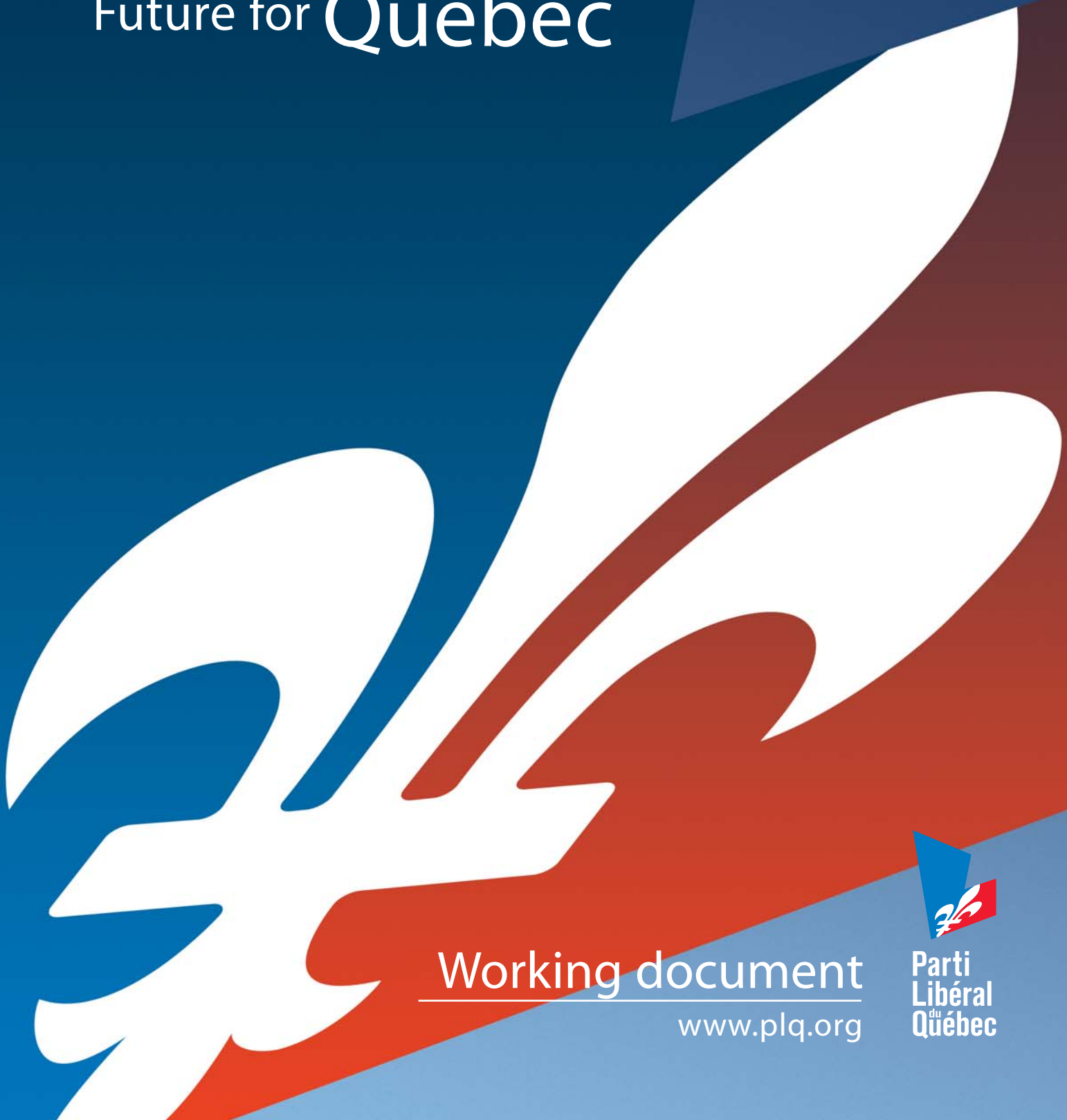
Together
We Can Build a Successful Future for Quebec



Working document

www.plq.org

Parti Libéral du Québec

TOGETHER WE CAN BUILD A SUCCESSFUL FUTURE FOR QUEBEC

2007-2012 ACTION PLAN
Second Term of the Quebec Liberal Party Government

WHY A SECOND TERM?

Action in our first term was affected by the challenges facing Quebec:

An aging population. By 2012 Quebec will have more residents over 65 years old than under 18. The double impact: more demand for services, particularly in health, and gradually fewer workers to pay for those services.

International competition. China, Brazil and India produce huge amounts of goods at low cost. This is hurting our manufacturing industries. However, our mining sector, for example, is profiting from the rapid growth of these emerging countries. We must adapt.

Sustainable development. This is a new, progressive awareness. It is also a new responsibility which calls for changes in our lifestyles.

The public finance challenge. Living within our means and respecting the public's ability to pay. This means making choices that keep our children in mind.

These challenges existed in 2003. Quebecers chose us to face them.

Remember 2003. Quebec was reduced to sending cancer patients to the United States for treatment. Today, 95% of cancer patients begin treatment within four weeks. Today, fewer young people are dropping out of school. Our children start learning English in their first year at school. In 2006, a year after the new parental leave program began, 82,500 babies were born in Quebec. This was an increase of 8%, -- the largest number of births in 10 years. In the field of energy, we started work on hydro-electric and wind power development projects equivalent to a second James Bay. With this clean energy to help, we will reach our goals under the Kyoto Accord.

We have reduced income taxes for Quebecers. Not as much as we would have liked but as much as we could. We also created a fund to reduce our debt load.

We have advanced the Canadian federation, obtained recognition of the Quebec nation and the principle of asymmetric federalism, and defended our identity and responsibilities even before UNESCO.

These actions lead to a Quebec which meets its challenges, adapts, and takes its place in a new world.

We have done things well and Quebec is doing better today. Unemployment is at its lowest rate in 30 years. There are 52,000 fewer people receiving social assistance than there were in 2003. Quebec's credit rating is at its highest level since 1975.

QUEBEC IS DOING BETTER

- 95% of cancer patients receive treatment within four weeks.
- The high school graduation rate is up from 79.8% to 85.2%.
- Our children start learning English in their first year at school.
- We implemented the parental leave program.
- We began work on the equivalent to a second James Bay development.
- Unemployment is at its lowest rate in 30 years.
- There are 52,000 fewer people on social assistance than in 2003 – a reduction of nearly 10%.
- Quebec's credit rating is at its highest level since 1975.

Quebecers are beginning to enjoy the fruits of their labour over the last few years. This is definitely not the time to change direction. On the contrary, now is the time to confirm the choice made in 2003, which was the right choice to move Quebec forward.

We accomplished a lot in our first term, but there is still plenty left to do. We are in a race for excellence and knowledge and every nation is involved.

We must join forces and put our ideas and energy together, making up for our small numbers with the strength of our unity and the extent of our abilities.

How could anyone imagine that we need another referendum to divide us? The choice is clear: either we are united and we prosper, or we are divided and we regress. I am confident that Quebecers will choose the unity and prosperity that the Quebec Liberal Party represents.

We invite Quebecers from all regions to use our accomplishments as a stepping stone to take Quebec even further. We have a plan for the coming years.

We have a development plan for Quebec which combines economic progress, social progress and protection of the environment. A plan for sustainable development based jointly on education and the creation of wealth.

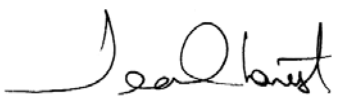
We will add 1500 more doctors and guarantee access to all surgery within six months. We will create 20,000 new places in child care and improve care for the elderly. We will give our universities the means to compete with the best in the world. We will make Quebec's economy one of the most innovative in the world and become the North American leader in sustainable development.

I am proud of our accomplishments. I am surrounded by a team which has proved its worth, a team with the talent, energy and ambition to continue serving Quebecers.

I ask Quebecers to give their confidence to our government for a second term. Because we have made good decisions. Because our party is the only one to answer all the challenges faced by Quebec while respecting the values Quebecers share. For the PQ everything else is secondary to sovereignty. That's dogma, not a solution. It's not vision, it's division. For the ADQ, it's social justice that gets pushed aside.

Since the start of our democracy, the Quebec Liberal Party has been the preferred choice of Quebecers to build our future. Our party remains current and promising because it is not based on passing trends or the myth of a magic solution. It is based on the power of work, the courage to make decisions and above all the values which bring Quebecers together.

Instead of the PQ's obsession with referendums and the ADQ's simplistic view, we propose a Quebec of the 21st century – greener, wealthier, more united. A leader for generations to come.



Jean Charest
Member of the National Assembly for Sherbrooke
Leader of the Quebec Liberal Party
Premier of Quebec

A PARTY OF VALUES

The Quebec Liberal Party bases its actions on liberal values. These values have inspired a tradition of progress which goes back to the beginnings of our democracy. Throughout our history these values have enabled us to control change and channel it toward evolution for Quebec based on unity and harmony. Only the Quebec Liberal Party embraces these values.

A VISION FOR TODAY

We believe in a **responsible, ambitious, generous** Quebec where every person participates in the success of our nation and the expression of its **unique identity**. We believe in a **modern state** which provides the best health care possible, which values higher education, which supports **the family**. We believe the **creation of wealth** is the cornerstone of progress aimed resolutely at **sustainable development.** In this age of international competition and the emergence of global issues, we believe the **Canadian federation** remains the best environment for the cultural, economic and social development of Quebec.

The members of the Quebec Liberal Party

LIBERAL VALUES

1. **Respect for individual liberties.**
2. **Identification with Quebec.**
3. **Economic development.**
4. **Social justice.**
5. **Respect for civil society.**
6. **Respect for democracy.**
7. **Sense of belonging to Canada.**
8. **Equality between generations.**

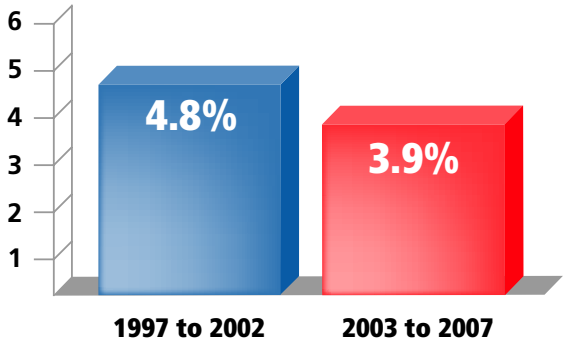
"To be Liberal is to believe in the development of individuals and society at the same time. These values form a whole. Together, not separately, they are the face of the Liberal Party."

Claude Ryan, 2002

AN OVERVIEW OF THE FIRST TERM

The Quebec Liberal Party was elected on April 14, 2003. Our objective was to refocus the state on its essential missions. We cleaned house on spending so we could invest Quebecers' money in Quebecers' priorities. By modernizing the state, in particular by increasing the use of the Internet and decreasing the number of civil servants, we made savings which we redirected to health and education.

RIGOROUS SPENDING CONTROLS



The average annual growth in program spending, in other provinces, excluding Quebec, is 6.8%.

This is how we were able to devote 70% of all new spending to health and social services. It was our top priority. We were starting from far behind. The system was deep in its worst crisis ever, a crisis created single-handed by the Parti Québécois, the only government in world history to retire 1500 doctors and 4000 nurses. We undertook a complete rebuilding of the health and social services system, which is beginning to show results.

The education system had also suffered cut after cut, particularly in assistance for students in difficulty. During the first three years of our term we invested three times more money in education than the PQ did in its nine years in power. This enabled us to add an hour and a half of classroom time per week in primary schools, improve homework assistance, begin teaching English in Grade 1, improve technical and professional training and increase support for our universities.

We improved family support; Quebec became a "Paradise for families," according to La Presse on April 8, 2006. We created 35,000 new places in child care, began a universal child-support system and created the new parental leave program, Le Régime québécois d'assurance parentale.

To make Quebec's economy more competitive, we reviewed business taxation and cut taxes which discourage investment, especially for small and medium sized businesses, three-quarters of which are now exempt from the tax on capital. We began reducing personal income tax. We had promised to match the Canadian average, which represented $1 billion a year over five years. We are more than halfway there. We have returned $3.1 billion to taxpayers, concentrating on those who need it most – families with children and low-income workers. Even if Quebecers no longer pay the highest taxes in North America, we have much to accomplish yet. During a second term we will continue reducing Quebecers' tax load to reach the Canadian average.

We have put Quebec on the road to Kyoto, and re-launched the development of clean energy. We will make this one of the cornerstones of a prosperous Quebec. We have ended the age of misgivings concerning the export of electricity. If Albertans can become wealthy by selling oil and gas, why should we hesitate to profit from our clean energy?

