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## **Standing Committee on Official Languages**

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**EVIDENCE**

**Thursday, April 5, 2012**

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**Chair**

**The Honourable Michael Chong**



## Standing Committee on Official Languages

Thursday, April 5, 2012

•(0845)

[Translation]

**The Chair (Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC)):** Welcome to the Standing Committee on Official Languages. It is Thursday, April 5, 2012, and this is our 36th meeting. We are here pursuant to Standing Order 108 in order to continue our study on the evaluation of the roadmap: improving programs and service delivery.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.):** I would like to raise a point of order, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Mr. Bélanger has a point of order.

You have the floor, Mr. Bélanger.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** It is not so much a point of order as a reminder.

You promised us that we would not do what we are in the process of doing this morning. There are four groups of witnesses. It is not fair to the people who are called to testify, because we are reducing their speaking time, to say nothing of the fact that, as members of Parliament, we do not have an appropriate amount of time to ask them questions. I am really disappointed.

On behalf of the committee, I apologize to the witnesses, because we will not have time to have a fruitful exchange.

[English]

**The Chair:** Well, I appreciate your concerns, but at the same time, I've had conflicting demands from members of the committee as to how they would like this committee structured. Some members, such as yourself, have asked me not to have more than three members on a particular panel. Other members of the committee have asked me not to split the committee into two panels of one hour.

I have to try to juggle these competing interests, and I do my best as chair. What I've asked for this morning, as a compromise, is that we have one panel of four different groups. I've asked that each of the four groups that have so kindly agreed to appear in front of us restrict their opening comments to seven minutes to allow us to move quickly into questions and comments. That's the compromise I've struck in order to balance those two very different suggestions from members of the committee.

Without further ado, we have in front of us today four groups: the Community Health and Social Services Network, represented by Madam Johnson and Mr. Carter; Youth Employment Services, represented by Mr. Aylen and Madam Unger; Mr. Farfan, Mr. O'Donnell, and Mr. MacLeod, representing the Quebec Anglophone

Heritage Network; and finally, Madam Langevin and Madam Horrocks, representing the Leading English Education and Resource Network.

We'll begin with an opening statement from the Community Health and Social Services Network. I ask all groups to keep their opening statements to seven minutes.

**Ms. Jennifer Johnson (Executive Director, Community Health and Social Services Network):** The Community Health and Social Services Network, the CHSSN, is pleased to appear before the standing committee to report on results of the road map with respect to improving the health and well-being of Quebec's English-speaking communities.

The CHSSN is a network of 64 community resources, associations, foundations, public institutions, and other stakeholders dedicated to creating partnerships that enhance services and improve health outcomes for English-speaking communities.

Our experience with the road map investments can be summed up by stating that our communities are stronger, the needs of more of its members are being met, and the Quebec health and social services system shows continued willingness to address the needs of English-speaking people.

The key to success has been an implementation agreement between the CHSSN and the Quebec Ministry of Health and Social Services, through which the CHSSN and its community partners collaborate with Quebec authorities at the provincial, regional, and local levels. Health Canada's innovative and flexible approach to implementing the road map measures has been another key factor in this success.

We are proud of the outcomes and are confident that they are a solid foundation supporting the four priority areas we are proposing for a renewed federal investment in the period ahead.

**Mr. James Carter (Program and Policy Advisor, Community Health and Social Services Network):** The CHSSN applies a best practices partnership model consistent with the World Health Organization approach for bringing together all the stakeholders that work to improve the health of a population.

Our program has established 18 community networks across Quebec as a focal point for addressing the needs of English-speaking communities. Over 40 health and social services centres delivering primary care—these are the public institutions in Quebec—along with youth protection agencies and other institutions meeting special needs, now participate on partnership tables with community networks.

I will give you one example of how a network works. In the Gaspé, a group called the Committee for Anglophone Social Action decided it wanted to reach out to isolated seniors who live in historically English-speaking communities in an area known as Cascapédia-Saint-Jules.

Through its community network, it was able to partner with the local health and social services centre and run a biweekly wellness centre for 23 seniors in the area. Animators run physical and mental exercise classes, the local chapter of the Women's Institute cooks lunch, and the public health and social services centre provides transport for the seniors and access to health promotion professionals.

Thanks to the road map investments, approximately 3,000 English-speaking seniors, youth, and families in the Baie des Chaleurs area are directly impacted through health promotion activities.

• (0850)

**Ms. Jennifer Johnson:** The CHSSN works directly with Quebec's health and social services system to implement the road map measures. The CHSSN program of adaptation of health and social service support projects is sponsored by the regional health and social service agencies in 16 regions.

One example addresses the needs of English-speaking communities in the distant region of Côte-Nord.

The regional agency worked with the health and social services centre, the CSSS in Sept-Îles, to create a community liaison program for English-speaking, Naskapi, and Innu patients coming to the hospital. Over a nine-month period, between 600 and 700 persons were directed to appropriate services by this person. The liaison person welcomes English-speaking people from the lower north shore, who have travelled 800 kilometres to get specialized medical treatment.

In order to create new knowledge of the health and well-being of English-speaking communities, the CHSSN identified the Institut national de santé publique du Québec, the INSPQ, as the key institutional partner. The INSPQ has undertaken projects to produce knowledge, through a detailed analysis of population health information, on the health status of English-speaking people and the factors that affect it.

**Mr. James Carter:** Educational institutions in Quebec are also playing a key role in implementing the road map measures. The McGill University training and retention of health professionals project, through an implementation agreement with the Quebec Ministry of Health and Social Services, is working to improve the capacity of the health and social services network to meet the needs of English-speaking individuals.

One key measure is the language training program, with a major emphasis on supporting English courses for French-speaking personnel in the public system who are working directly with the population. These are professionals who wish, desire, voluntarily, to improve their English language skills.

In the first three years of the road map investment, well over 3,000 French-speaking professionals participated in the language training program. This result builds on the 5,000 French-speaking profes-

sionals who completed language training through the first federal action plan.

In the next few weeks, the Quebec Community Groups Network, QCGN, will submit the health and social service priorities of English-speaking Quebecers for 2013-2018 to Health Canada. To ensure a timely review by this standing committee, the CHSSN, as the QCGN sector organization in health, is presenting four priorities for renewed federal investment. These priorities emerged from consultations with over 32 focus groups. They actually capture the voices of English-speaking Quebecers who shared their experience of the health system and their priorities for the future.

We have a brief that goes into more detail.

The first priority is the adaptation of human resources in the Quebec health and social services system. Like all health systems, there is constant turnover of personnel, change, reorganization, and rationalization, so there's a constant need to have input to keep training courses for professionals.

Second, the organizations that deliver services have to adapt their programs to small populations. So we want more road map investments in the Quebec health system so that we can continue to develop programs that are specific to the needs of our communities.

The third priority has to do with information about services in English. Many times, English-speaking people have said that it's very difficult to get information on where services are.

Finally, involvement of the community is key. Community organizations are very efficient in the distribution of information on programs, diseases, and other issues facing the population. They're also the source of volunteers and other community resources that help institutions meet users' needs. Community organizations are instrumental in informing citizens in their efforts to participate in the governance structures of those institutions.

The Quebec Ministry of Health and Social Services responded to a QCGN invitation to provide its opinion on the priorities proposed above. Recently, the minister wrote to the QCGN stating his support. He said, "We strongly recommend the renewal of the improvements to the official languages contribution program for health, sponsored by Health Canada". This comes from the Quebec government.

To conclude, the road map investments have played a key role in enhancing the capacity of our communities to better care for seniors, to equip young people to become productive citizens, and to encourage informed, healthy communities.

We are strongly recommending, with the implementation agreements we've developed with the ministry, that the Government of Canada launch a new contribution program for 2013-2018 to respond to the health priorities of our official language minority communities, including the English-speaking community in Quebec.

Thank you.

• (0855)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

We now have an opening statement from Youth Employment Services.

**Mr. John Ayles (President, Board of Directors, Youth Employment Services):** Good morning. I'm the volunteer president of Youth Employment Services. I'm here with Iris Unger, who will be presenting with me.

Canada needs an effective, trained workforce that can fully contribute to Canada's economic vitality. Our future workforce can come from only two sources: youth who are already here and new immigrants to our country. Both of these are clients of Youth Employment Services. In Quebec there is a substantial critical mass of anglophone youth and immigrants who are key to our future prosperity. We need to serve them in English if they are to reach their full potential. We need them if Canada is going to reach its full economic potential.

