



20 September 2018

François Legault, Coalition avenir Québec
Raphaël Fortin, Nouveau Parti démocratique du Québec
Adrien Pouliot, Parti conservateur du Québec
Philippe Couillard, Parti libéral du Québec
Jean-François Lisée, Parti québécois
Alex Tyrrell, Parti vert du Québec
Manon Massé, Québec solidaire

Requesting your party's support for students with food allergies at school

Dear Leaders,

On behalf of the leading advocacy organization for the more than 640,000 Quebecers and 2.6 million Canadians living with a potentially life-threatening food allergy, I am writing to seek your party's commitment to pass legislation in support of students with food allergies at Québec schools.

At the end of the recent sitting of the National Assembly, a Private Members Bill was introduced that would have, if passed, made a significant, positive impact on the lives of Québec school children, their families, and their educators. Bill 1197, *An Act to require preschool, elementary and secondary educational institutions to adopt practices for managing cases of anaphylaxis*, would have adopted simple, efficient, and effective measures to increase awareness of food allergies in school environments, reduce the risk of a potentially life-threatening reaction, and facilitate a response in the event of an emergency.

We are confident in the benefits of this legislation because we have witnessed it working elsewhere. The province of Ontario passed similar legislation, Sabrina's Law, in 2005. The Bill is named for Sabrina Shannon, a young girl who died from a food-induced allergic reaction at school. Since its passing, not a single student has died from an anaphylactic reaction at an Ontario publicly-funded school.

Food allergies are a growing public health issue. As only a small amount of a food allergen, when ingested, can cause a potentially life-threatening, anaphylactic reaction, and because there is no known cure for food allergies, avoidance of allergens is the only means to stay safe. Allergic reactions can have severe health implications for the individual, requiring medical care and resources that add pressure on our public health system. It is therefore in everyone's interest to reduce the risk of allergic reactions.

Our ask: will your party commit to re-introducing Bill 1197 or similar legislation in support of students with food allergies at school if elected to government on October 1st?

Our organization views the safe management of food allergies as a shared responsibility. While persons at risk (or their parents/guardians) are taught to follow preventative measures (i.e. carrying epinephrine, reading ingredient labels, telling others about their allergies), the support of the broader community,

including schools, is an important factor in keeping people safe. More information about our organization and food allergies in general may be found on our website.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this request for support. We would appreciate your response by email – jgerdts@foodallergyca.ca by 27 September. We will be sharing your response with our members in Québec in advance of Election Day. Please also do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

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