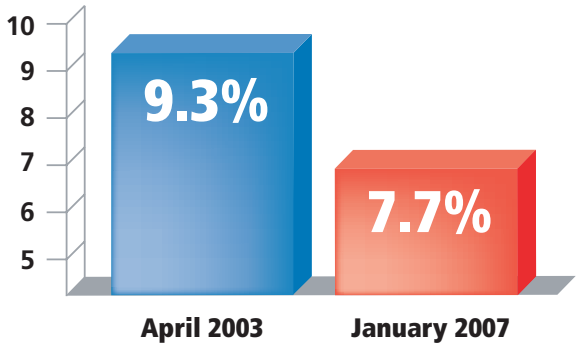
We have returned Quebec to a leading role within Canada, pushing for creation of the Council of the Federation, achieving recognition of the Quebec nation, fiscal imbalance, asymmetric federalism, and Quebec's particular role on the international stage. We have made 280 agreements with Ottawa and the other provinces. The main ones will bring Quebec more than $14 billion over six years. We have even increased Quebec's powers by taking over responsibility for parental leaves and obtaining the right to speak for ourselves at UNESCO.

We have settled the question of pay equity in favour of more than 400,000 women working for the state of Quebec. For us it was a matter of principle, and for Quebec women a matter of justice.

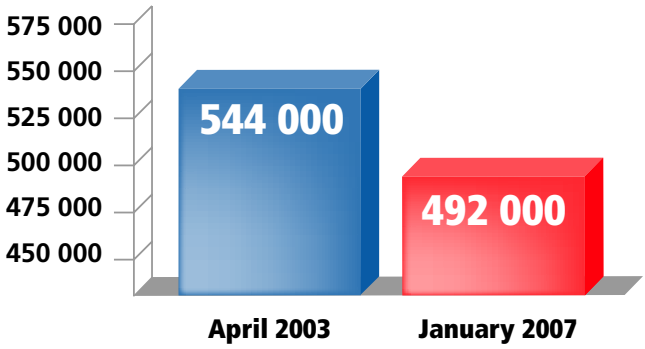
We managed Quebecers' money carefully. We limited spending increases to an average of 3.9% per year during our term. We maintained a balanced budget and created the Generations Fund to reduce our debt load. We have already contributed more than half a billion dollars to it. The DBRS and Moody's credit rating agencies have noted our rigorous management, the latter raising Quebec's rating twice in less than six months, to its highest level since 1975.

Today, Quebec is doing better. Quebec is better equipped to face its challenges. During our first term we redirected the state's resources toward Quebecers' priorities. We renewed our main development tools. We are on the way to a greener, more prosperous Quebec.

LOWEST UNEMPLOYMENT RATE SINCE 1975



52,000 FEWER PEOPLE ON SOCIAL ASSISTANCE



The Quebec Liberal Party is the only party whose goal is to make Quebec a nation that combines social justice, economic progress and protection of the environment, while providing strong leadership within the Canadian federation.

OUR BASIC PRINCIPLE

Sound management of your money

OUR PRIORITIES

1. Health
2. Education
3. Family support
4. Creation of wealth
5. Sustainable development and the environment
6. Culture and identity

Note to the reader: This 2007-2012 action plan introduces our priorities for a second term. It will be supported by the publication of a series of policy statements on particular issues of government action.

A basic principle

SOUND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

A basic principle

SOUND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

A government's first duty is the proper management of public funds and government administration.

When we took office, our priorities were clear. Refocus the state on its essential missions: health and education above all, limiting the growth of spending in other fields and reducing Quebecers' income tax.

Although we were confronted with a $4.3-billion shortfall (confirmed in the Breton report), and during our term in office had to deal with a sharp increase in the Canadian dollar and skyrocketing fuel prices, we nonetheless managed to reduce taxes and reinvest in Quebecers' priorities.

During our term, we limited annual spending growth to 3.9%. During the same period, federal spending increased 6.5% and spending by other provinces by 6.8% annually. Today, the government's share of the gross domestic product (GDP) is 17.9%, its lowest level in 30 years. While holding down spending, we reinvested more than $4 billion in health, which is nearly 70% of all new government spending, and more than $1.6 billion in education. In either case, that's much more than the PQ.

While controlling expenditures and reinvesting in Quebecers' priorities, we put $3.1 billion back in taxpayers' pockets. With the Child Assistance support allowance, the Work Premium and a $1000 deduction for all workers, in particular, we increased Quebecers' available income.

The households which benefited most from these measures are low- and middle-income families – those with total incomes from $30,000 to $75,000. For these households the advantages range from $1015 to $3805 per year. We also began a general reduction in personal income tax.

We had to make choices, and we made the right ones. We chose health, education and balanced budgets before income tax cuts. But we are more than mid way to our goal. We cut the gap between Quebecers' tax load and the Canadian average in half. We no longer have the highest taxes in North America. Today three other provinces have higher income taxes than Quebec.

CUMULATIVE HOUSEHOLD GAINS (in dollars)

		2004-2005 BUDGET[1]			2005-2006 BUDGET AND 2006-2007 BUDGET		
	Employment Income	Child Support[2]	Work Premium	Unified Program[3]	Worker Deduction	Indexation[4]	Available Income Supplement
Increase for couples with two children	30 000	1720	1 280	90	275	440	3 805
	50 000	660	-	150	440	582	1 846
	75 000	570	-	136	480	560	1 746
Increase for a single-parent family with one child	30 000	667	160	90	230	491	1 638
	50 000	531	-	42	240	400	1 213
	75 000	135	-	36	280	564	1 015

Note: Since numbers are rounded, the sum may not correspond to the total indicated.

(1) Excluding indexation, which is indicated in its own column.
(2) Impact of child support less non-refundable tax credits for children, tax reductions for families and family allowances.
(3) Impact of unifying the tax regime for an employee who pays union dues equal to 1.5% of his/her wages (maximum dues of $750 per year).
(4) Indexation for 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007.

The background of this rigorous management is modernization of the state. Far from the ideological butcher shop some were calling for, modernization has been a methodical process enabling us to reorganize the state to serve the needs of today's Quebecers, to make savings by reducing the number of employees, by developing lower cost Internet services, by grouping purchases and services. Modernization means building a 21st-century state: less expensive, more efficient, and providing better public services.

PERSONAL INCOME TAX - Gap in the tax burden between Quebec and other provinces when their taxstructure is applied to Quebec[1]

	2003		2007[2]	
	($ million)	($ per taxpayer)	($ million)	($ per taxpayer)
GAP BETWEEN QUEBEC & OTHER PROVINCES[3]				
Ontario	5 627	1 545	3 502	962
Alberta	4 433	1 217	3 303	907
British Columbia	3 538	972	3 184	874
Saskatchewan	2 234	613	1 292	355
New Brunswick	1 526	419	462	127
Manitoba	937	257	54	15
Nova Scotia	689	189	- 338	- 93
Prince Edward Island	1 099	302	- 425	- 117
Newfoundland and Labrador	- 677	- 186	- 2 218	- 607
AVERAGE GAP	**2 158**	**592**	**980**	**269**

(1) Including health contributions and family assistance measures (for example, family allowances and refundable tax credits).
(2) Including measures from Quebec's 2006-2007 budget and those of other provinces' budgets as of March 10, 2006 (i.e. British Columbia and Manitoba).
(3) Quebec's tax abatement of 16.5% is subtracted from the gap in tax loads.

Source: Ministère des Finances du Québec

In 2003, the average spread in the tax burden with other provinces was $2.2 billion.

In 2007, the spread dropped by 55% to $980 million. Quebec taxpayers therefore now spend an average of just $269 more than taxpayers in other provinces.

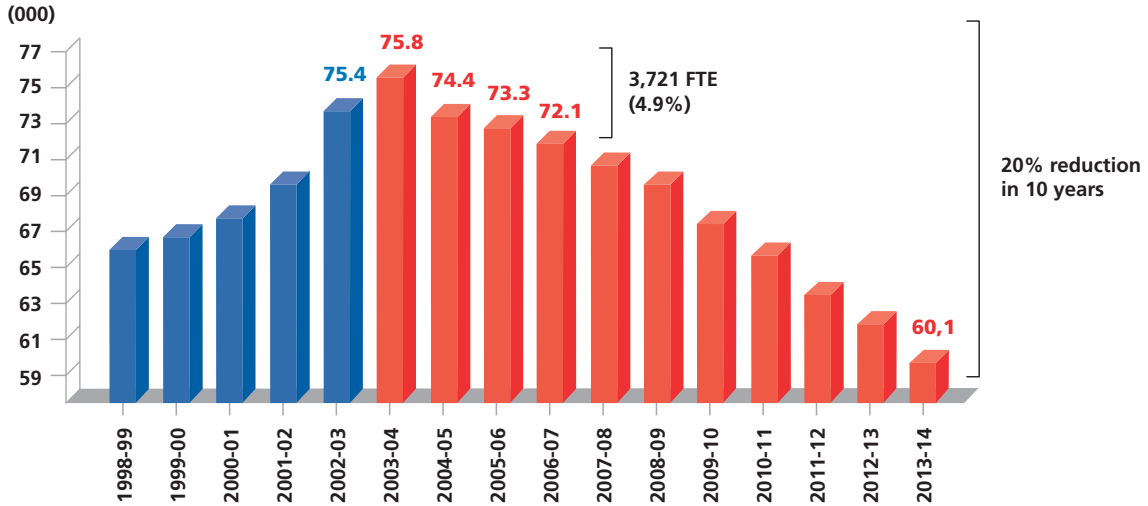
MODERNIZATION OF THE STATE

We initiated 57 projects to make the Quebec government a 21st-century organization and save $1.1 billion since 2004:

- Eliminated 35 government agencies which had become obsolete;
- Eliminated 3700 public service positions by replacing only half of those who retired;
- Simplified health care management by reducing the number of union locals (from 3600 to 900 units);
- Decentralized the government:
  - Located the customer service office of the Régime québécois d'assurance parentale (parental insurance board) in Rouyn-Noranda;
  - Located the office of Quebec's new chief forester in Roberval;
  - Located the new CSST call centre in Caplan in the Gaspé;
  - Moved SOQUEM, the Société québécoise d'exploration minière and the Bureau de l'exploration géologique to Val d'Or.
- Developed government Internet services;
- Created the single-wicket Services Québec to serve the public more efficiently;
- Established the Centre de services partagés (shared services centre) which allowed a saving of more than $44 million in the area of basic services (computers, office supplies, personnel management);
- Created the Agence des partenariats public-privé du Québec, the public-private partnerships branch;
- Began Quebec's six first PPPs including the Montreal symphony hall, the Autoroute 25 bridge, the Montreal university hospitals;
- Established new governance for state corporations;
- Created a new governance model for large projects.

REDUCTION IN THE SIZE OF GOVERNMENT: EVOLUTION OF THE WORKFORCE

(in thousands equivalent of full time)



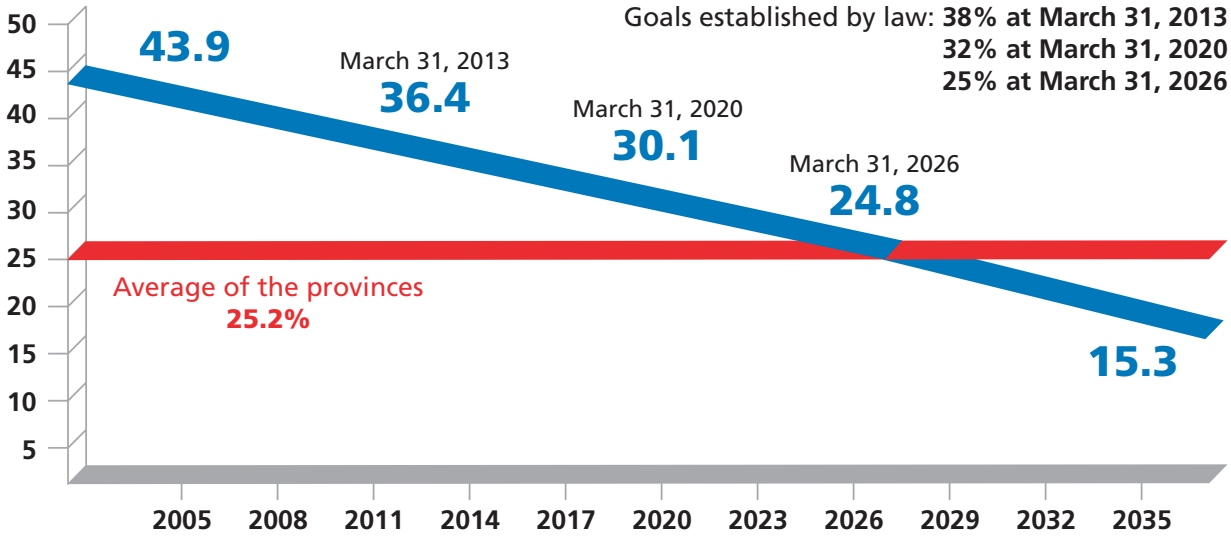
Our rigorous management also included creation of the Generations Fund and more than $500 million paid into it to reduce our debt. In particular, the Fund is financed by part of the income from electricity exports. It enables us to create equity to counterbalance the weight of our debt. This approach, which Moody's called "credible," is based on the following principle: the Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec, which manages the Generations Fund, obtains a return higher than the cost of financing our debt. In this way we improve our bottom line more quickly than if we paid the debt down directly.

This overall management is what led the DBRS and Moody's credit rating agencies to improve Quebec's credit rating. Moody's raised it twice in six months to bring it to its highest level since 1975.

