

ELECTION PLATFORM OF THE QUEBEC LIBERAL PARTY



THE ECONOMY **YES**
FIRST

plq.org

Note : This election platform presents the Quebec Liberal Party's priority commitments, as announced on November 5. These commitments will be implemented throughout the next five years, in accordance with Quebec's budgetary balance.

These commitments are borne of the vision, main directions, objectives and propositions developed since 2007 by the members of the Quebec Liberal Party's Political Committee, as well as militants gathered during the General Council and Members' Congress.

MESSAGE FROM THE LEADER OF THE QUEBEC LIBERAL PARTY AND PREMIER OF QUEBEC

My fellow Quebecers,

Historically, the economy is and has always been the strength of the Quebec Liberal Party. For generations, we have always succeeded in creating new opportunities to reflect the ambition of Quebecers and support the values that shape our nation. The time has come to renew our commitment to this mission, and we offer experience, skill, stability and prosperity.

In this period of economic turmoil, we have a plan to support Quebecers' purchasing power, to maintain credit access for businesses and to stimulate investment and employment in all regions of Quebec.

Quebec will also be faced with six major challenges that are closely tied to our objectives and essential to the strengthening of our economy. To succeed in these endeavors, we seek to:

- Ensure demographic growth across all Quebec regions;
- Promote our territory and natural resources;
- Become more productive and innovative;
- Better prepare our children for the future;
- Improve the quality of our services;
- Reinforce our identity as an economic asset.

It is with great pride that we present to you, in the following pages, our priority commitments to meet these objectives.



Jean Charest

Leader of the Quebec Liberal Party and Premier of Quebec

THE 6 MAJOR ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

1

DEMOGRAPHIC GROWTH THAT BENEFITS ALL REGIONS OF QUEBEC

YES TO QUEBEC FAMILIES

- We will create 15,000 new reduced contribution spaces across all regions and enhance the refundable tax credit for child care costs, which represents one reduced contribution space for all families that earn less than \$125,000 and do not use subsidized child care services.
- We will increase from 10 to 15 the number of days of unpaid leave provided for by the Act Respecting Labour Standards for workers who must take care of a family member.
- The *Régie de l'assurance-maladie du Québec* will cover 100% of all fees related to in vitro fertility treatments for the first two attempts.

YES TO HOME RENOVATIONS FOR QUEBEC FAMILIES:

- We will set up a 20% refundable tax credit (up to a maximum amount of \$2,500) to support families wishing to renovate their home by December 31, 2010. The initiative is designed for owner-occupants of a principal residence or a 2- to 3-unit building.
- We will extend the Renovation Québec and Residential Adaptation programs..

YES TO SENIORS WHO WANT TO WORK

- We will grant progressive tax exemptions on the first \$10,000 of labour income earned by seniors aged 65 and up who are also beneficiaries of the Old Age Security Program.

YES TO REGIONAL INITIATIVE

- We will increase tax credits offered to attract young graduates to our regions and will also make it available to new immigrants.

YES TO THE RECRUITING OF FOREIGN STUDENTS WHO CAN CONTRIBUTE TO QUEBEC'S GROWTH

- In order to attract more students, we will create a Foreign Student Recruitment Office aiming to coordinate and maximize promotion and recruitment efforts. The role of Quebec delegations and offices will thereby be reinforced. Higher education institutions will be solicited to be part of this office.
- To encourage graduates to choose Quebec as a place to live, we will grant foreign students who obtain a postsecondary degree, in accordance with regulations, a selection certificate that will considerably hasten their immigration process.

