Quebec Liberal Party daily commitments, 2014

The QLP economic team will create 250 000 jobs in five years

Montreal March 6, 2014 – On Day 2 of the 2014 provincial election campaign, QLP Leader Philippe Couillard unveiled the identities of three candidates with extensive reputations and accomplishments in the world of business who are joining his party's economic team and committed to create 250.000 jobs in the next five years.

In hockey it is said that the great teams are those with the greatest depth. That is certainly the case with my economic team. The Quebec Liberal Party has the best team and the best plan to re-launch our economy in all regions of Quebec.

- Philippe Couillard

Jacques Daoust, who until recently was Chairman and CEO of Investissement Québec, will run in Verdun riding. He was a long time executive with both the Laurentian Bank and the National Bank of Canada.

Mr. Daoust oversaw with great success the merger between Investissement Québec and the Société générale de financement. Under his leadership, Investissement Québec played a leading role in successfully steering Quebec through the global financial crisis of 2008-09.

Martin Coiteux, Economist with the Bank of Canada, will run in Nelligan riding. Mr. Coiteux is a specialist in the Quebec economy and the evolution of its companies. He brings to our team in-depth knowledge of the economy in all Quebec regions.

Carlos Leitão, a renowned economist with more than 30 years of experience in the financial and banking sectors, will run in Robert Baldwin. Chief Economist with the Laurentian Bank, Mr. Leitão was ranked as the second best Economist in the World in 2008 by *Bloomberg News*.

These three candidates are joining a diverse and very experienced team.

"The Parti Québécois broke the economic momentum of Quebec. In 2013, 66,800 full-time jobs were lost in Quebec. During the same period, 53,800 jobs were created in Ontario, and 136,800 in Canada. The Quebec economy is officially stalled. Jump-starting our economy is of the utmost urgency," Mr. Couillard continued.

The Quebec Liberal Party's plan is to create 250,000 jobs over the course of the next five years. "We have the team and plan in place that can face the challenges head-on and provide Quebec families with quality jobs," said Mr. Couillard.

A Liberal government would in its first 100 days:

- Re-establish the budgets of the Quebec infrastructure plan;
- Introduce a tax credit for home renovations;
- Present a budget that provides encouragement to foreign investors and Quebec and Canadian companies by establishing the predictability and stability that creates a favorable investment climate in Quebec.

During its first mandate, a Liberal government would:

- Re-launch the Plan Nord;
- Deploy the first Maritime Strategy in our history;
- Put in place an aggressive export strategy to take advantage of Free Trade Agreements with the European Union and the United States;
- Adopt measures to stimulate investments and innovation and re-launch the manufacturing sector;
- Favor the active growth of the population and technological and professional development so that Quebecers will have the skills and qualifications demanded by today's job markets.

These commitments will be explained in detail over the length of the election campaign.

"Quebecers deserve better than the PQ in the economic sector; Quebec families deserve more. Economic growth will allow us to better finance public services, to reach and maintain budget balance and reduce the weight of our provincial debt for future generations while easing the load borne by the middle class," Mr. Couillard concluded.

Together, we will address the real issues.

A maritime strategy to put Quebec back on track

Quebec City, March 7, 2014 – Philippe Couillard, Leader of the Quebec Liberal Party, today unveiled the first maritime strategy in Quebec's history, which will seek to maximize the entire potential of the St. Lawrence river and estuary. It will stimulate economic development in all Quebec regions along its banks and coasts, from Gaspé and Îles-de-la-Madeleine to Montreal, with detours by Sept-Îles and Rivière-du-Loup, passing by the Montérégie.

This ambitious maritime strategy will give birth to new vectors of economic growth and will provide new impetus for several industries. It is a cornerstone of the Quebec Liberal Party's new job creation policy.

This project will see the creation of 30,000 new jobs between 2015 and 2030. It will generate private investments of more than $4 billion as well as public investments of more than $3 million in infrastructures. It will generate financial benefits superior to $3.5 billion for the Quebec and Canadian governments.

We have the opportunity to restart our economy together by exploiting in a responsible fashion Quebec's maritime potential. For example, the combination of NAFTA and Free Trade with the European Union will enhance the importance of Quebec as a driving force in transatlantic transport. It is an opportunity that we must seize now to drive our economy.

- **Philippe Couillard**

Objectives of the maritime strategy include:

- To seize all opportunities for the development of maritime transportation stemming from Free Trade with Europe and the expansion of the Panama Canal.
    - To do so, we and the federal government will favor investments in port facilities in Quebec and the creation of a high-value-added logistics pole.
    - We shall develop intermodal transportation and coastal traffic and breathe new life into Quebec's shipyards, with the combined goal of fostering economic growth and the reduction of the hydrocarbon emissions related to the transport of goods and people.
    - We will improve the ferry services, notably those intermediate services
- To take advantage of all opportunities emanating from the rapid expansion of the cruise industry
- We shall invest in infrastructures by establishing an Office of Maritime Tourism to develop all tourism offer partnerships that are public-private or private-private.
- We also shall seize all opportunities arising from the development of maritime and environmental technologies.
- We will enroll Quebec firmly in the blue economy by investing in our research and marine technology institutes to foster innovation and lead up to the commercialization of new products.
- To transport our merchandise in a safer and more ecological manner.
- We are promoting maritime transport, in a sustainable development perspective, in a bid to reduce hydrocarbon emissions. The rail industry consumes nine times more energy than the marine industry, while trucking consumes six times as much as rail.
- To assure the sustainability of fisheries and aquaculture.

- We will work hand-in-hand with the fishing industry towards new product development with a view to expanding exports to new markets.
- To ensure the availability of qualified and skilled manpower through the expansion and promotion of training programs and by supporting our training centres.

This ambitious project seeks to maximize the potential of the majestic St. Lawrence in the great Liberal tradition of mobilizing projects, in the same vein as Robert Bouassa"s James Bay and the Plan Nord of Jean Charest. It will allow Quebec to seize unique development opportunities while positioning itself more advantageously in the global marketplace.

This strategy is good for good creation, good for the economic development of our regions, our public finances and the environmental protection of one of the most beautiful watercourses in the world. The government that I am proposing to lead will assume the leadership necessary to bring this ambitious strategy home safe.

"We will mobilize all cast members of the maritime sector – the federal government, municipalities, the socio-economic actors, research centres, colleges and universities – to drive the sustainable and ongoing economic development toward new horizons," Mr. Couillard said.

The Quebec Liberal Party is the only one to affirm this priority and is the only one capable of carrying out such an enterprise to renew our economy. Thus, together, we're taking care of real business.

Women at the heart of Quebec's Economic Development

Montreal, March 8,2014 – On this Day 4 of the current election campaign, Quebec Liberal Party Leader Philippe Couillard proposed several new measures aiming to increase the participation of women in executive positions and in non-traditional trades.

To meet our goal in the subjects of economic growth and equality between men and women, it is important that women are involved in the creation of companies and those trades or jobs described as non-traditional. A Liberal government that intends to address the real issues will act so that women are well represented in all spheres of economic life.

- Philippe Couillard

On this International Women's Day, Philippe Couillard undertook the following commitments:

Strengthen the presence of women in decision centres

Today, only one in five positions on corporate boards is held by a woman. Great progress has been made, however the participation of women in decision-making centres of society can and must improve. The Liberal government made history by presenting a Cabinet with parity between men and women and demands the same for corporate boards of governmental organizations. And this is a goal to which the private sector must aspire.

A Liberal government, in concert with *l'Autorité des marchés financiers* – the organization responsible for financial regulation in the province – would introduce an "apply or explain" program, in which the companies on the exchange adopt a plan for equitable female participation in their executives and on boards.

As for public companies and organisms that proceed with Calls to Tender, an additional criterion would be part of the evaluation process, an equality policy among those of 50 or more employees submitting bids. And they must make mention in their annual reports of measures taken to increase the participation of women in executive positions as well as on supply chains.

Support female entrepreneurship

It is in Quebec where the rate of activity in the work force for women between the ages of 15 and 49 is the highest in Canada, with many of these deciding to create their own businesses. Policies introduced by Liberal governments have greatly contributed to this advance, among them the *Régime québécois d'assurance parentale*, the availability of daycare places, and the *norme consensuelle en matière de conciliation travail-famille*, an initiative of the Family Ministry.

In a bid to catch up to the Canadian average for new business creation, a Liberal government will accompany female entrepreneurs in the realization of their ambitions. Specific promotional activities for female entrepreneurship shall be developed with the help of the Fédération des chambres de commerce du Québec (FCCQ) and the Réseau des Femmes d'affaires du Québec (RFAQ). In this perspective, the Femmessor program will be bonified in order to offer better financing, networking, tutoring and training services.

Moreover, *les centres locaux de développement (CLD)* (local development centres), in co-operation with Investissement Québec must develop strategies and methods to increase female entrepreneurship, especially for young women.

Promote non-traditional trades

Between now and 2020, some 1.4 million positions must be created and close to a third will require professional or technical training. In this perspective and that of equality between men and women, we must promote this training, especially among non-traditional trades among young women.

To aid in this, a Liberal government will insist on all information relative to non-traditional trades be accessible to young girls during high school-level career orientation sessions. As well, employers must be sensitized to the presence of women in non-traditional positions so that they can work to improving their participation levels. Special promotional campaigns aimed at both groups will be elaborated to help reach these goals.

"Women play a leading role in the growth of our businesses and the prosperity of our society. Great progress took place in Quebec in past years and a majority Liberal government will continue to make the advancement of women a priority and will support their contribution in the economic development of our society. Cause we are addressing the real issues," the Liberal Party Leader concluded.

Education - Reduce to better invest: a Liberal government will invest where it counts most : in the success of the student

Quebec City, March 10, 2014. – On Day 6 of the election campaign, the Quebec Liberal Party Leader, Philippe Couillard, introduced measures that would lead a Liberal government to increase services for students and invest in their educational success.

The Quebec educational network is well-established. The time has come to put in place mandates and missions that meet today's challenges and the real needs of students.

REDUCE BUREAUCRACY

As much as school boards are well-established and play fully their role of management of services offered to schools in their territories, the mission of the Ministry of Education, Leisure and Sport (MELS) must be readjusted.

The MELS's role is to define pedagogical goals and evaluate the quality of educational programs. The readjustment of the MELS mission will allow for the trimming of 100 persons per year over five years among administrative staff, with a final reduction of some 40 %. That will lead to savings of $7.5 million a year, which will total $37.5 million by the fifth year.

With the modification of the role of the MELS, the Ministry's regional offices no longer will need to micro-manage and play the role of overseer with the school boards. Consequently, the regional offices wil be abolished, allowing for annual and recurring savings of some $15 million.

School boards are leading players in regional economic development. They offer a proximity service and expertise in the co-ordination of services to students and schools. They will continue to offer these services to schools in their territories.

Schools will benefit from more autonomy to put in place pedagogical programs and see to the needs of the student. They also will have the latitude and improved means to meet the goals fixed by the MELS.

This readjustment of missions and mandates will allow for total savings of $22.5 million the first year and will reach $52.5 million in the fifth year.