Minister Kenney, in today's *Globe and Mail*, the headline for which reads, "Kenney in a hurry to help employers bring world's top talent to Canada".... Some of that talent is going to come to Quebec, or at least it must if Quebec is to remain strong. We are there to ensure that the people who do come maximize their potential.

**Ms. Iris Unger (Executive Director, Youth Employment Services):** Youth Employment Services was set up in 1995 by a group of leaders in the community who were concerned about the issue of youth retention in Quebec. The organization provides direct services to over 4,000 people annually, including those who need help finding employment, individuals who want to start small businesses, and artists who need help creating an economic future through their art.

We do this through a variety of programs, including one-on-one business coaching and counselling. We see over 2,000 people through business sessions, and over 4,000 people come to us who need help with employment issues. We do workshops and events, and we really try to use our networks to maximize the potential of the clients who come to see us.

We host more than five conferences per year geared towards artists, employment counsellors, and entrepreneurs, and we reach over 1,000 people through these events. We also have an extensive mentorship program. In partnership with HRSDC through the youth employment strategies, we are able to do internships on an annual basis. We also offer several types of new internship programs to help integrate new graduates into the workforce.

Our physical space is located in downtown Montreal between Concordia and McGill, and we provide free access to a variety of resources, including computers, Internet connections, a library, faxes, and, most importantly, a place for people to meet to work on their job searches and businesses. We also publish several books, and we provide business skills to artists.

The number of clients started at 500 in 1995, and today we see over 4,000 people. We see those 4,000 people over 16,000 times. Our budget when we started in 1995, with a grant through a foundation, was \$100,000, and today our budget is \$1.6 million. It consists of funding from the federal and provincial governments,

foundations, corporations, and we do a lot of fundraising on our own.

We have over 350 very active volunteers, and close to 700 volunteers we can call on at any time who help with our networks. We have partnerships with the business community, arts, academic, not-for-profit, and media sectors, and we leverage all those sectors to the maximum. Through our networks we are not only able to access valuable, in-kind resources, but we are able to help our clients build and grow their own networks.

We also head up the employment round table, which was created in 1998 specifically when the federal government transferred payments to the province on issues related to employment. It was started with five organizations that were very concerned about the impact this transfer would have on this particular sector. It continues to meet today to monitor that impact on these organizations. It's been a challenge, and we'll talk about that a little later. The only program that has been left with the federal jurisdiction is the youth employment strategies piece.

The table is currently made up of about 22 organizations that provide English language services in a variety of ways. Many of them offer bilingual services, but some of them offer exclusively English services. The majority of the members are not-for-profit, community-based service providers that have contracts with Emploi-Québec to provide direct services to the most vulnerable populations in our community—people with disabilities, visible minorities, new arrivals, women, people over 45, and youth. The group meets five to six times a year to discuss issues of common concern, and mostly to monitor the impact the transfers are having on the minority community. This is the only organization in Quebec that looks at these particular issues that impact the English-speaking employment service providers.

Three major challenges for this sector have come out of the round table and our experience at Youth Employment Services. The first is the impact of the devolution of the funding from the federal government to the provincial government and its impact on our community. Since the transfer of responsibility for employment from the federal government to the provincial government, there do not appear to be any provisions to ensure adequate support services to the minority community. For example, we see over 1,000 people at our centre, and Emploi-Québec funds 380. For the balance we have to do our own fundraising or look for other sources. Because Emploi-Québec is the sole provider of employment, it becomes a challenge.

I'd better talk very quickly, as I just noticed there's only a minute left.

• (0900)

The mission of Emploi-Québec does not meet the needs of our particular population. The proliferation of centralized government and para-government service organizations doesn't meet the needs of the English-speaking community for a variety of reasons. The potential loss of community-based organizations is a real threat, whether it's in employment or any other community organization.

I'm going to go quickly through the results of the investment of the road map. We currently get road map money from Canada Economic Development, which has been a major supporter of the work we do at YES, and it allows us to provide essential services. We start about 200 businesses a year. We also get money for a regional project to help provide our services out into the regions. We have a youth initiative project with Canadian Heritage, an arts program, and we have our internship, as I mentioned, with HRSDC. As well, I'm pleased to say that this week we signed an agreement with the Status of Women to help more women go into technology.

I'm going to quickly hand it over to John to discuss some of our recommendations.

**Mr. John Ayles:** Very good.

Our brief provides seven recommendations, which I will not go into detail about. But communities need the stability of secure financial support, so we need large amounts of money for a long time. We need to continue the investment in the road map. We need to examine the model being developed around our regional project. We need the regional project initiative to be implemented for employment services as well as for entrepreneurship. We need to ensure that the needs of the minority community are considered when funds are transferred to the province. We need to provide moneys where services are provided remotely and virtually. We need to invest in community organizations that can broker the moneys invested in them with volunteers and other support from the business community.

Vulnerable populations, including youth and new immigrants, first seek the services of their local community groups for support. These groups need financial resources to ensure their long-term stability and sustainability. Youth retention and attraction as well as successful integration of new arrivals is key to the future of the English minority communities, the future of Quebec, and the future of Canada as a whole.

• (0905)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Now we will have an opening statement from the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Kevin O'Donnell (President, Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network):** Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.

On behalf of the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network, we are glad to have this opportunity to be here today to thank the Government of Canada for the support it has given to us through the road map.

I just wanted to point out that you have all received, in both French and English...

[*English*]

our brief, "Preserving Our Heritage Together".

[*Translation*]

We also have magazines and other brochures that refer to our organization.

[*English*]

First of all, this morning we would like to talk to you about who we are, what we do, whom we represent, what we have done with the road map funding we have received, and the impact of this funding in the community. We'd like to talk a bit about the significance of road map funding for our mission and activities, and then whether QAHN recommends that the support for minority communities represented by the road map be continued in the next funding cycle.

And not to keep you in too much suspense for the last item, the answer is yes, we do recommend that.

I'm going to turn the mike over to my colleague, Matthew Farfan.

**Mr. Matthew Farfan (Executive Director, Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network):** Hello, everybody. I'm pleased to be here.

Founded in 2000, the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network, QAHN, or the RPAQ, Réseau du patrimoine anglophone du Québec, is a non-profit, non-partisan umbrella organization of some 90 historical societies, local museums, and other cultural and heritage organizations spread out all over the province of Quebec and concerned with heritage. We also have about 250 individual members.

QAHN aims to promote a greater understanding of the history of Quebec's English-speaking communities by informing, connecting, and inspiring members and the greater public through our publications, our projects, and various events we hold. Membership is open to any organization or individual, regardless of language or cultural affiliation, with a positive interest in the history, heritage, and culture of Quebec's English-speaking communities. Our membership, in fact, includes a number of essentially francophone organizations across Quebec as well.

We have three priority goals: strengthening our core membership through providing opportunities for networking, communication, and collaboration on projects and other member services; engaging our local communities, providing strategies and tools to encourage more Quebecers to join, use, and support the work of volunteer-based local heritage organizations; and making our stories known through our print, magazine, and online publications and through the activities of local organizations whose work we support and encourage.

I'll turn you over to Rod MacLeod, our past president.

**Mr. Roderick MacLeod (Past President, Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network):** As Matthew just indicated, we have a great number of core members and affiliate members and individual members reaching across the province. I'd just like to add to this that some of them are extremely small and fragile, but they are extremely dedicated and hard-working and extremely keen on promoting their local history and heritage. We like to think we are providing a great service to them, because they are otherwise unable to conduct much of their work.

Through our contact with these groups and our participation with the Quebec Community Groups Network and the Fédération Histoire Québec, who are having a *congrès* in May in Sherbrooke—and you all have a brochure to that effect—we feel we are entitled to speak on behalf of the English-speaking population in Quebec in areas touching history and heritage.

I refer you back to Kevin.

**Mr. Kevin O'Donnell:** So what have we done with the road map funding?

So far we've put together three projects: SHOMI, StoryNet, and HOMEI, and we have another one called SOFTI that we're waiting for at this point. If someone wonders why all our things end in "I", it turns out that way. They rejected our TIEDOMI request, but anyway, what can I say.

