA) to such comprehensive services units;***
 - 54.4 Provide increased and stable financing to non-profit organizations active in mental health support in all regions of Quebec, and offering supporting peer services;***
 - 54.5 Implement supporting peer mentorship programs, where newly diagnosed mental health patients can be matched with a peer who has suffered from the same problems and be helped with managing the disease (heed warning signals, following medication rules, break social isolation, maintain self-esteem, etc.);***
 - 54.6 Assess the feasibility of transferring a number of psychologists from private practice to medicare coverage, in order to improve access to psychological services to relevant patients by making them available in hospitals, Family Medicine Groups and clinics;***
 - 54.7 Establish supervised accommodation in urban areas for people who require constant supervision, in collaboration with homeless shelters and the psychiatric wards of urban hospitals (100 to 125 units in Montreal);***
-

2.6 Palliative care

Ideally, palliative care should be provided in a calm environment, where all unnecessary sources of stress for the patient have been removed. In hospital palliative care units, which must meet with particular organizational standards, admitted patients typically feature a survival prognosis below two months.

There is a pressing need to develop improved homecare services for seniors aged 85 and over to avoid long stays in nursing homes.

Beyond that, an efficient palliative care network could make a significant contribution in reducing the frequency and duration of hospital stays by elderly patients in their last year of life.

Moreover, hospital beds destined for short-term acute care do not constitute ideal settings for palliative care. First, the limited number of beds is barely meeting general demand, Second, the lack of available rooms may spill over into hospital corridors, creating another source of stress for the patient.

From 1997 to 2001, among all adults susceptible to require palliative care, over one in four (28.4%) was hospitalized for over two weeks in a general hospital, while 9.5% had two or more such hospital stays .

Homecare for people in the end of their lives would be the ideal solution for most but, depending on the condition and needs of each patient, may not always be viable. Often, the most suitable solution is a palliative care home a residential-like facility where proper medical care can be organized. In November of 2010, there were 27 such homes in Quebec, and 7 more under development. This number remains too low to meet the demands of an ageing population, especially given the increased incidence of such chronic diseases as diabetes, thyroid disorders, high blood pressure and arthritis .

There are 18 administrative regions in the Quebec healthcare network. In the medium term, we believe the government should increase the number of dedicated palliative care beds and the number of palliative care homes in all regions. It should also organize and deploy mobile multidisciplinary teams to make the palliative homecare alternative a reality.

27- Soins palliatifs de fin de vie au Québec : définitions et mesures d'indicateurs, partie 1, INSPQ, mars 2006

28- Idem

29- Maladies chroniques au Québec et au Canada : évolution récente et comparaison régionales, ISQ, janvier 2009

This is why we propose that a QLP government...

PROPOSITION 55

Improve and increase palliative care services in all regions of Quebec, and:

- 55.1 Substantially reduce the occurrence and duration of stays in hospital palliative care units, opting instead for palliative care at home, or stays in dedicated palliative care homes;***
 - 55.2 Eliminate situations where patients requiring palliative care are cared for in hospital wards designed for short term care;***
 - 55.3 Develop a plan whereby the number of dedicated palliative care beds would be increased in all regions, and establish multidisciplinary home palliative care teams in every region;***
-

3- An innovative, responsive and performing healthcare system

The healthcare system occupies a large portion of Quebec's provincial budget; a portion that has long experienced unsustainable spending growth to the detriment of the State's other missions. Colossal efforts were made over the last few years to better control costs related to healthcare and assure the system's continued existence without jeopardizing other state endeavors. In such a spirit, better management systems were implanted in the regions of Quebec in order to maximize resources by, for example, better coordination through Health and Social Service Centres. The number of union accreditation units has also been rationed, while respecting healthcare workers, which significantly simplified labour relations and reduced the management costs related to them. As a result, more than 765 million dollars will be saved in various bureaucratic expenses over the course of three years, from 2009-2010 to 2011-2012. In such a manner, costs related to the health system are contained and its sustainability assured.

What matters now is to optimize the Quebec healthcare system by, notably, facilitating the coordination of different complimentary resources (IPS, pharmacists, community organizations), and by the implementation of training and support in information exchange for both healthcare professionals and citizens.

By encouraging a better level of cooperation between different health care professionals, the government will be able to provide the province of Quebec with a health care system that is more performing, responsive and better able to respond to Quebec society's current and future issues.

3.1 A better performing healthcare network

In order to assure the high performance of Quebec's health care system, it is essential to have the means and tools to measure the performance of the establishments that compose it in order to identify its most costly operations as well as its strengths. A model developed by the University of Montreal's Institute for public health research (IRSPUM) was used by Quebec's Association of health and social services establishments (AQESS) in order to complete a global and integrated evaluation of the health care system, essentially of Quebec's Health and Social Service Centres from 2007 to 2009. This initiative, which represents the first step of a more systematic evaluation of the system, should eventually come to include all of our health care system's establishments: CSSS, hospital, teaching hospitals and Institutes. In a context in which our healthcare system represents the government's largest budget item, the use of a standardized model for the evaluation of our public system would enable the government to recognize its strengths and weaknesses and to improve its efficiency accordingly.

Moreover, the need for access to continuing education and for interdisciplinary work were addressed in the previous chapters as a means to better take care of vulnerable patients as well as to assure the provision of quality mental health and geriatric services. The same applies to all areas of patient care in a global perspective network efficiency. Health care professionals must be able to exchange with their colleagues and have easy and constant access to adequate training in order to stay on top of the network's best practices and most recent innovations, and make use of them as need be.

The population of Quebec must also have quick, easy and constant access to information. In this respect, the government has already put in place the Info-Santé service, or 811 helpline. In order to

30- Rapport d'évaluation globale et intégrée de la performance 2011, Centres de santé et de services sociaux données 2008-2009, AQESS

assure the proper understanding and full use of this service, a major advertising campaign should be carried out. Moreover, we need to make sure that the service is guiding people towards resources while taking into account the resource provider's capacity to adequately supply the appropriate services.

Additional communication and support efforts should be made amongst Quebec's newly arrived immigrants who do not yet have a full command of French, in order to ensure them full access to the province's healthcare system. In order to improve the treatment of immigrant patients, partnerships could be established with community organizations able to provide translators during consultations at any given time.

Lastly, in order to assure the better performance of our network of health and social service providers, it is necessary to clearly designate the role each player is to take on. According to the Portrait of Quebec's health cooperatives, the province counted 40 health cooperatives in 2009. In certain cases, these cooperatives were able to respond to the communities' different health needs (following the closure of a private clinic, for example). Their overall method of functioning is as follows: doctors are paid by medicare but the management of the buildings, staff, welcoming desks, of the follow up of certain programs and of external and public relations is maintained and operated by the health cooperatives.