INVESTING IN EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS

These savings in bureaucracy will be invested in student services and educational success. Over five years, this will represent cumulative savings of $187 million which also will be invested. We will emphasize three major themes, that is the fight against quitting school, the development of an attractive living environment, healthy, stimulating and enriching, and strengthening of language learning.

Fight against school dropout

A Liberal government will intensify the fight against school dropout. To do this, we will :

- Institute a homework counselling service in all elementary schools;

- Expand the help for homework in secondary schools;
- Expand the homework help periods with sessions on certain evenings and noon periods;
- Support community-produced projects such as the CRÉPAS in Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean;
- Prioritize the early detection of learning difficulties in children and combine this with rapid intervention for young children by ensuring an adequate number of available specialists.

A healthy, attractive and enriching living environment

Student success is a product of a healthy and safe environment. A Liberal government will prioritize the following actions :

- Work in concert with community partners to fight against violence and intimidation in schools;
- Rapidly deal with the problems of air quality in schools;
- Give schools the possibility of offering special vocational training and develop extracurricular activities;
- Encourage schools to establish community volunteer service programs;
- Encourage the use of digital technologies.

Strengthening language learning

A Quebec Liberal Party government will strengthen the learning of languages. We shall :

- Insist on the importance of reading and writing;
- Stress the promotion of the quality of French in elementary school;
- Reaffirm the establishment of an intensive English program in 6th grade by providing adequate funding;
- Offer immersion workshops in English or in French;
- Confirm the learning of French or English (as a second language) in Grade One in French and English elementary schools;

- Maintain the choice of language instruction at the pre-school and post-secondary levels.

“We are going to trim the bureaucracy with one solitary goal : investing in the educational success of the student. We must provide all the tools to the student, offer he or she a stimulating living environment, and give the student access to the greatest baggage of knowledge possible to allow he or she to grow and find his or her place in society. Education is the best investment of all for the future,” the Liberal leader concluded. ?

Improving access to care: generate savings to reinvest into patient care

Trois-Rivières, March 11, 2014 – On the seventh day of the election campaign, Philippe Couillard, the Leader of the Quebec Liberal Party, has made a commitment to overhaul health care funding and reduce bureaucracy to fund new initiatives that offer Quebecers greater access to health care and services.

Above all, taking care of business means working tirelessly to assure taxpayers that money invested in the health care system goes straight to patient care, making it more accessible for Quebec families.

Overhauling the funding of health care institutions

The Quebec Liberal Party will, within the first year of a mandate, revamp the financing of health care institutions to boost the volume of critical services, such as laboratory testing, radiological procedures and inpatient care.

The hospital funding overhaul will be based on each institution’s volume of care and productivity, including the quality of its services and patient follow-up. The new funding will be directed to all institutions and regions and will be widely allocated by 2017.

"This overhaul, which will ensure that money follows the patient, will also correct funding inequities between regions, leading to better performance, more services, shorter wait times and greater accessibility for Quebecers — all with the same money,” stated Philippe Couillard.

Philippe Couillard’s commitment is a continuation of what the Liberal government had introduced during its March 20, 2012 budget speech — namely, the formation of an expert panel on health care funding. This group, which has since completed its work, had the mandate to make recommendations about the health care and social service system’s challenges and better allocate financial resources to health care.

Generating savings

The Quebec Liberal Party is also committed to reducing the health care and social service system’s bureaucratic by requiring institutions, health and social service agencies, government agencies and the Ministry of Health and Social Services to present a three-year plan to reduce bureaucracy by 10%.

These plans could, for example, call for less paperwork, a readjustment in the number of managers or the use of new technology that increase the efficiency of any administrative activities.

In addition, the Quebec Liberal Party is still committed to optimizing Quebec's health services. In short, this would increase efficiency, better organizing and standardizing the care we provide.

We also believe that it is possible to see savings in the drug area, primarily through agreements with pharmaceutical companies, best practices for optimal drug use and lower generic drug prices.

Specifically, here's a breakdown of how much a Liberal government can save taxpayers:

- A 10% reduction in the bureaucracy **$150 million**
- Optimization measures & clinical efficiency **$25 million**
- Drug price negotiation (special agreements) **$50 million**
- Best practices in medication use **$50 million**
- Reduction in generic drug prices **$25 million**

With these measures, we will be able to fund all our new initiatives. Reducing bureaucracy, optimizing our services and paying less for our drugs would allow us to provide better access to patient care in Quebec.

Improving access to care

First, in addition to bringing the network family medicine groups (FMG) to 300, the Quebec Liberal Party is committed to fostering the creation of 50 super clinics across Quebec, true agents of health that will be open 24/7.

The super clinics will bring together a multidisciplinary team of general practitioners, medical specialists, nurses and other health professionals under one roof. They will have longer opening hours to provide more services evenings and weekends and offer services with or without an appointment. A dedicated computer system will manage the walk-in service to ensure a wait of less than two hours on site.

Radiology services and laboratory testing will also be available on the premises. In addition, super-clinics will allow families to consult meidcal specialists directly in the clinic. As a result, a child who needs a pediatrician or dermatologist will have access to him or her much more quickly — without the need to make call after call for a specialist.

A Liberal government is also committed to ensuring that Quebecers can count on 2,000 specialized nurse practitioners, who will join teams at medical clinics and work at health institutions.

Finally, the Quebec Liberal Party is committed to providing access to enhanced MRIs, CT-scans and ultrasounds, making sure that Quebecers can get the right diagnosis as quickly as possible. These three tests will therefore be covered by the public system when they are carried out in private clinics by 2014-2015. As a result, any individual can get a quick check-up at a private clinic without paying hundreds of dollars.

What the Liberal Party of Quebec now offers families of Quebec is a concrete and solid plan that will give them greater access to health care. These commitments demonstrate that we are focused on the real priorities of Quebecers, such as improving access to our health care system.

- Philippe Couillard

Act together to fight against intimidation in all of its forms

Montreal, March 12, 2014 – On this Day 8 of the election campaign, Quebec Liberal Party leader Philippe Couillard introduced measures to counter violence and intimidation against young people, persons with physical or mental handicaps and seniors in vulnerable situations, as well as women and children.

An act of intimidation, violence or mistreatment is one act too many. Each person must be allowed to thrive in a healthy and safe environment. Each person, notwithstanding their age, gender, sexual orientation and ethnicity has the right to dignity. A Liberal government will make the fight against intimidation a priority.

- Philippe Couillard

Acting from elementary school through university

Intimidation and cyber bullying have been increasing in recent years. Students must be able to live in a healthy, safe, stimulating and enriching school and university environment. It is imperative that we fight against intimidation at all times. All actors in our society must be responsible for the horror stories that young Quebecers go through.

The Quebec Liberal Party will have zero tolerance for intimidation.

Past Liberal governments have fought vigorously against this phenomenon and will continue to demonstrate proof of leadership in this area. It is time that we bring together all of the organizations and entities fighting against violence and intimidation to define the roles of each and co-ordinate all interventions, and act. A special forum of all intervening parties will be organized in the first 100 days of a new Liberal government. This forum, with the Premier at its head, will work towards a new action plan.

A Liberal government will also undertake to:

- Create information campaigns against intimidation and cyber bullying;

- Ensure the cohesion of police forces fighting against intimidation;

- Support training programs for police officers specializing in the fight against intimidation;

- Promote the establishment of community work programs for young people found guilty of offences in this area

Countering the mistreatment of persons with physical or mental handicaps or seniors in vulnerable situations

It is imperative that concrete actions to fight against mistreatment be taken to guarantee safety as well as the dignity of vulnerable persons residing in the health and social services network.

A Liberal government will introduce a bill that will work toward a complete and detailed plan to counter mistreatment in public and private establishments, a process that will detect situations of mistreatment, protection for employees who make these situations public as well as fines for all persons who hinder the fight against mistreatment. This legislative action will follow up the private member's bill presented in the National Assembly on October 10, 2013.

Protecting women victims of conjugal violence and their children

In 2012, almost 20,000 persons were victims of crimes against the person in a conjugal context. Women still represent the majority of victims. Women and children who take refuge in women's shelters must be able to feel safe. In Quebec today, it is still possible to discover the location of a shelter and thus compromise the safety of people within.

A Liberal government will proceed with an amendment to the law so that the names of all such centres and shelters appears on no documents accessible to the public, which will help maintain their confidentiality and protect those women victims of violence and their children residing within.

"We have the health and well-being of all persons at heart. Intimidation in all of its forms is far too present within our society. This is why we must act together to fight against this problem. A Liberal government will continue to exercise its leadership in this matter because we promise to take care of real business," Philippe Couillard concluded.

Small Medium Businesses central to QLP's economic recovery plan

Saint-Georges, March 13, 2014. – On the nineth day of the election campaign, Philippe Couillard, the Leader of the Quebec Liberal Party (QLP), announced five new initiatives for Quebec's SMBs. These measures, which will stimulate job creation, economic growth, innovation and exports throughout the province, are central to the Quebec Liberal Party's plan to restart Quebec's economy.

Our economy has run out of steam. The Parti Québécois has put the brakes on Quebec's economic growth. SMBs account for 50% of all jobs. They create 80% of all new jobs. Businesses in their first year of operation create 20%-25% of all new jobs. They are vital to our economic recovery and job creation. They deserve a government that understands their challenges. SMBs need to breathe, and Quebec Liberal Party's plan will give them the oxygen they need.

- **Philippe Couillard**

The plan calls for these five measures:

1. Establish an export tax credit
2. Introduce a single business file and portal
3. Launch the Créativité Québec program
4. Develop the Démarrage-Québec program
5. Exempt from taxation business and farm transfers to children and employees

Establish an export tax credit

With globalization, the development of new markets is one of the challenges for SMBs (fewer than 200 employees), particularly in rural areas.

To tackle this challenge, a Liberal government will do as follows:

- Provide a 50% export tax credit to SMBs on export-related transportation, from their point of origin to their destination. This tax credit will apply to interprovincial and international exports. This tax credit will provide greater assistance to companies furthest from major distribution centres. It will encourage companies to penetrate more distant markets. Businesses will be able to deduct 150% of their transportation costs from their taxable income.

- Strengthen Ouebec's 14 Regional Export Promotion Organizations (ORPEXs) to better support the export strategies of SMBs. These organizations, which advise entrepreneurs and organize trade missions, consist of only 50 experts. Their staff will increase by 25%.

- Bring together Quebec-based bilateral chambers of commerce (such as French, Italian and Latin American chambers of commerce) to strengthen ties between Quebec and the country of origin of our cultural communities.

Introduce a single business file and portal

To reduce costs of government red tape, the QLP will introduce two measures: a single file and single portal. These initiatives, coupled with the implementation of several Audet Report recommendations, will lead to a 20% cut in red tape costs for companies by 2015. Over time (within five years), the target is a 50% reduction in costs, including electronic transactions.

The introduction of a single file will provide companies with an advocate-guide who will help them deal with the province's administrative machinery. Companies will no longer have a file in a number of government departments and agencies. Instead, they will have only one file and a single point of contact for all administrative matters concerning their business.

