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MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT KEEPS COMMITMENT TO FRANCOPHONE COMMUNITY *Takes First Step Towards Creation Of French Language Services Commissioner*

TORONTO — The McGuinty government is building on its support for the Francophone community by introducing amendments to the French Language Services Act that would create the Office of the French Language Services Commissioner, Francophone Affairs Minister Madeleine Meilleur announced today.

The amendments were part of the Budget Measures and Interim Appropriation Act, introduced on March 22, 2007.

“The proposed establishment of the Office of the French language services commissioner would lead to continuous improvements in the quality, accessibility and active offer of French-language services”, added Meilleur. “This announcement of historical importance demonstrates the government’s commitment to supporting the vitality of the Francophone community and to ensuring that Francophones get the services they need.”

“The establishment of an Office of the French language services commissioner responds to an essential need of the Francophone community: to have an effective mechanism in place to act upon our concerns regarding French-language services “, commented Mariette Carrier-Fraser, President of the Assemblée de la francophonie de l’Ontario.

On November 20, 2006 at the ceremony marking the 20th anniversary of the French Language Services Act, Premier McGuinty announced the government’s intention to introduce legislative amendments to create the Office of the French language services commissioner. This initiative fulfills an important government commitment to the Francophone community.

Other initiatives taken by the McGuinty government to strengthen the Francophone community include:

- Additional investments of \$317 million in French-language education at the elementary, secondary and postsecondary levels
- In the health sector, a \$185 million investment to double the size of Montfort Hospital
- The designation of Brampton, Callander and Kingston under the French Language Services Act

“The wide range of initiatives that we have put in place is the result of the ongoing dialogue taking place between government, citizens and community organizations in order to meet the needs of Ontario Francophones”, concluded Minister Meilleur.

- 30 -

Contacts:

Marc Despatie
Office of the Minister
Responsible for Francophone Affairs
416 325-5219

Charles Jean Sucsan
Office of Francophone Affairs
416 325-4968

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