Health cooperatives appeared in Quebec in 1996 and today, present many obstacles related to issues such as financing, medical salaries, judicial status and issues regarding their conformity to Canadian health laws such as those legislating principles of universal access.

This is why we propose that a QLP government...

PROPOSITION 56

Bring forth constant improvements to the overarching operation of the network and to the performance of the individual establishments that compose it all the while facilitating access to its services for the whole of Quebec's population and :

- 56.1 Establish a public performance evaluation of the individual establishments that compose the system and of the productivity levels of certain specialty areas in order to foster competition;***
- 56.2 Assure, notably through distance training and the setting up of health practice communities, the spreading of better management practices and of innovative clinical practices throughout the network;***
- 56.3 Launch a major publicity campaign in order to ensure that Quebecers extensively know and use the 811 line, and that they be oriented towards the relevant resources, including clinics (GMF and network clinics) that are willing and capable of receiving new patients seeking out family doctors;***
- 56.4 Develop targeted approaches for new immigrants in order to assure full access to information and to the health and social services required by their situations;***
- 56.5 Clarify and, if need be, regulate and monitor the Quebec health cooperatives system all the while assuring the full respect and implementation of universal access principles;***

31- Reportage Radio-Canada : Barrière linguistique en santé pour les immigrants

(http://www.radio-canada.ca/emissions/ya_pas_deux_matins_pareils_windsor/2010-2011/chronique.asp?idChronique=156580)

3.2 A more responsive network

Quebec's healthcare system still functions primarily along the lines of a professional 'silo' management approach. Nevertheless, it is becoming increasingly accepted and agreed upon by professional orders and unions that the expertise and knowledge of one can serve the others in the delivery of properly integrated patient services. Such a multi-disciplinary approach favors the collective of skilled professionals and requires a more flexible approach and vision of each individual medical profession.

Since the adoption of Bill 90 in January of 2003, Quebec's health and social services network has introduced a new kind of healthcare professional, namely specialized nurse practitioners. In terms of front line care and of family medicine, SNP's play an important role in patient evaluation as well as in decision making and in the planning of the care related to his or her specialization. The SNP's role as liaison officer and as resource manager within the medical team and alongside the patient does much to relieve doctors of tasks such as treatment adjustments. This then allows a complete follow up with the patient and easier information sharing amongst care providers. As of now, the government expects the certification of 500 new SNP's by 2018. The positive effects of the growing number of SNP's can already be felt on the healthcare system's efficiency levels, notably in front line family medicine services. Once these new SNP's graduate, it will remain important for the government to prioritize front line services and care.

Collective prescriptions have also been proving themselves gradually in terms of their efficiency in delivering quality patient services and care. At the Vallée-de-l'Or Health and Social Service Centre, for example, where the number of positions filled by family doctors was clearly insufficient, a collective prescription was implemented granting nurses permission to perform various tests and therapies. Doctors who previously handled 20 to 25 patients per working shift are now able to see up to ten additional patients. A dozen collective prescriptions have been issued at Val d'Or's emergency unit, granting nurses a significant amount of autonomy in terms of diagnosis and therapeutic measures. If the patient still required an appointment with a doctor after having consulted a nurse, the doctor then had everything necessary for a swift diagnosis, rarely requiring more than a single appointment. If these collective prescriptions have proven themselves useful in individual establishments, it may be of relevance to evaluate their potential applicability on a provincial scale. In most cases, a generalizing of these models would contribute to the improvement of services and care provided to the whole population.

Collective prescriptions allow for the delegation of tasks, usually taken on by doctors, to another health care professional, more often than not, a nurse. It is important to keep in mind that pharmacists are healthcare professionals having undergone rigorous clinical training enabling them to optimize the use of medication. Their expertise, in a multi-disciplinary practice, could turn him into an invaluable ally to SNPs and family doctors. Pharmacists can become a precious partner in matters of clinical follow up and in keeping an eye on patients suffering from chronic ailments. Amongst the tasks pharmacists could take on, in order to maximize the healthcare team's efficiency all the while making the patient's life easier and simpler, we find the extension of regular prescriptions and the adjustment of certain prescriptions, as well as increased pharmacist access to certain laboratory test results.

32- « Quand les médecins passent le témoin aux infirmières », Le Devoir, mai 2011

In order to encourage the delegation of certain tasks at the heart of different professional orders within Quebec's network of health and social services, the government must adopt incentive measures as well as mechanisms meant to ease up proceedings related to the conclusion of certain agreements. The creation of SNP positions and the implementation of collective prescriptions are both examples of successful medical delegation measures. As in all areas of medicine, international innovations in this field are to be followed and carefully monitored. Through the Office of professions, the government should set up a systematic public evaluation of tasks and responsibilities that could potentially be delegated or shared, all the while taking into account the progresses made by national systems similar to Quebec's own.

This is why we propose that a QLP government...

PROPOSITION 57

Encourage better cooperation between different healthcare professionals within Quebec's healthcare network in order to improve healthcare accessibility and:

- 57.1 Accelerate the creation of a larger number of Specialized Nurse Practitioners positions in front line and family medicine by encouraging increased collaboration from administrators and healthcare professionals;***
 - 57.2 Encourage the sustained deployment of collective prescriptions, notably by ensuring that those established in individual establishments can easily be extended and applied unto additional Quebec establishments, by ensuring the spreading and proper understanding of previously established collective prescriptions throughout the medical community and by ensuring the collective nature of the compensation of the healthcare professionals involved;***
 - 57.3 Encourage further delegation of tasks to pharmacists, notably with respect to the extension of regular prescriptions for chronically ill patients and to the adjustment or modification of certain prescriptions, and improve access to certain laboratory test results for pharmacists;***
 - 57.4 Adopt measures offering incentives to relevant professional corporations to reach medical task delegation agreements as well as parallel mechanisms, in collaboration with relevant professional corporations and the Office des professions, meant to ease up proceedings related to the signing of such agreements;***
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3.3 A network preparing for an ageing population

Not unlike many developed countries, Quebec is undergoing an important acceleration in its population's ageing rates. According to actuary and former Health and Social Services minister, M. Claude Castonguay:

« From 2001 to 2016, we predict that the number of 20 to 64 year olds will only go up by 100 000, or 2%, while the number of people 65 and older will go up 50% (950 000 to 1 430 000 over a short 15 year period). Ageing and dropping birth rates will, in combination, provoke an unprecedented phenomenon; the reversing of the age pyramid. »

According to the latest predictions, the number of people over the age of 65 in Quebec is expected to double by 2041. The arrival of babyboomers should, between 2006 and 2026, provoke a major increase in the number of 65 to 74 year olds, then in those aged 75 to 84 from 2016 to 2036 and finally, from 2026 on, we will see a dramatic increase in the number of those 85 and older. One of the first impacts of this ageing population will be a substantial increase in demand for healthcare services. It is important to ensure our gerontology and geriatric services are capable of responding to our ageing population's healthcare needs. These services must dispose of sufficient and adequate resources in order to ensure their capacity to offer quality services to the elderly. According to the MSSS (2011), Quebec's health and social services network counts 66 geriatricians, 46 of which work full time. Quebec's residential and long term care facilities and hospital centres count 8 gerontology technicians.

