

COMMISSIONER CALLS ON THE GOVERNMENT TO HONOUR ITS COMMITMENT

Toronto, June 3, 2010 – Ontario's French Language Services Commissioner, François Boileau, released his third annual report today in which he expressed his impatience with the provincial government, calling on it to honour its commitment to resolve the issue of third-party French-language service delivery.

“The government acknowledged there was a problem when I raised this issue two years ago. Even though it made a commitment to resolve the issue, it has not come to any decisions since then. It is time for the government to take action and to implement the solutions that I suggested,” stated Mr. Boileau, who is calling on the provincial government to introduce a regulatory framework for the delivery of French-language services by third parties in 2010-2011.

The Commissioner has recommended that any future law authorizing the privatization of services contain specific clauses indicating that the rights for which provision is made in the *French Language Services Act* will continue to apply.

“These gaps in French-language service delivery have gone on long enough. When offering French-language services, suppliers must also make daily life easier for French-speaking Ontarians. It is time for the government to close these gaps and for Francophones to stop paying the price,” Mr. Boileau explained.

In 2009-2010, the Commissioner's Office received 351 complaints; 294 of these were investigated. In his annual report, the Commissioner made six recommendations targeting specific sectors. He recommended that, when all or part of their funding comes from the province, health units be required to apply the *French Language Services Act*. He recommended that a regulation be enacted to ensure that the province's community care access centres comply with the *French Language Services Act* and that Children's Aid Societies actively offer their services in French throughout Ontario.

The Commissioner also recommended the creation of a clear directive on active offer. The current arrangement is woefully inadequate, with the application of the concept of active offer often being left to the discretion of the government ministry or agency concerned.

QUICK FACTS

- *Open for Solutions* is the French Language Services Commissioner's third annual report. It covers the period from April 1, 2009, to March 31, 2010.
- In his report, the Commissioner has made six recommendations. He is calling for:
 - the inclusion of specific clauses on French-language services in any law authorizing privatization;
 - the creation of a regulatory framework for third-party French-language service delivery in 2010-2011;
 - the application of the *French Language Services Act* by the health units when all or part of their funding comes from the province;
 - a regulation to ensure that Community Care Access Centres comply with the *French Language Services Act*;
 - the creation of a clear directive on active offer, including a strategy to promote the offer of government services in French; and
 - the integration of the active offer of French-language services by the province's Children's Aid Societies into their service delivery across Ontario.

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