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## **QUÉBEC SALUTES GOVERNOR INSLEE'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE CARBON POLLUTION ACCOUNTABILITY ACT**

**Quebec, December 17, 2014** – The Minister for Sustainable development, Environment and the Fight against climate change, Mr. David Heurtel, welcomes the announcement made today by Washington State Governor Jay Inslee to create a Carbon Pollution Accountability Act (CPA) which would be “a new, market-based program that limits carbon pollution and requires major polluters to pay for their emissions”. Should this bill pass, Washington State could become the next partner to join the linked Quebec/California carbon market.

“By choosing to put a price on carbon, the State of Washington joins other North American subnational governments that have decided to play a leading role in the fight against climate change”, said Minister Heurtel. Governor Inslee chose an efficient, low-cost solution to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that brings together economic development and environmental protection”, said Minister Heurtel.

This is a major step forward provided by Governor Inslee in the fight against climate change. The CPA would “will affect the relatively small number of businesses that generate 85 percent of Washington’s carbon emissions”, contributing to the “transition of Washington to cleaner sources of energy and meet carbon pollution limits adopted by the state Legislature in 2008” Earlier this year, Governor Inslee had demonstrated his commitment to address this challenge by signing an executive order announcing a series of measures to reduce GHG emissions and accelerate the use of low-carbon energy technologies. The tabling of this bill which includes more accountability for major polluters testifies to the willingness that prevails in the State of Washington to tackle the issue of climate change.

Quebec has been actively seeking other partners to maximize the performance of its carbon market. Quebec’s carbon market system is flexible enough to allow its linking with other systems. Quebec and Ontario signed on November 21 a memorandum of understanding to foster concerted actions on climate change, within which a commitment was made to explore the possibilities of introducing market mechanisms in Ontario similar to those already implemented in Québec and California. Furthermore, at COP20 in Lima, Quebec joined Ontario, British-Columbia and California in a joint declaration in which the partners reaffirmed their commitment towards the global fight against climate change.

This declaration follows Quebec's economic update, in which the government announced 350 million dollars worth of investments in measures aimed at helping SMEs make the transition towards a greener economy. These investments are possible thanks to the revenues generated by its carbon market system, which transits through the Green Fund.

It is within this context that minister Heurtel had met with a representative from the State of Washington at the New York Climate Summit last September to emphasise the importance of putting a price on carbon and of developing market mechanisms while fostering durable economic growth within a competitive global economy.

During the 20th session of the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change that took place last week in Lima, Peru, minister Heurtel asserted once more Quebec's leadership in the fight against climate change.

"I would like to express Quebec's support and to offer our full cooperation in the process that Washington State may be about to undertake. Together, we can act and innovate, not only with the short-term in mind, but also with a long-term vision that takes into account the world we would like our children to live in", concluded Minister Heurtel.

Quebec has linked its carbon market system for GHG allowances with that of California on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014, thereby creating the largest carbon market in North America and the first to have been designed and to be run by subnational governments of different countries. Québec has chosen to allocate all the revenues, which should amount to 3.3 billion dollars by 2020, from its carbon market system to the Green fund to finance measures to fight climate change. These investments not only boost the economy and generate jobs, they also have the power to substantially improve the quality of life of our citizen.

– 30 –

**SOURCE:**

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