Given ageing trends, it is obvious that sending each and every senior citizen with fragile health in public nursing homes (CHSLD) would result in enormous economic pressures on public finances in the years to come, a parallel housing regime has been developing progressively. Seniors' home resources, simply called Intermediate Resources (RI), have been developed in order to ensure the housing and assistance of elderly citizens who are in gradual loss of autonomy and necessitating care and supervision exceeding levels traditionally provided within households, but inferior to those provided by CHSLDs .

Given that the proportion of elderly people is constantly on the rise and that the number of available places in residential and long term healthcare facilities is greatly limited, Intermediate Resources will be called upon to play an increasingly important role in caring for Quebec's elderly citizens.

The time span of contractual public-private housing agreements varies from one region and resource to another. With Intermediate Resources having concluded a short term agreement, they often come upon difficulties planning out their long term activities and responsibilities, as they are missing much of the information needed for efficient long term budget planning. This situation deters them from taking on large investments and projects, such as expanding their facilities. Some Intermediate Resources find themselves restricting their activities in order to respect the boundaries of their allocated resources. Given these difficulties, long term agreements would be much more appropriate and responsive to RI realities and needs. These agreements would enable them to continuously improve the quality of the services they offer their elderly patients, would reassure the patients on matters regarding their housing situations as well as the services on offer to them.

33- Institut national de la statistique du Québec, Vieillesse de la population, état fonctionnel des personnes âgées et besoins futurs en soins de longue durée au Québec.2010.

34- Source : Conseil des aînés, État de situation sur les milieux de vie substitués pour les aînés en perte d'autonomie, 2007

Aside from the difficulties presented by the time span of the public-private housing contractual agreements, the average daily sum per patient varies greatly from one region and from one Intermediate Resource to the next. Certain Intermediate Resources face important difficulties in meeting their responsibilities, as their rates of retribution are insufficient to cover the total expenditures of their patient's housing costs. For example, electricity and heating costs increase significantly over the winter period, given seniors' greater sensitivity to cold. Additionally, Intermediate Resources find themselves having to increase the number of orderlies as patients progressively age and subsequently lose autonomy. The insufficiency of the daily sum provided for the care of each patient leads certain residences to refuse new patients. Others continue, but are not able to provide quality services to their customers and limit activities. The daily retribution sums could better represent true exploitation costs in order to ensure the Intermediate Resource provider's provision of quality services for the elderly. Let us keep in mind that the yearly cost attributed to housing an elderly patient in CHSLDs averages \$56,000, whereas annual Intermediate Resource costs tally up to \$32,000.

In Quebec, elderly housing is an emerging and rapidly growing market. 20 years ago, spots in public nursing homes accounted for the vast majority of the elderly housing market. These spots now represent only 28.9% of the market, with private residences now holding on to 66.2% of the spaces available in 2005-2006. Certification is mandatory for private seniors' home developers.

The seniors' home market is a nascent industry in Quebec, and experiencing its own growing pains. As it is taking its first steps, the private elderly housing industry will require better management structures and rigorous supervision.

In response to the important costs related to the care of the elderly, the government encourages the housing of semi-autonomous seniors within the private system. CHSLDs (nursing homes) facilities focus primarily on providing care for those featuring important losses of autonomy. Nursing homes are overflowing and waiting lists are endlessly growing despite the creation of new spots. With the government having made the decision to halt the construction of new establishments, many existing establishments, built over ten years ago, are now in need of important restoration work and upkeep. Otherwise, we could risk a rapid deterioration of the physical plant in public nursing homes, making them unable to properly care for their elderly residents.

Cognitive troubles affect an important portion of people over the age of 65 in Quebec. As a matter of fact, the majority of patients residing within Quebec's residential or long term healthcare facilities suffer from some form of dementia. Analysts predict an important rise in the number of people over the age of 65 affected by dementia over the next forty years. By 2051, the number of elders struck by dementia is estimated at 302 444, in relation to today's 105 647. The portion of people over the age of 65 affected by dementia is estimated at 13%, a roughly 4, 5% increase from 2001 rates.

Given growing demand, high treatment costs and lack of resources in public nursing homes, early screening of dementia amongst the elderly is essential. Early screening allows for the rapid transition into measures that effectively attenuate symptoms and slow down the disease's growth and evolution. It also allows for the elimination of reversible symptoms. Early screening of dementia also allows for rapid initiation of treatment, which considerably reduces costs associated to the disease and improves the patient's quality of life.

PROPOSITION 58

Assure quality services to the elderly residing in public and private nursing homes and private residences, and:

- 58.1 Create more positions in geriatrics, gerontology and kinesiology in order to properly respond to Quebec's seniors growing needs;***
 - 58.2 Standardise and extend the duration of Intermediate Ressources (RI) agreements to 3 years in seniors' homes in order to ensure greater stability in the living conditions of seniors;***
 - 58.3 Ensure a minimal daily compensation for Intermediate Ressources (RI) places in order to avoid any decline in the quality of services and care provided to the elderly in seniors' homes and elsewhere;***
 - 58.4 Keep tightening quality controls, notably through certifications related to services and physical infrastructures in seniors' homes;***
 - 58.5 Renovate Quebec's public nursing homes that need repairs over the next 5 years;***
 - 58.6 Attribute to Specialized Nurse Practitioners specializing in psychiatry and working within the nursing home network the task of early dementia screening and follow up;***
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IV

A WORLD
FOR QUEBECERS

1- A Quebec open to the world

Since the QLP came to power, Quebec has been more open to the world. It has explored new markets and made its presence felt at many major international forums. The QLP government has sought to push back the frontiers of Quebec and open new vistas where Quebec talent can shine. The QLP government created a new environment of workforce mobility with France that opened doors for Quebec's qualified workers, who now have access to a market of over 60 million people, and that allows Quebec to attract qualified workers in fields where we have a shortage here, whether current or expected.

