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PRIME MINISTER'S ANNOUNCEMENT IN SASKATOON

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(APPLAUSE)

RT. HON. STEPHEN HARPER (Prime Minister of Canada): Bon matin, tout le monde. Good morning, everyone, and first of all, I want to thank Leona in return for that kind introduction. You should know that we keep Leona very busy. She is the Minister of Health, also the Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, and now the Minister for the Arctic Council, which Canada chairs this year. On top of that, she represents Nunavut, by far the largest riding in the House of Commons. So for all her good work, please join me in giving the Honourable Leona Aglukkaq a big round of applause. (APPLAUSE)

My thanks also to our master of ceremonies. Canada's Minister of State for Western Economic Diversification is a woman who works hard not just in her portfolio, but works hard for all of the people of Saskatchewan in Ottawa, so please give a hand to the Honourable Lynne Yelich. (APPLAUSE) Greetings to all of my other colleagues from the Parliament of Canada who have joined us here today. I see we have Ray Bowen, Brad Trost, Rob Clark, Denise Batters, Greg Rickford has come all the way from Ontario. We're appreciative that you're here. Thank you for joining us. Thanks to our hosts here at Canlan Ice Sports Agriplex; also to our other dignitaries. Mayor Atcheson, nice to see you again. Thank you for coming. Dr. Doug Clemen and others of the Heart and Stroke Foundation, thank you for being here as well.

Distinguished guests, mesdames et messieurs, ladies and gentlemen, it's wonderful, always wonderful to be back in Saskatoon. I tell people that I have one of my fondest memories as Prime Minister in this city,

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and that was a couple of years back. I had the opportunity to not only share the stage with, but some of you may recall, to also interview two of my heroes, Gordie Howe and Wayne Gretzky, two of the greatest hockey players of all time. It was a very special moment, because like many Canadians, like many of you, I am, of course, a big hockey fan. After all, this is the game that we invented, the game we've promoted around the world, and the game we play better than anyone else.

Mais même les plus grands joueurs du hockey canadiens ont fait leur début dans leurs arénas de hockey communautaires.

But even the greatest Canadian hockey players can trace their beginnings back to their local community hockey arena. As hard as it may be to believe, the men and women who amaze us with their speed, their toughness and their athleticism on the ice once needed help to tie their skates. That's where, of course, us dads and moms come in.

Chaque semaine un scénario comme celui-ci se reproduit dans des arénas communautaires partout au Canada.

Every week a scenario like that is played out in community arenas across the country. Energetic siblings cheer on a brother or sister after they score a goal, parents bond with one another over early morning coffee, and lifelong friendships are formed. As some of you know, Laureen and I have spent our fair share of time like that in local hockey rinks over the years, cheering on our son, and these are memories that we will always cherish for the rest of our lives.

Quand on y pense ces arénas communautaires sont...
Quand on y pense, ces arénas communautaires sont plus que des bâtisses avec

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une ou deux patinoires et des bancs trop froids. C'est le cœur et l'âme de nos communautés partout au pays.

When you think about it, these community hockey arenas are more than just buildings with one or two sheets of ice, and of course the cold bleachers. They're also the heart and soul of communities across the country. Now, just as our community rinks see great moments of triumph and loss on the scoreboard...

Ils sont aussi témoins d'urgences médicales qui ont parfois des fins tragiques.

They are also witness to medical emergencies, occasionally with tragic results. With us today is Robin Biggs, whom I met earlier. There's Robin, back in... I'm glad you're here with us today, Robin. Back in 2011 while playing hockey in this very arena, in this very arena, Robin went into a sudden cardiac arrest. Thankfully this rink had been equipped with an automated external defibrillator, and so bystanders with proper training were able to respond instantly and restarted Robin's heart. He is alive and well, and of course we're also pleased that he's been able to join us today. (APPLAUSE) Now, friends, this is not an isolated success story.

Il y a d'autres gens à Saskatoon et à travers le pays dont les vies ont été sauvées parce que les gens qui ont pensé rapidement ont pu utiliser l'un de ces petits dispositifs.

