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PRESS RELEASE

Bill C-484: The FMSQ Salutes the Motion Voted by National Assembly

Montréal, April, 17, 2008. – The Fédération des médecins spécialistes du Québec (FMSQ) salutes the motion unanimously voted by members of all political parties at the National Assembly denouncing Private Bill C-484, the “*Unborn Victims of Crime Act*”.

Bill C-484 was tabled on November 21, 2007 and passed the House of Commons second reading on March 5, 2008, virtually unnoticed. The FMSQ vigorously denounced this Bill on April 15, stating that it could implicitly confer legal status on a fetus, which has none under the current legislation. If the Bill passes final reading, it could have serious repercussions on the practice of medicine.

The motion was presented by Minister Christine St-Pierre, jointly with the Deux-Montagnes and Hochelaga-Maisonneuve MNAs. During the vote, 100 MNAs were present; Premier Jean Charest was one of them. The motion voted is as follow:

« Que l'Assemblée nationale rappelle le consensus social qui existe au sein de la société québécoise à l'égard du droit des femmes de choisir de mener à terme ou non une grossesse;

« Que l'Assemblée nationale indique au Parlement du Canada que le projet de loi C-484 ne devrait pas être adopté, puisqu'il pourrait engendrer une incertitude importante quant à la criminalisation de l'avortement et au statut juridique du fœtus. »

"The FMSQ wishes to salute the courage of Québec MNAs who, at the contrary of many Federal MPs, including the Leader of the Official Opposition, took a clear stand on this matter. Such support is important for the battle carried out by the FMSQ" said Dr. Gaétan Barrette, President of the FMSQ.

The FMSQ believes that the pressure put on members of the House of Commons must continue. Private Bill C-484 must not pass a third reading; it must be relegated, once and for all, to the oblivion it deserves. Everyone who shares the FMSQ's point of view can make their Member of Parliament aware of that fact through the special Internet site available at: <http://www.fmsq.org/c-484>. Since its launch, 48 hours ago, the petition initiated by the FMSQ gathered more than 7,000 signatures.

The Fédération des médecins spécialistes du Québec numbers more than 8,000 members in Québec, representing 35 medical specialties. The sole organization recognized by government with respect to negotiating medical specialists' collective agreements, the FMSQ is also consulted on all aspects of the organization of medical care in Québec.

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