Quebec has taken the lead in the continuous improvement of the Canadian social and economic union, thanks to the creation of the Council of the Federation. It is a QLP government who made sure that the asymmetric principle would find a practical application in a historical agreement on healthcare. It is also a QLP government that was successful in obtaining a seat at UNESCO for Quebec, and made it so that Canada truly became an interior market to which any Quebec worker can have access, from sea to sea.

Being open to the world obviously starts at home. As the history of Quebec has shown us eloquently, liberal governments act as magnets for people living outside our borders: the province receives more immigrants and can generally boast a brighter interprovincial net migration rate. The last few years have also seen a certain added benefit to this liberal advantage: Quebecers have regained their confidence as never before, and the fertility rate has started increasing again, a phenomenon the people of Quebec had long ceased to hope for.

This confidence in what Quebec is today, but also in everything it has the capacity of becoming, is exactly what motivates the QLP and orients each of its actions.

This confidence that Quebecers have what it takes to be among the best in the world is what nourishes our desire to compete on every market. We certainly have all the talent needed to play — and win — at the globalisation game.

1.1 A Quebec leading in Canada

Having Quebec progress within the Canadian federalism, all the while actively participating in the building of a stronger Canada, more respectful of provincial jurisdictions and Quebec's identity, such is our vision.

Since 2003, relations between Quebec and the rest of Canada are much better than they were under preceding governments of the Parti Québécois.

Most Quebecers are strongly attached to Canada. All the while having indisputable pride for Quebec, its accomplishments and promise; they consider Canada their country, as they rightly should. For them, home is Canada. They also believe that actively participating in the evolution of Canada is in their best interest.

Our strong preference is for a Quebec acting as leader within Canada, a province aiming to contribute even more to the future of this country. Making good use of its leadership role and making sure it benefits all its citizens. In other words, Quebec must express this leadership as it gives a positive impulse to the evolution of Canadian federalism, an evolution following a path towards greater respect for Quebec's superior interests.

The QLP's position is clear and coherent and has remained the same for a number of years: to continually promote and defend the interests of Quebec as a full-fledged member of the Canadian confederation. On that level, our record is exceptional.

Indeed, it is under a QLP government that a historical agreement on health care was signed in 2003 and formally recognized a principle dear to Quebecers: asymmetrical federalism. Also thanks of the QLP, Quebec now plays a formal role within UNESCO (a permanent representative of Quebec, within the Canadian mission, with a specific right to speak), progress was made redressing fiscal imbalance and the House of Commons recognized that Quebec's people form a nation.

It is also at our initiative that the Council of the Federation was created and the Canadian domestic market reinforced, among other things, with the signature of agreements on workforce mobility with Ontario, New-Brunswick and the other federal partners. All this and the return of Quebec within the Canadian Francophonie, as well as the efforts and initiatives made by the Quebec Government to convince Canada to take part in talks leading to a global economic and commercial agreement with the European Union.

The QLP is unquestionably a federalist party, in the real sense of the word. However, this position does not mean that we must accept all decisions made by the Government of Canada without debate. On the contrary, we must remain critical and vigilant, and continue to vigorously oppose federal interference or attempts to interfere in areas of Quebec jurisdictions.

Some of these interferences are the result of the so-called federal spending authority. This power must be framed by a rigorous set of guidelines, even eliminated, as much for existing programs as for new initiatives.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 59

Continue to lobby in favour of the abolition or, if not, for the limitation of the federal spending power with full compensation in areas of provincial jurisdiction, and that, in compliance with, if need be, the asymmetry principle;

The reform of the Canadian Senate constitutes another problematic issue for Quebec. In fact, the manifest intention of the federal government to unilaterally modify the nomination process and mandates of senators is not acceptable. The Senate, we should never forget, is at the very basis of the original federalist compromise. The Canadian Senate is also essentially a federal-provincial entity more than strictly a federal one. The spirit of federalism teaches us that this institution was part of a historical compromise and is by nature a federal-provincial entity, in its most essential characteristics. Thus, it should only be modified with the consent of the different partners of the federation.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 60

Vigorously oppose any attempt from the government and Parliament of Canada to modify any one of the essential characteristics of the Senate without the consent of the federal partners, and that, in accordance with the amending procedure laid out in the Constitution Act, 1982;

Noteworthy is the fact that the Senate was initially suppose to act as Chamber for the provinces and regions, a role it has really never played since all senators are named exclusively by Ottawa. To this day, Canada remains one of the rare federations in the world where provinces have no formal role to play in its central institutions and almost no say in important national decision-making. It is high time this be corrected.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 61

Promote the transformation — through current constitutional amendment mechanisms — of the Canadian Senate into a true House of the Provinces, that is, into an entity where each province would be directly represented by delegates and where its voice could be heard, on the basis of its needs, priorities, positions and own objectives;

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The influence of Quebec in the House of Commons is likely to decrease in the next few years as the result of a diminution of the Quebec's population compared to that of Canada as a whole. Already, the Canadian government has submitted a Bill in the federal Parliament, Bill C-12, which unfortunately confirms this trend. The Government of Quebec must lead the charge with all its energy in anticipation of maintaining the current relative weight of Quebec within the House of Commons. This position is even more justifiable for the fact that Quebec is the only province with a francophone majority in Canada and that reducing its influence within a central institution can only result in diminishing the place French holds in Canada.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 62

Take all means necessary for the relative weight of Quebec within the Canadian House of Commons to be maintained;

We have mentioned the Council of the Federation. This provincial-territorial body was created in December of 2003 and its origin can be traced to the report of the QLP's Special Committee on the political and constitutional future of Quebec society presided by Mr. Benoit Pelletier at the time. This report, titled *An Action Plan: Affirmation, Autonomy and Leadership*, was unanimously adopted in October 2001 by QLP members.

When first established, the objective of the Council of the Federation was to reinforce dialogue and encourage consensus between the provinces and territories, on the one hand, and provide them opportunity to not only make more vigorous representations, but also present a unified position vis-à-vis Ottawa on certain issues. The Council of the Federation has played its role well until now and proven its worth on many issues, including those on health care, fiscal imbalance and the strengthening of the Canadian Economic Union. However, it would be appropriate that its Secretariat be reinforced, which in its initial form was expected to be highly effective and relatively autonomous. This would not be possible without the consent of all provinces and territories. It would also be fitting that the Council fully assume all duties listed in its current mandate. Among these responsibilities are analysis of any action or measure from the federal government having a significant impact on the provinces and territories (including a project to review federal bills and legislation), as well as the elaboration of a shared vision on how intergovernmental relations that respect the fundamental values and principles of federalism should be conducted.