SHOMI, our spoken heritage online multimedia initiative, received \$220,000, and essentially it was in two parts. Part of it we digitized. Our members over the last several decades now have interviewed people, and they've all been on analog tape, sometimes in damp basements and so on. We got some 440 hours of this material from all over the province and we had it digitized and put online, in collaboration with our partner, Concordia University. Plus, we had a number of initiatives in museums across the province. That was a big project, and it was very successful.

StoryNet is one we're working on right now. That's a very interesting project that will involve a number of partners. As the title says, we're there to tell the stories. The important thing is to make sure we don't lose all the different experiences of what it's like to be living in Quebec, especially as a member of the minority community.

HOMEI, the heritage online multimedia enhancement initiative, received \$115,000 from Canada Economic Development. That was designed to upgrade our websites. We now have a very good website and a series of what we call web magazines, regional ones for the Gaspé, the Outaouais, Montreal, and other places. HOMEI was designed to make sure there was a tourist aspect, if you will. It was practical that it was there.

I'm going to turn it over to Matthew.

● (0910)

**Mr. Matthew Farfan:** I'm going to talk a little about the impact specifically of road map funding in our local communities.

Historical societies and museums carry out lots of things: they research, publish books, mount exhibitions, conduct tours, take care of long-neglected cemeteries and other heritage sites, often including buildings that are falling down and in need of repair. Many of these activities are well beyond both the financial and the human resources available through volunteer efforts. Many volunteers, especially seniors, have difficulty navigating the new online media and the increasingly complex maze of funding programs available at different levels of government. This is why our member organizations appreciate the funding from the road map and the efforts that QAHN makes to procure these funds.

I have one minute? Okay.

**The Chair:** If you could wrap up, that would be great.

**Mr. Matthew Farfan:** Yes, I'll wrap up.

I'm going to quote from testimony from one of the groups that benefited through one of these projects in Wakefield, Quebec, the Fairbairn House:

The value of funding such unique initiatives in remote rural Anglophone communities in Quebec cannot be overstated. In future, we at Fairbairn House will rely on such programs to develop tools and resources for our communities [...] We look forward to working with QAHN on future projects for cultural development.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

We'll now have an opening statement from the Leading English Education and Resource Network.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Paule Langevin (Project Director, Community Learning Centre Initiative, Leading English Education and Resource Network):** Good morning. I am delighted to be with you today to speak about an exciting initiative that is having a growing and substantial impact on the anglophone minority community in Quebec. I am of course referring to the network of community and education centres in the anglophone education sector in Quebec.

My name is Paule Langevin and I am the director of the provincial management team, whose job is to guide the implementation of the network and to contribute to its upkeep in the province. With me today is Debbie Horrocks, Assistant Project Director and Community Liaison Coordinator.

The concept of community learning centres, or CLCs, is simple: the education and participation of students at school, their leadership and their commitment to the community are consolidated through family and community support. In the same way, the school helps the families and the community in which these students live. The basic principle is that of a school rooted in its community and open to all of its members. It requires a change of culture within the school structure and a change of perception of the school on the part of the parents and community partners. This is not always easy to achieve.

The primary goal of the CLCs, initially funded six years ago by Canadian Heritage, was to promote the social well-being and development of youth, as we knew that school education alone is not enough. We had to encourage the community in which the school is located to participate in programs so as to develop a sense of belonging and to breathe new energy into the school and the surrounding community.

[*English*]

**Ms. Debbie Horrocks (Assistant Project Director and Community Liaison Coordinator, Community Learning Centre Initiative, Leading English Education and Resource Network):** We have built up our capacity with a team of coordinators who are passionate about their work and are committed to making a difference in their individual communities. Supporting and guiding each CLC is a group of committed stakeholders—community organizations, school boards, governmental agencies, and a volunteer partnership table. We are doing amazing things with a relatively small budget, but there is constant pressure to keep the schools open longer, the lights on, and our programs running.

Our future is uncertain. Our reality includes less government funding, fewer donations, families with reduced income, school boards under threat, and communities with increased expectations of their CLC. This is why it is imperative that the federal government continue to support the initiative in the new road map.

There are 37 CLCs at different stages of implementation located in vastly different contexts. Some are situated in the remotest areas of the province, where there are no roads connecting villages. Others are located in urban centres. There is a mix of elementary, high school, and adult centres, with student populations ranging from 45 students to 1,500. The reality is that each CLC needs to find tailor-made solutions to answer the unique needs of its students, families, and communities.

CLCs are transforming schools into vibrant centres of lifelong learning and community life. Buildings that used to close when the students left are now open until 10 p.m. for six and in many cases seven days a week and in the summer. It isn't unusual to find senior citizens reading to five-year-olds and grade 6 students teaching seniors how to use computers so that they can e-mail their grandchildren.

● (0915)

[Translation]

**Ms. Paule Langevin:** The most important impact of setting up a community learning centre is the emphasis placed on partners, who contribute in cash or in kind. “Together, we can do more” is the maxim that describes and underpins the relationship of co-operation between the school and the community. We all work together to expand the possibilities of lifelong learning.

Last year, our partners provided a contribution equivalent to more than \$2.5 million. We have relied on more than 350 partners in various projects. This allowed us to offer services, resources and programs that did not exist before the creation of the CLCs.

In its March 2011 report, the Senate Standing Committee on Official Languages indicates:

[The partners] contribute to the revitalization of the English-speaking communities, help to develop a sense of belonging to the community, provide an opportunity to build bridges between generations and between the school and the community, while offering services and activities that are tailored to the needs of each region.

The work with partners from various sectors is a balancing act. The CLCs endeavour to meet the particular needs of their community, whether it is with youth, in health, education, art or culture, while encouraging more substantial community involvement, in order to improve the chances of success and student participation.

Furthermore, the CLCs increased communities' connectedness, reduced isolation, improved accessibility to various activities, information and resources, all in English, and allowed for services to be provided in a new form, services that hitherto were not accessible to community members.

The CLCs helped build what was sorely lacking in the anglophone community: networks, partnerships and relationships, not only between the schools and the existing anglophone community organizations, but also with the services offered by the provinces

and the regions, the NGOs and with various policy discussion groups.

[English]

**Ms. Debbie Horrocks:** One of the Canadian senators who visited a CLC while on a recent tour of Quebec commented that CLCs were doing so much with so little. They are bringing resources and vitality to communities scattered over an immense geographic area in English schools that have been on a demographic decline for 25 years.

At the recent strategic priority-setting forum organized by QCGN, the English-speaking community identified six priorities that were key to ensuring a more vital and sustainable future. CLCs contribute to all six of these priority areas: access to services in English, community building, economic prosperity, identity and renewal, promoting leadership development and youth engagement, and helping ensure that our institutions remain healthy and vibrant.

To better understand the transformation that is beginning to take place, the Senate report noted:

that CLCs are a model that could encourage involvement by the English-speaking communities. All witnesses, without exception, had only praise for the value and potential of the centres. The committee believes that we must encourage innovation and enable the communities to profit from their good work. The government should therefore commit to maintaining and developing the CLCs in the long term.

● (0920)

[Translation]

**Ms. Paule Langevin:** If my time were not so short, I could give you many concrete examples of what we managed to do with small budgets. I could give you examples of what the CLCs are doing in locations as different as a disadvantaged city neighbourhood and a remote Lower North Shore village.

So, in a nutshell, what do CLCs do? I refer to a comment made by Mr. Graham Fraser, the Commissioner of Official Languages, taken from a report recently tabled before the Senate: “the availability of services improves community members' quality of life as well as the community's vitality”. That is the influence they have on minority anglophone community life in the province and it is why the federal government should protect their place in the new roadmap. The CLCs have changed the lives of these communities and are now considered to be pillars of development and agents of change in the minority anglophone communities' vitality in many regions.

Honestly, I could talk about the CLCs all day long, but I would rather invite you to visit one and see for yourselves. Mr. Aubin and Mr. Gourde, I invite you to visit the CLCs in your beautiful region, the Centre-du-Québec, and to see for yourselves what CLCs are and what they can do.

Thank you for taking the time to listen to us.

**The Chair:** Thank you to everyone.

We have one hour left for questions and comments.

We will begin with Mr. Godin.

**Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like to welcome you all.



[English]

It started with the action plan at the beginning of 2000, and then it became the road map.

Mr. Menegakis, I have to practise your name a lot. Trying to do my Acadian with the French to the English is not that easy. I hope you forgive me for that.