PROMOTING OUR TERRITORY AND RESOURCES IN A SUSTAINABLE MANNER

YES TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NORTHERN REGION

- Through its Northern Plan, unveiled during the current electoral campaign, the Quebec Liberal Party proposes the concrete implementation of the biggest economic project north of the 49th parallel ever launched in Quebec. The Northern Plan will put forth measures to explore, manage and occupy northern Quebec, representing over 70% of our territory.
- We will gradually provide the northern region with the necessary infrastructures to maximize its energy development. Equipment to produce 4,500 MW is already under construction, mainly in the territory covered by the Northern Plan, north of the 49th parallel. The Plan also proposes the implementation of several projects to produce an additional 3,500 MW of electricity across the territory, 20% of which will consist of solar, wind, water and other alternative energy sources.
- The northern region holds a wealth of mineral resources, such as iron, nickel, copper, zinc, gold and silver. While some are already well known, others remain unknown or unsuspected. Géologie Québec's will accelerate the mapping of this huge territory, which will lead to the creation of several new mines.
- In order to protect mining exploration projects from economic fluctuations, we will double the Mining Heritage Fund's budget allowance.
- We will implement the Institut national des mines du Québec in Val-d'Or.
- The Northern Fund also features an important environmental aspect. Indeed, 50% of its territory will be shielded from any industrial, mining or commercial activities. Five new northern parks, the largest natural parks in Quebec, will also be created.
- Within the next 5 years, a new forest of 100 million trees will be planted in the southern portion of the northern territory, thereby creating a new carbon sink.
- The collaboration between the communities on the territory will support the growth of the Northern Fund. As such, northern and aboriginal groups will be consulted regularly to ensure this ambitious plan's success.

YES TO QUEBEC'S AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRY

- We will reinforce the promotion and distribution of our foods within Quebec by doubling the budget of the "Le Québec dans votre assiette" program.
- We will create a Quebec Food Product Promotion Office whose mission will be to develop local and international markets for our products.

YES TO FOREST INDUSTRY RENEWAL

- As part of our \$1.4 billion forest industry support program, we will create a \$400 million loan guarantee plan aimed at wood processing industries.
- We will develop a \$25 million assistance plan for heavy machinery owners and independent transporters.
- We will increase wood usage targets in Quebec's construction industry by 25% through our Stratégie pour l'utilisation du bois dans l'industrie de la construction au Québec.

YES TO INFRASTRUCTURE RENOVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

- We will increase the budget allowance of our Quebec Infrastructure Plan from \$37 billion to \$41 billion from 2009 to 2013, thereby ensuring the creation or retention of 100,000 jobs each year. Investments will be focused on road infrastructures, public transportation, hospitals, universities, colleges and schools, cultural equipment and municipal infrastructures.

YES TO TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS IN THE METROPOLITAN REGION

- We will speed up investments in local and regional transportation infrastructures within the Montreal region. We will increase the number of trains servicing suburbs by 35% and add 10,000 new park-and-ride spaces.

YES TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR NATIONAL CAPITAL

- We will invest in 5 priority projects set within the national capital, namely:
 - The construction of a multi-purpose amphitheater to host sporting events and shows;
 - The modernization of the Gaétan Boucher ice rink;
 - The extension of the Samuel-De-Champlain trail;
 - The creation of the Opéralia Festival;
 - The pursuit of the complementary steps to build a high-speed train connecting Quebec and Windsor.
- The QLP also pledges to support the Quebec wireless or “Quebec Wi-Fi” project and implement a pre-clearance center at the Jean-Lesage airport.



AN ECONOMY THAT IS MORE INNOVATIVE, MORE PRODUCTIVE, THAT CREATES MORE WEALTH

YES TO A NEW ECONOMIC SPACE FOR QUEBEC

- We will build a new economic space for Quebecers. Based on the France-Québec agreement on the mutual recognition of skills and acquired knowledge, we will enter into similar agreements with other partners.
- We will take on a leadership position with the Canadian government to enter into a free-trade agreement between Canada and the European Union.
- We will enter into an economic partnership agreement with Ontario.
- We will enter into a Canada-wide agreement on the mobility of labour with all provinces.

YES TO JOB CREATION AND MAINTENANCE

- We will make \$2 billion available for businesses:
 - \$1 billion set aside for loans or loan guarantees.
 - \$1 billion to increase the capital invested by the SGF in companies that are active in Quebec.

YES TO ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION

- We will develop a mixed public-private start-up fund, in which we will invest \$50 million to facilitate the commercialization of discoveries, inventions or patents from Quebec researchers, through new Quebec companies.
- We will provide a 10-year tax exemption on revenues from the commercialization of Quebec patents for any new company that will market a product for which intellectual property was developed by a Quebec university, college or research institute.
- We will contribute to women entrepreneurship by providing an additional \$5 million to support, capitalization and start-up organizations that assist women who launch a business (ORSEF).
- We will require, as early as 2011, gender parity on the board of administrators of all state corporations and government agencies.

YES TO THE PROTECTION OF THE PURCHASING POWER

- We will increase the minimum wage by \$0.50 an hour in 2009 and another \$0.50 in 2010, to bring it up to \$9.50 per hour.

4

INVEST IN THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS OF QUEBECERS

YES TO SCHOOL SUCCESS

- We will reduce the teacher-student ratios by 10% in all Quebec elementary and high schools, and by 20% in disadvantaged sectors.
- We will enhance the offering of after-school cultural and sports activities.