There have been many other people in Saskatoon and across Canada whose lives have been saved because quick thinking bystanders utilized this small device. Unfortunately, unfortunately, not all are as lucky. This hit home to many of us in 2009 when distinguished photojournalist Tom Hanson suddenly collapsed while playing hockey with friends. Tom was

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someone who had travelled extensively with me over the years. He was in the prime of his life.

Et encore aujourd'hui Tom Hanson manque grandement à ceux et celles qui l'ont connu.

And Tom is still very much missed by all of us who knew him. But Tom's story, and the stories of countless others has helped spur us into action. During the last election, we made a commitment to Canadians, a commitment to extend the reach of this lifesaving technology to recreational hockey arenas all across Canada. And as Canadians know, it has been our government's practice when we make promises to keep them.

J'ai donc aujourd'hui le grand plaisir d'annoncer que notre gouvernement effectue un investissement important partout au Canada afin de garantir que tous les arénas du hockey récréatifs soient équipés d'un de ces appareils qui permet de sauver les vies.

So I'm very pleased to announce that our government is making a significant investment across Canada to ensure that every recreational hockey rink will be equipped with one of these lifesaving devices. (APPLAUSE) Let me be clear: that means a defibrillator in every recreational hockey rink from coast to coast to coast.

Et plus encore, notre gouvernement va aussi soutenir la formation pour les utiliser.

What's more, our government will also support the training to operate them. Now, before I go any further, I must extend my personal thanks to our valuable partner in this important initiative.

La Fondation des maladies du cœur du Canada.

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The Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada. Please give them a big round of applause for their work. (APPLAUSE) Our government is very pleased to be working with the Heart and Stroke Foundation to supply these portable, easy to use, effective defibrillators, and also to provide the necessary training.

Avec le programme de notre gouvernement, plus de 1500 défibrillateurs seront distribués dans des arénas qui n'en ont pas déjà un.

More under our government's program, more than 1500 defibrillators will be distributed to arenas that do not already have one. Now, friends, let me just say a couple of other things.

Premièrement, un arrêt cardiaque soudain peut frapper des hommes et des femmes de n'importe quel âge, de n'importe quel niveau de santé, et ce à n'importe quel moment.

First, sudden cardiac arrest can affect men and women of any age, at any fitness level, at any time. In fact, tens of thousands of Canadians suffer from sudden cardiac arrest every year. We know that most cardiac arrest deaths occur outside of a hospital. The only chance of survival in many cases such as this is rapid treatment. The early use of a defibrillator then can, combined with CPR and the prompt actions of emergency medical services significantly improves the chance of survival from cardiac arrest. We have the technology and we know that it works. We know that with minimal training, defibrillators are easy to use, and we know that by making these devices more readily available, fast treatment will save lives. And in situations where even a minute can make the difference between life and loss, our investment is indeed a significant one. The other thing I do want to say is this to all those adult hockey players out there. And it's something I say when I

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coach our Conservative Party hockey team. Hockey is a very physically demanding sport, especially on the heart. It is something best played because you are in shape, not something to be played to get into shape.

Donc soyez très vigilants quand vous êtes un peu plus vieux et que vous essayez de faire sur la glace ce que vous auriez fait quand vous étiez plus jeune et au meilleur de votre condition.

So be very careful when you're old in trying to do something on the ice that you would have done when you were younger and in the peak of condition.

Mesdames et messieurs, sachez que la santé et la sécurité des familles canadiennes demeure une des grandes priorités de notre gouvernement.

Ladies and gentlemen, the health and safety of Canadian families remains one of our government's priorities. And when it comes to promoting an active and healthy lifestyle, our record is strong. We created the successful children's fitness tax credit, and we've assisted in building and upgrading hundreds of community and recreational centres across the country.

L'annonce aujourd'hui marque une autre mesure pratique pour protéger les Canadiens et les Canadiennes, et encourager un mode de vie sain.

Today's announcement is another practical step to protect Canadians and encourage healthy living. By making our local rinks better prepared to respond to sudden health emergencies, this action is one more way that our government is putting the health and safety of our families first. It is another promise kept.

Merci de m'avoir accueilli.

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Thank you for having me. (APPLAUSE)

(1693 words)

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