**Mr. Costas Menegakis (Richmond Hill, CPC):** You're doing a good job.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** He's saying, here's the road map we have today. As profitable as it was, one question is important, and we're all kind of asking it: do you want another road map? And how strong do you want it to be? I say that because there are questions about whether there will be another road map. Did it make a big difference? What was the difference before and now? You kind of explained it in your preamble today, but at the same time, what are you looking forward to in the next one? Do you think there should be more money in it? Everything we do right now is with less money, but I've heard from all the witnesses so far that it did help communities across the country—francophones outside of Quebec and anglophones in Quebec.

I'd like to hear whether you want another road map.

**Ms. Jennifer Johnson:** Yes.

[Translation]

**Mr. James Carter:** The answer is yes, absolutely.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Absolutely?

**Mr. James Carter:** Yes. I would simply like to say that it is very important that there be multi-year support. Rather than having small projects here and there, there has to be a plan. It is very important in order to ensure the continuity of investments and the vitality of the communities.

[English]

**Mr. John Ayles:** The answer is yes, but I'd like to make a point that maybe testifies to our lack of knowledge. We are not always clear what is road map money and what is other money. Perhaps it would behoove you to clarify when it is road map money that's coming through other sources and other places.

Secondly, volunteer-based organizations like our own allow, if you like, small amounts of money invested to be brokered into significant differences to the community. Money from the road map definitely makes a difference and definitely gets leveraged into much more impact than it would have if it was simply spent.

• (0925)

**Mr. Kevin O'Donnell:** I echo the two previous speakers.

Yes, we do need that money. The Canadian government, of course, under the Official Languages Act is committed to supporting minority communities. We're very happy to note that the current government, in the recent round of budget cuts, did not cut funding to the official languages program. We're very happy about that. It's a strong signal that the current government is committed to its commitments to support our communities. The road map money helps us to go a lot further. We can give all kinds of examples of

places, museums, historical societies, and so on, who are trying to do the best with what they've got. They have very little.

They're also quite elderly. I have to say I'm one of the junior members in the historical community out in the regions. Many of them are in their seventies and eighties. They have the limitations of age. They may not understand the new technologies. They have a vague idea of its potential but they don't understand it. These are all areas in the domain of heritage that are so important for our collective memories and identities to be maintained. It's so important that we still have the ability to go out and get these stories to maintain this identity.

**Mr. Roderick MacLeod:** I was president of QAHN during the action plan. I'm an action plan president and Kevin is a road map president. I have nothing but good things to say about the action plan, and we really benefited from it and appreciated it. But I feel that the experience with the road map that I've observed has been considerably more flexible. One of the things it has done is it has allowed us to have—

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** There's a GPS on it; that's why it's more flexible.

**Mr. Roderick MacLeod:** That's true. Otherwise we'd be lost without maps.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** We don't know that yet.

**Mr. Roderick MacLeod:** With the multi-year funding for projects we've been able to be much more creative with what we've done. I'm not sure what has gone into the thinking on that, but it's been very well received. The outcomes, in terms of some of the efforts of our organization, have certainly benefited from that. I'll say it's even more dynamic, as opposed to flexible.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** I like to hear that.

**Ms. Debbie Horrocks:** Certainly, with regard to the community learning centres, while our budgets individually are quite limited, as our presentation indicated and as I think Mr. Ayles referred to, we leverage that into much greater amounts that come into our centres. Our partners, over 350 throughout the province—English partners, French partners, government and non-governmental partners—have leveraged the minimum amount into more than \$2.5 million. We would like to see the road map continue, not only for us but for all our partners who we're involved with. We really have made partnerships the backbone of community learning centres; without the partnerships, unfortunately, we'd probably cease to exist.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Mr. Gourde.

[Translation]

**Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, CPC):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I want to thank you all for being here this morning. Your cooperation and your testimony will greatly assist us in preparing a good study.

I also want to thank Ms. Paule Langevin for her invitation. Perhaps we can speak after the meeting to decide on a date.

I would also like to thank the representatives from the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network; you are doing excellent work which is so very important. In my riding, the Irish and Scottish communities have really made an exceptional contribution to the history of the area. It is a lovely story. If you have any lines to share, I would like to take the time to read them and perhaps publicize them in my riding.

I would like to give each of the four groups an opportunity to say, in a minute or a minute and a half, what the priorities of the next roadmap should be so that each of your organizations can move forward.

You may begin.

**Mr. James Carter:** Good morning, Mr. Gourde.

Before answering, I would also like to invite you to come and visit our community network, the MCDC, in Lévis.

As for the next commitment periods, we have set out our priorities mainly with the Department of Health. Within the framework of the roadmap and the action plan, we have established very important language training programs for francophone professionals in the 18 network communities. It is important that each of these community networks work with the CSSs and other government institutions in the region. We simply want to ensure that the communities can pursue their partnerships with the Quebec public system.

It's very simple: there is a community focus designed to ensure that anglophones participate in the health system. For the province of Quebec, the resources must be in place to ensure the proper human resources in the public system. If things continue along those lines, the results will be impressive.

• (0930)

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Thank you.

[English]

**Ms. Iris Unger:** One of the issues that I think is coming up quite clearly is our dependency upon each other in terms of our partnerships. We're starting to create a mosaic, and I think pulling out any one piece is going to create ripples in the whole community.

I think some of the work that has been done over the past few years has really created a synergy that's really important. I think we're talking about sustainability and continuity around our programs.

The other main issue would be help in figuring out models so that we could access financial resources to provide services, particularly to youth and to work around the provincial mandate. I look at the CHSSN model, where moneys are going specifically to the province and are earmarked for the minority community in Quebec.

So looking at new models of ways of being able to service who we need to service in our communities, in the way that we need to service them....

**Mr. Kevin O'Donnell:** I'd like to echo that QAHN is involved as well in partnerships with other organizations, as well as our 90 members, by the way, who are listed on the back of our brief. For

example, we work with the Community Learning Centres. They're an important partner in our present-day activities.

We have a number of challenges coming up in the future. Certainly, we relied on the cultural development fund of the *Feuille de route* for funding for a number of our projects.

In regard to some of the challenges we have today, one is to engage youth, for example. It's important that our young people be aware of and appreciate

[Translation]

...their identity as Quebeckers, Canadians and Anglo-Canadians; they have several identities.

[English]

We are one of the organizations. Our projects can help them understand one aspect of that project.

Of course, a lot of the boomers are retiring now—it's quite interesting—and they're looking for projects to become involved in. This is a whole other area that I think has tremendous potential for us in the history and heritage community to tap into, again, to build up this all-important sense of identity that we have as Canadians, Quebeckers, and as anglo Quebeckers.

[Translation]

**Ms. Paule Langevin:** The community learning centres would not exist without their partners. It is as simple as that. We absolutely need a coordinator in each of our centres in order to manage all of these collaborations. The roadmap is very important to us. It is very important that we keep a coordinator in each of our schools. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Gourde.

I will now give the floor to Mr. Bélanger.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

• (0935)

[English]

Welcome, everyone; Madame Langevin.

Monsieur MacLeod, you're the past president, right?

**Mr. Roderick MacLeod:** Yes.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** I would argue that the reason you saw this positive evolution between the *Plan d'action* and the *Feuille de route* is because there was a very thorough professional evaluation done twice on the *Plan d'action*. It was mid-way, which apparently hasn't happened yet for the *Feuille de route* and which was supposed to be happening—none of the departments have completed their studies, unfortunately—and at the end of it. The lessons learned from that thorough professional assessment were applied. Also, previous incarnations of this committee took on the Heritage department in particular for multi-year funding. So kudos are to be given to the committee, and for the evaluation of the *Plan d'action*.

I'm a little concerned that we're not going to get the same kind of evolution on *Feuille de route 2*, if there is one, and there will be, because Minister Valcourt has already said there will be one.

This is it for the evaluation. I'm not sure every member here will read all of the briefs you've left us, and seven minutes of presentation is a far, far cry from a thorough professional evaluation. That has to be put on there.

I hope we will somehow concoct something on which we can progress as we go forward for our communities.

Having said that,

[*Translation*]

...I have a few questions.

[*English*]

I'm intrigued about the Community Health and Social Services Network's 2 and 4: African Canadian development on Montreal Island, and the Saint-Léonard Italian Canadian community. Am I to understand that these communities mostly tend towards being anglophones?