Continuing this modernization of the state and maintaining our rigorous management of public funds and government administration is the first principle behind our action. To do this, we are establishing five management targets for our second term.

THE GENERATIONS FUND WILL SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCE OUR DEBT LOAD

(in percentages)



FIVE MANAGEMENT TARGETS FOR A SECOND TERM

1

SPENDING CONTROLS

We will maintain **a growth cap of 4% on spending**, and further reduce the state's share of our gross domestic product.

2

REDUCING THE COST OF MANAGEMENT

We will reduce the average management cost of government programs **from 15% to 10%** and we will require all state corporations to adopt strict controls over management costs.

3

REDUCING THE SIZE OF THE STATE

From 2004 to 2014 **we will have reduced the number of government employees by 20%** through attrition, respecting our employees and their labour contracts.

4

REDUCING OUR DEBT LOAD

From 2007 to 2012 the Generations Fund will accumulate more than $4 billion; **by 2025 it will be $32 billion and our debt load will have been reduced to 25% of GDP.**

5

TAX RATES AT THE CANADIAN AVERAGE

We maintain the goal of matching Quebec income taxes with Canadian averages. We are halfway there after our first term and we will meet the target in our second term.

1. HEALTH

Always the top priority of Quebecers

1. HEALTH

Always the top priority of Quebecers

Goal for 2007-2012: To guarantee access to services with more doctors and more nurses in a society encouraging prevention of illness and promotion of healthy living habits.

State of the system under the PQ in 2003: The health and social services system was deep in an unprecedented crisis caused by the previous government retiring 1500 doctors and 4000 nurses. Many cancer patients waited 12 weeks before their treatment began. They were sent to the United States for treatment. Hospitals were closed. More than 4000 places in chronic care were eliminated without alternative resources being developed. The emergency situation was getting worse by the year. Buildings were in poor condition.

A summary for 2003-2007 : In 2003 we introduced the most advanced action plan ever adopted by a political party in Quebec. It was a 150-page work titled Partenaires pour la santé – *partners for health.*

Throughout our term this plan has guided our action: linking establishments in networks, integrating services, reorganizing local services, adding medical and nursing staff, launching the new university hospitals in Montreal, reinvesting in medical technology, computerizing patient records. This plan is behind the full reconstruction of the health and social services system, which will continue through our second term.

We started by repairing the PQ's errors and have improved services in all areas of health and social services. Some of the changes we have made will not show results for some time. For example, it takes seven years to train a doctor. We couldn't settle everything in four years. But we have seen major progress in almost all fields of care and services, and built the foundation of a renewed system which will be able to respond to the needs of Quebecers in a context where an aging population means constantly increasing demand.

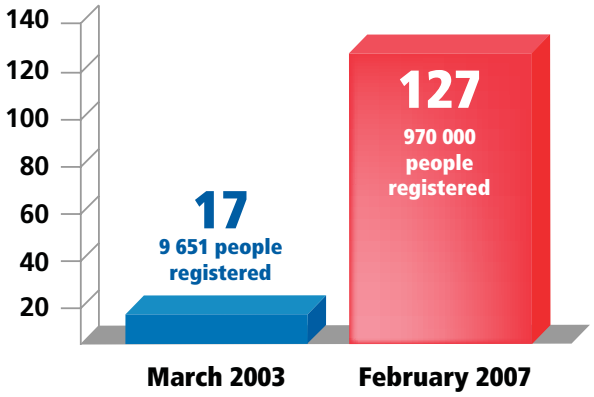
Despite the strong growth of demand, we have reversed the trend toward deterioration which had prevailed for years. Under our leadership the overall performance of the health care system and the quality of services have increased from year to year, making Quebec an exception to the rule. No government has done so much for health care since the years when another Liberal government created our public system, thanks to the Quiet Revolution.

We will begin our second term with pride in our performance and enthusiasm for our future plans. Here are some major improvements to come:

- 1500 more doctors in the system.
- All operations guaranteed within six months.
- A first access plan for the physically and mentally disabled.

We are on the right track: rebuilding our health care system for the benefit of all Quebecers.

INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF FAMILY MEDICINE GROUPS



WE STARTED BY REPAIRING THE PQ'S ERRORS AND HAVE IMPROVED SERVICES.

We added $4.2 billion to the health and social services budget. During our term 70% of new government spending has gone toward health care. As a result:

- 95% of cancer patients begin treatment within four weeks.
- We reduced by one-third the number of patients awaiting surgery more than six months.
- We upgraded technological equipment in every region.

We corrected the PQ's mistakes:

- From 2003 to 2008, 860 more doctors began their training.
- Every year we admit 12 times more foreign doctors that did the PQ, so that 245 more have been trained since 2003.
- We increased the number of nurses by 2000.
- We introduced the function of specialized nurse-practitioner so everyone's skills are better employed.
- We increased medical training in the regions by creating satellite faculties of medicine in Trois-Rivières and Saguenay.

We improved services:

- We increased the number of family medicine groups from 17 to 127.
- We improved home-care services, mental health care, and assistance to victims of domestic violence.
- We adopted a medication policy favouring better use of medicines.
- A new free medication program for the poorest elderly and a return to free medication for everyone receiving social assistance.
- We began appraisal visits to assess the quality of services provided to the elderly, the handicapped and troubled young people.
- We established an intervention program for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder.
- We reduced Youth Protection waiting lists by 46% for evaluation and 56% for applying measures.

We reorganized the network:

- We put an end to "silo-based" management by combining the CLSCs, CHSLDs and hospitals in each region to improve coordination of services and manage patients better.
- We launched the process of computerizing patient records, a major technological project costing half a billion dollars.
- We eliminated smoking in public places and returned prevention and healthy living habits to the forefront of the government action plan, with spending of $956 million over 10 years in partnership with the Lucie et André Chagnon Foundation.
- We launched the biggest health-development project in Canada with the Université de Montréal and McGill health centres and the new Sainte Justine mother-child university hospital.

PLANS FOR OUR SECOND TERM

The work of rebuilding the health care system will continue during our second term. This priority for health reflects a profound belief: a universal public system within which the private sector can play a part remains the best way to improve people's health while slowing the increase in costs. It also provides a competitive advantage. Our health care system fosters science and excellence, creating wealth and driving the state-of-the-art life-sciences industry, which strengthens Quebec's position among knowledge-based economies.

We are making **four commitments** in the field of health and social services.

COMMITMENT No. 1
MORE DOCTORS, MORE NURSES, MORE CARE, MORE SERVICES

After a first term devoted partly to repairing the mistakes of the past, in our second term, a Quebec Liberal Party government will accelerate the improvement of health care services.

a) **More doctors everywhere in Quebec.** Since 2003 we have put a lot of effort into increasing the number of students admitted to medical and nursing schools. We will continue this effort so that over the 2007-2012 period 1500 more doctors will be in practice in Quebec than today, divided among family doctors and specialists, and throughout all regions. We will also continue our effort to recognize foreign qualifications.

b) **More family doctors.** The arrival of extra doctors will bring improvements to front-line health care. The reorganization of services and methods of family medical care will ensure that families and vulnerable individuals will have access to a general practitioner.

c) **More nurses.** We now have 2000 more nurses than in 2002. We will improve measures to attract and keep members of this profession, continue recruiting outside Quebec, and aim for better use of our nurses' skills, finally correcting the PQ's historic mistake. Throughout Quebec we will bring staffing plans for nurses into line with the realities of the profession.

d) **More nurse practitioners.** To make the profession of nursing yet more appealing, we will continue developing training programs such as the one for Specialized Nurse Practitioners, already in place for cardiology, nephrology (kidney diseases) and neonatology (newborn care). Nurse practitioners will be deployed in the front lines, especially in the regions.

COMMITMENT No. 2

GUARANTEED ACCESS TO SERVICES

Action in our first term allowed us to improve access to health care services. We've come a long way. We will continue this work. **In our second term, a Quebec Liberal Party government will improve access to health care and social services, in particular through the introduction of an access guarantee.**

a) **First in Canada: Guarantee all surgery within six months.** During our first term we oriented the system toward a guarantee of access to services. To do this, in the fall of 2006 we adopted a law allowing the creation of private clinics affiliated with the public system, which uphold the access guarantee for surgery for hips, knees and cataracts. This access guarantee means that everyone will be treated in the public system within a medically acceptable delay, or failing that will be treated in a private clinic at public expense. This is a precedent for Canada. During our second term all surgical care will be covered by the access guarantee, ensuring that all Quebecers' operations take place within six months. Obviously, all emergency procedures will take precedence.

b) **After Info-Santé… Info-Médicaments and Info-Social.** The seven-day, 24-hour Info-Santé CLSC hotline is a proven success. We will improve this service by adding Info-Médicaments, so information on the proper use of medication will be available around the clock. We will also add Info-Social, to refer anyone in trouble or distress to the right help service. The Info-Santé/Info-Médicaments/Info-Social call service will have a single 811 number that can be dialed from anywhere in Quebec. We will also continue to develop the Health Guide Web portal (www.guidesante.gouv.qc.ca).

c) **Emergencies.** The reduction of overcrowding in emergency wards was a constant priority through our entire first term, and will remain so in our second. We have worked at every level. We reorganized workflows in hospitals to improve emergency care. We improved resources in long-term care so places in short-term care are open for patients hospitalized through emergency wards. We accelerated improvements in home care so convalescents and elderly people with declining self-reliance can avoid going to emergency wards for treatment. Despite the number of emergency admissions increasing by 20%, we were able to reduce the length of stays. All these steps both upstream and downstream from emergency will continue, bringing permanent progress.

d) **Better access to ambulance service.** We will continue to pursue our goal of constantly improving the quality and availability of pre-hospitalization emergency service. We will pay special attention to the use of first responders in many municipalities, to the improvement of response times, and to the variety of services available.

COMMITMENT No. 3
BETTER SUPPORT FOR THE MOST VULNERABLE

In our second term, a Quebec Liberal Party government will pursue its commitment to our society's most vulnerable members. We will continue extending services for addicts, women who are victims of violence, the homeless and compulsive gamblers. In particular, we will improve service in the following fields:

a) **A first access plan for mental and physical rehabilitation.** We will put in place the first access plan for mental and physical rehabilitation services. The plan will improve access to services and patient management, and the top priority will be children. We will also improve home care, relief care for parents, and day care service to give caregivers a break from the demands of a loved one with physical or mental disabilities.

b) **A 24/7 crisis response for troubled young people.** We will ensure application of the new youth protection law, intended to reduce the mistreatment of children. We will increase services in youth centres, paying special attention to the needs of young people facing mental health problems. We will increase resources to improve support for troubled young people and their families by creating a 24/7 crisis intervention service all over Quebec.

c) **Bring mental health service closer to the people.** We will continue following the Mental Health Action Plan, to ensure that services for young people and adults are available in all Health and Social Services Centres (centres de santé et de services sociaux (CSSS)), in conjunction with family doctors, community services and private resources. We will also extend services provided to those with acute mental troubles, by ensuring support and follow-up in the community. We will also continue our efforts to reduce the number of suicides.

d) **Variety of housing solutions for the elderly.** We will continue to apply and support the action plan for service to seniors suffering a loss of autonomy, particularly by supporting the development of new forms of housing and home care.

COMMITMENT No. 4

PREVENTION

During its second term, a Quebec Liberal Party government will increase prevention, to help control the rising cost of health care and to improve the health of Quebecers.

a) **Better eating at school.** Education also means learning to eat well. With the help of school boards, we will eliminate junk food in our schools. Cafeteria menus will be examined, soft drinks, candy and sweets banned from vending machines in schools, and parents made aware of the importance of good food and a healthy lunch box.

b) **Moving more at school.** We will introduce a plan to prevent illness and promote physical activity in our schools. We will encourage the development of inter-school sports, which improve young people's health and reinforces school spirit, which is also an influence in keeping students in school.

c) **Encouraging young people to take part in sports.** We will introduce a tax credit like that of the federal government to encourage young people to take part in sports. The credit will be for up to $500 of allowed costs on payments for registration in a sports activity such as soccer or hockey, swimming, etc. Every taxpayer paying for a child under 16 will be eligible.

THE QUEBEC LIBERAL PARTY IS THE ONLY PARTY MAKING HEALTH ITS TOP PRIORITY.

2. EDUCATION

To make our place in the knowledge world

2. EDUCATION

To make our place in the knowledge world

Goal for 2007-2012: Make improved higher education the heart of our strategy for the creation of wealth and give our young people the tools to take their place in a new world, while better mastering the common language which is at the core of our identity.

State of the system under the PQ in 2003: The education system faced repeated cuts, reaching into the most essential missions such as assistance for students in difficulty. School dropouts reached a peak and development projects for higher education sat on the shelf.

A summary for 2003-2007: Education paves the way to progress for Quebec. This was true yesterday, it's true today and it will be true tomorrow. Education is the surest road to prosperity. It is the best weapon against poverty. It leads people to enlightenment and broadens horizons for our society.

