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ALBERTA

**Edmonton—Opening of
St. Thomas Health Centre**

Statement by:

The Honourable Claudette Tardif

Wednesday, May 28, 2008

THE SENATE

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EDMONTON—OPENING OF ST. THOMAS HEALTH CENTRE

Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I am pleased to inform you that on May 20, 2008, over 200 people attended the grand opening of the Saint Thomas health centre in Edmonton, Alberta's first bilingual primary health care centre.

This organization brings together three types of services for some 200 residents: mental health care, assisted living, and affordable housing for more independent individuals, as well as a community health centre, offices for the Réseau d'adaptation scolaire, and classrooms for students in the bilingual nursing sciences undergraduate program of Campus Saint-Jean.

Currently, 65 people work at the centre, and 85 per cent of them are bilingual in French and English.

Who would have thought, 12 or 13 years ago, that we would be celebrating the opening of a centre like this one? This is the result of a magnificent dream for the Franco-Albertan community, which has found ways to develop strong partnerships with the Government of Alberta, the federal government, Health Canada,

the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, the Capital Health Authority, Réseau-santé en Alberta and the Société Santé en français.

I would like to salute Denis Collette, whose hard work, patience and perseverance over more than ten years made this project happen. The francophone community's unwavering support certainly contributed to the success of the project as well.

I would also like to thank the many donors in the francophone community who never stopped believing in a place designed to facilitate access to French-language health care. Without the community's desire to make this happen, the Saint Thomas Community Health Centre would never have seen the light of day.

Many francophone communities across the country recognize the Saint Thomas health centre as a model for supplying health services in French. Resources and infrastructure must be allocated to improving the health and well-being of francophones in minority communities.

Accomplishing such an innovative project contributes to the vitality and development of Alberta's francophone community. The community should be very proud of this achievement, which is an inspiration to francophone communities across the country.

Long live the Saint Thomas health centre!