The federal spirit, the QLP believes, implies that different federalist partners work in concert to improve those public policies they are responsible for. In the areas of education and health care, namely, organisations such as the Canadian Institute for Health Information and the Canadian Council of Ministers of Education have played a helpful role in terms of disseminating best practices and evaluating new initiatives. Yet, one area where few innovations and best practices are identified and disseminated is Family Policy. Quebec is a recognised pioneer on the matter across Canada, and our expertise could certainly benefit other provinces. Other provinces could also inspire Quebec on issues regarding family policy.

In fact, the promotion and dissemination of best practices and the transfer of knowledge is a worthy objective, regardless of the jurisdiction in question and not only on health care, education or family services. We believe the Council of the Federation can, and must, play a key role in this issue, especially when best practices or transfer of knowledge regarding public policies adopted by the provinces on their exclusive area of jurisdiction are concerned. When it comes to jurisdiction provinces share with the federal government, then it is desirable that the promotion and diffusion of best practises and the transfer of knowledge be done in the context of federal-provincial collaboration. But even then, the Council of the Federation could play a determinant role in defending the points of view of the provinces and territories with the Canadian government.

It would even be desirable if, at an international level, the provinces, territories and the federal government each played a role in the promotion of Canada's best practices – from the respective exercise of their constitutional jurisdiction to the implementation of their public policies.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 63

Continue the development of the Council of the Federation, and:

- 63.1 Convince its partners in the Council of the Federation to proceed with a reorganisation and substantial strengthening of its Secretariat and to actively ensure that it fully assumes all the duties and functions prescribed in its current mandate;***
 - 63.2 Invite its partners in the Council of the Federation to create a Council of Family Ministers of Canada, which would be a permanent study and analysis body dedicated to disseminating knowledge, information and best practices regarding family policies;***
 - 63.3 Work in concert with our partners of the Council of the Federation to increase its role in terms of promotion and dissemination of the best practices and transfer of knowledge regarding provincial public polices, and ensure that the Council even assumes this role of promotion towards the federal government, and that, on behalf of the provinces and territories;***
 - 63.4 Convince our partners of the Council of the Federation to offer their collaboration to Ottawa so that, together, they can promote the best Canadian practices on an international level, which would allow foreign governments to learn from Canada and share with our federal and provincial governments on the full range of these issues;***
-

Since the early 60's, the liberal governments of Jean Lesage, Robert Bourassa, Daniel Johnson and Jean Charest have all given a great deal of importance to the role Quebec plays on the international scene. The Canadian Constitution does not address aspects regarding international relations, if only in one now obsolete clause — section 132 of the Constitution Act, 1867. Without resolving the question of who between the federal government and the provinces has the authority to conclude international treaties (unless they both do?), the law clearly establishes that provinces have the responsibility of implementing such treaties when their constitutional jurisdiction are involved. It would be important for the provinces to actively participate, along with the Canadian government, in the negotiations of these treaties which, in the end, the provinces

will have to implement, whether in all or in part. Presently, this is not really what takes place. In fact, the participation of provinces to the negotiation of treaties remains a random occurrence, which is regrettable.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 64

Convince our partners, federal and provincial, of the importance of the provinces actively and formally taking part, along with the government of Canada, in international treaties negotiations whenever a treaty or parts of a treaty concerns an area of provincial jurisdiction;

Still, with regard to international relations, in May of 2006 the federal government followed-up on the appeal from the Quebec government to allow the Quebec nation to speak of its own voice at UNESCO, an international forum where questions that touch on Quebec's distinct nature and jurisdictions of the National Assembly are debated. Since its signature, the Canada-Quebec Agreement on UNESCO has eloquently demonstrated that being part of Canada does not prevent Quebec from independently building ties with other nations around the world. We believe that the experience of UNESCO opens the door to a winning formula that should be applied to other international forums, including two in particular: the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Organization of American States (OAS).

The ILO is an institution of the United Nations specializing issues surrounding work conditions and the protection of workers. Born of the Treaty of Versailles, it is made up of governments, employers and employees from over 180 States. A more active presence of the Quebec government within the ILO would provide an opportunity to emphasize documented differences that exist between Quebec and its Canadian partners in terms of labour law.

With respect to the OAS, its goal is to defend democracy and Human Rights, increase territory security and reinforce exchanges between all countries of the Americas. With its four official languages (English, Spanish, Portuguese and French), it reflects the diversity of people and cultures from all over the continent. Of course, the organisation counts among its members very many francophone and francophile nations and discusses many hemispheric issues which have a considerable impact on areas of jurisdictions exclusive to Quebec.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 65

Seek to negotiate with the federal authorities an arrangement inspired by the 2006 Agreement on UNESCO, by which Quebec could increase its presence, even speak on its own behalf, in the greatest possible number of international forums, in particular at the International Labour Organization and the Organization of American States;

Canada is, as we all know, a constitutional monarchy. Her Majesty the Queen is represented in each province by the Lieutenant-Governor. Many Quebecers wish for this function to be abolished. This can however only be done in accordance to a procedure of constitutional amendment that is quite challenging: unanimity.

We suggest that, at the very least, a dialogue be initiated in Quebec on different ways to modernise the institution of the Lieutenant-Governor, to adapt it to the contemporary context. This discussion could debate a certain number of modalities surrounding the nomination of the Lieutenant-Governor, without prejudice to constitutional laws currently in effect.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 66

Look closely at different ways to modernise the function of Lieutenant-Governor of Quebec such as, for example, the elements surrounding the conditions and procedures around his or her appointment;

According to the Canadian Constitution, the administration, organisation and delivery of health services are under the jurisdiction of the provinces. The federal government is only supposed to intervene in matters related to marine hospitals and the event of quarantine, or regarding certain groups under its jurisdiction, such as war veterans, stationed service members, Aboriginals and prisoners in federal prisons. Since the federal government finances certain provincial health services, it attempts to influence provincial policies on the matter. And so, provinces must, while assuming the management of health services and administer their own health care insurance plans, respect the conditions provided in the Canada Health Act, namely the universality, comprehensiveness, accessibility, transferability and public management of health care. The provinces have nonetheless the obligation to provide any information requested by the Canadian Government and mention federal contributions in all public documents or health care services advertisements. Financial sanctions are provided for in case of regulatory infractions, including the reduction of federal transfers or even a downright withholding of federal contributions.