We reinvested constantly and resolutely in education. We increased coaching in primary schools, so youngsters can get a taste of success as early as possible. We strengthened the role of the CEGEPs as technical training centres and increased funding for universities. We also encouraged parents to get involved in schools by including them in the committee steering the introduction of the reform. We also changed the law so parents could be consulted about the form of their school's new report cards.

WE REINVESTED CONSTANTLY AND RESOLUTELY IN EDUCATION.

UNDER OUR LEADERSHIP:

- The rate of high-school graduation rose from 79.8% to 85.2%;
- The education budget increased by $1.6 billion (three times more than the PQ in nine years), including $535 million for universities, with another $320-million investment already announced for CEGEPs and universities in 2008-2009.

WE:

- Extended the primary classroom week by one and a half hours;
- Provided homework assistance in 1900 schools;
- Began teaching the English language in Grade 1;
- Increased the time devoted to teaching French;
- Gave sports a bigger place in schools;
- Set aside $120 million for coaching students with difficulties;
- Improved professional and technical training everywhere in Quebec by implementing new programs;
- Supported CEGEPs in the regions, which have seen attendance fall ($60 million since 2003), along with the last schools in villages and neighbourhoods (extra investment of $70 million more than the previous government).

We encouraged the creation of new links between high schools, CEGEPs and universities, in order to stimulate workforce training and combat shortages of trained personnel. This synergy between institutions of higher learning and business became a vision for the future when the Plan de rapprochement de la formation professionnelle et technique was introduced in the spring of 2006.

COMMITMENTS FOR OUR SECOND TERM

During our first term, we made the education system stronger by reassigning resources at all levels of instruction. We paid particular attention to primary teaching so our children will acquire a taste for learning and success as early as possible. During our second term, we will strengthen higher education. We will help young people qualify for entry by providing stronger support for success in school, by improving French-language skills, and by ensuring that our young people can speak English by the time they finish high school.

We are making **seven commitments** in education.

COMMITMENT No. 5
ENCOURAGE SUCCESS IN SCHOOL

When the PQ was in office, the high-school graduation rate dropped below 80%. Today it is more than 85%. This is an encouraging result but far too many young people still enter the labour market with inadequate training. **In our second term, a Quebec Liberal Party government will do more to promote success in our schools.**

a) **An hour of activity after school.** We will introduce a program allowing primary and secondary schools to provide students with one hour of organized activities, in order to develop homework assistance more quickly and allow students to get involved in extra-curricular activities such as sports and the arts. This measure will contribute to success, and more specifically to the success of boys. Homework assistance will be available to all primary and secondary students. We will also support the development of a variety of approaches such as on-line help with homework, which will help welcome returning students.

b) **1000 new professionals for students with difficulties.** The Parti Québécois cut down support for students with difficulties. We have repaired this mistake by re-hiring 800 professionals. We will add to our $100-million investment plan between now and 2009 by hiring 1000 more psychologists, psycho-educators and speech therapists to work in schools with children having difficulty. We will continue introducing preventive measures and rapid action beginning in pre-school and primary grades, because early detection of problems can help the child.

c) **Make adult education easier to access.** We will continue to develop a skills recognition service in every region, to simplify the return to the classroom for adults wanting to go back to school for a high school diploma.

COMMITMENT No. 6

IMPROVE PROFESSIONAL TRAINING IN ALL REGIONS

To remain competitive and continue our economic development, Quebec has a major need for trained workers. With the support of its partners in education, employers and labour unions, the government introduced a Plan de rapprochement en matière de formation professionnelle et technique with $26 million in funding over three years. The plan is based on regional groups working together.

In our second term, a Quebec Liberal Party government will put the Plan into action, and reinforce it with an extra $6 million per year. In particular this investment would allow school boards to provide new short training courses leading to an attestation of professional studies, and enable colleges to provide more training toward an attestation of college studies. This money will be added to the regional funds available to the 17 regional education tables.

COMMITMENT No. 7

IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF FRENCH

The French language is at the core of our identity. Our children need to master it. For this reason we have increased the amount of time students spend learning French, from 150 hours per year to 200 in the first three years of high school. This is equal to adding an extra year of French. We will be going even further with continual monitoring of our progress and by giving people a taste for better French.

In our second term, a Quebec Liberal Party government will increase the attention given to the French language, both in the classroom and in public spaces.

a) **Departmental French examinations at the end of each primary and secondary cycle.** To better measure French language skills and adapt instruction as needed, we will institute education department examinations at the end of each primary cycle, that is in Grades 2, 4 and 6, and each secondary cycle, that is Secondary II and V. All students in all schools will be examined.

b) **Promote reading at school.** We will adopt a new plan to promote reading at school. While the previous plan emphasized renewing the supply of books in school libraries, the new plan will be based on the pleasure of reading. It will include the hiring of librarians and staff skilled in animation and school library management.

c) **A national spelling contest.** We will create a contest similar to the National Spelling Bee in the United States. From primary Grade 4 to the end of secondary, students from all schools will be invited to take part in local, regional and provincial competitions.

d) **A campaign for better French.** The government will launch a campaign promoting excellence in the French language. It will be aimed at all Quebecers and make excellence in spoken and written French a matter of pride. It will remind newcomers and members of the cultural communities of the importance of mastering French to ensure their social and economic integration.

COMMITMENT No. 8

MASTER ENGLISH BY THE END OF HIGH SCHOOL

In today's world, understanding languages opens a door to success. We must provide our children with an education which allows them to communicate with our neighbours and with the world. Mastering English is not an option but a necessity. We will give our young people the ability to learn English thoroughly in high school.

In our second term, in order to allow students to understand English better, a Quebec Liberal Party government will encourage youth in Secondary IV and V to take part in one-month English-language immersion visits.

These immersion visits will require reciprocal agreements. While young Quebecers immersed themselves in English Canada, young English Canadians would be doing the same in French Quebec. This initiative would be sponsored by the Council of the Federation. Student participation would be voluntary.

COMMITMENT No. 9

MAKE IT EASIER TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL

Access to higher education is a very important strategy. It includes access to college studies. Every year thousands of Quebec students get to the end of Secondary V but don't go on to CEGEP because they are missing a few courses for their high school diploma.

The rigid rules deprive these young people of opportunities and deprive Quebec of potential post-secondary diplomas which we need.

In our second term, a Quebec Liberal Party government will make it easier to go to CEGEP and encourage a return to studies.

a) CEGEPs will be allowed to admit secondary students "conditionally" if they are missing up to two courses (six units). These students may enter CEGEP while completing their missing high-school courses.

b) CEGEPs will be allowed to admit adult students who have not finished high school but who have acquired knowledge and work experience which would be judged sufficient to take part in a course of study.

COMMITMENT No. 10

MAKE HIGHER EDUCATION A COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

During the Quiet Revolution we became a modern society by throwing open the doors of education. In today's age of international competition, as our aging population puts pressure on our potential for growth, education seems once again to be the key to our progress and success. Increasing our knowledge will allow us to improve the performance of our economy, to invest in new development niches, and to increase our standard of living. But above all, knowledge shapes informed citizens who enrich Quebec by broadening our horizons.

Much has already been done. While CEGEPs and universities were literally strangled for money by the budget cuts that marked the péquiste government, we have reversed the trend with transfers of $660 million more than in 2002-2003, in order to cover all the costs of the system. We have also added a reinvestment of $320 million over three years.

In our second term, a Quebec Liberal Party government will make higher education a collective priority. With our partners in the post-secondary field, we will pursue discussions on how to make our institutions competitive with the best in the world. Everyone involved must contribute to this – governments, business and students.

a) **We will continue reinvesting in universities and CEGEPs** with the goal that our institutions of higher learning be at the forefront of colleges and universities in Canada. For this purpose, by 2012 a Quebec Liberal Party government will add $1 billion to these systems on top of federal transfers.

b) **We will reinvest federal funds in CEGEPs and universities.** Federal transfers for post-secondary education are less than they were in 1994-1995. This situation must be settled to Quebec's satisfaction. We will allocate directly to CEGEPs and universities all funds resulting from an eventual recovery of federal transfers for post-secondary education.

c) **We will adjust tuition fees at universities** by raising them $50 per session (session of 15 credits) over the 2007-2012 period. The 14-year-old tuition freeze has become untenable. It interferes with recruiting and retaining the best professors and researchers, and handicaps the competitive development of research infrastructure. This is no benefit to students, institutions or Quebec. Our tuition fees are currently only 33% of the Canadian average ($1668 a year in Quebec, $5046 in the rest of Canada), and even with this moderate adjustment they will remain by far the lowest on the continent.

d) **We will improve the loans and bursaries program, which is already the most generous in North America,** with the goal that no student should need to interrupt his or her studies for reasons of money. Expenses admissible under the loans and bursaries program will be adjusted to reflect the new tuition fees.

e) **We will encourage businesses to contribute to university foundations** because they are among those who benefit most from the knowledge of graduates.

COMMITMENT No. 11

STIMULATE EDUCATION SAVINGS

We will encourage parents to save for their child's education. In a second term, a Quebec Liberal Party government will establish a new incentive for education savings. **The government will contribute up to 10% of the first $2000 placed in a Registered Education Savings Plan each year.**

BY DOING THIS, WE WILL DEVELOP THE TALENTS OF BETTER TRAINED AND BETTER EQUIPPED YOUTH FOR THE WORLD OF TOMORROW.

3. FAMILY SUPPORT

Because making family life easier will help build a compassionate Quebec

3. FAMILY SUPPORT

Because making family life easier will help build a compassionate Quebec

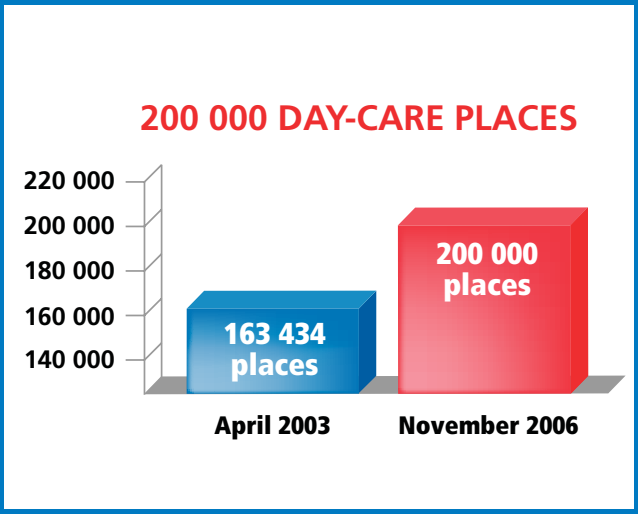
Goal for 2007-2012: Make Quebec the most family-minded place in North America, from birth to old age in safer and more united communities.

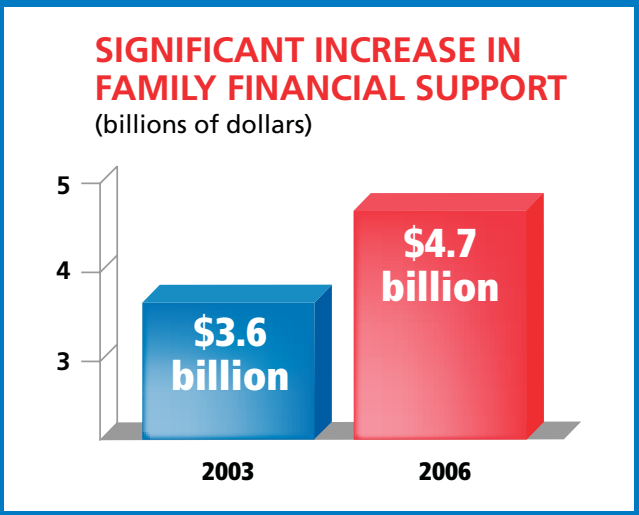
State of the system under the PQ in 2003: The child-care system was under-funded and responded poorly to parents' needs, with a shortage of places and inflexible services. Because the Parti Québécois was unable to agree with the federal government, it could not establish a family leave program meeting parents' needs.

A summary for 2003-2007: We improved family support by looking at the overall family, helping parents of young children as well as parents of adolescents, and those who want to house an elderly parent. We have adopted a tax structure favouring the family.

WE IMPROVED FAMILY SUPPORT

- We added more than 35,000 places in child care, reaching our goal of 200,000 places in the reduced contribution program.
- We created a refundable "family allowance" tax credit which provides direct financial support of $2 billion to more than 856,000 families.
- We began the most generous parental leave program in North America (the Régime québécois d'assurance parentale).
- We eliminated the Quebec sales tax (TVQ) on diapers and breast-feeding products.
- We provided $132 million in special support for families living with a handicapped child, benefiting 30,000 families.
- Since 2003 financial support for families has risen by 30%.
- In 2006, total public assistance for the family rose to $4.7 billion, twice the amount for Ontario.
- We introduced income splitting for retired people, resulting in an income tax reduction of $106 million, to the benefit of 370,000 elderly couples.
- We added $74 million to the Tax Credit Respecting Home-Support Services for Seniors. This measure benefited 180,000 people.





The family is the basic unit of social life. It is the first thing we belong to as individuals and our permanent home base. To ensure the family is able to fulfill this unifying and liberating role, family assistance must be supported by a determined combat against poverty and social exclusion. The government has met its obligations in this area.