A single portal will allow companies to approach Investissement Québec (IQ) for access to provincial business assistance and financing programs from IQ, Centres locaux de développement (CLDs), Centres locaux de développement (CRE) and other government agencies.

Launch the Quebec Creativity program

Developing a culture of innovation is a prerequisite for Quebec's future prosperity. This is also the best way to reach the productivity levels of our partners in North America. Inevitably, we must focus on the knowledge economy, innovation and creativity to ensure that Quebec remains competitive. Universities, research centres and companies must be able to work in synergy.

That's why a Liberal government will do the following:

- Provide immediate assistance to companies to get their innovative projects off the ground through an Investissement Québec-administered Créativité Québec (CQ) program. CQ, which will have a budget of $150 million, will provide direct subsidies, loans and investments to kick-start in any innovative project requiring at least $2 million, including the acquisition of new technology, production process upgrades and the development of new products.

- Give a payroll tax holiday to expedite the hiring of skilled employees, strengthening a company's capacity for innovation. This measure would lower payroll taxes by 4.25% on new hires, exempting the company from contributions to the Health Services Fund (HSF).

- Extend to all universities the Accélérateurs pour la création d'entreprises (ACET) model developed by Université de Sherbrooke, which allows graduates from different faculties to submit their thesis as a launchpad to an innovative technology start-up.

Develop the Démarrage-Québec program

Typically, the most enterprising companies are also the most prosperous. That's why a Liberal government will establish the Démarrage-Québec initiative to provide easier access to patient capital and, in turn, stimulate entrepreneurship. This program has been successful elsewhere in the world, particularly in the United Kingdom. Quebec is one of the provinces in Canada with the *fewest* number of business start-ups. This program will enable new and innovative companies get through the critical start-up period, where the main challenge is access to finance.

This program consists of the following:

- Give a capital gains tax exemption for investments in new technology start-ups. The maximum investment eligible for a capital gains tax credit will be limited to $150,000 and must be held for a period of at least three years.

- Attract the finest foreign entrepreneurial talent through the Démarrage Québec Visa program. Immigrant entrepreneurs will have to present a business plan and obtain a partnership commitment from a group of investors or venture capital funds. In addition, they will need to have the funds to cover their living expenses during the startup phase of their business. They must also learn French.

Exempt from taxation business and farm transfers to children and employees

Within five to 10 years, 50% of SMB owner-managers retire. Consequently, ensuring business continuity is crucial to protecting jobs in our province and keeping the ownership of Quebec companies in Quebec hands. Like our SMBs, our farms are in dire need of successors with the retirement of thousands of farmers.

A Liberal government is committed to the following:

- Provide company founders with a capital gains tax exemption of $750,000 if they sell their business to their family or employees (for at least one year). Currently, this exemption is available only if a business is sold to an unrelated person. In the agricultural industry, the tax exemption ceiling will be $1 million.

- Let the savings of young farmers, preparing to succeed their parents or grandparents, grow tax-free in a Young Farmer Fund (like a TFSA). The maximum annual contribution will be set at $15,000. The gradual transfer of a farm will be an option to amortize the the cost over a number of years — supported by the Young Farmer Fund.

- Each sale will be reviewed to ensure the validity of the transaction.

“SMBs, which have been abandoned by the Parti Québécois government, are the foundation for our economic action plan. With the best economic team ever assembled, a Liberal government will implement these concrete measures to give Quebecers, once again, the drive to start and manage a business. We will be there for Quebec entrepreneurs every step of the way, from the development of new products to new markets, because it’s time to get down to business,” said the Leader of the Quebec Liberal Party.

Protecting head offices - Act quickly and simply to protect our companies and our jobs

Montreal, March 13, 2014 – On this ninth day of the election campaign, Jacques Daoust, candidate in Verdun and his counterpart in Robert Baldwin, Carlos Leitao, made public proposals by the Quebec Liberal Party aimed at keeping head offices in Quebec.

The presence of head offices in Quebec has a considerable economic and social contribution, as much on jobs as on the economic activity these businesses generate. Given that the majority of these companies are publicly traded, many head offices are vulnerable to hostile public takeover bids. We should provide ourselves with the means to intervene when undesirable situations arise.

- Jacques Daoust

The Liberal Party plan provides using a part of the Fonds des générations to acquire up to 10% of the shares of a publicly traded company headquartered in Quebec which is the object of a hostile takeover bid that threatens its presence here. To do so, the Finance Minister will modify the Fonds des générations investment policy to permit use of up to 20% of its holdings to fight against hostile takeovers.

No change in the Loi sur la réduction de la dette that instituted the Fonds des générations will be necessary since Article 6 provides that the Finance Minister with the power to determine the investment policy in collaboration with the Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec – the fund's manager – with a view to maximizing performance and contributing to the economic development of Quebec.

Our approach benefits from having access to the use of public funds to meet society's objectives within the framework of maximizing performance. It is a practical and effective way to protect our head offices.

The holdings in the capital stocks acquired in the fight against a hostile takeover bid will contribute to forming a strong core of Quebec institutional shareholdings. They would be sold at an opportune moment to ensure maximum profitability and would contribute to Quebec's economic development. This would not be a takeover tactic.

"Our proposal would have allowed us to intervene quickly in the cases of hostile takeover bids for Réno-Dépôt and Osisko, and to work in co-operation with senior management in these companies to keep their respective head offices in Quebec," he added.

Contrary to the proposals contained in the report of the Groupe de travail sur la protection des entreprises québécoises, the Liberal Party plan has the advantage of not having to modify the regulations governing the securities trade in Quebec.

In adopting regulations governing the securities trade that differ from other provinces, this would put in jeopardy the "passport" principle that satisfies the requirements of all provinces when it receives authorization from its province of origin. We risk opening the door wide to the federal government to push for a single securities commission in Canada.

- Carlos Leitao

The report of the Groupe de travail sur la protection des entreprises québécoises contains some interesting recommendations, notably in the chapter on the tax system, which will be studied by a Quebec Liberal government.

A Liberal government will re-launch sustainable northern development with the re-launch of Plan Nord+

Val-d'Or, March 14, 2014 – On this Day 10 of the election campaign, Quebec Liberal Party leader Philippe Couillard chose Abitibi as the site of his announcement of the re-launch of northern development in Quebec with the re-launch of Plan Nord+, which will maximize economic benefits in North and South. A Liberal government will improve the Plan to better profit workers, businesses, suppliers and equipment manufacturers which will create more jos across all regions of Quebec.

“The Plan Nord represented a global initiative of sustainable northern Quebec development which sparked interest on a global scale and represented the hope of a better future for local communities, First Nations and the Inuit people. But less than a year after the election of the Parti Québécois, these projects were postponed, that is to say abandoned. We now talk about a ‘Plan Mort.’

A Liberal government will undertake to re-launch the Plan Nord in all of its dimensions, eoonomic, social and environmental, by taking up where we left off and by adding to the original project a major offensive to create jobs and economic fallout in all regions. In other words, we’ll take care of real business.

- **Philippe Couillard**

Maximize economic benefits across the regions

A Liberal government will establish the Société du Plan Nord to co-ordinate the development of this immense territory, bringing together all partners – the majority of which will be independent of government.

With the goal of maximizing economic benefits across all regions, a supply office will be integrated with the Société du Plan Nord to better inform businesses throughout Quebec, of the supply and equipment needs of all kinds and to better link the South with development of the North. For machinery suppliers, equipment manfacturers and industrial sub-contractors, a special mandate will be accorded to IQ Ressources, the subsidiary of Investissement Québec, to make better known the needs of large orderers and accompany our businesses in their development.

Thus we will develop in Quebec a world classs network of suppliers and equipment manufacturers in the mining, forestry and hydroelectric sectors.

Because it is important that all of Quebec benefits from the economic fallout that will result from the re-launch of the Plan Nord, a Liberal government undertakes to share a part of the royalties emanating from exploitation of mining, oil and gas resources. This so that local and native municipalities and communities profit directly from the involvement in mining, oil and gas development of their community as well as increase their capacity to support it, so that future generations can reap the social and economic benefits of this development.

Developing the North is also increasing the contributions to the Fonds des générations and reducing the weight of this debt. It is an extraordinary legacy that we, the Liberals, seek to leave for future generations.

Investing strategically to develop the North

A Liberal government will invest strategically in infrastructures to develop and make accessible the northern territory.

To do this, the Quebec Liberal Party, seeks to:

- Encourage the supply of natural gas north of the 49th parallel toward Sept-Iles to serve the North Shore, the last heavily industrial region still without this energy source;

- Promote an agreement of co-investment among businesses for the opening up of the "Labrador ditch" which would advance a rail connection linking the iron ore deposits with the port of Sept-Iles;

- Re-launch the coastal trade project on the North Shore, in collaboration with St. Lawrence ship owners, and to put in place a five-year pilot project as part of the Maritime Strategy;

- Participate in the expansion of a 560-foot-long pier which is vital for the economic development of Port-Cartier, also witin the framework of the Maritime Strategy.

Immediately following the election of a Liberal government, a vast promotional campaign will be launched which will include the establishment of an international mining economics mission so to attract foreign investment and reassure the mining sector.

Enrich our know-how

A Liberal government will establish new regulations to maximize local benefits in terms of employment and local contracts, notably leading to training programs adapted to the needs of young native persons.

It will create a support network for the resrarch and development of know how, which was a part of the original Plan Nord and which had attracted the interest of 65 organizations in the educational network, representing a potential of 1,750 researchers. This network would contribute to ecological planning and development and an increase of Northern know how in its economic, social and enviromental dimensions.

To re-launch the Plan Nord, we must work together with the native communities and involve them in our undertaking. We must also prioritize respect for the environment and sustainable development, all by creating wealth with a vision for future generations. We must furnish to all of Quebec, from the mining regions to the maritime regions, the means of development which will allow them to participate to their full potential. That is what we are aiming for with this great social project.

- **Philippe Couillard**

Natural gaz supply: re-launch the North Shore with the Plan Nord+ and the Maritime Strategy

Sept-Îles, March 15, 2014 – On the 11th day of the election campaign, Quebec Liberal Party leader Philippe Couillard visited Sept-Iles on the North Shore to announce the re-launch of the Plan Nord+ once the party becomes the new government and also introduced the first Maritime Strategy in Quebec history which will develop the full potential of the river and estuary of the St. Lawrence.

The North Shore and particularly Sept-Iles are extremely well positoned to benefit from both the Plan Nord and Maritime Strategy projects. As we are adressing the real issues, we will encourage the supply of natural gas north of the 49th parallel toward Sept-Iles to serve the North Shore, the last region with a significant industrial concentration still without this form of energy, by the extension of the underground network, by the transport of liqufied gas or by the transport by coastal navigation as part of the Maritime Strategy.

- Philippe Couillard

Plan Nord

Workers will benefit from the re-launch of the Plan Nord as much as Quebec companies, suppliers and equipment manufacturers. We will give confidence to investors who left Quebec with the arrival of the Parti Québécois and we will help northern communities to support and create infrastructures for transportation, schools, home building as well as health services.