**Ms. Jennifer Johnson:** The Saint-Léonard network, the REISA, is serving all of the English-speaking community in the east end of Montreal. The name doesn't quite describe properly the population it serves, but it's the English-speaking community in the east end of Montreal.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** So it's not the Italian Canadian community?

**Ms. Jennifer Johnson:** They were the sponsor organization for the network. They were the ones who received the funding and supported the network that developed in that region.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** What about the other one?

**Ms. Jennifer Johnson:** The African Canadian is our first network that is focused on a basically cultural community. This is a network that is serving the black English-speaking community. I think it's in five CSSS territories in Montreal.

It is a unique network that we have, but it is very focused in terms of the population it serves.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** If I want more information on that particular one, do I just call?

**Ms. Jennifer Johnson:** Absolutely.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** I might just do that.

**Ms. Jennifer Johnson:** We can get more information.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** You have a similar situation in Toronto.

**Ms. Jennifer Johnson:** I'm sure.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Black francophones do not have any services either. I would be very interested in knowing how it works.

[*English*]

**Ms. Jennifer Johnson:** Perfect.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** To YES, am I to understand that you're principally Montreal-centric? I don't mean that negatively.

**Mr. John Ayles:** We have been principally Montreal....

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** And you're trying now to spread out?

**Mr. John Ayles:** We have recently expanded the scope of our services, and we are embarking on a major study, which is halfway completed, I would say, as to the needs of the regions and how we can serve them, either virtually or physically.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Okay.

For QAHN, is the next one going to be called "RETIRED"? Sorry, I just had to put that in there.

You're spread all over the place.

**Mr. Kevin O'Donnell:** Frisky retirees.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** It will be QAHN and the seven dwarfs soon.

The president of the Quebec anglophone school boards was here last Tuesday. He made a comment that I've heard quite a few times from people associated with QCGN, that for the linguistic minority in Quebec it's not the language that is threatened but the communities.

Do you agree with that assessment? All of you, quickly.

**Voices:** Yes.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** All right. Therefore, the perspective has to be different.

The mistake we make quite often is that we equate

● (0940)

[*Translation*]

...the situation of francophone minority communities...

[*English*]

with the situation of anglophone minority communities, and it's not the same. Do we agree on that?

**A voice:** Yes.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** We're making great progress.

**Ms. Debbie Horrocks:** I would suggest that we work as partners. We all work together, each partner here. We all work together. We don't work exclusively with the English community. We can't possibly. When you're an organization in the province, you also have to work with your francophone partners.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Do I have a couple of minutes? I have a minute.

I brought this up on Tuesday. Do you have a comment to make on the current issue of *L'actualité* and how this may result in your community being perceived?

**Ms. Paule Langevin:** We had a discussion with Jennifer about it last night.

If you look at how the questions were worded, from an anglophone point of view the questions were biased; therefore, you get biased answers.

I will let Jim continue.

**Mr. James Carter:** We have to make a distinction between the political discourse in Quebec around language and what happens at the community level. We're involved with our French-speaking colleagues and French-speaking communities all over Quebec, and the relations are excellent. The collaboration is excellent. Most of my francophone colleagues who work in the health system shake their heads when they see attempts to create a tense linguistic environment for what are essentially political reasons.

Everybody, in fact, understands the need to support the French language in Quebec. There is a high degree of bilingualism. But an article like the one in *L'actualité* affects community relations, and that is probably the most damaging thing.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Mr. O'Donnell.

**Mr. Kevin O'Donnell:** I would just add that there is no question that we are entering another era, another phase of political life, here in Quebec. Elections are coming up.

It's an issue. There's no getting around it, and that's one of the reasons we are so appreciative of the fact that we can provide support to our community, because we need that kind of moral support as well.

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** All right.

It is now Mr. Trottier's turn.

**Mr. Bernard Trottier (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I thank all of our witnesses for being here this morning.

It is a great pleasure to meet you.

As my colleagues on the committee have said, we have been studying the Roadmap for Canada's Linguistic Duality for several months now. The program was implemented in 2008. The biggest change for the linguistic communities is that they get long-term funding. As you said, it is difficult for your organizations to function without that long-term support. That is why we started the roadmap in 2008.

Another aspect of the roadmap deals with inter-departmental coordination. That is perhaps not something that you can see. This coordination with federal government officials here appears to be in the background; but it also constitutes another change.

Thank you for being here. We are looking for some feedback from the groups that have benefited from this new approach to supporting linguistic communities.

[*English*]

I want to ask the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network some questions. Because I don't have time to ask all of your questions, I want to do maybe a bit of a deeper dive.

I'll give an example of why I think the work you're doing is so important.

Recently I was talking to some parliamentarians from the Republic of Georgia. They're always in a linguistic struggle with a

Russian minority, and they have a large Russian neighbour. They talked about the importance of maintaining their heritage in the republic. They gave the example that Russians will take over a 1,000-year-old Georgian Orthodox church and put a Russian onion dome on top and remove any traces of the Georgian language within the republic.

I am not saying that Canada is Georgia or Russia. But could you describe the importance of heritage, recognizing the centuries of linguistic reality in the province of Quebec?

● (0945)

[*Translation*]

Furthermore, it is the same story in the rest of Canada, in terms of the francophone heritage in other parts of the country.

[*English*]

What is the importance of what you do for young people? I am the father of young children. My children are 12 and 10. Could you describe some of the things you do and what they mean in terms of their outlook with respect to the language and with respect to the communities they live in and are neighbours with?

**Mr. Kevin O'Donnell:** Yes. To go back to your larger issue about the whole question of language and minorities and so on, these are indeed sensitive areas, where you have groups that have come together for various reasons, sometimes because of political dominance at one point.

The only thing I can say about this is that the English-speaking community of Quebec is a very diverse group of people. Today, of course, they represent literally dozens of different groups made up of people whose first official language is English. That's how we describe ourselves, as English-speaking communities; we're not the people from Great Britain or wherever.

Many of us have been in Quebec for a long time. Believe it or not, many of us do not live in Westmount and have the kinds of privileges that sometimes get associated with everybody. Yes, some of us are, I'm sure, part of the 1% of the world, but most of us, I would suspect, are part of the 99%, to use the Occupy language that got popular last year.

So it's varied. We've had experiences, over the centuries now, on farms, in factories—not only in the head office of the factory but on the factory floor—and so on. We've had these kinds of experiences, and they have to be remembered and celebrated. I think that's an important thing.

It's important that our young people understand that as well. Very often today we have standardized textbooks. We have families that move from one place to another, for promotions and stuff like that, and we have teachers now who....

In the old days, teachers tended to be from their area. We have to actually talk about now and try to promote something called “community-based learning”, which our CLC partners do so well and which we are doing, to help them to do that, to try to give young people a sense of rootedness, of where they are. I mean, they're not just living in bedroom suburbs and their place is the mall; they actually live in a place, in a town, that has an interesting past, with people who have problems and situations that are remarkably similar to what they are going through or have gone through—although it would be a little different in those days.

It's just a really good thing. If we don't have that sense of identity of who we are, with some kind of rootedness, then we're just transients with our duffle bags, going from one place to the other.

So we need that. And that's why we're here.

**Mr. Bernard Trottier:** Thank you very much.

Naturally the groups that have come here have appreciated the funding and the efforts in terms of supporting linguistic minorities. Of course, they've all said that, yes, they want another version of the road map. That's not a surprise there.

I want to ask you more of a higher-level question. If you could put yourselves in the shoes of the heritage minister, the hard-working heritage minister, who has to look at this \$1.1 billion in funding that we've had in terms of the road map, what would you say would be the criteria for establishing priorities? Ultimately it is about priorities. We've had groups from early childhood, primary education, culture and media, health care, immigration settlement, economic development. Everybody is saying that is the priority.

Thinking at maybe a level higher than that, what would be the criteria? How could you measure success and say that this should be the priority for supporting linguistic minority groups across Canada?

**Mr. James Carter:** In the area of health, in our investments since the first action plan, which I have to say was very successful for us and flowed into the road map without any break, the evaluation in the first action plan was absolutely thorough. We had a major evaluator, and we engaged both the ministry in Quebec and Health Canada in that work.

So within the department of Health Canada and its work through Quebec and us, we have, within the larger road map context, absolutely mapped out the results. We have set the priorities clearly and squarely within Quebec's strategic plan in health.

