



**Chambre de commerce
du Montréal métropolitain**
Board of Trade of Metropolitan Montreal

June 21, 2004

The Honourable Jean J. Charest
Premier of Quebec
Executive Council
Honoré-Mercier Building
835 René-Lévesque Blvd. East, 3rd floor
Quebec City, Quebec
G1A 1B4

Dear Mr. Premier:

Within the context of the de-amalgamation of certain Quebec cities set in motion by the popular will expressed on June 20, the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Montreal wishes to inform you of certain expectations regarding the application of the provisions of the *Act respecting the consultation of citizens with respect to the territorial reorganization of certain municipalities*.

As you know, the Board of Trade is particularly interested in the new dynamic of urban centers and, in particular, the need to be able to count on a strong and creative metropolis to fuel and support the economic development and prosperity of Quebec.

During its appearance before the parliamentary committee last September, the Board of Trade thus presented to the government a series of recommendations aiming to ensure that the Montreal region can realize its full economic development potential following the vote on municipal reorganization. These recommendations were naturally characterized by a strong concern for the management of responsibilities affecting the entire agglomeration.

In accordance with the provisions of *Bill 9*, adopted last December, the Agglomeration Council will exercise significant responsibilities – including economic development – following the reconstitution of certain municipalities. Given the magnitude of these responsibilities, the Board of Trade would like to stress to you the great importance it places on the rapid and efficient establishment of this Council and, above all, its stable and long-term operation in the coming years.

The Board of Trade thus considers it essential that all the legislative provisions concerning the Agglomeration Council be fully respected. In this regard, the Board of Trade fears that pressures could be exerted on the government by the reconstituted municipalities to redefine the decision-making mechanisms along with the division of powers and municipal revenues between themselves and the Agglomeration Council. For the Board of Trade, any attempt to amend the existing legislation would have only a negative impact on the development of Quebec's urban centers and paralyze their growth, to the detriment of the prosperity of the entire province.

More specifically, the Board of Trade wishes to stress to the government the need to maintain the decision-making structure of the Agglomeration Council as laid out in *Bill 9*, which specifies that the number of representatives "shall be in approximately the same proportion to the total number of

members as the populations of the related municipality is to the total population of all the related municipalities.”

With such fair and democratic representation – particularly given that almost 90 percent of Montrealers have, *de facto*, supported the new city – this Council will have the means to become the best tool to ensure the coherence of the economic, social, cultural, and environmental development of Montreal’s agglomerations.

We hope we have convinced you of the need for a clear, long-term vision of governance for Quebec cities to finally take shape.

With highest regards,

Benoit Labonté
President and CEO

c.c.: Jean-Marc Fournier, Minister of Municipal Affairs, Sports, and Recreation