“We shall promote an agreement of co-investment among businesses for the opening up of the “Labrador ditch” which would advance a rail connection linking the iron ore deposits with the port of Sept-Iles. The re-launch of the Plan Nord will favor the rebirth of such a project,” Mr. Couillard added.

Together with a Liberal Party government, we will provide all the necessary leadership to re-launch the Quebec economy and create jobs for all Quebecers, from north to south and east to west.

Maritime Strategy

This key project will be the creator of 30,000 new jobs from 2015 to 2030 and give birth to new vectors of econnomic growth. It will generate more than $4 billion in private investments and public investments of more than $3 billion in infrastructures, which will result in economic benefits of more than $3.5 billion.

The great project that is the Maritime Strategy will develop the full worth of the potential of the St. Lawrence, which is part of the Liberal tradition of great mobilizing projects. It will allow the North Shore region to seize unique opportunities for development and to be better positioned on the new Maritime stage in Quebec.

“This Strategy is good for employment and the economic development of the North Shore. Thanks to it we will re-launch the project of coastal navigation on the North Shore with fans of the St. Lawrence and we will participate in the rebuild of a pier some 560 feet in length which is vital for the economic development of Port-Cartier,” Mr. Couillard concluded.

Îles-de-la-madeleine, the region at the heart of the Maritime Strategy

Îles-de-la-madeleine, March 15, 2014. – On this Day 11 of the election campaign, Quebec Liberal Party leader Philippe Couillard travelled to the Îles-de-la-Madeleine to propose to the Madelinots a revamped economy with the first maritime strategy in Quebec history.

Quebec was born of one of the most beautiful rivers in the world which can offer us, as well as the beauty of its seascapes, riches that can generate numeroous economic activities. This first maritime strategy will give birth to 30,000 new jobs and will generate some $3.5 billion in eco-

nomic benefits.

We propose a project that will position the river and the Gulf of St. Lawrence at the heart of the economic re-launch of Quebec. And the Îles-de-la-Madeleine are an integral part of this ambitious Maritime Strategy.

With the goal of improving the services offered by Quebec's ferries, a Liberal government will increase financing for businesses in partnership wth the Société des transports. In the Iles, this financial aid will be very useful for companies like the Groupe CTMA for which this will represent the potential for new job creation.

It is with this example of concrete action that the Quebec Liberal Party will take care of real business.

- Philippe Couillard

It is also important to recognize the importance of researching and developing markets for marine products such as the earless seal. In the Iles, this is an opportunity to kill two birds with one stone: manage fish populations so to promote the increase of fish stocks and profit from this natural reseource with a great potential.

Liberal candidate Germain Chevarie exercised an undeniable influence on the content of this maritime strategy and so the Iles occupy an important place in it. The Liberal candidate added that "the seal hunt is a sustainable activity, carried out with the respect for the renewal of the resource. This activity is considered one of the possibilities in the development of maritime products."

In the framework of the Maritime Strategy, we will also mandate a special organism that will make sure to document and surveil the state of coastal zones and the river banks to prevent their degradation and which also will oversee their improvement and further develop the demand for products linked to the fishery and suport biomarine research.

Improving the quality of life for our senior citizens : ensuring that our seniors are living in safety and dignity

Laval, March 17, 2014. – On this Day 13 of the election campaign, Quebec Liberal Party leader Philippe Couillard introduced a series of measures aimed at improving the quality of life for senior citizens and promised to have within his Cabinet a minister responsible for them.

We will introduce significant measures to ensure that senior citizens, who have contributed to building Quebec, may live in safety and dignity. Better meeting the needs of our seniors, that is addressing the real issues.

Preserving the independence of our senior citizens

The Quebec Liberal Party will introduce a special tax credit refundable to 20% for physical, artistic and cultural activities – up to $200 – for citizens 60 years of age and older who earn less than $40,000 a year.

“It is well known that adopting an active lifestyle adds years of quality life for our seniors while staving off cognitive deterioration and the loss of independence. That is why we seek to facilitate access to physical and leisure activities. This will allow our seniors to develop new abilities, reduce the effects of age, preserve a social network and stave off isolation," monsieur Couillard said.

A Liberal government would promote the participation and increased mobility of seniors in their communities by boosting the Municipalité amie des aînés program, with the goal of increasing the number of municipalities taking part in it. As well, we shall increase the share of the infrastructures budget in this program to $6 million from $3 million to better support those communities involved in the Municipalité amie des aînés program in their efforts to undertake infrastructure or urban development projects that will enable them to better respond to the needs of seniors.

Helping seniors to maintain ownership of their homes

Seniors wish to remain in their homes as long as possible and need the means to do so. Over the last few years, Quebec benefited from a significant increase in property values. As a result, home owners saw their property and school taxes increase. The impact of these increases was particularly difficult for seniors, most of who are living on fixed incomes.

A Liberal government will introduce a special loans program for homeowners 60 years of age and older to help them manage their property and school tax bills. To be eligible, total annual household income must not exceed $70,000. This program is similar to that already in place for students, in that the government will provide a certificate that can be deposited with any financial institution. This will instruct the institution to disburse in the name of the homeowner the amounts demanded by municipalities for property and school taxes.

The loan will be repaid upon sale of the home.

Supporting family caregivers

The Liberal government undertakes also to support family caregivers, notably by investing an additional $5 million per year for five years for the development and consolidation of services defined specifically for them. We will proceed with calls for proposals to allocate available funds.

Moreover, as we are aware that it is often difficult to balance work and family for those taking care of a family member, we will ensure that family caregivers benefit from a day of compassionate leave in their workplace, in other words a day off without financial penalty.

A Liberal government will also review all tax credits available for family caregivers to extend their reach, notably by ensuring that those who take care of a spouse may have full access to tax credits designed for family caregivers. Also, we shall introduce the prepayment principle.

This is our way of thanking family caregivers for the support they provide daily to a sick parent, spouse with loss of autonomy, or child with a physical or mental handicap.

Investing in home care services

In the Quebec Liberal Party, we believe that each senior citizen should be able to count on care and services corresponding to the level of his or her independence. Consequently, in strengthening our services in CHSLD and in intermediate resources, we estimate that we must pursue the development of home care services. To this end, we will undertake to invest $150 million a year for five years to do so.

To ensure that the sums that will be granted are properly invested in the development of home care services, we shall also review the financing method. To protect these investments, the money shall be allocated to the Ministry in a dedicated envelope, and it is only upon the reception of proof that home care services truly have been developed that establishments will receive the budgets related to them.

"A Liberal government is determined to offer to seniors as well as those with mental or physical handicaps, care and services of the highest quality which will adequately meet their needs, especially when it respects their desire to stay in their own homes as long as possible," the Liberal Party leader concluded.

Financial program: gradual elimination of the health tax : A government led by Philippe Couillard will produce a budget surplus by 2015-2016

Nicolet, March 18, 2014. On this Day 14 of the election campaign, Quebec Liberal Party leader Philippe Couillard, accompanied by his economic team, made public his financial program. A Liberal government in Quebec will produce a budget surplus by 2015-2016 and will reduce the fiscal burden on taxpayers by gradually eliminating the health tax.

The restart of our economy and a rigorous management of expenditures will allow us to realize a budget surplus by 2015-2016. And we will then be able to offer a lasting respite for families by gradually abolishing the health tax.

- Philippe Couillard

A Quebec Liberal Party government will institute measures to re-launch the economy and job creation within days of taking office. Our economic policies will allow us to catch up with the Canadian growth rate. It is essential to increase provincial revenues without raising general taxes and those for taxpayers.

A Quebec Liberal Party government shall also apply a very rigorous management of expenditures. A review of all programs will be undertaken shortly after the election. Savings of $1.3 billion will be realized over the first two years of the new government's mandate.

The province's essential missions, health and education, shall be protected. The budgets for health and education will rise annually by 4% and 3.5% respectively. The credits of other ministries will be globally frozen for a period of five years. Over the span of the financial program, the annual increase in spending will be maintained at under 3%.

Moreover, crown corporations must produce significant increases in efficiency without raising rates and prices so they can contribute to the efforts to return to a balanced budget.

A permanent review committee shall be created with a mandate to scrutinize all government programs and their delivery methods. The authority for this mandate will be assigned to the Treasury Board.

"This rigorous management of expenditures will allow us to offer a break to middle class families. As well as the abolition of the health tax, prices for daycare services will be indexed as of 2015 to relieve families of the price shock announced by the PQ which seeks to have these daily rates rise to $9 from $7," Mr. Couillard added.

Budget surpluses are predicted as of 2015-2016. These will be allocated as follows; 50% for tax reductions for taxpayers of the middle class, and 50% to relieve the public debt burden with extra payments to the Fonds des générations.

"Our financial program is one of a rigorous government that seeks to protect the essential missions of the province and re-launch our economy. We shall develop within the civil service a culture of stringent program evaluation with a view to ensuring that services offered meet the needs of families and that they are delivered effectively," Mr. Couillard continued.

I ask Pauline Marois to not replay for Quebecers the 'coup' of 2012 when she showed up for the debates without a financial program. Quebecers have the right to know what the Parti Québécois has in store for them after the economic fiasco of the last 18 months.

Investing in our infrastructures to restart our economy

Quebec City, March 19, 2014. – On this 15th day of the election campaign, Quebec Liberal Party leader Philippe Couillard promised to re-establish funding for the maintenance and modernization of infrastructures at levels preceding those of cuts imposed by the government of Pauline Marois.

For the Liberal party, intergenerational equality is one of our fundamental values. Thus we must go further to leave to our children a Quebec that is in a good state and this as much from the point of view of public finances and of the quality of our infrastuctures.

- **Philippe Couillard**

The Marois government chose to cut some $15 billion in the Plan québécois des infrastructures (PQI) over a period of 10 years, but refused to assume the consequences by identifying which projects will be cancelled or postponed. “Pequiste austerity is poorly targeted austerity. Instead of cutting in administration, the Marois government has cut in sectors that are crucial for our economic and social development and which stimulate the economy and job creaiton,” the Liberal Party leader added.

Philippe Couilard was flanked by all of the candidates of the Quebec Liberal Party in the provincial capital region on this occasion. He illustrated the impact of the re-establishment of the funds allocated in the POI by announcing that a Liberal government would proceed with the widening of the Henri IV autoroute, a $500 million project over five years.

Infrastructures that meet our aspirations

To meet the challenges of productivity, Quebec must equip itself with modern infrastructures which will allow our businesses to develop their full potential. This is a central theme of a strategy that seeks to conquer new markets to create a richer and more prosperous Quebec. We have the opportunity to be at the juncture of the two largest consumer markets in the world which are preparing to sign a free trade agreement. We must be prepared to capitalize from the advantages that our geographical situation provides to become the Gateway to America. It is in this context that the infrastructure projects of the Plan Nord and our Maritime Strategy would come under the Plan québécois des infrastructures.

Sustain our economy with constructive projects

According to the Mouvement Desjardins, the Quebec economy has stalled since 2013. These investments in infrastructures will help compensate for lower prospects of private investment for 2014, which Statistics Canada shows remains at levels below those in 2012.

The OECD describes investment in modern infrastructures not only as an investment for the future, but also as the best way to stimulate the economy. This will create jobs everywhere in Quebec.