Health services represent the most important item of expenditure for the Quebec government and a provincial area of jurisdiction of undeniable importance. Yet, the interpretation of Canadian laws impacts greatly on how provinces can assume their own jurisdiction. A proper application of the federal conviviality principle, as defined in the 2001 report titled An Action Plan: Affirmation, Autonomy and Leadership, would normally mean that the Canadian government must collaborate with provinces on matters regarding the interpretation and implementation of this federal law.

C'est pourquoi nous proposons à un gouvernement issu du PLQ...

PROPOSITION 67

Ensure that the Canadian provinces can actively take part in the interpretation and implementation of the Canada Health Act;

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For a number of years now, the QLP government has played a leadership role within the Council of the Federation in order to find sustainable solutions to fiscal imbalance. In response, the government of Canada increased healthcare transfer payments and made improvements to equalization. On the other hand, Ottawa has failed to bring transfers for post secondary education back to their levels of 1994-95, as called for by the Council of the Federation. The Canadian provinces need budgetary and economic planning stability. They need to rely on the necessary resources to meet their constitutional responsibilities without resorting to an excessive tax burden that would slow their growth.

Even if the recent world economic recession has transformed federal surpluses into deficits, it is crucial for the smooth functioning of the Canadian federation that the federal government not repeat the mistakes of the past and bring its public finances in order on the back of provinces.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 68

Exert leadership within the Council of the Federation so as to reach satisfactory agreement with the federal government concerning fiscal arrangements;

The application and respect of norms regulating commercial trade represents a major challenge in Quebec. If the opening of borders constitutes a remarkable opportunity for Quebec companies and ensures access to a larger range of products and services for Quebec consumers, it also brings up inequalities for a certain number of Quebec companies and different industry sectors.

For example, in the farming sector, Quebec producers were forbidden to use a large number of different pesticides, all with the aim of protecting the health of Quebec consumers. Certain foreign producers, not liable for the same norms, still used these pesticides and were able to offer their products on the Quebec market, what is more, at a lesser cost. Strawberries are the most telling example. The pork industry is another example of an industry where production is highly regulated by both the federal and provincial government — specifically with regards to the prohibition of using certain antibiotics in livestock feeding. Pork produced outside of Quebec is not submitted to the same norms and regulations than pork produced here, but it still ends up on our grocery shelves.

The lack of control regarding the compliance of imported products could obviously favour abuse and misrepresentation, and consumers would be the first ones to suffer.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 69

Insist that the federal government ensures the respect of the principle of reciprocity in international trade agreements, specifically with regard to environmental issues and food safety;

The election of the QLP government in 2003 has been marked by the return of Quebec within the Canadian Francophonie. Since then, initiatives made by the Quebec government in order to reinforce ties that bind Quebecers on the one hand and francophone and Acadian communities of Canada on the other have certainly multiplied. More recently, new types of projects, with essentially economic objectives, have seen the day. It is the case with the Rendez-vous Acadie-Québec, which provides an opportunity to entrepreneurs from Quebec and New-Brunswick to meet face to face and explore new paths of collaboration together. These types of initiatives should be applauded as the Canadian Francophonie constitutes a wonderful opportunity for companies and business people from Quebec interested in expanding their share of the market. We can only hope that opportunities for such encounters become popular everywhere across Canada.

Inaugurated in November 2008, the mission of the Centre de la francophonie des Amériques has been to promote and emphasize a strong and promising Francophonie for the French language in a global context of cultural diversity. The Center focuses specifically on the reinforcement and enrichment of relations between the francophones and francophiles of Quebec, Canada and the Americas³⁴. Initiated by the Quebec government, the center works tirelessly to ensure the development and flourishing of the French language, and promote rapprochement between francophones and francophiles. It supports projects that aim to promote the French language and the French factor in the Americas.

The activities of the Centre de la francophonie des Amériques are financed by the Quebec government. However, since 2010, grants awarded to the center have been substantially reduced because of budget cuts being made across the government³⁵. With the future in mind, we believe this situation should be rectified.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 70

Assume the responsibilities specific to Quebec with respect to the Francophonie of the New World, and:

- 70.1 Continue to strengthen the Canadian Francophonie, by developing, among other things, commercial networking events similar to the Rendez-vous Acadie-Québec model that took place between Quebec and the francophone and Acadian communities of Canada;***
 - 70.2 Increase the resources allocated to the Centre de la francophonie des Amériques, namely by appealing to other financial partners, and dedicate as a priority such additional financial resources to programs regarding youth as well as cultural, commercial and business exchange programs in order to make sure French has an even greater visibility throughout the continent;***
-

34- http://www.francophoniedesameriques.com/documents/misc/Rapport_activites_2009-2010_Centre_Interactif.pdf

35- http://www.francophoniedesameriques.com/documents/misc/Rapport_activites_2009-2010_Centre_Interactif.pdf

In 2001, the report titled *An Action Plan: Affirmation, Autonomy and Leadership* was officially adopted by the QLP. This report contains a wide range of principles that, to this day, continue to guide the actions of the government in its relations with the rest of Canada as well as with the government of Canada.

If many of the recommendations contained in this report have been implemented (the Council of the Federation, asymmetry in intergovernmental agreements, leadership of Quebec within the Canadian Francophonie, increased role of Quebec in the world, partial settlement of fiscal imbalance, various initiatives regarding Aboriginals, etc.), recommendations regarding the return of Quebec into the Canadian fold and which path should be taken to achieve this remain topical.

These recommendations can be summarized as such:

- Full and complete participation of Quebec to the evolution of Canada, its openness to other provinces, joint action, balance and flexibility in federal-provincial relations, respect of the federalist spirit by all Canadian partners.
- Expansion of the Canadian Social and Economic Union, limitation of the federal spending power, participation of Quebec and the other provinces to negotiations of international treaties affecting their area of jurisdiction, better respect of provincial autonomy and priorities of provinces in their areas of jurisdiction, participation of the provinces to the nomination process of senators and Supreme Court of Canada judges.
- Recognition of the autonomy of Quebec and its identity, reinforcement of its place on the international scene, improved partnership between Ottawa and Quebec in a wide range of sectors by way of administrative agreements, among others things.
- Recognition within the Canadian Constitution of Quebec's specificity (in its national characteristics) and a right of veto in terms of constitutional modification, integration of the Canada-Quebec Agreement on Immigration and temporary admission of foreign aliens in the Constitution, reform of the Canadian Senate, the need for the principle of federal conviviality to be entrenched in the Canadian Constitution.