With that, we can assure the heritage minister, through the work we do with the ministry and our communities—and certainly Health Canada, who has a very clear picture of what its investments have done in our communities in health—that the government has a very, very good picture of what a future investment of taxpayers' money would mean in our health sector.

● (0950)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Weston.

[Translation]

**Mr. John Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, CPC):** My thanks to our witnesses.

Let us carry on with my colleague's questions. It is clear that we will have another roadmap because we know that our minister is a great supporter of the vitality of both official languages. He himself graduated from a French immersion school in British Columbia, as have my children and myself.

What are the criteria to choose those who will receive funding? What do you think of them? When we think of our great country, what are the criteria for allocating funding? How can we continue to ensure there is proper accountability to be certain that this is a good use of money?

Mr. Carter, you may begin. Could you give us short answers, please?

**Mr. James Carter:** It is very important to be able to measure the outcomes and the results, not just at the end of the four years of funding, but along the way.

In fact, we must be able to demonstrate clear results every quarter and every year. That is what we did with Health Canada. There was an agreement with the Department of Health. It is very important to be able to measure the impact and that the impact be felt within the community itself. That is an important criterion.

We must also ensure that Canadian government investments serve as a lever for our communities where a lot of volunteer activities are organized. The investments are intended to provide leverage to communities so that they can create partnerships and obtain other funding to coordinate actions taken by other levels of government, for example. I believe that, in the next roadmap, we must demonstrate that the investments lead to something. It is not simply an investment, it is a lever. We must demonstrate how the other levels of government, regional, local or provincial, have made their own contribution to the federal investment.

[English]

**Mr. John Weston:** Merci.

Mr. Aylen.

**Mr. John Aylen:** Thank you.

I'm looking at this from the point of view of our clients. I think the most important thing is that we intervene early in the process. When we don't intervene, the laws of motion apply and individuals and their contributions get lost. So we need to reach people when they arrive here. Often they're the spouse of somebody who's come for some other reason, and if that person does not find a job they ultimately leave. We have a number of cases where that's true.

We don't want people to fall into the trap of chronic unemployment or underemployment. I think we need to intervene soon and fast when the need arises, and respond to the opportunity from a community and an economic development point of view.

**Mr. John Weston:** Thank you.

● (0955)

**Ms. Debbie Horrocks:** At the Community Learning Centres we're accountable to everyone. We're accountable to our community partners, the school boards that own the CLCs, our provincial government—we appear in the strategic plan of the Government of Quebec—and Canadian Heritage. Each level wants to know that their investment is being well used.

About three years ago we undertook a voluntary external evaluation that did a thorough examination of the 22 CLCs we had then. We weren't mandated to do that, but it has given us a lot of information and recommendations that have enabled us to move forward and make changes as necessary.

I provided a copy to the clerk in English and in French, so that's certainly available to you.

Recently we began to undertake a second evaluation, because we certainly strongly believe that if we don't evaluate ourselves—

**Mr. John Weston:** May I interrupt? We're looking for criteria for choosing recipients.

Maybe I can go to you, Mr. O'Donnell.

**Mr. Kevin O'Donnell:** I think we all appreciate the delicate balancing act that the minister and the ministry has to undertake in this whole question of funding to groups. We know there's one pot of money, that it's going to be shared among many people—not only among us here in this room, but also across the country. We're aware of it and appreciate the fact that this is a difficult job. I certainly am not going to say that heritage and culture and arts are more important than employment and health. That's just not it.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Mr. Harris.

**Mr. Dan Harris (Scarborough Southwest, NDP):** Thank you very much.

And thank you again, everyone, for coming today.

I'm going to apologize to those I don't ask questions of; don't feel ignored, but with only five minutes there's only so much time.

Of course, I've heard a few folks mention the exhaustive consultation process that took place after the action plan. That more than likely led to the improvements that have been seen in the road map. I want to stress this for the Heritage department, when they eventually hear this, because they made a rather unfortunate decision that they're going to use our committee study rather than doing their own in-depth consultation, and we abhor that decision. They themselves even admit that the answers received from witnesses would have been different if the witnesses knew the study was going to be used for that purpose.

So I'm going to put that on the record again.

I'm going to start with YES, Youth Employment Services. As I'm one of the younger parliamentarians around, it's critical. In my province of Ontario, we're dealing with approximately a 17% youth unemployment rate.

What's the unemployment rate for youth in Quebec right now?

**Mr. John Ayleen:** Frankly, I couldn't tell you, but I would suspect it's above 10%.

**Ms. Iris Unger:** I think it's pretty close to 17%. I have an article here from *The Gazette* from yesterday morning with the exact number. We get called upon quite often, and we usually get the most up-to-date statistics; it's very high.

**Mr. Dan Harris:** Yes, it is critical that we deal with that issue, because we're robbing the next generation of economic opportunities. Of course, they're the generation dealing with massive student debt as well.

What other ministries do you receive funds or support from?

**Ms. Iris Unger:** We receive funding from Canadian Heritage, HRSDC, as I mentioned, Status of Women, Canada Economic Development—those four—plus we seek provincial money.

**Mr. Dan Harris:** Okay.

By the way, congratulations on getting that money from Status of Women. I come from the IT sector, and we do need more of a gender balance in that sector.

**Ms. Iris Unger:** We're very excited about it.

**Mr. Dan Harris:** Just like, for instance, in child care, you need more gender balance on the other side.

Speaking of HRSDC and their recent decision to close youth employment centres, have you yourselves made use of those employment centres or referred your members, the people you serve, to those centres before?

● (1000)

**Ms. Iris Unger:** We have not. We partnered with them when they were around. We did presentations about our services, but we're very aware of the closing of the centres. We have some issues with it because one of the things we find is that young people, when they're doing their job search, work in isolation at home and think they're going to get jobs off the computer and virtually. We try to get them into our centre because that's how they're going to get the jobs: through networking, through support, and through one-on-one coaching.

The other issue is we're seeing a lot more mental health issues with young people. They're getting very stressed about being unemployed.

**Mr. Dan Harris:** That one is certainly I think a catch-22, because of course most employers now ask people to submit online so as to limit their own HR costs and needs. It creates a bit of a vicious circle, but please continue in those efforts, because that isolation is very similar to what new Canadians are often facing with language barriers, where you just end up in that spiral and can't get out.

**Ms. Iris Unger:** Can I add that only about 20% of people get jobs through the Internet? Employers may be saying that people should do that, but at the end of the day, that's not how they're doing their hiring.

**Mr. Dan Harris:** No, it's most certainly not.

**The Chair:** One minute.

**Mr. Dan Harris:** I apologize, but I'll have to stop there on that.

We had ELAN in here on Tuesday, and of course, as Monsieur Bélanger was mentioning, the differences for CBC and Radio-Canada.... In the rest of Canada, it certainly helps to protect the French language for the minority, whereas in Quebec it serves more of a cultural purpose.

QAHN, as you mentioned, there have been no cuts necessarily in official languages, and I think that's partially to the credit of this committee, the work we've been doing, and the attention we've brought to this. But the CBC, of course, is facing huge cutbacks and has just announced 700 job cuts in the regions. In the smaller areas, in local media, and with the radio, we have serious concerns that this is going to affect the official language minority communities. Would you please provide a comment on that?

**The Chair:** Very briefly, please.

**Mr. Kevin O'Donnell:** The CBC Quebec community network is a very important element for communities outside of the Montreal area and so on. Yes, we can get TV signals and so on from the States, but the CBC itself is very, very important. Certainly in the border areas and so on, virtually that's what they have. It's important. Actually, we're looking at it with trepidation.

On the difference between language and culture, it gets a little.... I'm not exactly sure how to parse that. You have to get your news and information and that sense of solidarity.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Menegakis.

**Mr. Costas Menegakis:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to thank all of our witnesses from all the groups that are here today for appearing before us.

It's certainly interesting. In the last couple of meetings, we've really heard about what's happening in the English-speaking minority communities in Quebec. I was born and raised in Montreal and educated there.

You mentioned McGill and Concordia, and I'm on the Concordia side. I also confess that I'm among the 99%, in that I'm close to Westmount, but Van Horne and Décarie is not Westmount.