- **Carlos Leitao**, candidate in Robert Baldwin riding

He also stipulated that the positive impact of these investments on our economy coupled with our economic policy will contribute to the lowering of our debt to GPP ratio, as our financial program shows.

Modern infrastructures which improve the quality of life for families

We have the duty to provide for our children schools that stimulate, and to our sick effective hospitals, and to our seniors welcoming living environments, and to have roads as good as those of our neighbors and to develop infrastructures for public transport. Modern infrastructures raise the quality of life for families by assuring the long-term safety and prosperity for all.

A rigorous and transparent approach to project management

We shall adopt a strategic approach to invest in priority projects in a rational and balanced way. The POI will be managed rigorously as much in the management of project portfolios as in management of individual projects, and this to maintain cost control and ensure that

Quebecers pay the right price for infrastructures.This management will take place in complete transparency. We will provide these facts on an Internet site that will show each POI project by region, its nature, its work schedule, its cost and the level of progress in work schedule and budget terms.

Quebec nust reduce its maintenance deficit, invest in and for its future and stimulate its economy. Together, addressing the real issues.

Improving access to healthcare - A Liberal government would undertake without delay renovations to Verdun Hospital

Verdun, March 21, 2014 – Jacques Daoust, Liberal candiate in Verdun riding, as well as his area colleagues, Marguerite Blais, Liberal candidate in Saint Henri-Sainte Anne, and Dr. Yves Bolduc, Liberal candidate in Jean-Talon, are committed to re-launching the Verdun Hospital modernization project.

This project is situated at the crossroads of two major priorities of a Liberal government, that is stimulaing the economy by investments in infrastructures and improving access to healthcare by modernizing our hospital facilities. For the benefit of patients in Vedun as well as all those in southwestern Montreal, we commit to immediately begin renovations on Verdun Hospital.

- Jacques Daoust

At present, the dilapidated state of the facilities at Verdun Hospital, with some rooms lodging as many as four patients, often without bathrooms, the compactness of common spaces and crowded corridors can compromise the quality and safety of healthcare.

I must applaud the exceptional work of the hospital's medical teams, who deserve more than to be ignored by the Marois government. They carry out their tasks in often difficult conditions and we in the Quebec Liberal Party are proud to support them in this essential renovation project which will allow them to deliver quality healthcare services in a modern environment.

- Dr. Yves Bolduc

Renewing the forest industry in our regions

Quebec City, March 22, 2014. – On this 18th day of the election campaign, Quebec Liberal Party leader Philippe Couillard pledged to install a complete development plan that would favor the forestry industry and consolidate employment in the sector while promoting the economic development of our regions.

“For months now I have been travelling across the province. I have met workers, entrepresenurs and processing plant owners who need a helping hand from the government to assure their futures. The Parti Québécois has thrown up a giant smokescreen with their Rendez-vous de la forêt but they fooled no one: the promised results have not materialized. It takes true leadership for the forestry industry and only the Quebec Liberal Party has the desire to provide it. The first action item that I will implement will be the appointment of a Minister for Forests, Wildlife and Parks, who will lead a permanent Forum on the question in concert with all of our partners,” Mr. Couillard announced.

Proposed measures

We took part in the Rendez-vous de la forêt, we deemed it important for us to do so. And the conclusions emanating from it come from, in large part, proposals that we submitted.

The Liberal government plan would be threefold:

1. Improve the productivity and competitiveness of Quebec forestry:

- By public investment of $225 million a year over five years in silvicultural projects, of which $170 million will be in non-commercial work, a commitment superior to those amounts announced by the PQ;

- By establishing financal support for the maintenance and development of multi-user forest roads to assure safe access for all users of the forests, which the PQ did not do;

- By assuring dialogue with businesses to evaluate the relevance of revisiting electricity fees, something on which the PQ has provided no commitment;

- By improving the new forestry regime by reviewing all regulations relating to planning of works and the functioning of the Bureau de mise en marché des bois;

- By reinforcing the links between the education milieu, universities and Cegeps, to develop programs in engineering and architecture that would promote the use of structural lumber;

- By revisiting the practices of the Chief Forester so that there is more transparency and information when assessing forestry possibilities;

- By assisting the industry and forest co-operatives in the renewal of forestry equipment, with loan guarantees;

- By assuring stable financing for the private forestry industry;

- By re-affirming the concept of local forests.

2. Promoting innovation:

- By continuing to support the promotion of the forest biomass;

- By pursuing the establishment of the Charte du bois;

- By supporting the industry in the marketing of innovative products from the processing of wood as architectural elements and products derived from cellulose;

- By undertaking work site projects in hardwood forests, that we began in 2012 with a view to establishing a clear strategy for this type of forest which represents 30% of Quebec's woodlands.

3. Develop forestry manpower:

- With the development of a plan for the proactive promotion of forestry trades in conjunction with the Comité sectoriel de main-d'œuvre en aménagement forestier and institutions that offer training linked to the forestry industry.

The forestry industry is present at the heart of 140 Quebec municipalities and supports some 60,000 jobs; it is essential that stakeholder issues be taken seriously.

Situation in Saguenay-Lac Saint Jean

In Saguenay-Lac Saint Jean, the forestry industry has struggled with uncertainty since the arrival of the PQ. The balance sheet for Denis Trottier, Martine Ouellet and Pauline Marois in this region has been the following: promises without follow-up actions, a cloud over protected areas, radio silence on the loss of Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification of Les produits Forestiers Résolu, and secretiveness when it comes to forest caribou.

Hundreds of forestry jobs are in danger in the region because of PQ paralysis. It must stop. Pauline Marois refuses to get involved in the issue of sacrificing jobs over caribou, and Denis Troittier agrees with her. The PQ lacks compassion when it comes to forestry workers. To me, it is perfectly clear; never would I sacrifice forestry jobs for even one caribou.

- Philippe Couillard

Action plan for the Capitale-Nationale- The intelligent city: a modern tool for a great capital

Quebec City, March 23, 2014 – On this 19th day of the election campaign, Quebec Liberal Party leader Philippe Couillard unveiled measures that will provide the necessary tools for the radiance of a great provincial capital.

The Quebec Liberal Party action plan for the Capitale-Nationale includes:

1. a new governance to provide the Capitale-Nationale with the necessary tools that it may shoulder the responsibilties inherent with its status, and which modernize its relations with the Quebec government;

2. Economic measures to support the creation and expansion of innovative and high technology industries and to encourage the development of tourism and maritime transport;

3. Investments in transportation infrastructures that will improve the quality of life of its citizens.

The Capitale-Nationale is the pride of all Quebecers. We must support its development. The time has come to modernize its governance so that it has the tools which correspond with the responsibilities of a great city. Our capital will be one of the first cities to set out on a track leading to its status as an intelligent city.

- **Philippe Couillard**

Quebec: Intelligent city

A Quebec Liberal Party government will introduce the concept of the intelligent city by starting with the Capitale-Nationale. This concept strives to optimize new technologies that will benefit administrations and citizens alike. A QLP government will work to complete the coverage of Quebec relative to high-speed Internet access (large bandwidth).

A modern governance

A Liberal government will take inspiration from the White Paper of the Union des municipalités du Québec to improve the relationship between the Quebec government and its municipalities. The Quebec Liberal Party favors a partnership arrangement which accords more autonomy to the municipalities. They must have at their disposal the powers of taxation and responsibilities that reflect the realities of the 21st century.

Contrary to the “wall-to-wall” policies that characterize the Parti Québécois, we will favor “made to measure” to reflect the specific realities of different urban agglomerations. Thus, Quebec must benefit from its own law that reflects the realities of a great capital. The $5 million fund for special events also will be extended.

Durability of pension plans

A Liberal government also pledges to legislate to protect the durability of pension plans in the municipal sector. We favor negotiations between the affected parties, but with the obligation of reaching a result within a year. At the end of this period, an arbitrator shall be appointed and will have six months to find common ground or act arbitrarily. His decision will be binding. He must apply the following principles: respect for the capacity to pay of citizens, intergenerational equality, sustainability and integrity of the plan and respect for the general principle of equal (50-50) sharing between municipality and its beneficiaries.

A new economic stimulus

The Quebec Liberal Party plan also foresees measures that will provide a new stimulus for innovative and technological small-and- medium sized businesses in the Capitale-Nationale region. Among these measures, note: a new export tax credit; the creation of the Démarrage-Québec program to promote the creation of new, innovative businesses; and the launch of the Créativité Québec program that will support innovative projects from conception on.

As well, the Maritime Strategy proposed by the Quebec Liberal Party wll provide a new impetus for businesses linked to maritime transport in Quebec. We will support the development of the cruise business, as much in the matter of improved facilities for visitors, as port infrastructures. This strategy will also lead to more orders for shipyards.

Quebec City has an enormous advantage in that it has a deep-water port. Our Maritime Strategy will allow Quebec City to greatly benefit from the movement of merchandise emanating from Free Trade with the European Union, as well as the expansion of the Panama Canal. It will also promote significant growth in the cruise industry.

- **Philippe Couillard**

We will also support the desire of Quebec City tourism promoters to further develop winter tourism. “The 2012-2020 tourism policy of the previous Liberal government recognized this focus of tourism development. Thus we support this desire to make Quebec City a major international winter tourism destination,” Mr. Couillard added.

Modern infrastructures

A Liberal government will also re-launch our economy by re-establishing the sums contained in the original Plan québécois des infrastructures, and subsequently cut by the Parti Québécois government. This means some $1.5 billion more a year invested in our infrastructures over the next 10 years. Quebec City will benefit from this re-launch of our infrastructures.

A Quebec Liberal Party government will invest $500 million for the widening of the Henri-IV Autoroute. This investment will allow us to assure the quality of this ageing infrastructure and will contribute to the increased efficiency of the highways network of the Capitale-Nationale.

A Liberal government also pledges to finish the work on Phase 3 and launch Phase 4 of the Promenade Samuel de Champlain project.These works will allow greater use of the banks for recreational ends by the greater public, all by restructuring a sector that has had a greatly underdevloped potential. The project consists of proposing an urban development master plan and the maximum use of the river banks and environs, between Avenue D’Estimauville in the west and the Montmorency river to the east with a view to meeting the government’s goal of returning the (St. Lawrence) river to its citizens.

A Liberal govenrment has always supported the Capitale-Nationale and will continue to do so. Together, with all social and economic players we are addressing the real issues that make Quebec City a great capital region.

- **Philippe Couillard**

A Liberal government would stimulate home renovation to help families and re-launch our economy

Sherbrooke, March 24, 2014 – On this Day 20 of the election campaign, Quebec Liberal Party leader Philippe Couillard said that a Liberal government would provide a refundable tax credit to support families seeking to renovate their homes.

Stimulating home renovation is improving the quality of life for our families all the while re-launching our economy. It also serves to fight against moonlighting and promotes energy efficiency.

- Philippe Couillard

Stimulating home renovation

A Liberal government will establish a tax credit refundable of up to 20% (to a maximum of $2,500) for work done to support families who seek to renovate their homes.To be eligible, all work must have been completed by December 31, 2016 and the minimum value of the work must be at least $3,000.

