

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
CNW CODE 01**

**Task Force on Tax Assistance for the Resource Regions
and the New Economy
Day of Meetings in Montréal**

Québec, October 5, 2007 – The Task Force on Tax Assistance for the Resource Regions and the New Economy heard from fifteen companies and organizations in Montréal. The Task Force held an initial meeting in Montréal last September 12.

Private meetings

The Task Force first met with two companies that receive assistance for the new economy, an accounting firm that explained how the market for leased office space in Montréal has changed and a publisher commenting on the information technology industry.

The companies asked that the tax assistance for the new economy be maintained, pointing to the growth in Québec of high-quality jobs tied to the world market and suggesting a number of changes to the support measures. The accounting firm described the impact of the tax measures on the market for leased office space. The publisher presented a critical analysis of the principle of tax assistance measures and their impact.

Public hearings

Six organizations discussed the tax assistance measures for the resource regions. The president of the Fédération québécoise des municipalités emphasized the state's responsibility concerning the occupation of the territory, requesting in particular measures defined at the RCM level. The CRÉ de la Vallée-du-Haut-Saint-Laurent, the CRÉ de Lanaudière and the CLD des Moulins criticized tax assistance for the resource regions. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business stressed the quality of the business environment, expressing a desire for programs that apply across Québec with adjustments based on objective criteria. The CSN expressed concern over the fate of jobs created by tax assistance measures and asked that the measures be adjusted.

The CLD des Moulins, the CSN and four other organizations spoke in favour of the tax assistance measures for the new economy. They pointed out the positive impact of the assistance, with TechnoMontréal emphasizing the strategic role in the economy of the industry thus created. The organizations hope that the assistance measures will be adapted or that an overall policy to strengthen the new economy will be adopted. Montréal International asked that the tax assistance measures be redeployed in the package of elements to attract investment. The Cité de la Biotech stressed the importance of science parks. The CRÉ de la Vallée-du-Haut-Saint-Laurent objected to assistance measures that do not benefit all of Québec.

Speaking on behalf of the Ville de Montréal, the mayor of Saint-Laurent pointed out that the tax assistance measures for the new economy are an essential part of the city's development policy. Recommendations were submitted concerning the changes to be made to the existing measures, including transition measures, once the existing assistance measures expire.

The Task Force will hold its last meetings in Shawinigan on October 12. The full recording of the public hearings is available at: www.gtaf.gouv.qc.ca

– 30 –

Source: Jacques Delorme
418 528-7382