YES TO A MORE SKILLED LABOUR

- We will increase from 50% to 75% the financial assistance granted to businesses for the implementation of training programs.
- We will recognize the efforts of laid-off workers to train for other types of work, by making sure that during their training, they receive an income equal to what they would receive in employment insurance benefits.

YES TO THE EXCELLENCE OF OUR HIGHER EDUCATION ESTABLISHMENTS

- We will increase the number of professors in universities, and develop a world-class expertise in the area of education, health and environment sciences.
- To hasten the development of excellence niches in smaller universities in the regions, we will increase by 5% the total workforce of professors in these specific areas. We will also support the efforts to recruit world-renowned professors.
- We will continue to index the main parameters of the student assistance program.



MODERN HEALTH SERVICES AND ENHANCED QUALITY OF LIFE FOR OUR SENIORS

YES TO ENHANCING THE STATUS OF NURSES

- We will grant an annual premium of \$3,000 to technical and graduate nurses, and a \$2,000 annual premium to nursing assistants for their first three years of work in the public network.
- We will grant a salary bonus of \$8,000 at the end of each year of work to nurses with more than 35 years of service and who wish to remain active.
- We will accelerate access to tenure for nurses so that 60% of them have permanent jobs.

YES TO MORE FAMILY DOCTORS AND INCREASED ACCESSIBILITY

- We will increase the number of family medicine groups from 178 to 300 during the next mandate, thereby improving access to a family doctor for all Quebecers.
- We will make sure that a greater number of general practitioners teach in medicine faculties, so we can train one general practitioner for every specialist.
- We will include a mandatory observation family medicine practicum in the first year of the medicine program.
- We will make sure that the medical clerkship in family medicine has a duration of at least two months and that it occurs before the selection of the residency.

YES TO INTENSIFYING THE FIGHT AGAINST CANCER

- We will create a 5-year \$10 million a year bursary program for Quebec research institutes and centers involved in the fight against cancer, to support programs that may enable a major scientific breakthrough in the fight against cancer.
- We will encourage companies to seek the expertise of our university researchers as it pertains to the fight against cancer, by increasing from 35% to 50% the refundable tax credit for university and assimilable research.
- We will support and train more contributors and volunteers to work with those suffering from cancer.

YES TO THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF OUR SENIORS

- We will invest more to enhance our service offering to seniors who become less independent and wish to live at home, in a private residence, or benefit from intermediate resources.



A STRONG IDENTITY, CONFIDENT IN THE FUTURE

YES TO QUEBEC CREATORS AND CULTURAL INDUSTRIES

- We will abolish the QST on all Quebec cultural products to promote the consumption of items such as CDs, DVDs, film and show tickets, visual art works, etc.
- We will enhance by \$10 million our support to television and film productions and emerging professionals, thereby bringing to \$33 million a year the SODEC's film budget allowance, allowing the funding of 6 additional films and fostering emerging professionals.

OUR COMMITMENT, THE ECONOMY FIRST

For the past 5 years, the Quebec Liberal Party has put more money in Quebecers' wallets, more professionals in schools, more doctors in hospitals, more Quebecers in jobs. The Party has boosted investments in green energy, infrastructures and health. It has provided new hope to families, seniors and regions.

In this period of economic turmoil, the vitality of demographics, the dynamics of the economy and the widening of our horizons are priorities that are paramount, more than ever.

We will boost Northern development, revitalize our economy in all regions, renovate our infrastructures, develop public transportation and accelerate our journey towards sustainable development.

We will focus on the knowledge and skills of Quebecers, promote innovation and new energy alternatives, reforest and improve the training we provide to workers, stimulate our agriculture, enhance the status of our nurses and teachers, encourage our students, support our artists and our businesses.

We pledge to invest to protect Quebec's economic security and future during the storm.

We pledge to spare no effort in building, with you, one of the world's strongest and best-performing economies.

Our commitment, is the economy first.

THE COST OF OUR COMMITMENTS

Our commitments are targeted, precise and priced.

We have assessed the annual cost of every commitment. The estimate represents the annual cost of the initiative once it has been fully executed. In some cases, such as new daycare spaces, the initiative will unfold gradually.

Our commitments will be funded as they are executed over the duration of a 5-year mandate and within the government's financial framework. We intend to maintain budgetary balance and limit the average annual growth of program expenses to 4.5%, as we have done since 2003.