The program is aimed at homeowners and their principal residence (single dwelling or condominium) or up to a triplex, independent of their annual revenue. The program also will cover multi-generational dwellings, the transformation of single dwellings into multi-generational units or the reconfiguring of a home to meet the needs of a person or persons living with a disability.

This tax credit will be offered to all citizens, notwithstanding household revenue. All work on renovation of the household will be accepted. The current green tax credit will be maintained until that program ends October 31, 2014 and following that all renovations aimed at increasing energy efficiency will be eligible for the new tax credit.

A Quebec Liberal government will also invite the federal government to participate in the program and encourage it to offer a federal tax credit.

The tax credit for home renovation established in 2008 by the Liberal government of the day was highly successful and greatly contributed to supporting economic activity. We will expand the admissions criteria for condominiums (with the exception of common areas).

"It will also be available for persons making changes to their property with a view to adapting it for a person with a disability. It will also support families who are renovating their property to transform them into multi-generational units. We're going further to better meet the needs of our citizens," Mr. Couillard concluded.

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Quality training to promote the economic development of Quebec

Trois-Rivières, March 25. 2014 – On this 21st day of the election campaign, Quebec Liberal Party leader Philippe Couillard unveiled measures aimed at revitalizing professional and technical training programs while ensuring the presence of top-notch university establishments.

The Liberal plan is clear: on the day after our election we will buckle down to work to re-launch the economy and create 250,000 new jobs over five years. To do this, we must make sure that Quebecers have the qualifications required to meet the demands of the job market. A Liberal government will depend on professional and technical training programs to better prepare our young people and offer continuing education to our workers.

- Philippe Couillard

Relying on professional and technical training

Between now and 2020, some 1.4 million positions will have to be filled, 31.7% of which will require at the very least professional and technical training and 40% a university education. Quebec is at the point where it must provide a wide range of cutting edge training to prepare qualified workers.

A Liberal government will take inspiration from the German model of trade schools to better integrate internships in companies into professional and technical training programs. In Germany, professional training is very highly regarded. Some 60% of under 20s head for a system described as "dual." This system prescribes three years of training, two-thirds of which are spent in a company setting. This approach therefore relies on a partnership and division of costs between the State and the company. Students make a choice from a listing of 340 training programs which are predetermined by the participants in the socio-economic environment. Note that the Bombardier Transport company in Berlin is among those companies involved in the dual system. To this end, schools, school boards and the collegiate network will work hand in hand.

One must offer concrete measures and specific actions to better promote the learning of a trade for the greatest number of young people and adults.

As well as the implantation of the German model, a Liberal government pledges to:

Ease the entry requirements for training programs leading to diplomas for professional studies (DEP), college study certificates (AEC) and college study diplomas (DEC).

Provide more and varied opportunities for professional and collegiate training (DEP, AEC, DEC) to encourage more young people and adults to acquire the proper training leading to a well-paying trade. To do so, we shall reduce the bureaucracy in school boards and Cegeps so that they can quickly provide training programs that respond to the needs of the marketplace.

Insist on the importance that information relative to non-traditional trades be offered and available to young girls during orientation sessions in high school. As well, we must raise the awareness among employers of the presence of women in non-traditional trades to increase their participation. Information campaigns aimed at young women and businesses will be created to help achieve these goals.

Support, through the Maritime Strategy, marine research to develop a better understanding of the river, leverage it to its full potential and thus promote collaboration between Cegeps and universities.

Have quality and competitive universities

The economic prosperity of Quebec is anchored by our university network. Our universities must be able to offer an education of the highest quality and rival those institutions from around the world who deploy constant efforts to attract the best professors and researchers.

The Ministry of Education is currently quite paternalistic when it comes to our system of higher education. It will refocus its mission to create goals and support our universities all the while practising rigorous management of our tax dollars.

A Liberal government pledges to:

- Simplify and make efficient the accountability of universities, all the while ensuring rigorous and transparent management. The resulting savings in time and money could be invested in the right place, that is to say, in student services.
- Support an increase in own-source revenues of universities by developing the marketing of university patents and by building a philanthropic culture.
- Index school fees for Quebec students.
- Review school fees for students from French-speaking countries so that they will pay the equivalent of what Canadian students pay. This revision will help increase the attraction of Quebec universities and will be undertaken in partnership with them.

The Parti Québécois acted in an underhanded way with universities as well as with Quebec students by hiding from them the real péquiste fee hike. By lowering the tax credit for school tuitions from 20% to 8%, the Parti Québécois let down middle class and low income students.

- Philippe Couillard

A Liberal government will also develop retention measures for university students such as:

- Developing a partnership with the universities, employers in the private sector and employment assistance groups to offer a first work experience for young university students graduating from programs that don't feature internships.
- Extend to all universities the Accélérateurs pour la création d'entreprises (ACET), model developed by the Université de Sherbrooke, which allows graduates in different faculties to submit their final project studies with the objective of launching innovative technology businesses.

Make continuing education more accessible

The motivation to learn a trade also includes continuing education/training. A person must have the opportunity to pursue studies in his or her field without having to face endless redundancy in the courses offered from one level to the next.

A Liberal government pledges to:

- Ease the transition between different training and development paths notably in the matter of prerequisites, to encourage the pursuit of studies for those who seek to continue their academic progression at the high school, college or university levels.

One must know how to revitalize as well as promote the different academic paths all the while ensuring flexibility in programs to qualify the greatest number of persons. In coming years, the job market will need numerous workers who have qualified in a wide varety of slots. Give us the necessary tools to qualify the greatest number of workers and to promote the economic growth of Quebec. That is addressing the real issues.

Montreal, an International Metropolis of the future

Montreal, March 26, 2014 – On this 22nd day of the election campaign, Quebec Liberal Party leader Philippe Couillard unveiled a series of commitments aimed at equipping Montreal with the proper tools to become a great international metropolis. Montreal will have the necessary means at its disposal in governance, infrastructures and economic, social and cultural development to become a great metropolis, open to the world and poised for the future.

Montreal must cement its position as a great international metropolis. The city is the pride of all Quebecers, and it is incumbent on all of us to support its development. The time has come to modernize its governance and infrastructures so that it will have the tools that correspond with the responsibilities of a great metropolis.

- Philippe Couillard

The Quebec Liberal Party's action plan for Montreal provides for the development of the Quartier de la santé. Situated in east-central Montreal around the Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal (CHUM) and its research center (CRCHUM), and also benefitting from the presence of the McGill University Health Center (MUHC) nearby, the Quartier de la santé will consolidate Montreal's position among the 10 most important health hubs in North America.

This project, which will require covering part of the Ville-Marie Autoroute, will contribute significantly to the economic development of Montreal in the area of life sciences by becoming a magnet for biotechnology companies and biomedical research. It will confirm Montreal's future among the great centres of innovation in North America.

"We must profit from the substantial investments raised for the construction of CHUM, CRCHUM and the MUHC. We have a unique opportinity to build a centre of innovative, cutting-edge medical technology and biotechnology businesses in Montreal.

We have everything it takes to succeed: renowned researchers, modern installations, reputable universities and an attractive city. We must seize these opportunities.

The Liberal action plan for Montreal also calls for commitments that revolve around the following three axes: 1) Modernized governance; 2) Investments in infrastructures that will improve the quality of life of its citizens and transportation flow; 3) Economic measures that will allow Montreal to ensure its economic future.

Modernized governance

A Liberal government will take inspiration from the White Paper of the Union of Quebec Municipalities to revise the relationship between the Quebec government and its municipalities. A model of governance cited by the UQM and its members is that of Toronto and Queen's Park. We will endorse a project that leads to a relationship based on partnership and the recognition of decision-making independence in several sectors.

Montreal's special character demands a tax system and responsibilities that will allow it to fully fulfill its role and which reflects its strategic importance for Quebec.

The first move will be to grant more flexibility to municipal councillors to resolve the question of municipal employees' pension plans.

This governance would also provide the necessary tools to allow the city to manage its own social realities, for example the acceptance and integration of immigrants and the struggle against homelessness.

Accelerating the renewal and development of infrastructures

A Quebec Liberal Party government would re-launch the economy by retrieving those funds in the Plan québécois des infrastructures that were cut by the Parti Québécois government.

As for transportation , the Liberal government will back the efforts of the City of Montreal to increase the use of public transport. Special attention will be paid to the co-ordination and planning of operations in the public transportation network in Montreal and the greater metropolitan region. To promote the electrification of public transport, preferential rates for electricity will be made available to the Société de transport de Montréal. We also are committed to completing the expansion projects for commuter trains in western and eastern Montreal and also shall study the feasibility of extending the subway system.

As for highways, we shall accelerate the Turcot Interchange project. We will work closely with the federal government to fast track the replacement of the Champlain Bridge, without tolls and with a public tranport component. Special measures will be introduced during its replacement/construction process, notably the operation of a ferry service between Montreal and the South Shore.

A new economic impetus

The Quebec Liberal Party also provides for measures that will give a new impetus to Montreal and which will position it as a business metropolis and build a veritable economy of decision-makers.

The Maritime Strategy proposed by the Quebec Liberal Party will give a new impetus to industries linked to urban freight logistics. We shall support the modernization of the Port of Montreal, notably by building a direct link between its installations and Autoroute 25. An investment of $500 million will allow the Vaudreuil-Soulanges logistics hub to see the light of day. These investments in intermodal transportation will allow the Port of Montreal to take full advantage of Free Trade with Europe. As well, our commitments to PMEs (small and medium-sized businesses), in the form of export tax credits, will be supported by these developments.

"Geographically and culturally, Montreal is at the crossroads of Europe and North America, which gives it an important strategic advantage. The conclusion of the Canada-Europe trade agreement with the United States is a unique opportunity that must be seized. Montreal has all the positive attributes required to position itself as the Gateway to North America," the Liberal leader added.

The presence of head offices in the city is of capital importance, both on the employment and socio-economic levels. The Liberal Plan provides for the use of a part of the Fonds des générations for the acquisition of up to 10% of publicly traded companies whose local head office is threatened by a hostile takeover bid.

Finally, the Quebec Liberal Party applauds the ambition of the inspirational vision presented in the report, "Créer un nouvel élan à Montréal" by Jacques Menard (BMO Grouple financier and the Boston Consulting Group).

We shall support those proposals aiming to bolster the economic power and international cachet of Montreal, so that our city may compare favorably with cities like Boston and Seattle. Converting this ambition to reality, however, will take a government that addresses real issues.

A Liberal government will help Quebec families to set aside the necessary funds to purchase their first home

Blainville, March 28, 2014 – On this 24th day of the election campaign, Quebec Liberal Party leader Philippe Couillard announced that a Liberal government would help young people and their older counterparts to set aside the necessary funds to purchase a first principal residence by creating a property savings plan (REP), the régime épargne-propriété. This measure will help families to gain access to property all the while encouraging Quebecers to save.

Access to property is an important element in the quality of life of families. We pledge to support them in easing their access to property so that Quebec will remain a 'paradise for families.' This new measure was part of a long list of initiatives taken by the previous Liberal government which ensured the prosperity of Quebec families, such as parental leave and successive income tax decreases.