A DETERMINED BATTLE AGAINST POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION

- Adoption in 2004 of a $2.5-billion, five-year plan to combat poverty and social exclusion.
- Support for low-income earners through the "Work Premium," which benefits 543,000 households including 240,000 families with children.
- Repeat indexation of the minimum wage, at $8 an hour starting in May 2007.
- Investment of more than $619 million to create 20,000 affordable housing units.
- A new free medication program for the poorest elderly and a return to free medication for everyone receiving social assistance.
- Introduction of the PRIIME plan, which encourages employers to offer immigrants and members of visible minorities a first job in their field.

COMMITMENTS FOR OUR SECOND TERM

In our second term, we will continue adding to family support. The measures we have put in place, especially the new Régime québécois d'assurance parentale family leave program and child-support program, have created a favourable atmosphere for increasing the birth rate. In 2006, 82,500 babies were born in Quebec, an increase of 8% over 2005. The purpose of our commitments is to make this increase in the birth rate a sustainable trend.

We will also pay special attention to our elderly, both those who remain healthy and active and those losing their autonomy. We will also continue leading the fight against poverty and social exclusion.

We are making **three commitments** in these areas.

COMMITMENT No. 12
BETTER SUPPORT FOR PARENTS

During our first term, we added 35,000 new places in child care and gave the system flexibility so it better suits the needs of parents, in particular those with unusual schedules. **In our second term, a Quebec Liberal Party government will continue adding child care places to provide for the higher birth rate, and making it easier to balance work and family.**

a) **20,000 new places.** In 2007-2012 we will add 20,000 more places in child care, particularly in workplaces, to provide a range of solutions to parents varied needs.

b) **Drop-in child care.** To improve services provided to parents and respond better to the varied needs of today's families, we will ensure stable and predictable funding for community-based drop-in child care centres, so parents can have their children looked after for a few hours when they choose to.

COMMITMENT No. 13

ENCOURAGE SENIORS WHO WANT TO WORK, TAKE BETTER CARE OF ELDERLY PEOPLE WHO ARE LOSING THEIR AUTONOMY

Quebec is home to more and more seniors. Most are active and in good health. Whether working part time, volunteering or mentoring, they make an enormous contribution to society. Others are losing their ability to look after themselves and need special care. **In our second term, a Quebec Liberal Party government will make more room for the elderly in our society.**

a) **Working without penalty in retirement.** Many people over legal retirement age want to keep on working. Presently if they work while receiving the maximum payout from the Régime des rentes, they must continue to pay in without being able to receive any more from the Régime. If they receive a supplemental pension, they may not both continue working and benefit from the pension. After age 69 they may no longer contribute to their registered retirement savings plan (RRSP) and must start withdrawing from it. We will negotiate with the federal government to ensure that older people who want to continue working, whether full- or part-time, can continue adding to their own pension fund.

b) **Protect the available income of the elderly.** Retired people receive a fixed income. Indexing of income-tax tables has helped protect their available income. We will take another step by raising the tax deduction for retirement income from $1000 to $2000.

c) **A minister for the elderly.** A minister devoted only to seniors will be named to cabinet and will become their privileged representative within the government. The minister will have the role of encouraging the active participation of seniors in society, and ensure that their interests are taken into account in all government decisions. He or she will also make sure that vulnerable older people and those losing their autonomy are protected from all forms of abuse.

d) **Increase the quality of services in institutional settings.** Our government introduced a major program of evaluation visits in CHSLDs (chronic care hospitals) to judge the quality of service. We will continue this program of structured visits and add surprise visits. We will publicize the results of all inspection visits. We will begin a compulsory certification system for private residences for the elderly. By the end of our second term, all residences will have to meet the certification requirements to stay open.

e) **Increase home care for older people losing their autonomy.** We improved home care throughout our term. The number of people receiving home care increased by 14%, from 136,000 in 2002-2003 to more than 155,000 in 2005-2006. This trend will continue. In our second term we will:

- Once again increase the tax credit for housing an elderly relative.
- Provide more respite for natural caregivers.
- Provide more hours of care to more elderly people in the home.

COMMITMENT No. 14

INCREASING THE FIGHT AGAINST POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION

During our first term we concentrated our efforts in the fight against poverty and social exclusion on increasing the income available to the poorest families with children, and on integrating social assistance recipients in the workforce if they are able to work.

In our second term, a Quebec Liberal Party government will push forward its determined fight against poverty and social exclusion by acting in partnership with family-oriented community organizations (FCOs) and community health and education groups to improve support and coaching for three target groups:

- **Children living in poverty, so they can succeed in school.**
- **Poor young adults, so they can find work.**
- **Parents with difficulties, so they can get back their confidence for the sake of their children.**

During our second term, we will also pay special attention to people aged over 45 who live by themselves. Some slide into isolation, which compromises their ability to return to an active life. We will develop accompaniment methods, and increase the Work Premium, to help them get back in motion.

WITH THESE MEASURES, WE WILL CONTINUE TO BUILD A QUEBEC FOR ALL CITIZENS, FOCUSING ON THE FAMILY, FROM BIRTH TO OLD AGE.

4. CREATION OF WEALTH

A prosperous economy for all

4. CREATION OF WEALTH

A prosperous economy for all

Goal for 2007-2012: Take advantage of our strategic asset, energy, to stimulate innovation, investment and workforce training to create more wealth, for the benefit of all Quebecers and based on sustainable development.

State of the system under the PQ in 2003: Despite the favourable economic context, Quebec performed badly. Unemployment was high, around 9%. Business assistance programs were too numerous, too expensive and too inefficient. Although it is one of Quebec's strategic assets, energy development was nearly dead. Trying to be a substitute for private enterprise, the Parti Québécois government brought about some expensive losses. By themselves, the SGF and Gaspésia lost a billion dollars.

A summary for 2003-2007: Picking up the pieces after a government that played the sorcerer's apprentice, we had to restore order. Public and private enterprises create wealth and employment; the role of government is to create the conditions that encourage their growth.

This is why we have helped our businesses deal with a rising dollar and energy prices, increased competition from Asia and a slowdown in the U.S. economy.

To do this, we began by giving private enterprise more room to breathe, in particular by reducing the income tax rates for small and medium-sized businesses and by making it easier to turn to subcontracting.

GIVING COMPANIES ROOM TO BREATHE

- We lowered the income-tax rate for small and medium-sized businesses to 8%.
- We reduced the tax on capital for all businesses. Today 75% of all small and medium-sized companies are exempt.
- We freed many such companies from the 1% payroll tax.
- We made subcontracting easier, which is very important to small and medium-sized businesses.
- We simplified government assistance programs, reducing them from 162 to 10.

To stimulate economic activity we then made some strategic investments, particularly in infrastructure, and approved development projects showing vision and progress, such as the new university hospitals in Montreal and the Petite-Rivière-Saint-François recreation and tourism project in the greater Quebec City region.

We renewed the mandate of our state economic development tools such as the SGF, which returned to profitability, and Investissement Québec, so their actions contribute to strengthening the economy in all regions. We gave ourselves a new way to develop Quebec by introducing public-private partnerships.

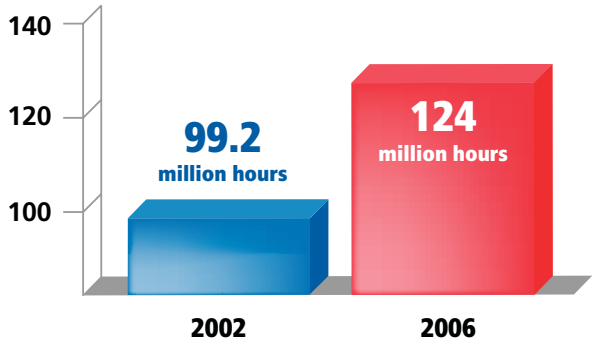
STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS WHICH HAD POSITIVE SPINOFFS

- Support for major economic development projects such as: Bell Helicopter in Mirabel, Ubisoft in Montreal, Pratt & Whitney in Longueuil, Alcan in Saguenay-Lac-St-Jean, Goldex in Abitibi-Témiscamingue, Bombardier Recreational Products in Valcourt, the Massif de Petite-Rivière-St-François, etc.
- Unprecedented investments in public infrastructure:
  - 70% increase between 2003 and 2007 in maintenance investments on public buildings such as hospitals and schools;
  - $4.4 billion investment in highway infrastructure.
- Reorganization of the venture-capital industry:
  - Creation of FIER regional investment funds (40 funds accredited by February 2007 with capitalization of $316 million);
  - Creation of seven specialized high-technology and life-sciences funds;
  - Establishment of eight new foreign venture capital funds in Quebec.
- Quebec ended 2006 with 9% growth in venture-capital investment compared to 2005, while Ontario saw a 9% reduction.

We brought back energy development by pushing Quebec to the forefront of the North American wind power industry. We also reconfirmed hydro-electricity as a privileged sector; ordered work on the Peribonka and approved the Chute-Allard, Rapide-des-Cœurs, Eastmain-1-A / Rupert diversion projects. We brought energy back to the centre of our vision of the future with an Energy Development Strategy announcing investments of $31 billion over 10 years. We prepared for the future with a Research and Innovation Strategy aimed at maximizing the benefits of research by converting our researchers' discoveries into employment and enterprises.

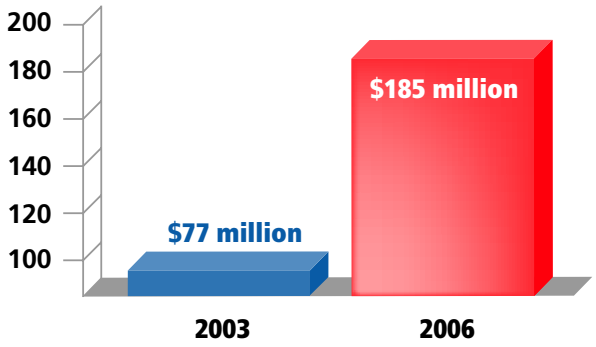
CONSTRUCTION HOURS WORKED

(125.7 million in 2005, a peak since 1977)



PRIVATE VENTURE-CAPITAL INVESTMENTS

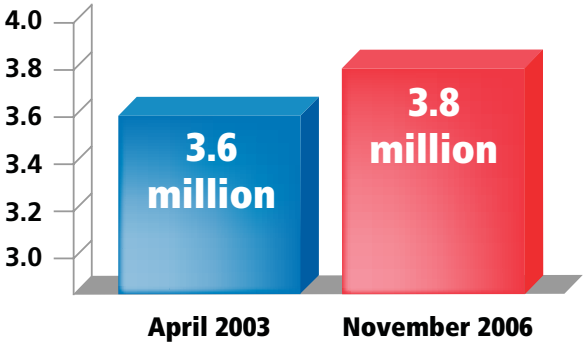
(American and foreign funds, reaching their highest level since 2000)



Source: Réseau Capital

The government did things well because at 8% the unemployment rate is at its lowest in more than 30 years, despite the ever-more complex economic situation. There have never been as many Quebecers on the job; the number of people on social assistance has gone down by 10% and poverty is declining.

RECORD NUMBER OF PEOPLE AT WORK



THE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

- $31 billion investment over 10 years.
  - $25 billion in hydro;
  - $6 billion in wind energy.
- More than 70,000 direct jobs.
- Strong emphasis on energy efficiency.
- Enriching Quebec in three ways:
  - Spinoffs in the form of contracts for hundreds of businesses in all regions.
  - Increased income from electricity exports to improve services and reduce our debt load.
  - Abundant, low-cost energy to support our own growth and attract investment and projects like Alcan in Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean.

THE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

- **Increase research and development spending to 3% of the GDP by 2010.**
- **Increase the private sector's share in funding R&D in Quebec from 60% to 66%.**

- $400 million added to public research.
- $420 million to develop research infrastructure.
- $80 million to support private-sector research.

- Target sectors: nanotechnology, genomics, photonic optics, advanced materials, information and communications technology, energy.
- Innovation in the regions:
  - Small and medium-sized businesses in the regions will have the resources to hire high-level graduates to put innovative projects to work.
  - The College centres for the transfer of technology (Les centres collégiaux de transfert technologiques – CCTT) located in the regions will have budgets to recruit and retain researchers.
- 900 more scholarships for young researchers.
- Half the investments will be used to market Quebec discoveries.

COMMITMENTS FOR OUR SECOND TERM

To maintain our quality of life in the face of constantly growing international competition, a rapidly aging population and a workforce that will begin shrinking in 2012, it is essential to create new wealth more quickly.

During our second term, we will bank on innovation, energy, stimulation of investment, workforce training, new markets, and increasingly competitive taxation, with the goal of the highest economic growth rate of the Canadian provinces.

We are making s**ix commitments** to this effect.

COMMITMENT No. 15

INCREASE WEALTH BY DEVELOPING AND EXPORTING CLEAN ENERGY

Energy was one of the most powerful symbols of Quebec's entry into the modern world. It will be one of our most solid anchors in the age of sustainable development.

