

## ***Community, Commitment, Cooperation*** ***Moving Forward Together***

### **For Immediate Release**

### **Federal Elections 2011: In a tight race, Anglophone votes count**

**Tuesday, April 27, 2011** – As Quebecers prepare to head to the polls in a few short days, the Quebec Community Groups is questioning which party, which leaders, and which candidates will best represent the interests of the English-speaking community of Quebec in Ottawa.

“The Government of Canada has an obligation under the Official Languages Act to enhance the vitality of the English-speaking community of Quebec, to support our communities and to assist in their development,” said QCGN President Linda Leith. “The Federal Government is not doing a good job, and we should be asking all candidates in this election why not.”

Over the past few weeks, the Quebec Community Groups Network has asked the main federal parties, their leaders and their candidates in Quebec to make a firm commitment to fulfill the Federal Government’s duties towards our communities. While party responses included polite rhetoric in support of our community, and predictable criticism of the ruling Conservatives, they failed to directly address all of our questions and concerns.

The Liberals promised to immediately begin a consultation on the next Official Languages plan, but offered no firm commitments on specific issues. The Bloc Québécois said that it defends the interests of all Quebecers, including the English community, and notes the right of English-speaking Quebecers would be protected in a sovereign Quebec. The New Democrats promise to support the Official Languages Act, but are also vowing to extend parts of Bill 101 to federal undertakings in Quebec. And while we are not wholly satisfied with what the three opposition parties are saying, it is of great concern that the incumbent Conservatives, who are hoping to expand their presence in Quebec, have remained silent on these important issues.

Leith noted that the concerns of the English-speaking community of Quebec, a group with specific challenges in finding their place in Quebec and Canada, have been largely ignored during this campaign. “But as the race for many Quebec ridings heat up, all parties should be eager to court the almost one million votes held by Canadians who constitute the English-speaking minority of this province,” said Leith. “In a tight race, our votes count.”

The QCGN encourages English-speaking voters to visit our website ([www.qcgn.ca](http://www.qcgn.ca)), see our questions and how federal parties responded, and post their reactions. “We also urge you to pose these questions to the people vying for your support,” said Leith. “Ask the candidates in your riding how they will act to ensure the English-speaking community of Quebec benefits from the programs and policies they contain. Make yourself and our community heard. The Government of Canada must help us keep our community vital and sustainable. Let’s ensure that the parliamentarians elected on May 2 are committed to making that happen.

The Quebec Community Groups Network ([www.qcgn.ca](http://www.qcgn.ca)) is a not-for-profit organization bringing together 36 English-language community organizations across Quebec. Its mission is to identify, explore and address strategic issues affecting the development and vitality of English-speaking Quebec and to encourage dialogue and collaboration among its member organizations, individuals, community groups, institutions and leaders.

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