

**NOTES FOR A SPEECH BY
JULIE BOULET,
MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT
AND MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR
THE MAURICIE REGION**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE
ONTARIO MARINE SUMMIT**

Toronto, November 28, 2006
(The spoken version will prevail)

Ms. Donna Cansfield, Ontario Minister of Transportation,

Mr. Wayne A. Smith, President of the Ontario Marine
Transportation Forum,

Marine industry representatives,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am delighted to be here with you today, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ms. Cansfield and Mr. Smith for their kind invitation.

I would also like to extend a warm welcome to the members of the marine community who are with us today.

At Ms. Cansfield's request, I have agreed to speak to you about the Qu_bec government's commitment in the area of marine transportation.

Our commitment has its roots in the mission of the Ministère des Transports du Québec, which is to ensure safe, efficient transportation systems that contribute to the sustainable development of Québec and its regions.

As is the case in Ontario, the Great Lakes/St. Lawrence Waterway constitutes a major marine transportation route that passes through the province of Québec. This system also represents an extraordinary economic asset, as evidenced by how closely it is linked to so many of our strategic industries. Recognizing this fact, the Québec government is committed to optimizing the role that this unique asset plays in the economic prosperity of our province.

Marine transportation is a key component of our mission, which is one of the reasons why we support its growth.

Marine transportation is also a vital link in the multimodal chain, and the Qu_bec government considers the development of this link to be extremely important for two reasons: as one of the most environmentally friendly modes of transport, marine transportation contributes to sustainable development; and it also contributes to the economic development of the various regions of Qu_bec.

The Qu_bec government's growing involvement with marine transportation came about in response to Ottawa's withdrawal from this field during the 1990s. At that time, the marine industry asked us to make a more sustained commitment, and we were pleased to comply.

The cornerstone of our commitment took the form of the Qu_bec Marine Transportation Policy that was published in

2001, which was developed as a result of close cooperation between the Qu_bec government and the marine industry. This essential partnership led to the success of this major initiative.

Continuing with the theme of partnership, the implementation of the policy was assigned to the Joint forum on marine transportation, which I have the pleasure of co-chairing along with Mr. Guy C. V_ronneau, President of the St. Lawrence Economic Development Council.

It is worth mentioning some of the concrete results that this forum has achieved, such as:

- the establishment of a strategic port network;
- the introduction of a Marine Transport Assistance Program, which has led to some \$70 million in investments;

- the creation of a Chair in marine transportation;
- the formation of the Qu_bec Shortsea Shipping Roundtable, which is chaired by Nicole Tr_pancier, who is with us today;
- the development of a campaign to promote marine activity on the St. Lawrence.

Mr. Andr_ Meloche, the Director of the Marine, Air and Rail Transportation Directorate at the Minist_re, will tell you more about these accomplishments.

These results provide even more encouragement for us to maintain and strengthen our partnership with the marine industry.

Ours is a concrete commitment that attests to the fact that, in Qu_bec, regional economic development and a thriving

marine transportation industry go hand-in-hand, and for the Minist_re des Transports du Qu_bec, this commitment transcends jurisdictional issues.

It is very gratifying for us to know that we can count on the cooperation of such a dynamic industry, as it takes part in the efforts proposed by the Joint forum on marine transportation. Thanks to the Qu_bec Marine Transportation Policy, we have managed to build solid, constructive relationships in Qu_bec.

The Great Lakes/St. Lawrence Waterway trade route has tremendous potential, and together, we can work toward increasing awareness and optimizing the use of this major marine transportation route.

Thank you for your attention!