These recommendations, and the principle of affirmation, autonomy and leadership guiding them, continue to orient our actions and exchanges as federalists.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 71

Reaffirm and reconfirm the report titled *An Action Plan: Affirmation, Autonomy and Leadership* as the official position of the QLP with respect to intergovernmental relations;

On a final note, let us be reminded of the importance of Quebec's distinctiveness being affirmed and formally recognised in Canada and that its prerogatives as well as its social, economic and fiscal priorities being respected.

Quebec must remain active within Canadian federalism and continue to contribute to the growth of our great country. Quebec must also persist in working, with its federal partners, toward the strengthening of the Canadian Economic Union in the spirit of openness which characterises the QLP.

1.2 A Quebec that excels on the international scene

Active for over a century on the international scene, Quebec has every interest in reinforcing relations with its allies and forming new relationships with other partners. The Quebec government is already leading a strong, concerted and multilateral international action to increase the notoriety of Quebec, all the while fulfilling its own needs. Other actions are also deemed necessary to further develop the presence of Quebec on the international scene.

Similar to her international commercial partners, Quebec has established a public diplomacy policy aiming to promote the interests of Quebec among her international commercial partners, by speaking directly to the people of these countries instead of only to their political and diplomatic leaders. Quebec offices abroad and commercial missions organized by the province are also two key actions. Quebec would nonetheless gain to adopt an additional strategy of public diplomacy.

The citizen-ambassadors of tomorrow

Traditional diplomacy and public diplomacy, both performed by government representatives, cannot replace the impact of hundreds of thousands of tourists, students, exporters, investors and other Quebec expatriates have on our commercial partners. The strategies aiming to harness the energy of these 'citizen-ambassadors' are only embryonic at this stage and the development of an innovative, creative and audacious strategy for Quebec is needed to meet this challenge.

The two main obstacles for implementing these strategies is the identification and mobilisation of these 'citizen-ambassadors' needed to disseminate certain key messages of information from the Quebec government (i.e. Quebec being opened to foreign investors, its stable political climate regardless of the presence of an independence movement, the existence of a multitude of tourist attractions, the quality of the Quebec's education system, etc.) as widely as possible.

It is essential that the Quebec government know who its citizen living abroad are, if it wants members of the Quebec Diaspora to establish contacts with one another. No standardized and complete database on the Diaspora currently exists. Furthermore, no official structure of contact has been established to allow Quebecers living abroad to stay in contact with authorities or professionals back in Quebec. The network of Quebec delegations established abroad and the various professional associations would both constitute excellent resources for the networking efforts we need to carry out.

The best way to contact and attract these 'citizen-ambassadors' is, at first, to look at individuals and companies who receive governmental aid from Quebec to go abroad. As such, in exchange for grants awarded to students, exporting companies, athletes, artists and humanitarian co-workers, it would be fair and quite appropriate for the Government of Quebec to ask that these individuals and companies join a directory or a recruiting and networking virtual platform.

This platform would allow them to exchange on the particularities, challenges and different business opportunities inherent to their host country. It would also be used to frequently send key messages and various information the Quebec government would want to disseminate.

Quebec has every interest to organize a network of the Diaspora, but also ensure its development and growth. The knowledge of one or more foreign languages is indispensable to openness and cooperation with other countries. Within the context of commercial exchanges, multilingualism allows corporations to take full advantage of globalization.

Multilingualism still needs to be developed in Quebec. In June 2006, Quebec's ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport added English as a second language to the curriculum of elementary schools. This decision served to help students become familiar with a second language at a very young age. English is among the most spoken languages on the planet, but the learning of other foreign languages is also necessary to prepare children and students become citizens of the world. One of the best ways to learn another language remains immersion, ideally at an early age.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 72

Build on citizen diplomacy and:

- 72.1 Establish the province's own communication policy towards Quebec citizens living abroad with the objective of passing on different basic information on Quebec and its international policy positions;***
 - 72.2 Develop a directory of Québec citizens living abroad likely to share their expertise and business contacts with Quebec;***
 - 72.3 Create a virtual platform of exchange to allow Quebec executives and professionals working abroad to contact each other and exchange, as well as for the Quebec Government to send key messages it might want to share with them;***
 - 72.4 Develop inter-language exchange partnerships between Quebec schools and colleges and foreign institutions;***
-

Many organisations, public as well as private, actively participate in the promotion of Quebec on the international scene by showcasing its strengths and assets in different ways. This is the case of Quebec's ministère des Relations internationales (MRI), which focuses on Quebec's commercial policy. Information on the website of the MRI is available in three languages: French, English and Spanish. Many government agencies and municipalities are also active in this matter.

The participation of numerous organisations in the promotion of Quebec represents a considerable asset to increasing its notoriety on an international level. Nevertheless, the information shared is often selective as it depends on the objectives of each organisation.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 73

Develop a multilingual central governmental portal showcasing the different assets of Quebec in order to attract more investments and skilled labour;

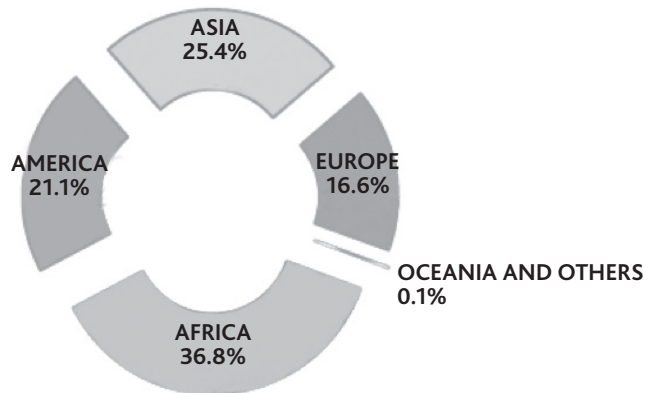
Multiply Labour Mobility Agreements

In the 70's, Quebec was considered one of the youngest societies in the Occident; it is now on the verge of becoming one of the oldest. The median age in Quebec will jump in 30 years as much as that of other nations will two or three generations. The search for a workforce with qualifications such as the ones Quebec needs will become central to sustaining Quebec's prosperity. We must therefore choose the path of opening our borders to qualified workers. Quebec has already begun implementing this strategy with the signature of a historical agreement with France on qualified workers mobility.

We must continue to open such new environments to attract the talented workers we need. The rest of Europe and Latin America represent great targets for promoting Quebec's assets to qualified workers likely to immigrate here.

European countries have professional qualifications generally similar to those of Quebec. Upon their arrivals, Europeans workers can move more easily through the process, which can sometimes be long and complex, of obtaining the recognition of their diploma, credentials and professional skills.