- Philippe Couillard

Access to property

According to the 2011 Census, 61.2% of Quebecers own property while the number is 69 % in Canada overall. If we don't act, that gap shall widen because the increase in house values is outstripping income earnings and the funds needed to purchase a home have soared. Consequently, it is more and more difficult for young families to acquire property, despite low interest rates.

This is why a Liberal government would create the REP. The main characteristics of the REP are the following:

- 100 % of the money invested in the plan is tax deductible;

- Citizens can invest up to $5,000 a year for a maximum period of 10 years;

- The money saved in the plan must be used for the purchase of a first principal residence. Once the money is used as a down payment, the plan shall expire; consequently and contrary to an RRSP, it will not be necessary to reimburse the funds;

- Discussions will be undertaken with the Canadian government with a view to ensuring that REP money will be tax deductible federally as well;

- Contributions to the REP will not affect those in an RRSP (by reducing allowable contributions);

- If the funds accumulated in an REP are not used after 10 years, the money can be redirected to an RRSP, respecting maximum annual contributions.

By establishing this home savings plan, we're improving the quality of life of Quebec families and increasing the value of their heritage. For young families it is difficult to accumulate the money needed to buy a property considering the high rate of increasing home values in recent years. The REP will give them a helping hand and contribute to sustain economic activity.

Commitments in health inspired by our past success

Quebec City, March 31, 2014 – On this Day 27 of the election campaign, Quebec Liberal Party leader Phillippe Couillard visited the Pavillon Ferdinand-Vandry of Université Laval that was expanded in recent years thanks to a grant of $61 million from the previous Quebec Liberal government. New installations include the Centre Apprentiss, comprising 30 laboratories equipped with cutting-edge imaging and other medical equipment.

It is to generate projects like this one and to give a boost to our re-launch of the economy that I pledge to re-establish the funding for the maintenance and modernizarion of our infrastructuures at the level prior to that of the $15 billion in cuts carried out by the Marois government.

- Philippe Couillard

With the support of the Liberal government, the Pavillon Ferdinand-Vandry has become a vast integrated complex of training in health sciences which brings together under one roof the faculties of medicine, pharmacy and nursing.

The installations of the Pavillon Ferdinand-Vandry not only allow for the training of a greater number of students in health sciences but also fosters interdisciplinary co-operation.

This principle of co-operation is one of the key elements for improving accessibility to health-care services in Quebec, and that is why we will prioritize it by promoting the creation of 50 super clinics in the province, each bringing together a multidisciplinary team comprising general practitioners, specialists, nurses and other health professionals.

- **Philippe Couillard**

Training tomorrow's healthcare practitioners

The Quebec Liberal Party leader emphasized that the Pavillon Ferdinand-Vandry is attended by some 7,000 students in medicine, pharmacy and nursing sciences who will provide tomorrow's healthcare services to the population of Quebec.

Remember that on the heels of the massive retirements undertaken by the Parti Québécois with Pauline Marois as leader, the healthcare and social services network was struck by a serious shortfall of medical staff. Fortunately, starting in 2003, the Liberal government had increased in a major way the numbers of cohorts in medicine and nursing sciences, so much so that the shortfall was slowly but surely being reduced.

"The Quebec population can count on the presence of doctors and nurses in coming years because of the ongoing efforts of the Liberal government. But this won't be enough, we have to pursue the work we have begun to improve access to healthcare, and we have a concrete and solid plan to get there," the Liberal leader continued.

Mr. Couillard recalled that a Liberal government would revise the method of funding establishments in the health and social services network, will allow Quebecers to visit clinics with their health card for tests in medical imaging, will train 2,000 specialized nurse practitioners and promote the creation of 50 super clinics open seven days a week, as well as increasing investments in infrastructures.

Our commitments in healthcare are inspired by our successes and are the logical follow-up to numerous actions we have undertaken to improve access to healthcare for Quebec families. This constitutes our response to the real priorities of Quebecers in healthcare matters.

- **Philippe Couillard**

Maisonneuve-Rosemont Hospital - QLP reiterates its support for the modernization project

Montreal, April 1, 2014. – Quebec Liberal Party candidates for Montreal's east-end ridings and Dr. Yves Bolduc, the Liberal candidate for the riding of Jean-Talon and former Minister of Health and Social Services, have joined together today to reiterate their support for the major Maisonneuve-Rosemont Hospital modernization project.

The Quebec Liberal Party commitment to restoring the Quebec Infrastructure Program's funding — to the level prior to the Marois government's $15 billion in cuts — includes funding the Maisonneuve-Rosemont Hospital project and others like it.

- Dr. Yves Bolduc

In March 2010, Dr. Bolduc, the Minister of Health and Social Services at the time, announced that the Maisonneuve-Rosemont Hospital could start developing its modernization project plan. The institution, in turn, presented clinical and modernization plans to the Agence de la santé et des services sociaux de Montréal (Montreal Health and Social Services Agency), but has not seen any movement on these files. The Parti Québécois has simply failed the Maisonneuve-Rosemont Hospital and, at the same time, the 670,000 Montrealers who live in Montreal's east-end and receive health services in this area.

This modernization project is is urgently needed. Facilities at the Maisonneuve-Rosemont Hospital, mostly built in the 60s, must provide physicians, nurses, attendants and every other health care professional with state-of-the-art, efficient facilities that allow them to offer better care to patients.

- Dr. Yves Bolduc

Dr. Bolduc also indicated that the Quebec Liberal Party's Maisonneuve-Rosemont Hospital support is not new and has been consistent for many years. On March 29, 2010, in fact, the Liberal government announced an investment of $63 million for the expansion and renovation of the institution's emergency unit. This was a first step toward the large-scale project that the Quebec Liberal Party plans to undertake at the Maisonneuve-Rosemont Hospital.

The Maisonneuve-Rosemont Hospital project fits within two priorities for a Liberal government: restarting the Quebec economy with significant investments in infrastructure redevelopment and hospital modernization.

"That's why the Quebec Liberal Party candidates for Montreal's east-end ridings today reiterated their support for the major Maisonneuve-Rosemont Hospital modernization project," concluded Dr. Bolduc.

The economic revival of Quebec and Montreal

Montreal, April 1, 2014. – On this 28th day of the election campaign, Quebec Liberal Party leader Philippe Couillard met with the business community of the city at the Chambre de commerce du Montréal métropolitain. He pledged before a full house to revive the Quebec economy and also outlined a five-point plan for Montreal's economic renewal.

I am going to lead a government that will make the economy its top priority. A government that understands Montreal, its importance and its challenges. Montreal must consolidate its position as a major international metropolis. A strong metropolis is in the best interests of all Quebecers, and it is incumbent on us to support its development. The time has come to modernize its governance and its infrastructures so that it will have the tools which correspond with the responsibilities of a major metropolis.

- Philippe Couillard

Let's face it. The Quebec economy has broken down with the PQ government, private investments have dropped substantially and employment has decreased. Without a change of course, the future does not look bright: lowered provincial revenues combined with the loss of control over spending are digging a deep deficit that will eliminate all room to maneuver and lead directly to a more onerous financial burden and cuts in services.

The Quebec Liberal Party plan consists above all of a revival of the economy and strengthening it in a sustainable manner. It is imperative that we re-establish a favorable economic climate. This revival will be undertaken mainly with major support for our PMEs (small- and medium-sized businesses). "PMEs represent half of the existing jobs in Quebec, and even more with 80% of new jobs," Mr. Couillard stated, explaining his plan to stimulate access to funding and job creation, to attract foreign entrepreneurs, promote innovation and prop up exports with tax credits on transportation costs.

With a Quebec Liberal Party government in Quebec, investments in infrastructures, cut by the PQ, will be re-established. Investments will climb to $11 G instead of $9.5 G annually. Financially speaking, the economic activity created by these investments will significantly contribute to reduce the public debt. In all cases, investment in infrastructures is good for the economy.

We are going to implement an improved Plan Nord. A société du Plan Nord will be created to co-ordinate investments, and we will include in this corporation a marketing office. With this office, companies from all over Quebec will become familiar with the needs of major clients and will be able to participate in northern development.

This improved Plan Nord also will benefit from a special mandate accorded to Investissement Québec. Its mission shall be to support the growth of Quebec equipment manufacturers and suppliers. The Plan Nord is still as significant as it ever was and Quebec will benefit even more from it as the global economy picks up.

The economic vision of the QLP also includes the creation of a maritime strategy that seeks to position Quebec as a great turntable for transatlantic traffic arising from free trade agreements with Europe and the United States. This maritime strategy also rests on the development of a sustainable fishery and a "blue" economy, more specifically marine biotechnologies which are undergoing tremendous growth globally.

All of these initiatives in this economic revival shall benefit Montreal.

Moreover, the Liberal leader presented a five-point plan specific to Montreal to provide impetus for its development:

1. Renewed governance: A QLP government will adopt a law formally recognizing Montreal's status as a metropolis by according it the powers due to a great North American city;

2. Tools for an international city: A Liberal government will give the city the necessary financial levers so it may diversify its revenues and will conclude a shared resource- responsibilities agreement according to the subsidiarity principle;

3. Investments in infrastructures: a Liberal government will accelerate work on infrastructures and the development of public transport and will agree on priority tasks with the CMM in this new spirit of partnership with Quebec. The Liberal Party leader also reiterated his opposition to tolls on the Champlain Bridge, claiming that the current bill on this presented by the federal government does not make the measure any fairer for all that;

4. A new economic impetus for Montreal: the economic orientations of the QLP (infrastructures, PMEs, Plan Nord, new powers) will stimulate the city's economy. Add to those some specific projects:

    - In the framework of the Maritime Strategy, port activities will be developed, the link between the port and Highway 25 will be finished and an investment will allow the creation in the Montérégie of a trans-shipment centre of international scope: it is the natural Vaudreuil-Soulanges hub (logistical pole);

    - The first part of the Ville-Marie Expressway will be covered, which will allow for the development of the Quartier de la Santé project;

    - A Liberal government will strive very hard to preserve the head offices concentrated in the city. Le Fonds des générations will be brought into play to protect these offices from hostile takeover bids by allowing for the purchase of up to 10% of outstanding shares in those companies.

5. Protect the French face of Montreal and promote its culture: the Liberal leader stated that Montreal's French face is the city's top attraction. "French, the language of institutions, the common tongue, principal language of work and a diverse population, these are all part of a unique mix that drives Montreal's creativity," the Liberal leader said. This cultural dynamism will be promoted. Among other things, a Liberal government's foreign missions will include a cultural component.

Montreal's revival is a matter of confidence, and the Quebec Liberal Party will bring forth this confidence. Only the Quebec Liberal Party has the team, the plan and the competence to put Quebec back on the road to prosperity and to give back to Montreal its luster, prestige and dynamism of a major international metropolis, open to the world and poised for the future.

- **Philipe Couillard**

Working together for a stronger and sustainable agricultural sector

Saint-Hyacinthe, April 2, 2014. – On the 29th day of the election campaign, candidates Pierre Paradis (Brome-Missisquoi), Martin Coiteux (Nelligan), Stéphane Billette (Huntingdon) and Louise Arpin (Saint-Hyacinthe) unveiled agricultural measures at Ferme Laurent Leblanc that a Liberal government will introduce in office.

