



LE RÉSEAU DU MIEUX-ÊTRE
FRANCOPHONE
DU NORD DE L'ONTARIO

Press release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Announcements that negatively impact the Francophone community

Sudbury – November 16, 2018

We are very disappointed with the recent government announcements regarding the economic update. With the elimination of the Francophone University and the French Language Services Commissioner of Ontario, what message is being sent to Francophones?

The office of the French Language Services Commissioner plays a fundamental role, not only to guarantee the respect of the French Language Services Act, but also to make sure that key issues for Francophones are being heard at the political level and to ensure that French is respected as an official language. The Commissioner is a key player in ensuring that Francophones have access to quality health services in French.

The Francophone University is a project that has long been supported by the Francophone community. Access to quality post-secondary education in French is essential in order to maintain bilingual human resources that are able to practice in various sectors, including but not limited to the health sector.

Ontario has been recognized across Canada and internationally as a model with regards to how our minority population is treated. This is due to our law regarding French language services, our French Language Commissioner and the Office of Francophone Affairs.

As indicated by Mr Collin Bourgeois, board chair for the *Réseau du mieux-être francophone du Nord de l'Ontario (Réseau)*, “The decision taken by the government demonstrates a lack of interest on their part in protecting linguistic rights and the French language. It is also a lack of respect towards the more than 600 000 Franco-Ontariens. These recent decisions are unacceptable and it is important that we speak out together in the same voice to inform the government of the strong contribution that the Francophone community brings to Ontario.”

We support the mobilisation campaign of the *Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario*, as well as their request for an urgent meeting with the Honourable Doug Ford in order to share the position of the Franco-Ontarian community and request that the government reverse their decisions.

The *Réseau*, in collaboration with its partners, plans, networks and engages with communities to improve access and equity to French language health services.

For more information on the *Réseau*, please visit our web site www.rmefno.ca.



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