



Passenger train return: Alexis Deschênes and Coalition to hold another event on October 11 in Matapedia

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CARLETON – The mobilization to obtain the partial return of VIA Rail to Port Daniel continues, with a public rally scheduled for October 11 at Matapedia station, as Alexis Deschênes, Member of Parliament for Gaspésie-Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine-Listuguj, recently announced in Carleton.

Mr. Deschênes is currently convincing fellow Bloc Québécois Members of Parliament to take part in the Saturday, October 11 event, scheduled for 9 a.m.

"I am not the only Member of Parliament (MP) affected by the fact that VIA Rail doesn't offer enough train frequency. A three-weekly train schedule is far from enough. So, I expect some colleagues to join me. The day before, I will take the train to get to my riding and invite other MPs to join me," explains Alexis Deschênes.

Although the train is scheduled to arrive in Matapedia shortly after 6 a.m., the rally itself will begin at 9 a.m.

Micheline Saint-Onge, spokesperson of the Coalition of Gaspesians for the return of

the passenger train, hopes that the citizens who are available that morning will come to Matapedia to express their support and put pressure on the public transporter.

"We are trying to organize a bus in order to encourage people to join us. I can't tell where that bus would leave to come to Matapedia. We would surely like it to start in Port-Daniel-Gascons or New Carlisle. We still have a bit of time to plan it. We ask people to look for details soon on our social media and media in general," explains Ms. Saint-Onge.

On September 12, the Coalition launched a document presenting all the major work carried out on the railway over close to a decade.

Alexis Deschênes and Micheline also made a follow-up on the September 6 major mobilization of 400 Gaspé residents at several stations between Matapedia and Gaspé.

Mr. Deschênes praised the Coalition's serious work regarding the 72-page comprehensive document inventorying the work carried out on the section between Caplan and Port-Daniel-Gas-



Photo: G. Gagné

Member of Parliament Alexis Deschênes and Micheline Saint-Onge of the Coalition for the Return of the Passenger Train recently held a press conference at Carleton's train station.

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"This precise and well-illustrated document demonstrates the scope of the work carried out on the rail line. These large-scale projects now allow us to benefit from a refurbished infrastructure. After investing \$355 million in public funds, it would be unacceptable if this rail line were not also used for passenger transportation as quickly as possible," declared Alexis Deschênes.

The October 11 rally at the Matapedia train station is a way of "maintaining public

pressure on VIA Rail. It is one of the tools we have at our disposal to force the railway company to change its posi-

tion and finally commit to a partial return to Port-Daniel-Gascons," concluded MP Deschênes.