For the Quebec Liberal Party, the bio-food industry's development and its stakeholders have always been a major priority and an integral part of the QLP's approach to protecting and promoting the richness of our food and the expertise of our farmers, both inside and outside Quebec's borders.

"On April 7, Quebecers must choose either the Parti Québécois and a referendum or the Quebec Liberal Party that addresses with real issues, including agriculture.

To this end, we must protect our supply management and stabilization systems. If the Parti Québécois leads Quebecers into a referendum, our supply management and stabilization systems will be in jeopardy. The Quebec Liberal Party will never put Quebec family farms at risk due to a disruptive referendum.

- Pierre Paradis

We also need to implement strong measures that will help young Quebec farmers become and remain entrepreneurs.

We will allow the savings of these young people, who are preparing to take over from their parents or grandparents, to grow tax-free in a Young Farmer Fund (like a TFSA). The gradual transfer of a farm will be an option to amortize the cost over a number of years — supported by the Young Farmer Fund.

- Martin Coiteux

To ensure that our agricultural sector is stronger and sustainable, a Liberal government will implement many measures. The Parti Québécois has been slow to truly take a stand on issues vital to the the bio-food industry's development.

What Quebec needs now is to, among other things, make buying locally easier. To this end, a Liberal government will establish a code of conduct calling for public institutions to purchase local food, strengthening Quebec's strategic food positioning plan.

A Liberal government will work to cultivate local products, make them more accessible and foster agriculture development, providing greater access to Quebec alcohol products through legislative changes that expand the distribution network for wine, cider and other alcoholic beverages made here.

- Stéphane Billet

In addition, the QLP is satisfied with the draft of the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement, which was initiated by the previous Liberal government. A Liberal government will continue in this direction by helping Quebec cheesemakers penetrate new markets. It will demand reciprocity in terms of packaging design and food safety standards for imported cheese in connection with this agreement, and will support Quebec cheesemakers in negotiations with the federal government for transitional compensation measures.

“The Quebec bio-food industry is, first and foremost, made up of men and women who are passionate about producing diverse, high-quality food.”

It’s also an economic driver for Quebec and its regions and the most important subsector of Quebec’s primary sector. A Liberal government will continue to work closely with community partners for a stronger and sustainable agricultural sectoc.

- Louise Arpin

A minister of SMBs to support their development

Sherbrooke, April 3, 2014. – On the 30th day of the election campaign, Quebec Liberal Party leader Philippe Couillard announced that he will appoint a Minister of SMBs. SMBs account for 50% of all jobs. They create 80% of all new jobs. They are vital to our economic recovery and job creation.

Our economy has run out of steam. The Parti Québécois has put the brakes on Quebec’s economic growth. When it comes to entrepreneurship, Quebec lags behind other Canadian provinces. In the first half of 2013, 50% of all bankruptcies in Canada involved Quebec companies. SMBs are central to our economic recovery plan for Quebec. SMBs need to breathe, and the Quebec Liberal Party’s plan will give them the oxygen they need.

- Philippe Couillard

The Quebec Liberal Party will support SMBs throughout their lifecycle with five measures. The Minister of SMBs will primarily fulfill the SMB commitments of a liberal government. He or she will be an advocate for SMBs. In addition, the Minister’s responsibilities will involve every phase of SMB development and the simplification of their paperwork for, as an example, tax subsidies. The Liberal government’s SMB plan includes the following commitments:

1- Création et démarrage d’entreprises

A Liberal government will establish the Démarrage-Québec initiative to stimulate entrepreneurship through easier access to patient capital. This program has been successful elsewhere in the world, particularly in the United Kingdom. It will enable new and innovative companies get through the critical start-up period, where the main challenge is access to finance.

This program consists of the following:

- Give a capital gains tax exemption for investments in new technology start-ups. The maximum investment eligible for a capital gains tax credit will be limited to $150,000 and must be held for a period of at least three years.

- Attract the finest foreign entrepreneurial talent through the Démarrage Québec Visa program. Immigrant entrepreneurs will have to present a business plan and obtain a partnership commitment from a group of investors or venture capital funds. In addition, they will need to have the funds to cover their living expenses during the startup phase of their business. They must also learn French.

2- Introduce a single business file and portal

To reduce the costs of government red tape, the QLP will also introduce two measures: a single file and single portal.

- The introduction of a single file will provide companies with an advocate-guide who will help them deal with the province's administrative machinery. Companies will no longer have a file in a number of government departments and agencies. Instead, they will have only one file and a single point of contact for all administrative matters concerning their business.

- A single portal will allow companies to approach Investissement Québec (IQ) for access to provincial business assistance and financing programs from IQ, Centres locaux de développement (CLDs), Centres locaux de développement (CRE) and other government agencies. In addition, a toll-free SMB hotline will be set up for all SMB matters.

3 - Growth through new markets

With globalization, the development of new markets is one of the challenges for SMBs (with fewer than 200 employees), particularly in rural areas.

To tackle this challenge, a Liberal government will do the following:

- Provide SMBs (with fewer than 200 employees) with a 50% tax credit on the cost of transportation services to other Canadian provinces and global markets, from their point of origin to their destination. This tax credit will provide greater assistance to companies furthest from major distribution centres. It will encourage companies to penetrate more distant markets. Businesses will be able to deduct 50% of their transportation costs from their taxable income.

- Strengthen Quebec's 14 Regional Export Promotion Organizations (ORPEXs) to better support the export strategies of SMBs. Their staff will increase by 25%.

- Bring together Quebec-based bilateral chambers of commerce (such as French, Italian and Latin American chambers of commerce) to strengthen ties between Quebec and the country of origin of our cultural communities.

4 - Innovation

Developing a genuine culture of innovation is a prerequisite for Quebec's future prosperity. Inevitably, we must focus on the knowledge economy, innovation and creativity to ensure that Quebec remains competitive. Our universities, research centres and companies must be able to work in synergy.

That's why a liberal government will do the following:

- Provide immediate assistance to companies to get their innovative projects off the ground through an Investissement Québec-administered Créativité Québec (CQ) program. CQ, which will have a budget of $150 million, will provide direct subsidies, loans and investments to kick-start any innovative project requiring at least $2 million, including the acqui-

sition of new technology, production process upgrades and the development of new products.

- Give a payroll tax holiday to expedite the hiring of skilled employees, strengthening a company's capacity for innovation. This measure would lower payroll taxes by 4.25% on new hires, exempting the company from contributions to the Health Services Fund (HSF).

- Extend to all universities the Accélérateurs pour la création d'entreprises (ACET) model developed by Université de Sherbrooke, which allows graduates from different faculties to submit their thesis as a launch pad to an innovative technology start-up.

5- Business transfers

Within five to 10 years, 50% of SMB owner-managers retire. Consequently, ensuring business continuity is crucial to protecting jobs in our province and keeping the ownership of Quebec companies in Quebec hands. Like our SMBs, our farms are in dire need of successors with the retirement of thousands of farmers.

In response, a Liberal government is committed to the following:

- Provide company founders with a capital gains tax exemption of $750,000 if they sell their business to their family or employees (employed for at least one year). Currently, this exemption is available only if a business is sold to an unrelated person. In the agricultural industry, the tax exemption ceiling will be $1 million.

- Permit the savings of young farmers, preparing to succeed their parents or grandparents, grow tax-free in a Young Farmer Fund (like a TFSA). The maximum annual contribution will be set at $15,000. The gradual transfer of a farm will be an option to amortize the cost over a number of years — supported by the Young Farmer Fund.

- Each sale will be reviewed to ensure the validity of the transaction

SMBs, which have been abandoned by the Parti Québécois government, are the foundation for our economic action plan. With the best economic team ever assembled and a Minister of SMBs, we will be there for Quebec entrepreneurs through every stage of their development, because it's time to address the real issues.

- **Philippe Couillard**

Reestablish Quebec as a leader in the fight against GHGs

Montreal, April 3, 2014. – On the 30th day of the election campaign, Quebec Liberal Party candidates Gerry Sklavounos (Laurier-Dorion), David Heurtel (Viau) and Marie Montpetit (Crémazie) announced environmental commitments that will enable Québec to resume its role as a North American leader in the fight against climate change and GHG emissions.

More than a challenge, the fight against climate change offers us the unique opportunity to steer our economy toward clean energy and technology. The Liberal government's record in the fight against climate change reflects the party's leadership role in North America and demonstrates its commitment to intergenerational equity. In addition to intergenerational equity, the quality of the environment has become increasingly recognized as a fundamental aspect of our well-being and health. Innovative measures and alliances with other governments have allowed us to make a green shift faster than our trading partners. Quebec must once again assume a leadership role, abandoned by the Parti Québécois government.

Give back Quebec a serious plan to fight climate change

Powered by the Green Fund, the Action Plan on Climate Change is the centerpiece of our strategic approach to climate change. So far, the only action plan on climate change in effect was adopted by the Liberal government in 2012. The Parti Québécois government took $711.6 million out of the Green Fund to fund promises without telling Quebecers the 2012 Action Plan on Climate Change programs due to be canceled. Even members of the advisory committee were not informed of changes to the Action Plan, secretly adopted via a fully confidential order-in-council before the election.

A Québec Liberal government is committed to convening, within the first 100 days of its mandate, the climate change advisory committee to report how much the PQ government spent and develop an action plan to reduce GHG emissions by 20% by 2020. Our government will make the fight against GHG emissions an interdepartmental, inter-agency priority.

Even though Quebec was mobilized around a 20% GHG reduction target by 2020, the Parti Québécois raised the target to 25% without anything to support its claims. In doing so, it demobilized the major players in this fight and undermined the credibility of a process deemed serious beforehand.

- David Heurtel

A Liberal government will make the development of a green economy a real social project and is committed to maintaining, in this sense, a carbon market. Quebec must continue to set the pace in promoting cutting-edge climate change standards. The former Liberal government has already demonstrated that its positive leadership can help small revolutions, as in the case of California's vehicle standards. Due to the efforts of California and Quebec, the U.S. and Canadian federal governments announced standards for the entire North American automotive industry in 2010.

Increase our biodiversity protection

Sustainable development makes complete sense when it comes to biodiversity conservation. Under a Liberal government, the proportion of protected areas increased from less than 1% to more than 8% of Quebec. Quebec's first Maritime Strategy, proposed by the Quebec Liberal

Party, plans to earmark 10% of our marine territory as protected marine areas by 2015. As a result, we will be five years ahead of the Nagoya Conference's international commitment.

We will develop an enhanced version of Plan Nord.

The Quebec Liberal Party's economic vision, which will also include implementation of Quebec's first Maritime Strategy, will lead to the development of the North with a smaller environmental footprint.

- **Marie Montpetit**

The Strategy's proposed $3 billion investment in infrastructure will help develop the North in a more sustainable manner.

The Parti Québécois is all talk and little action when it comes to the environment. The term sustainable development should not only be used to embellish speeches— it should be part of the government's everyday priorities.

- **Gerry Sklavounos**