Before I start with my questions, I've heard my colleagues opposite mention a couple of times now that the department is replacing their consultation with our study. This is an important study. It's an investment. The road map represents an investment of some \$1.1 billion. So we're taking a long time in order to have an opportunity to speak to all of the stakeholders, but under no circumstances is it replacing the consultative process the department is doing.

This is going to be value-added information, of course—and very valuable information—that we give them from our study after hearing from all stakeholders such as you. The department will take that into consideration, as will the minister, along with the consultative work that is being done, and quite comprehensively, I might add, by the ministry itself.

In the very short time I have I want to focus a little bit on the youth. It's an interesting comment to say that our communities are in danger. And I agree. Minority communities across the country have

different sets of circumstances. The francophone community outside of Quebec is spread across a vast land, whereas the anglophone community within Quebec is more concentrated, if you will.

I've always maintained—and my colleagues, I believe, share this with me—that the way to attract the youth is through cultural programs within the communities, through sports, recreation, and cultural programs. Can you give me your thoughts on that, please? All of your groups can respond.

• (1005)

**Mr. Kevin O'Donnell:** I can take one example. A.S. Johnson High School in Thetford Mines has a tremendous sense of volunteerism, thanks to the work of their local language community, MCDC. I think that of the 52 high school students or graduates, 36 of them are involved in volunteering in different things, everything from helping seniors with computers and teaching them all about Facebook and that kind of thing to helping to rake their yards.

It's interesting, you can hear this on the CLC podcast. They listen to the older generation. They were listening to a Mr. Young. He's 92 years old and he's telling them about what it was like when he was growing up in B.C. He's now in Thetford Mines, but he grew up with Pierre Berton.

There's a very articulate young lady, and Ms. Horrocks can maybe give us the exact URL, but it certainly is worth listening to. It's incredibly inspiring.

These same kids have a five- or six-minute video on YouTube right now about volunteering, about their community. I would urge everyone to take a look at that video because it really does give you a tremendous sense of what young people are all about today. They're very articulate and appreciative of their communities.

**Ms. Jennifer Johnson:** The health and social services sector has recognized that when the kids go away to university in Montreal, one of the most important things is to encourage them to come back and work in their communities. A number of things have been put in place using road map funding, such as internship programs so that kids studying in health and social services programming have the opportunity to go back to their communities and do their internships locally.

We just introduced a bursary program. I think 32 bursaries were given to students who are studying in health and social services. That encourages them to recognize that their communities are supporting them, and we hope they'll go home and look at their options of practising their skills in their communities.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Madame Unger, very briefly.

**Ms. Iris Unger:** We have an arts program. I think Montreal is being perceived as a cultural centre, and a lot of young people are coming to Montreal. I'm always saying that youth are going to be mobile, so we shouldn't be trying to hold them in our communities, but we should be encouraging those who are flocking to Montreal, quite literally, who want to stay in Montreal, because of the perception that it's a creative place to be right now.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Monsieur Lapointe.

[Translation]

**Mr. François Lapointe (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, NDP):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like to concentrate on some of the difficulties you have raised. I am very curious to better grasp or understand them. As I live in a region whose population is 99.7% francophone, I do not claim to have a precise understanding of the problems experienced by anglophone communities. In my opinion, they may be the best levers to justify the argument that maintaining the funding is essential.

I would like to start with a question for Ms. Unger. My question has two components.

First, could you give us some details on how the services work? For example, your workshops on personal support, are they given by volunteers, by professionals on contract or by members of full-time staff?

Also, could you help me to better understand why Emploi Québec is not succeeding in meeting the needs of the anglophone community? In what sorts of ways do they not make appropriate connections? Is this lack of connections specific to certain regions of Quebec? Why do the youth employment centres, the local development centres and the local employment centres not offer appropriate service to some anglophone communities?

• (1010)

**Ms. Iris Unger:** All right. May I answer you in English?

[English]

**Mr. François Lapointe:** No problem.

**Ms. Iris Unger:** The centre itself is open to anybody, so people walk in and they sign up. We have workshops provided by staff. We have 22 staff; we have staff who do daytime workshops, but we also bring in a lot of volunteers. We have a lot of evening workshops when we bring in people from the business community. We have mentors. Those are volunteers.

We take our 22 staff and leverage those people to help secure volunteers. Those are the 300 volunteers who do workshops, mentorships, sit on advisory committees. That's our format.

Also, once people come in for workshops, we will then do one-on-one coaching, if somebody's looking for a job.

**Mr. François Lapointe:** Okay.

**Ms. Iris Unger:** It's Emploi-Québec.

**Mr. François Lapointe:** Emploi-Québec and local centres of employment are all financed by Quebec. Why can't they manage to have a real collaboration with you? You said it wasn't working well, so I'd like to know why and how.

**Ms. Iris Unger:** There are two points there. Emploi-Québec gives organizations *x* amount of money to service...it's a pay-per-client model right now. I think some of the issues we're facing are similar to those the francophone communities are facing—we sit on several coalitions with those groups—as far as cutbacks or changes in the way they give out the money. I think those are common to the francophone and anglophone communities. Proportionately, because there are so few anglophone organizations providing service, when

there are cuts from Emploi-Québec they impact English-speaking communities more.

**Mr. François Lapointe:** It hurts even more.

**Ms. Iris Unger:** Right. So that's number one.

Two, I think the provincial government is invested in para-government organizations like the CJE and the CLD. For whatever reason, people from the anglophone community do not access these services for the most part. I don't know if there is the perception that they won't be served in English. That goes for Montreal and the regions as well. So unless you live in a predominantly anglophone neighbourhood, chances are you won't get services in your language of choice. If you live in the east end and you're anglophone, you have to go to the organization that's set up, because it's divided by regions. They're forced to go. So we get the people who are living in the east end of Montreal who can't access English services.

[Translation]

**Mr. François Lapointe:** Thank you, Ms. Unger.

Ms. Horrocks, earlier on, you described a rather gloomy future. You made reference to the demographics and to average family incomes. This seems to somewhat contradict Ms. Langevin's conclusion, who said that funding campaigns last year had raised \$2.5 million and that this had worked rather well. I would like you to clarify for us what worked well, but then in what way you are concerned about the future.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Ms. Horrocks, you have the floor.

[English]

**Ms. Debbie Horrocks:** The future is worrisome. I almost hesitate to say this, but we've become a victim of our own success. More and more demands are being placed on CLCs. Our communities are looking to them more and more to provide services and resources, especially the CLCs in the regions where services like YES aren't available.

We have a network of video conferencing for all our CLCs. Workshops like YES offers are now being made available to communities across the province. The \$2.5 million is coming from the various community organizations that are contributing to offering the resources through our CLCs. Most of the time it's not in the form of cash. A lot of them are in-kind contributions and volunteer time. Our CLCs work with a network of volunteers, like most of our organizations. Without volunteers we would probably be in dire circumstances.

**Mr. François Lapointe:** What are the demographics outside Montreal for English communities for the next 50 years?

**Ms. Debbie Horrocks:** The demographic in the English community—especially in the school system, because I also have a connection there—has seen a huge decline in the past 25 years, and it's going down.

At the CLCs we're working very hard to bring people back to the regions.

• (1015)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Madam Horrocks.



[Translation]

Thank you, Mr. Lapointe.

[English]

Thank you to all our witnesses for your testimony. I know you had much more to say in your opening statements than the time afforded you, but the briefs have been given to the analysts and the members of the committee, and I'm sure they'll be incorporated into our report.

Thank you very much for appearing.

[Proceedings continue in camera]

●(1015) \_\_\_\_\_ (Pause) \_\_\_\_\_

●(1030)

[Public proceedings resume]

**The Chair:** We're in public session for the consideration of the second part of our committee business, which is a notice of motion from Monsieur Godin.

Go ahead, Monsieur Godin.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I will read the motion that I am tabling:

That the Committee invite the President of the Treasury Board to appear for a televised two-hour meeting between now and May 18, 2012, regarding his report on the status of programs relating to the official languages of Canada in the various federal institutions in respect of which the Treasury Board has responsibility, which was referred to the Committee on December 9, 2011, pursuant to Standing Order 32(5).

In terms of the date, we will have time because we will be drafting the report. So some sessions will be free. It would be a good time to do it. It is important that the minister speak to us about his program. I am certain that the minister wants to present his program. I would like to have the committee's support on this.

[English]

**The Chair:** Merci.

We'll go to Mr. Harris.