CONTINENT OF BIRTH 2010



Source: Statistical Report on Permanent Immigration in Quebec, 4th quarter, 2010

France and Quebec have already concluded an agreement on the mutual recognition of professional qualification. As such, the fact of agreeing with France in advance on different regulated professions will notably have a direct consequence on French immigrants, who will no longer need to worry about their diplomas having any value on Quebec soil: they will have the opportunity to practice their respective professions sooner after their arrival, and therefore be able to contribute to the growth of our economy.

The openness toward other francophone countries such as Belgium and Switzerland also deserve to be explored. Belgium has 10 788 760 citizens and 3.5 millions of those are French speaking³⁷. Switzerland, a country with four recognized languages, had 7 731 167 citizens in 2010, including almost 1.6 million (20%) of those being francophone.

Non-francophone Europe is also worthy of special attention, namely countries which, like Quebec, are interested in collaborating in the widening of the mobility zone of talented citizens. Considering the similarities between their professional system and the one in Quebec, a progression towards the full recognition of qualification and skills for these workers is also easier to achieve.

Finally, Quebec and Latin American countries also share numerous traits. They share the geographical reality of having the United States as a commercial partner. With a growth rate in the year 2008 estimated by the World Bank at 5.7%, Latin America is among the emerging markets with the best perspectives for the future. Finally, Spanish, the official language of Latin American countries, has the same language root as French, making it easier for Latin American immigrants to learn the language.

³⁷ - Source : Source : FMI - World Economic Outlook Database : Banque Mondiale

PROPOSITION 74

Invest in the international mobility of labour and:

- 74.1 Negotiate mobility agreements with other European francophone countries than France, such as Belgium and Switzerland;***
 - 74.2 Organise skilled labour prospection missions aimed at non-francophone European countries interested in widening their area of mobility, and who have professional and academic systems similar to those of Quebec;***
 - 74.3 Increase its efforts to stimulate immigration from Latin-American countries, considering their linguistic proximity with Quebec;***
-

Cultural diversity: a key to the development of Quebec

“Cultural diversity is the name given to the idea that all peoples should be able to develop in an international environment conducive to the expression of different cultures and ongoing dialogue. As a principle, cultural diversity underlies a modern view of the world based on respect for plurality”³⁸.

Cultural diversity represents a major asset for a nation such as Quebec. For a company, cultural diversity can also represent a competitive edge. The diversity of a company’s human resources allows it to better meet the expectations of its clientele, but also enhance its corporate image and take advantage of a potential network of ambassadors present in different international markets.

In practice and in the pronouncements of successive liberal governments in Quebec, we can clearly identify a distinctive common thread: an imperative of mobility according to which a person (immigrant or non-immigrant) integrating a society must not see his or her destiny enclosed in the pathway (social class, profession, cultural environment or ethnic group) that opened this access in the first place – in other words, borders must be porous.

It also goes without saying that, implicitly, the practices of the QLP institute French as the common language of intercultural rapport. Contrary to certain viewpoints of the Parti Québécois however, there is no question of a formal test or time limit, even less so the idea of disenfranchising citizens of certain fundamental rights if the quality of their second language does not satisfy government inspectors. Liberals are convinced that French must be required of new immigrants, in view of her intrinsic prestige and the opportunities speaking French provides on Quebec soils. The linguistic history of the last decades has proven us right.

38- Gouvernement du Québec : <http://www.gouv.qc.ca/portail/quebec/pgs/commun/>

"With regard to Quebec, it is essential to refer to a formula that preserves the acquisition of this nation in all its richness, while widening the environment in which they can be organized or reorganized. Until proven otherwise, interculturalism announces itself as the best model to efficiently conjugate these imperatives." (G rard Bouchard, 2011)³⁹

The fact is that Quebec has developed her own model throughout the years. A model that focuses on dialogue but that also suggests the integration to a common foundation to new immigrants, to values forged throughout centuries by the majority group of the host country. We believe that this model should not however simply remain a well guarded secret of sociology experts. It must be based on certain clear and easy to understand definitions, widely shared by all members of Quebec society. A more open model that would focus on the balance of moral obligations required as much from new immigrants and fellow-countrymen who preceded him or her, but also on the host society and her institutions.

It would also be more legitimate to refer to this model, instead of to concepts foreign to our political culture, if circumstances require additional safeguards, namely when the behaviour of a small group of newcomers in Quebec contradicts the principles of equality between men and women, universal education or the neutrality of public institutions towards religious beliefs.

³⁹- Bouchard, G. (2011). Qu'est-ce que l'interculturalisme?. Revue de droit de McGill.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 75

Promote the benefits of cultural diversity among the Quebec population, in an intercultural perspective;

The integration of newcomers is a shared process, which is the spirit itself of interculturalism as it is practiced in Quebec. More basically, this suggests that immigrants should be interested in the gradual discovery of the cultural heritage of the host society, and that the government seeks to make it accessible in all its richness. We believe that a sure way to achieve this goal would be offering new immigrants, in the year following their permanent resident status, a cultural pass giving them access to admission tickets to shows and Quebec cultural events at a price similar to those paid for youth admission. Cultural institutions, in particular those outside of the greater Montreal region, could join the initiative in exchange to the advantages related to the promotion of the governmental program.

This is why we propose that a QLP government ...

PROPOSITION 76

Offer a 'Cultural Pass' to new immigrants to help them discover and learn more about Quebec and also visit Quebec's cultural institutions, particularly those outside of the Montreal metropolitan area.

CONCLUSION

The propositions outlined in this document are the outcome of a great deal of work by QLP members across Quebec. All of them are united by the same core values: seeking social justice, upholding individual freedoms, reaching equity across generations, and recognizing that economic development is the engine of progress for all of society.

Through those propositions, QLP members demonstrate their passion for Quebec society and their faith in future success. They also demonstrate their attachment to the political institution the QLP has become. This party, with roots going back to the birth of democracy in this country, is the only one to have thrived in different eras, the only one that could evolve and progress along with Quebec society and so shape its destiny.

To this day, the QLP remains the principal political force in Quebec, and the only party with an inclusive vision of the future, on in tune with the evolution of Quebec and the world around us.

At a time when the Quebec political scene features calls to isolate Quebec from the world or to create a new party with uncertain goals, the experience of the QLP, the solidity of its values and the strength of the Chartrand government's record are reassuring factors for Quebec.

At a time in history when the world is going through changes of great intensity, it is crucial for our prosperity and quality of life to have a battle-tested team in government, one with the right understanding of the world and the manner in which Quebec can prosper in it, to the benefit of citizens in all regions.

