

Coalition québécoise pour le contrôle du tabac

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NEWS RELEASE

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Be forewarned about Sponsorship Alliance: Quebec Coalition

Reacting to pressure from the **Alliance for Sponsorship Freedom (Ralliement pour la liberté de commandite)**, the **Quebec Coalition for Tobacco Control** is warning the government about the **Alliance's** motives and asking that it remains cautious while considering its positions.

Louis Gauvin, Coordinator of the Coalition, says: « Although we are demanding a total ban on tobacco sponsorship, we are also looking at solutions to preserve the cultural and sporting events which are currently funded by tobacco money. Our province hosts many of the most popular events currently relying on tobacco sponsorship. We, as much as any citizen, want to ensure their continuation.

« Yet we know there is a wide range of viable alternate solutions to replace tobacco sponsorship. An independent foundation, financed by a levy on industry profits, is but one example. Successful models exist in other countries. Why couldn't they apply here? More importantly, why does the **Alliance** reject every alternate solution?

« The answer is obvious. The Tobacco industry has admitted that it helped organize and fund the **Alliance**. **Imperial Tobacco's** PR firm is running their campaign. It is therefore not surprising that the principal objectives of the **Alliance** are inherently in the interest of the tobacco manufacturers, and not in the interest of the artistic or sporting groups.

« Cultural and sporting organizations are understandably concerned about their funding, and have every right to express their genuine fear. However, the **Alliance** is the wrong organization with which to discuss solutions: As a front for the tobacco industry, it will never consider workable alternatives to tobacco sponsorship to safeguard sponsored events. The sole objective of the tobacco industry is to preserve tobacco sponsorship, not to promote culture or sports.

« Despite the fact that smoking kill over 40 000 Canadians, including 10 000 Quebecers, every year, the tobacco companies continue to promote their deadly products through sponsorship. It's high time the government put an end to this deadly promotion and seriously examines solutions to replace tobacco sponsorship. »

*The **Quebec Coalition for Tobacco control** is a non-profit organization representing over 200 Quebec health, educational and municipal organizations who support a series of anti-tobacco measures, including a ban on tobacco sponsorship.*

For more information: (514) 598-5533

Attached: Facts on Tobacco Sponsorship (French only)