**Mr. Dan Harris:** I would just like to emphatically support Monsieur Godin's motion on this. When we have ministers and ministries that touch on our subjects, it's critical that from time to time we have them come and present before the committee and that this is done in public for public consumption. I wholeheartedly support the motion.

**The Chair:** Okay. We have a motion in front of the committee right now. You should all have copies of it. We'd been given notice of it previously.

I'm going to give the floor to Mr. Menegakis.

**Mr. Costas Menegakis:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I think we all want the minister to come before the committee. We'd all like to hear what he has to say. I know he has a very busy schedule; he's travelling all over the place.

I wonder if this would be the appropriate time to propose an amendment to Monsieur Godin's motion.

●(1035)

**The Chair:** Why don't you move the amendment and explain what the amendment is doing?

**Mr. Costas Menegakis:** Sure.

I'm moving the following amendment:

That the Committee invite the President of the Treasury Board to appear for a televised meeting, at his convenience, regarding his report on the status of programs relating to the official languages of Canada in the various federal institutions in respect of which the Treasury Board has responsibility, which was referred to the Committee on December 9, 2011, pursuant to Standing Order 32 (5).

Basically, what this does is give flexibility to the minister and it allows us to work with him to schedule coming to a meeting here at his convenience.

**The Chair:** Okay.

There's an amendment in front of the committee. It would strike two phrases from the motion. It would strike "two-hour" and it would strike "between now and May 18, 2012" and replace it with "at his convenience".

We're going to go to Mr. Harris and then to Mr. Bélanger.

**Mr. Dan Harris:** I'm just going to ask Mr. Menegakis, if he could nod his head yes or no, whether he would be amenable to changing that amendment to say that the minister appear before the committee "before we break for the summer". Would he be okay with that?

**Mr. Costas Menegakis:** No. I think he'll probably be here before the summer. I wouldn't change it. I would not.

**Mr. Dan Harris:** I understand your desire to add flexibility there, but I think that "before the summer" is important.

**Mr. Costas Menegakis:** I think my amendment speaks to the willingness to bring him here. I believe he wants to come, and it will probably be done before the summer. I want to leave my amendment as is.

**The Chair:** Okay.

Mr. Bélanger.

[Translation]

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** I would like to move a subamendment, Mr. Chair.

I suggest that the meeting last two hours. I move that the minister's appearance—on a date of his choosing—last two hours.

[English]

**The Chair:** Okay.

[Translation]

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** He is taking it out and I want to put it back in.

[English]

**The Chair:** Okay. We now have a subamendment to the amendment. The subamendment that's live on the floor right now would include "two-hour" in the amendment moved by Mr. Menegakis.

We're on the subamendment. Is there any discussion on the subamendment?

Monsieur Godin.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Really, I am having trouble accepting that. I don't mind that we are moving this from May 18 to 30, but to say that he can come when he feels like it...

We are already giving him a period of time over the next few weeks. Are official languages important for the government or not? Why can he not take two hours to appear before the Standing Committee on Official Languages? Where is the problem? This government has trumpeted far and wide that it is acting for the good of official languages. Why does he not come to trumpet it before our committee? Let him make his presentation and give us the opportunity... As I stated earlier, we have spent six months considering the roadmap. We want the minister to be accountable for official languages within his department.

First, it is not unusual to have a minister appear for two hours.

Second, we are setting a deadline but we are not telling him he has to be here next week. We know he is busy and it seems to me that giving him until the end of May is reasonable. When he does become available by May 18, then we will give him all the time needed, we will give him the morning. But we cannot say that he can come when he wants, for no more than an hour, and that we are sure he will come before the end of June. That is not how these things work.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Lapointe, you have the floor.

**Mr. François Lapointe:** I am surprised by Mr. Menegakis' amendment. Maybe there is something that I have not yet grasped. Does ministerial accountability still exist? Does that include ministers coming before standing committees? Does that involve a standing committee being able to suggest an appropriate time period, depending on the study at hand, to have an opportunity to exchange views with the minister? This is all being disregarded and we are saying that the minister can come whenever he wants to, for however long he wants to, and maybe he will come, but maybe not, we will see. Where is ministerial accountability in all that? When does it happen? If it has disappeared, then why are we here? This is a fundamental question. I am concerned by the lack of parameters.

•(1040)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Gourde, you have the floor.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Mr. Menegakis' amendment is that the minister will come, but in a way that is respectful of the minister. We know that our ministers have very little time and they have very busy schedules. Perhaps the NDP members have never experienced what the life of a minister can be like, but Mr. Bélanger has. A minister may be available, but he may not be.

I think that we must invite the minister. If we are not satisfied with his response, then you can always table another amendment, another motion. Our side, under Mr. Menegakis' amendment, is inviting the

minister to come at his convenience. Once we have a response, we can always have a discussion, but if the response is positive, if the date works for us and if he appears for an appropriate length of time, then this discussion will have been for nothing. That would be logical. That is what I wanted to say. If we abide by tradition and if we respect the minister, then the amendment is acceptable.

On the other hand, I think it is unacceptable to try and restrict things with the subamendment. We will vote in favour of the amendment. We will vote in favour of the motion as amended. We are ready to vote.

**The Chair:** On Mr. Bélanger's subamendment, there are two minutes remaining.

Mr. Harris.

[*English*]

**Mr. John Weston:** Can we call the question, Mr. Chair?

**Mr. Dan Harris:** Ironically—

**The Chair:** There's a point of order.

**Mr. Dan Harris:** Well, the person who has the floor—

**The Chair:** Okay. Just one moment.

**Mr. Dan Harris:** —has the ability to call the question.

**The Chair:** I have a point of order from Mr. Weston.

Go ahead, Mr. Weston.

**Mr. John Weston:** I was asking if we could call the question. I'm just afraid—

**The Chair:** We can't if there's further debate, and I understand there's further debate.

Mr. Harris.

**Mr. Dan Harris:** Well, it's the person who has the floor who can call the question.

**The Chair:** No.

**Mr. Dan Harris:** No?

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** No. There's further debate.

**The Chair:** There is no calling of the question until—

**Mr. Dan Harris:** If there's further debate, then I will pass it on to my colleagues.

**The Chair:** Okay.

There is no calling the question until debate collapses.

We now go to Mr. Bélanger.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** I will not speak for too long. Ever since the Conservatives came to power, ministers have been appearing before the committee for one hour only. I wanted to know if that was still their intention, and it appears to be so.

Three departments, under the Official Languages Act, have specific responsibilities regarding official languages. Those are the Department of Justice, the Department of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, and Treasury Board. We have never seen the President of Treasury Board.

A report was tabled. I agree with Mr. Godin in that we should hear from the minister, and because he has specific responsibility under the act, I think we should spend two hours with him. I know that ministers are busy but once a schedule has been set, the minister can come for two hours. I will agree that he can come when it is convenient for him, but the meeting should last for two hours.

**The Chair:** Fine. There are 30 seconds remaining.

Mr. Ravnignat, you have the floor.

**Mr. Mathieu Ravnignat (Pontiac, NDP):** I will give my time to my colleague.

**The Chair:** Fine, Mr. Godin has the floor.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** I simply want to say that the last time a meeting on this was to take place was in the Senate on October 20, 2011. It was cancelled so that he could attend a lunch with the mayor of Ottawa. What are his priorities?

On that note, let's call the question and we will see what your priorities are.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** I have one minute—literally. We're in our last minute.

Is there any further debate on the subamendment?

Okay. Then I'll call the question on the subamendment.

(Subamendment negatived)

**The Chair:** We're back to the amendment.

Is there any debate on the amendment?

Seeing none, I'll call the question—

**An hon. member:** [*Inaudible—Editor*]

**The Chair:** Oh, there is debate on the amendment?

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** No, no...[*Inaudible—Editor*].

**The Chair:** Okay.

I'll call the question on the amendment.

(Amendment agreed to [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

**The Chair:** We're now back to the main motion as amended.

Is there further debate on the main motion as amended?

Mr. Harris...?

You're out of time. I'm going to adjourn.

I'm going to call the question on the motion as amended.

(Motion as amended agreed to [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

**The Chair:** Okay. The main motion as amended has been adopted.

I will call the minister. I will ask him to appear for two hours, and we'll try to get that done in May or June.

This meeting is adjourned.

Have a good Easter weekend.





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