Our commitments are divided into three areas: initiatives that increase budgetary expenditures (budget initiatives), initiatives that reduce budgetary revenues (tax initiatives) and initiatives that are funded by the debt service (infrastructures, advances to state corporations).

Certain government policies have already been integrated into the government's financial framework, such as the 5-year infrastructure program and initiatives included in the economic and fiscal update unveiled on October 4.

Our commitments total \$1.505 billion: \$938 million in budget initiatives, \$485 million in tax initiatives, and \$82 million in the debt service.

As our commitments will unfold over the duration of a 5-year mandate, they represent an average annual cost of \$301 million. This will require additional expenses of \$204 million on average per year (budget initiatives and debt service), which represents a 0.3% increase in budget expenses.

The commitments funded through tax initiatives will require the introduction or enhancement of tax credits for an average annual value of \$97 million, which represents 0.15% of annual budgetary revenues.

BUDGET INITIATIVES

New daycare spaces	\$195 million
Full coverage of first in vitro fertilization treatments	\$35 million
Extension of the Renovation Québec and of the Residential Adaptation programs	\$50 million
Extension of the Mining Fund	\$10 million
Géologie Québec	\$5 million
Reforestation policy	\$20 million
Québec dans votre assiette program	\$16 million
Quebec Food Product Promotion Office	\$10 million
Promoting women entrepreneurship	\$5 million
Reduction of the student-teacher ratio	\$200 million
Promoting sports and cultural activities in schools	\$20 million
Initiatives for the training of the workforce	\$20 million
Hiring of university professors	\$35 million
Indexation of student assistance programs	\$25 million
Initiatives to enhance the status of nurses	\$66 million
Bring the number of family medicine groups to 300	\$61 million
Enhance the Research Fund dedicated to the fight against cancer	\$10 million
Training program for contributors and volunteers who work with people suffering from cancer	\$5 million
Additional investments in home care	\$140 million
Support to film production	\$10 million
TOTAL FOR BUDGET INITIATIVES	\$938 MILLION

TAX INITIATIVES

Increase of the tax credit for childcare services	\$20 million
Home renovation plan	\$250 million
Deduction for senior workers' earnings	\$100 millions
Increase of the credit for young graduates returning to the regions	\$40 million
10-year tax exemption for the promotion of intellectual property	\$2 million
Increase from 35% to 50% of the refundable tax credit for university research contracts	\$3 million
Elimination of the QST on cultural products	\$50 million
Increase of the tax credit for film and television productions	\$20 million

TOTAL FOR TAX INITIATIVES

\$485 MILLION

INITIATIVES FUNDED BY THE DEBT SERVICE

Northern Plan Infrastructure Fund (\$250 million over 5 years)	\$12,5 million
Development of public transportation (Montreal – \$196 million)	\$10 million
Infrastructure investments (National capital – \$135 millions)	\$7 million
\$1 billion advance to SGF	\$50 million
Business Start-up Fund (Government contribution of \$50 millions)	\$2,5 million

TOTAL FOR THE INITIATIVES FUNDED BY DEBT SERVICE

\$82 MILLION

TOTAL FOR THE COMMITMENTS

\$1,505 BILLION

THE LIBERAL VALUES

The Quebec Liberal Party has played a role in all of the major changes our society underwent and, more than any other political formation, it has helped shape today's Quebec.

Throughout its history of 140 years, 8 main values have inspired and guided the Quebec Liberal Party's political action. Today, these values continue to steer our formation in defining the orientations that will enable us to face economic turmoil and prepare the future.

These 8 main values are:

- **PRIORITY TO INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS;**
- **STRONG IDENTIFICATION WITH QUEBEC;**
- **FOCUS ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT;**
- **COMMITMENT TOWARDS SOCIAL JUSTICE;**
- **RESPECT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY;**
- **COMMITMENT TOWARDS DEMOCRACY;**
- **PROUD ADHERENCE TO THE CANADIAN FEDERATION;**
- **INTERGENERATIONAL EQUITY.**



MONTRÉAL

7240 Waverly
Montreal, Quebec H2R 2Y8
Telephone: 514 288-4364 Toll-free: 1 800 361-1047
Fax: 514 288-9455

QUÉBEC

1535 chemin Sainte-Foy, suite 120
Quebec, Quebec G1S 2P1
Telephone: 418 688-8910 Toll-free: 1 800 463-4575
Fax: 418 688-1416