In keeping with the Energy Development Strategy, in our second term, a Quebec Liberal Party government will make clean-energy exports one of the main tools for the enrichment of Quebec, in a continental perspective of sustainable development, and in cooperation with local and Aboriginal communities.

While Alberta gains wealth from its oil and gas, Quebec should be proud to sell neighbours our green energy – hydro-electricity. Quebec would meet its financial challenges while slowing the use of polluting energy by our neighbours. To profit most from energy exports we must build new transportation lines to our export markets.

As well, under the Export Development Strategy large industrial energy users will have to develop structuring projects with wealth-generating spinoffs to receive the best price (power intensive rate, tarif L).

COMMITMENT No. 16

CREATE WEALTH THROUGH INNOVATION

To meet the challenge of international competition, increase Quebecers' standard of living, establish Quebec's place in the new economy and accelerate the creation of wealth, in our second term, a Quebec Liberal Party government will stimulate all forms of innovation in all regions so that research and development investments reach 3% of GDP, ranking Quebec among the world's most innovative economies.

This is one of the goals of the Research and Innovation Strategy, which calls for investment of $888 million over three years, and which received unanimous praise in business and research circles.

This move toward innovation will be fueled in particular by the new university hospitals in Montreal, which make up the largest health development project in Canada, and by introduction of the new medication policy, which will give new drive to the life-science industry so important to Montreal and Quebec City.

In our second term, a Quebec Liberal Party government will also increase the number of College centres for the transfer of technology (CCTTs) from 31 to 45. The CCTTs have become a strategic meeting place for businesses and CEGEPs, and a key asset fostering innovation and economic diversity in the regions. For this reason we have created three new CCTTs. We will continue in this direction.

COMMITMENT No. 17

ENRICH QUEBEC BY STIMULATING PRIVATE INVESTMENT, WHICH CREATES WEALTH AND EMPLOYMENT

Competitive taxation is a deciding factor in Quebec's ability to stand up to the emerging economies, accomplish growth projects and attract foreign investment. Our government took action by exempting 75% of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) from the tax on capital and introducing a tax credit on all projects involving modernization and improving productivity.

This brought results. Contrary to conventional wisdom, private investment is not in a free fall in Quebec. Far from it. Figures for 2006 are not out yet but final results for 2004 and 2005 show that business investment represented 11.5% of GDP in Quebec while the rate for Canada was 11.3%, excepting Alberta which is in a unique situation. Quebec did better than Ontario in both years: 11.5% vs. 10.2% in 2004 and 11.5% vs. 10.8% in 2005.

In our second term, a Quebec Liberal Party government will accelerate its plan to eliminate the tax on capital and double investment incentives for modernization and productivity improvements in business.

a) All SMEs will be exempt from the tax on capital.

b) For large businesses, we have adopted a plan to cut the capital tax in half by 2009. We will go further. During our second term, we will introduce a plan to eliminate the capital tax completely. We will give priority to manufacturers, which are more sensitive to competition from emerging countries and the rapid rise of the Canadian dollar.

c) Meanwhile for all businesses we will double the tax credit on capital from 5% to 10% for all investments in modernization and productivity improvements, with the result that businesses which invest in Quebec will immediately be exempt from the tax on capital.

COMMITMENT No. 18

ENRICH QUEBEC BY CONTINUED WORKFORCE TRAINING

In an innovative economy, continued workforce training is an essential element of success. We have helped to make this issue a business priority by creating new links between educational institutions and businesses, by developing the CCTTs and by creating new professional and technical training programs.

In our second term, a Quebec Liberal Party government will make workforce training an integral part of business reality and regional economic development.

a) **Save on taxes while training your workers.** We will introduce income tax credits to support businesses which provide training of all kinds, whether it be work terms, mentoring or alternating work and study.

b) **Turn experience into competence.** Many workers acquire valuable expertise on the job. We will allow recognition of this expertise as skills so workers can be admitted into certified training programs and further their careers in an innovative business.

c) **Customized training for each region.** To support economic diversity in the regions and help them attract workers, in conjunction with local decision makers, we will develop regional professional and technical training plans based on the needs of local business. These plans should help inactive people enter the workforce more rapidly.

d) **Increase resources for training.** During renegotiation of the Canada-Quebec agreement on labour market development, we asked that monies from the employment insurance fund, which has a large surplus, be used for training of target groups such as young adults, new arrivals and those receiving social assistance.

e) **Promote entrepreneurship.** Throughout our first term, we encouraged entrepreneurship among young adults in particular, through the youth entrepreneurship challenge Défi entrepreneuriat jeunesse and the Youth Action Strategy. We will further this action in partnership with several groups, including La Fondation québécoise de l'entrepreneurship. We will attack the problem of generational change in family businesses, and take steps so that by 2012 as many young Quebecers as other young Canadians have plans to start their own business.

COMMITMENT No. 19

ENRICH QUEBEC BY IMPROVING OUR INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure is the spinal column of the economy. Our government made record investments in the development and maintenance of public infrastructure including highways, waterworks, sewers and public buildings such as schools and hospitals.

From 2003-2004 to 2006-2007, $4.4 billion was invested in highways alone. From 2007-2008 to 2010-2011 another $7.9 billion will be spent on highways in all regions.

Our government also introduced a new way to develop and maintain our infrastructure, by setting up Quebec's first public-private partnerships and creating a government agency devoted to evaluating and managing such contracts so the state retains expertise in this field.

So far, six public-private partnerships are in various stages of completion, including the two university hospitals in Montreal, the bridge on Autoroute 25, Autoroute 30 and the network of rest stops along main highways.

In our second term, a Quebec Liberal Party government will make infrastructure development a central part of its strategy for the creation of wealth, using the public-private partnership model when it is advantageous to the public.

COMMITMENT No. 20

ENRICH QUEBEC BY DEVELOPING NEW MARKETS

The United States is Quebec's main commercial partner. More than 80% of our international exports are sold there. While continuing to cultivate this vital market we will also develop new markets in Canada and elsewhere.

In our second term, a Quebec Liberal Party government will:

a) **Promote a free-trade agreement with Europe.** The European Union, with 27 members, has already reached a free-trade agreement with Mexico and Chile, and is in negotiations with Mercosur. It would be profitable for Quebec to benefit from this openness to diversify our export markets and sources of investment. For reasons of language, history and geography, Quebec is Canada's best asset for reinforcing ties with Europe. The Quebec Liberal Party was a pioneer of NAFTA and is the federal government's closest ally in carrying through this advantageous project. **In our second term, a Quebec Liberal Party government will work with the government of Canada to reach a free trade agreement with the European Union.**

b) **Developing the Canadian market.** Through the Council of the Federation, which was a Quebec initiative, work has begun to strengthen the Canadian economic union. We will complete this work. Bilaterally, Quebec has made an agreement with Ontario on labour mobility. **During our second term, we will continue to make agreements opening up Canadian markets to Quebec businesses, starting with a labour mobility accord with New Brunswick.**

c) **Increase our commercial relations with emerging economies.** We have intensified relations with Mexico, added to our services at our Beijing and Shanghai delegations and opened new offices in India (Mumbai) and Brazil (Sao Paulo). **During our second term, a Quebec Liberal Party government will work to improve and diversify relations with emerging economies.**

BY PUTTING THESE MEASURES TO WORK, WE WILL CREATE MORE WEALTH FOR ALL QUEBECERS.

KEY PROJECTS IN ALL REGIONS OF QUEBEC

01-Lower Saint Lawrence
Bombardier Transport and the Société de transport de Montréal, in negotiation: $1.2 billion to manufacture new Montreal metro cars in La Pocatière.

02-Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean
Investment of $2.1 billion by **Alcan**, a direct result of the Quebec Energy Strategy.

03-Quebec City and Region
Investment of $110 million in city beautification and plans for the **400th anniversary of the founding of Quebec City.**

04-Mauricie
Investment of $680 million in the **Chute-Allard and Rapides-des-Cœurs** hydroelectric facilities.

05-Eastern Townships
Expansion and reorganization of the **CHUS Hôtel-Dieu:** $112 million.

06-Montreal
The largest health development project in Canada: $3.6 billion to modernize **the Université de Montréal hospital (CHUM), the McGill Health Centre and Hôpital Sainte-Justine.**

07-Outaouais
Extension of **Autoroute 50**: an investment of more than $256 million.

08-Abitibi-Témiscamingue
Creation of the ***Régime québécois d'assurance parentale*** customer service centre in Rouyn-Noranda.

09-North Shore
Renewal of the **Québec Cartier** company: government contribution of $196 million within a total investment of $600 million, saving 1800 jobs.

10-Northern Quebec
Project of the decade: Close to $5 billion for **Eastmain-1-A/Rupert diversion.**

11-Gaspé
Public and private investments of close to $20 million in Matane, allowing Quebec to become a world player in the **diamond industry.**

12-Chaudières-Appalaches
Continued extension of **Autoroute 73**, representing an investment of over $76 million between 2003 and 2007.

13-Laval
Completion of **Autoroute 25 through a public-private partnership** – a total project of $400 million.

14-Lanaudière
Investment of $300 million for the construction of a **suburban train** between Mascouche and Montreal.

15-Laurentians
Saint-Jérôme **suburban train** – an investment of $21.7 million.

16-Montérégie
Completion of **Autoroute 30** – investments of $193 million since 2003.

17-Central Quebec
Centre intégré de formation et d'innovation technologique (CIFIT) – a total investment of $5.3 million.

SIX POLICIES

1. Quebec Energy Strategy:
$31 billion for 2006-2015

2. Action Plan to Support the Forestry Sector:
$1 billion for 2006-2010

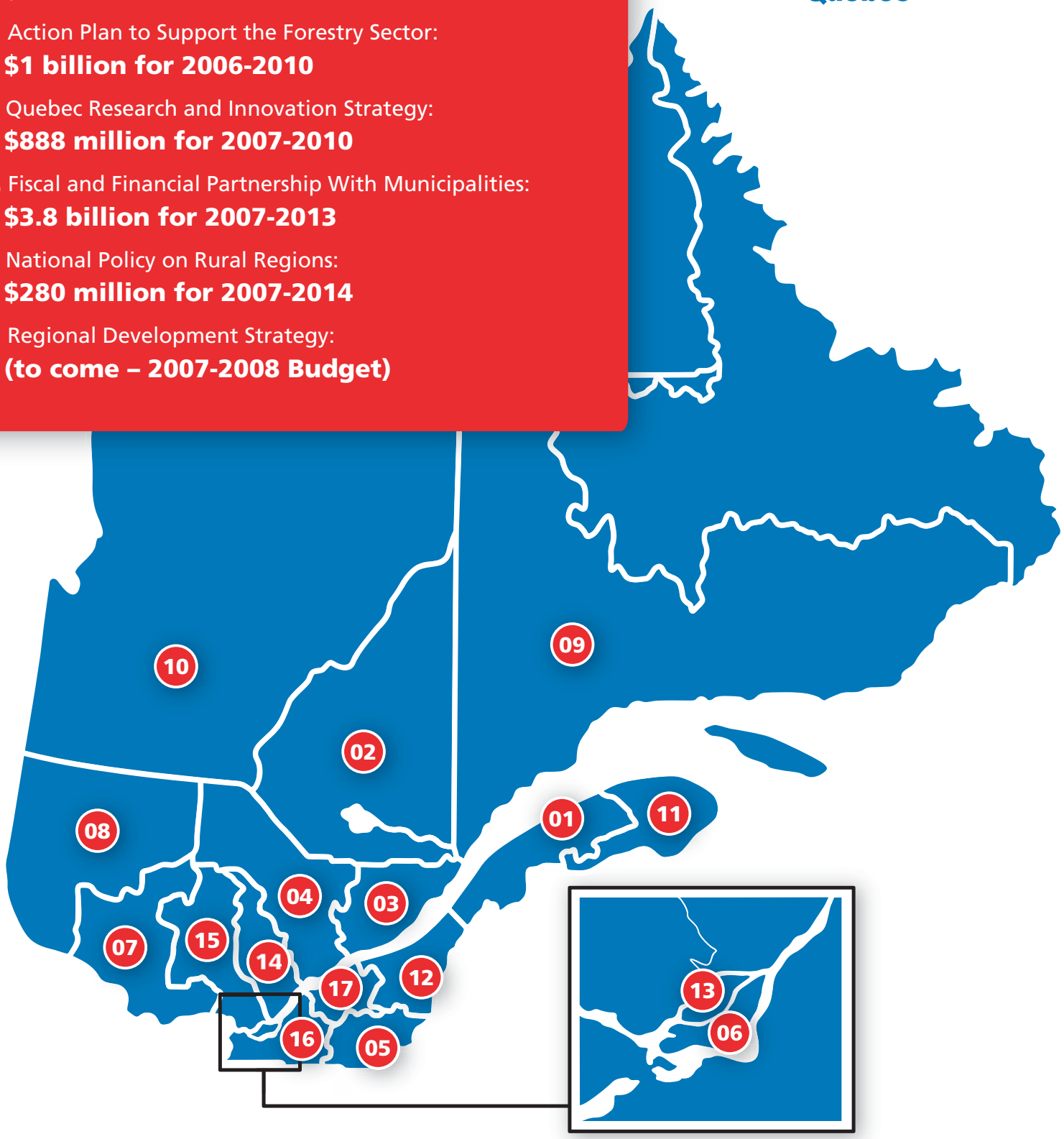
3. Quebec Research and Innovation Strategy:
$888 million for 2007-2010

4. Fiscal and Financial Partnership With Municipalities:
$3.8 billion for 2007-2013

5. National Policy on Rural Regions:
$280 million for 2007-2014

6. Regional Development Strategy:
(to come – 2007-2008 Budget)

Parti Libéral du Québec



5. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Because we only have one planet

5. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Because we only have one planet

Goal for 2007-2012: Make sustainable development and environmental protection a way of life and a source of wealth for Quebec.

State of the system under the PQ in 2003: The environment has never been a priority for the PQ. It governed at a glance, without any overall vision. It ignored important questions like sustainable development, air quality, waste management and climate change. The National Water Policy was announced with great pomp but didn't come with the funding to make it work.

A summary for 2003-2007: Under our leadership, environmental issues have become a priority involving the entire government and forming a basic part of our vision of the future. No government has gone as far.

OUR GREEN PLAN PUT TO WORK: NO GOVERNMENT HAS GONE AS FAR.

- We adopted a law on sustainable development which is binding on all government departments and agencies.
- We adopted an action plan on climate change which calls for contributions from all industries, including oil companies. Many environmental groups call it the best in Canada.
- We created a Green Fund to finance projects that contribute to environmental protection.
- We committed Quebec to renewable energy by reviving hydro-electric development and moving Quebec to the forefront of wind power production in North America.
- We emphasized the idea of energy efficiency.
- We adopted Quebec's first policy on development of public transportation.
- We introduced a TVQ credit of $1000 on the purchase of low fuel consumption (6 litres or less per 100 km) hybrid vehicles.
- We had the courage to step in and protect our forests.
- We tightened up the rules on substances which attack the ozone layer and the environmental standards for heavy transportation.
- We introduced waste-disposal user fees, which brought in $50 million a year for municipalities, which can use it to fund the application of waste matter management plans with the expectation of achieving a recovery, recycling and re-use rate of 65% by 2008.

Today, we are in the North American avant-garde in the struggle against climate change. The Green Fund will enable us to fund projects proposed by the government, municipalities and ecological groups to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Quebec by 10 million tonnes. With the hoped-for participation of the federal government, Quebec's greenhouse gas emissions will be reduced by another 3.8 million tonnes, enabling us to meet our targets under the Kyoto Protocol by 2012.

By themselves the new heavy-transport regulations have caused a reduction of 80,000 tonnes per year in air pollution from trucks – the equivalent of 20,000 cars. It's proof that we can change things.

COMMITMENTS FOR OUR SECOND TERM

Quebecers' growing concern for the environment is one of the most important changes in our society in recent years.

Though we embrace the environmental cause, we are nonetheless among the biggest users of water, the biggest producers of garbage and the biggest consumers of energy on the planet. A big challenge for our second term will be to bridge the gap between environmental concerns and an environmental culture. We must move from great universal principles to small personal acts. In protecting the environment, every person is part of the solution and every person doing their part is just as important as powerful government action.

We are making **four commitments** to this effect.

COMMITMENT No. 21
FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE

Quebecers are the most concerned of all Canadians regarding climate change, with an awareness rating of 91% in a poll published in 2006. SEDNA IV, Quebec's formidable mission to Antarctica, contributed to this, as did the more and more obvious effects of climate change. **In our second term, a Quebec Liberal Party government will make the fight against climate change a top priority**.

a) **Meeting the targets of the Kyoto Protocol.** Our climate change strategy calls on the government, business and public to work together to reduce Quebec's greenhouse gas emissions between now and 2012 by 6% of what they were in 1990.

b) **Increase the use of public transportation by 8%.** We will reach this goal in particular with the opening of the Train de l'Est between Montreal and its North Shore, and the payment of $650 million over five years to Quebec's nine public transit corporations and to regional councils of elected officials for the development of public transportation in rural areas as well as towns.

c) **Double the tax credit for hybrid vehicles.** During our first term, we introduced a TVQ credit of $1000 on the purchase of a low fuel consumption (6 litres or less per 100 km) hybrid vehicle. We will double this tax credit.

d) **Work toward a carbon market.** We will campaign in favour of a carbon exchange to be established in Canada. Under the Kyoto Protocol, businesses which fail to meet their targets have to buy the right to emit CO2. On the other hand, those which go further than their targets may sell their credits on the carbon exchange. This becomes a financial incentive to reduce harmful pollutants. The prerequisite for such a carbon market is that the federal government must set strict targets for greenhouse gas reductions.

e) **Prepare for post-Kyoto.** In 2008, we will hold a broad public consultation to prepare for life after Kyoto and to ensure that Quebec remains a leader among North American societies in the fight against climate change. We will also work with our Canadian and American neighbours to coordinate our efforts in North America during this new phase.

COMMITMENT No. 22

INCREASE RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING EVERYWHERE IN QUEBEC AND USE WATER IN A RESPONSIBLE WAY

Selective garbage pick-up has existed for some years in a large majority of Quebec municipalities. However, our dumps are still being filled with too much paper and other waste that could be re-used or recycled. At the same time, Quebecers are huge consumers of water – among the world's biggest users. Using so much water is costly to the public, municipalities and industries and goes against the spirit of sustainable development.

In our second term, a Quebec Liberal Party government will encourage the public, businesses and municipalities to become more involved in protecting the environment by changing the way they do things.

a) **Recycle, compost, recuperate.** Together with municipalities, we will develop a response framework to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill. This response framework will include suitable measures for each milieu to favour composting organic waste and recycling all possible refuse. Our goal is to raise the overall recovery rate for a bag of household garbage to 65% in 2008 and 70% in 2012. In particular we see that there are recycling bins beside waste baskets in public places such as parks and shopping centres. We will also put in place a recovery system for electronic waste such as computers and telephones. This waste contains contaminants which are harmful to the environment as well as metals and other materials which can be recovered.

b) **Fight the waste of water.** We will encourage municipalities to adopt better water-use practices for both home and business. Government assistance for the repair or construction of waterworks will go primarily to municipalities which share these goals and propose projects reflecting them.

c) **War on over-packaging.** We will bring together representatives of various industries, merchants, environmental groups and the general public to develop a plan to eliminate excessive packaging of consumer products in food stores and other retail outlets. The instant popularity of re-usable grocery bags and baskets shows that consumers are ready to change their ways.

COMMITMENT No. 23

BETTER PROTECTION FOR ECOSYSTEMS AND THE LAND

Along with the fight against climate change and the promotion of recycling and recovery of waste, we will also take steps to protect our natural heritage. **In our second term, a Quebec Liberal Party government will reinforce the protection and restoration of the environment.**

a) **Stop filling in our wetlands.** In certain regions of Quebec the damage and loss of wetlands have reached a critical level. These places play an essential ecological role, acting as natural water filters, supplying protection against flooding, and supporting biodiversity by providing food and water for countless species of plants and animals. After consultation with everyone involved, we will adopt Quebec's first wetland protection policy.

b) **Defeating blue-green algae.** We will introduce a protection program for lakes involving watershed organizations, shoreline landowner groups and municipalities. Special attention will be paid to sources of drinking water.

c) **Expand protected areas beyond 8% of the land.** We will bring together all those involved in a forum on protected areas in order to reserve land more quickly and involve local communities in the process. We will set annual goals and regional representatives will tell us which of the listed lands they want to be converted into protected areas.

d) **Soil decontamination.** We will provide municipalities with new taxation tools so owners of abandoned contaminated sites can rehabilitate the land and make it suitable for development. We will also introduce a program to revitalize contaminated lands intended for recreation to improve the quality of living environments. These two measures will allow revitalization of land abandoned or vacant for many years, in an approach of shared responsibility.

COMMITMENT No. 24

SUPPORT GREEN TECHNOLOGY

We believe that the evolution toward sustainable development is a path of prosperity for Quebec. **In this spirit, in our second term, a Quebec Liberal Party government will promote the growth of an economy which protects the environment.**

a) **Green venture capital.** The Quebec government will invest in a private Quebec mutual fund intended to support the development of clean technology and renewable-energy projects aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions and using the life cycle approach. Under this approach, efforts are made to minimize environmental impact at every stage in the life of a product (extraction and production of raw materials, manufacture, transportation and distribution, use and re-use, recycling and waste management).

b) **Quebecers' environmental know-how.** . We will encourage construction of the Sustainable Development House to develop Quebec expertise in this field and provide a window on Quebec environmental know-how.

THROUGH THESE MEASURES, WE WILL MAKE QUEBEC A NORTH AMERICAN LEADER IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND PRESERVE OUR ENVIRONMENT FOR THE BENEFIT OF OUR CHILDREN.

.

6. CULTURE AND IDENTITY

Because our nation must continue to assert and distinguish itself as it has for 400 years

6. CULTURE AND IDENTITY

Because our nation must continue to assert and distinguish itself as it has for 400 years

Goal for 2007-2012: Increase Quebec's influence in Canada, North America and the world by extending knowledge of our culture, continuing to assume strong leadership and increasing our autonomy within the Canadian federal system.

State of the system under the PQ in 2003: Ironically, culture and identity are the poor relatives of the PQ administration. That balance sheet adds up to an expensive referendum in 1995 – another one! – which divided Quebecers and weakened us in the power struggle with the federal government and other provinces. To the PQ, the state is subordinate to its obsession: to create the "winning conditions" to hold a third referendum. The PQ government was a policy of isolation on the Canadian stage, international action weakened by the closing of overseas offices, which was little comfort to our international economic partners, and cultural action motivated more by the cause than by the real interest of artists and creators.

A summary for 2003-2007: Since the Quiet Revolution, Quebec Liberal Party governments have been most active in matters of culture. From the creation of a ministry dedicated to culture to the Council of Arts and Letters, to the Law respecting the status of the artist and the law making French the official language of Quebec, the Quebec Liberal Party has made culture and identity a development tool rather than an ideological creed. We are part of the tradition of supporting culture and the arts mainly for the benefit of our artists and creators.

SUPPORT FOR THE ARTS AND CULTURE

- Between 2002-2003 and 2006-2007:
  - The budget of the Culture and Communications Ministry increased by 17%;
  - Credits for the Quebec Council of Arts and Letters increased by $14.5 million.
- We gave culture a bigger place in the schools:
  - By requiring completion of arts courses to obtain a high school diploma;
  - By definitively preventing a boycott of cultural activities as a pressure or protest tactic in the field of education;
  - By lifting the moratorium that had lasted more than 20 years on the recognition and funding of artistic training throughout Quebec.
- We established new partnerships with the private sector to support culture:
  - Launch of the planned new Montreal symphony hall as a public-private partnership;
  - Creation of Placement Culture, which supports patronage of the arts and encourages the long-term survival of cultural enterprises.
- We began a $15 million a year support plan for television and film production.
- We raised the tax credit for film production services from 11% to 20% to attract more foreign film shoots.
- We introduced a social safety net for artists.
- We improved public libraries with 50 construction and renovation projects in all regions.
- We created a cultural heritage protection fund and supported museums facing difficulties.

Our action on issues of culture and identity are based on the conviction that far from suffocating Quebec's particular character, the Canadian federation can be a sounding board for it. This is why we have assumed a strong leadership role to improve recognition of Quebec within Canada and reinforce Quebec's international presence while respecting Canadian foreign policy.

STRONG LEADERSHIP

Our government's leadership led to:

- The recognition of Quebec as a nation;
- Recognition by the federal government of the fiscal imbalance;
- An agreement on health recognizing for the first time the principle of asymmetric federalism;
- An agreement allowing Quebec to speak with its own voice at UNESCO;
- Repatriation of responsibility for parental leaves;
- An agreement with Ontario on labour mobility;
- The strengthening of Quebec's international activities in China, India, Europe, Mexico, Africa and Haiti;
- The UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions;
- A First Nations Socio-economic Forum;
- Quebec City becoming the host for the 12th summit of the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie in 2008;
- Creation of the Council of the Federation and the Centre de la francophonie des Amériques;
- 280 agreements with the federal government and other provinces regarding Quebec's jurisdiction, with the main agreements representing more than $14 billion over six years. This is the highest number of intergovernmental agreements signed during one term by a Quebec government.
- Adoption of Quebec's international policy and the new *Politique du Québec en matière de francophonie canadienne.*

During our first term, we also provided major support for preparations for the 400th anniversary of Quebec City, which is in 2008. We will be celebrating more than the 400th birthday of one of the world's most beautiful cities, but also the beginning of one of the great adventures in the history of humankind – the development of North America and the growth of a Francophone nation in America.

IMPORTANT SUPPORT FOR QUEBEC 2008

- We have allocated a budget of $110 million for celebrations of the 400th anniversary of the founding of Quebec City.
- $40 million for the program of festivities, which will begin the night of December 31, 2007 and end in October 2008.
- $70 million for beautifications.
- Major projects are underway, such as construction of the Samuel de Champlain Promenade, which will give the river back to the people of Quebec City, the redevelopment of Baie de Beauport and Bassin Louise, and the opening of the Centre de la francophonie des Amériques.
- Major sports and cultural events will take place, including a major performance directed by the Cirque du Soleil.
- Major diplomatic events will be held in the capital, hosted by the government of Quebec, including the 12th Sommet international de la Francophonie and the statutory meeting of the Council of the Federation.
- Some countries have been invited or have asked to participate, including France, the United Kingdom, the United States and Ireland.

COMMITMENTS FOR OUR SECOND TERM

Our government's action in matters of culture and identity has been guided by achieving results. For us the pride of being a Quebecer is more than a flag in the wind but a daily determination to help Quebec progress.

In our second term, we will act in the same way to affirm and strengthen our unique identity.

We are making **five commitments** to this effect.

COMMITMENT No. 25

PROMOTE AND PROTECT FRENCH IN NEW TECHNOLOGIES

With its policy on French in new technologies, with the standards it has imposed on suppliers concerning respect of the French language in computer materials it purchases, with its positions taken at forums stemming from the world summit on the information society, the Quebec government plays a leading role on the subject of the vitality of French in new technologies. However, the strength of the Internet and new technologies keep the French language under constant pressure.

In our second term, a Quebec Liberal Party government will intensify its diplomatic offensive, similar to the one which led to protection of the diversity of cultural expressions, so that the use of French is respected more in the use of new technologies (Internet, video games, DVDs, etc.). We will involve our partner states and governments of the Organisation internationale de la francophonie.

COMMITMENT No. 26

MAKE OUR CULTURE MORE ACCESSIBLE

Culture is the expression of who we are. Among other things, the force of our identity relies on access to our own culture. During our first term, we gave priority to the creators, who had been neglected. While continuing to improve the creative situations of our artists, we will also improve access to their works. **In our second term, a Quebec Liberal Party government will facilitate access to culture and contribute to modernizing promotion and distribution.**

a) **A network for our libraries.** Libraries are the principal entry point for culture. We will link all Quebec's public libraries in a network to increase the number of books available to the public in all regions.

b) **A new funding model for our film industry.** Working closely with the Quebec film community, we will develop a new funding model for full-length feature films, particularly those in the French language. The new model will be based on the principle that culture is everyone's business. We will promote the creation of a private fund which will complement government participation. And with the goal of ensuring the long-term development of our film industry, efforts will be made to encourage co-productions, particularly with Europe.

c) **Protect our cultural heritage.** The Cultural Heritage Fund created in the 2006-2007 budget enables the restoration of heritage buildings, which are expressions of the Quebec identity on the landscape. The Fund will become the foundation of a new Law Respecting Quebec's Cultural Heritage, which will ensure its permanency.

d) **Application of the Convention sur la protection et la promotion de la diversité des expressions culturelles.** To follow up on the most important victory in Quebec's diplomatic history, we will continue working with determination to apply the Convention sur la protection et la promotion de la diversité des expressions culturelles.

COMMITMENT No. 27

PROMOTE OUR RICH DIVERSITY AND THE RESPECT OF OUR COMMON VALUES

The foundation of the Quebec identity is a common language – French. It encompasses the English-speaking community, present here since the beginning of our history, and whose institutions participate in the development and growth of Quebec. It also involves the First Nations, which must be fully included in the development and prosperity of Quebec.

Our identity is also nourished by the contributions of people from the four corners of the Earth, representing all traditions and religions. Quebec's diversity is a treasure. It is also a constant challenge, to maintain a balance between the rights of the majority and those of minorities.

In our second term, a Quebec Liberal Party government will reaffirm Quebecers' common values and our profound conviction that Quebec's diversity is one of our greatest assets.

a) **We will respond to the commission studying "accommodations," headed by Gérard Bouchard and Charles Taylor.** This commission was formed in February 2007 with the mandate to:

- Present an accurate picture of the practices of accommodation related to cultural differences.
- Consult Quebecers on the question. ;
- And make recommendations to the government so that these accommodations respect Quebecers' common values.

b) **We will put to work a plan to fight racism and discrimination.** Before the debate on "reasonable accommodations" surfaced, we held a parliamentary commission on the state of intercultural relations in Quebec, a debate in which the ADQ decided not to participate. That forum demonstrated Quebecers' broad openness to immigration. It also brought out the friction points which needed to be discussed. The result was a plan to combat racism and racial discrimination, which will be put into action throughout our second term.

COMMITMENT No. 28

INCREASE QUEBEC'S ACTION AND VISIBILITY IN THE WORLD

A Quebec Liberal Party government will increase Quebec's actions, visibility and influence on the international scene. During our second term, we will pursue discussions and work with our Canadian partners, in particular within the Council of the Federation, in order to increase the autonomy and the role of the provinces and territories in international negotiations and forums. We will also make a significant gesture reflecting Quebec's leadership in favour of formal recognition of the role of federated states and autonomous regions within international bodies, by organizing and hosting in Quebec a first international summit of federated states and autonomous regions.

COMMITMENT No. 29

CONTINUE TO IMPROVE CANADIAN FEDERALISM

The platform *Affirmation, Autonomy, Leadership* (Pelletier Report, 2001) remains the basis of our political and constitutional position on Canadian federalism. In our second term, a Quebec Liberal Party government will continue to increase Quebec's progress within the Canadian federal system, and there promote its autonomy and national character. More precisely, we will pursue the following priority objectives:

a) **Improve tax relations within Canada.** We will improve tax equity by completing the settlement of fiscal imbalance, by negotiating a framework for federal spending power, and by proposing a new mandate for the Council of the Federation to follow and analyze the annual evolution of tax relations in Canada.

b) **Strengthen the Council of the Federation.** In 2003 Quebec put an end to the péquiste "empty chair" policy, with the creation of the Council of the Federation, an institution devoted to ensuring better cooperation between the provinces and moving Canadian federalism in a direction more favourable to the interests of Quebec and its federated partners. The Council has since been an undeniable success: for example, the 2004 agreement on health and asymmetrical federalism, as well as recognition by the federal government of the problem of fiscal imbalance, among other successes. We will take advantage of this strategic position to propose strengthening its mandate and its secretariat in Ottawa.

c) **Involve Quebec in the nomination of Supreme Court judges.** It is unusual that the members of a constitutional tribunal such as the Supreme Court are nominated by only one of the two orders of government, in this case the federal government, without the formal participation of Quebec, which in a legal sense represents the tradition of civil law in Canada. Thus in its second term a Quebec Liberal Party government will work to ensure Quebec's participation in the process of nomination of the three Supreme Court judges who represent Quebec.

d) **Negotiate an agreement on culture and communications.** The field of culture and communications is definitely a shared jurisdiction, but it is nonetheless intimately linked to the Quebec identity. Thus it is important that Quebec's particular responsibility in this field be explicitly recognized and that the role of the federal government be better defined. As a result we will put everything to work so negotiations begin between the governments of Canada and Quebec on an administrative agreement specifying each government's roles and responsibilities in these key areas.

e) **More support for the francophone and Acadian communities of Canada.** We hope in particular to sign cooperative agreements on the subject of the Canadian francophonie with the federal government, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nunavut and the Northwest Territories – the four Canadian federation partners which have not signed such agreements with Quebec

f) **Greater Quebec presence in western Canada.** The strong western energy sector, Vancouver's title "Pacific Port of Entry," the signing of an economic integration agreement among the western provinces, and the 2010 Olympic Winter Games in British Columbia – these are all business opportunities for Quebec enterprises. To better profit by them we will open a Quebec office in Calgary and an agency in Vancouver.

WITH THESE ACTIONS, WE CONTINUE TO ADVANCE QUEBEC, AND PROMOTE OUR IDENTITY, CULTURE, AUTONOMY AND VALUES.

INVESTING IN THE LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT OF QUEBEC

The results of our first term and our intentions for the second demonstrate our notion of governmental responsibility: to govern for the long-term development of Quebec. We won't yield to passing fashions and we won't be blinded by a magic solution.

We move forward driven by convictions, values and an unshakeable attachment to Quebec.

With this 2007-2012 action plan, we will continue the work started in our first term, so that Quebec can face the challenges of an aging population, international competition, sustainable development and public finances.

In these challenges we see the opportunity to make a better Quebec, a Quebec which cares for its people from birth to old age, which looks toward education and knowledge, more creative and more prosperous, a Quebec fully aware of the environmental issues and proud to be speaking French after 400 years.

In every era of our history, the Quebec Liberal Party has been able to represent progress while reconciling ambition and compassion. It has presided over change without rupture, allowing everyone to join the train toward renewal. And today, only our party aims to make Quebec a nation combining social progress, economic progress and protection of the environment.

Our government is part of that tradition of builders who embody the Quebec Liberal Party. In 2003, Quebecers gave our party the mandate to open up this new century. Four years later, we are confident that Quebecers want our team to continue this important job.

THE COST OF OUR COMMITMENTS

Our promises are specific and come with a dollar value. They are categorized in two groups: measures that increase government expenditures and tax measures that reduce government revenues.

We calculated the precise annual cost of each of our commitments. The estimate represents the annual cost when the measure is fully accomplished. In some cases, measures will be implemented gradually, such as in the case of hiring doctors.

Our commitments will be funded as they are implemented, within the government's budget. We will abide by a zero deficit, and spending growth will be less than 4%, as set out in our management targets (target 1).

Costs associated with carrying out certain government policies in our second term, which have already been made public, such as the innovation policy, are already forecast in the government's budget.

EXPENDITURE-RELATED MEASURES

Commitments	Annual Cost
HEALTH	
More doctors, more nurses	$700 million
All surgeries in less than six months	$100 million
Info-médicaments and Info-social	$20 million
Reducing emergency ward waiting times	$20 million
Better access to ambulance services	$15 million
Access plan for physical and mental rehabilitation	$110 million
24/7 service for youth at risk	$90 million
Mental health services	$60 million
Service for other vulnerable groups (drug addicts, compulsive gamblers, women victims of violence, the homeless)	$70 million
Effect of the aging population on health and social services (including home care)	$250 million
EDUCATION	
Schools open one hour longer	$200 million
French exam at the end of each primary and secondary cycle	$3.4 million
Promoting reading at school	$20 million
Campaign to promote excellence in French	$1.1 million
Better eating at school	$4.5 million
Immersion program for secondary IV and V students	$25 million
Better loans and bursaries program	$25.8 million

Post-secondary studies Additional $1 billion to account for increased system costs)	$200 million
Professional training	$6 million

FAMILIES

New day-care places (20,000)	$200 million
Financing for drop-in day cares	$3 million
Increased work premium	$20 million

WEALTH CREATION

Increase to 45 the number of College centres for the transfer of technology (CCTT)	$3 million
Workforce training in the regions	$20 million

ENVIRONMENT

Support for green technologies	$5 mmillion
House of sustainable development	$0.4 million

CULTURE AND IDENTITY

Library networking	$5 million
Fight against racism and discrimination	$15 million
Strengthening the Council of the Federation	$0.25 million
Strengthening Quebec's presence in western Canada	$1 million
More support for Francophone and Acadian communities elsewhere in Canada	$0.2 million
TOTAL	$2.194 billion

Fulfilling these commitments will therefore increase spending by an annual average of $438.8 million over the next five years.

TAX MEASURES THAT AFFECT REVENUES

Commitments	Annual Cost
EDUCATION	
Stimulating education savings	$40 million
WEALTH CREATION	
Eliminating the tax on capital	$750 million
Increasing from 5% to 10% the capital tax credit for new investments	$100 million
Tax credit for on-the-job training	$40 million
ENVIRONMENT	
Encouraging the purchase of hybrid vehicles	$1 million
TAXATION	
Reducing personal income tax by $250 million per year to match the Canadian average within our second term	$1,25 million
$500 tax credit for sports activities (youth under 16 years)	$35 million
Increase in the tax deduction for retirement savings to $2000	$70 million
Increase in the refundable tax credit for natural caregivers of adults	$25 million
TOTAL	$2,311 billion

Fulfilling these tax commitments will therefore reduce the annual average tax burden on individuals and businesses by $462.2 million over the next five years.

INDEX

Why a second term?	**4**
A party of values	**7**
An overview of the first term	**8**
Our basic principle: sound management of your money	**11**
Our priorities	
1. Health	**17**
2. Education	**25**
3. Family support	**33**
4. Creation of wealth	**41**
5. Sustainable development and the environment	**55**
6. Culture and Identity	**63**
Investing in the long-term development of Quebec	**73**
The Cost of our Commitments	**74**

Montréal
7240, rue Waverly
Montréal (Québec)
H2R 2Y8

Téléphone : 514 288-4364
Sans frais : 1 800 361-1047
Télécopieur : 514 288-9455

Québec
1535, chemin Sainte-Foy, suite 120
Québec (Québec)
G1S 2P1

Téléphone : 418 688-8910
Sans frais : 1 800 463-4575
Télécopieur : 418 688-1416

Parti Libéral du Québec

www.plq.org

Alain Paquin, représentant officiel. Imprimerie Vitray, 2310, avenue De Vitré, Québec (Québec) G1J 4A5