



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

## **Standing Committee on Finance**

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**EVIDENCE**

**Wednesday, June 15, 2011**

**Chair**

**Mr. James Rajotte**



## Standing Committee on Finance

Wednesday, June 15, 2011

● (1735)

[English]

**The Clerk of the Committee (Mrs. Guyanne Desforges):** Honourable members of the committee, I can see a quorum.

I must inform members that the clerk of the committee can only receive motions for the election of the chair. The clerk cannot receive any other type of motion, cannot entertain points of order, nor participate in debate.

We can now proceed to the election of the chair.

Pursuant to Standing Order 106(2), the chair must be a member of the government party. I am ready to receive motions for the chair.

Ms. McLeod.

**Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC):** I'd like to nominate Mr. Rajotte.

**The Clerk:** It has been moved by Ms. McLeod that Mr. James Rajotte be elected as chair of the committee.

Are there any further motions?

Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the motion?

(Motion agreed to)

**The Clerk:** I declare the motion carried, and Mr. James Rajotte duly elected chair of the committee.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**The Clerk:** Before inviting Mr. Rajotte to take the chair, if the committee wishes, we will now proceed to the election of the vice-chairs.

Pursuant to Standing Order 106(2), the first vice-chair must be a member of the official opposition.

I am now prepared to receive motions for the first vice-chair.

Ms. Nash.

**Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP):** I'd like to nominate Hoang Mai.

**The Clerk:** It has been moved by Ms. Nash that Mr. Hoang Mai be elected as first vice-chair of the committee.

Are there any further motions?

Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the motion?

(Motion agreed to)

**The Clerk:** I declare the motion carried and Mr. Mai duly elected first vice-chair of the committee.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**The Clerk:** Pursuant to Standing Order 106(2), the second vice-chair must be a member of an official party other than the official opposition.

[Translation]

I am now ready to receive a motion for the election of the second vice-chair.

[English]

**Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.):** I nominate Scott Brison.

**The Clerk:** Ms. Sgro has moved to nominate Mr. Brison, *in absentia*, as the second vice-chair of the committee. Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the motion?

(Motion agreed to)

**The Clerk:** I declare the motion carried and Mr. Scott Brison duly elected second vice-chair of the committee.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**The Clerk:** I now invite Mr. Rajotte to take the chair.

**The Chair (Mr. James Rajotte (Edmonton—Leduc, CPC)):** Good evening, everyone. Thank you so much for that unanimous endorsement, and congratulations to my two colleagues, the two vice-chairs, on their election as well.

Just before we go to routine proceedings, because it is a new Parliament and there are new members of Parliament around the table, I thought it would be a good idea to just go around the table and introduce ourselves to our fellow committee members very briefly. I know we're all politicians, but could we all be very brief?

I will introduce myself first. I am James Rajotte.

● (1740)

[Translation]

I have been a member of Parliament for 10 years, representing the Edmonton—Leduc riding.

[English]

We will begin with Ms. Nash.

**Ms. Peggy Nash:** Hello, everyone. My name is Peggy Nash.

I am a newly re-elected member of Parliament. I was elected in 2006 and now again in 2011. My riding is Parkdale—High Park.

This is the first time I'm a member of the finance committee. Before, I was the vice-chair of the government operations committee and a member of the industry committee. It's a great pleasure to be here.

**Mr. Hoang Mai (Brossard—La Prairie, NDP):** Hello. My name is Hoang Mai. I'm the MP for Brossard—La Prairie, a newly elected vice-chair, and also the national revenue critic for the NDP.

**Mr. Wayne Marston (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, NDP):** I'm Wayne Marston, the member for Hamilton East—Stoney Creek. This is my third term in the House and the first term on this committee. I'm looking forward to working with everybody, even James. I like to add a little humour here and there when I can, and I look forward to working with everybody.

[Translation]

**Mr. Alain Giguère (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, NDP):** Good afternoon, my name is Alain Giguère. I am the newly elected NDP member of Parliament for the Marc-Aurèle-Fortin riding. I'm extremely pleased to be working with all the members of this committee. I will listen to you carefully, and I hope you will do the same for me. That way, together, we may be able to carry out projects in the interest of all Canadians. Thank you.

[English]

**Hon. Judy Sgro:** I'm Judy Sgro, member of Parliament for York West, which is in Toronto. I am an associate member of the committee, so I will be joining you periodically.

Thank you.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Shelly Glover (Saint Boniface, CPC):** Good afternoon, everyone. Welcome to our committee.

My name is Shelly Glover, and I am the member of Parliament for Saint Boniface, Manitoba. I am also the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance. I am a mother of five. I mention that because I am very proud of it. I am proud of my family and of being a member of Parliament.

Thank you and good luck.

[English]

**Mrs. Cathy McLeod:** Good afternoon, everyone.

My name is Cathy McLeod, and I'm from the beautiful riding of Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo in British Columbia. I have been on the finance committee since February of this year. I'm the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of National Revenue.

**Mr. Dave Van Kesteren (Chatham-Kent—Essex, CPC):** Hello, everyone. I'm Dave Van Kesteren and I'm the member for Chatham-Kent—Essex, which is Canada's most southern riding. I've been a member since 2006.

**Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC):** Good afternoon. My name is Randy Hoback. I'm the member for the great riding of Prince Albert, home of John G. Diefenbaker and a few other prime ministers.

I also sit on the agriculture committee and I've sat on natural resources. This is my second term.

I'm like Wayne, in that I like to invoke a little humour once in a while. I think that's healthy for a situation when it gets too serious, because sometimes humour breaks the logjam and allows things to move forward. I really look forward to working with each and every one of you here as we move through the budget and other things of concern.

**Mr. Mark Adler (York Centre, CPC):** Hello, everyone. My name is Mark Adler.

I was elected on May 2 for the riding of York Centre in Toronto. I am the founder of the Economic Club of Canada and I'm very much looking forward to working with all of you here on the committee.

**Mr. Brian Jean (Fort McMurray—Athabasca, CPC):** My name is Brian Jean. I was elected in 2004, so this is my fourth time. I'm from northern Alberta, Fort McMurray—Athabasca. I'm looking forward to this committee. This is my first time on finance. It'll be fun.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, all of you. Some of you know each other, but please get to know your colleagues from other parties across the table. It certainly helps in the functioning of the committee.

In terms of the functioning of the committee, we also have a very special clerk. The clerk is here to serve all members of the committee. Please do rely on the clerk for all questions regarding procedural matters.

We'll have the clerk introduce herself as well.

**The Clerk:** My name is Guyanne Desforges. I've been in procedural services for the last 15 years, on different committees and different rotations, and I'm very pleased to join the finance committee.

● (1745)

**Mrs. Mariane Beaudin (Procedural Clerk, Committees Directorate, House of Commons):** My name is Mariane Beaudin. I am also a procedural clerk. I used to be the clerk of the Subcommittee on International Human Rights; I'm now the clerk for the health committee.

I'm assisting my colleague today for the meeting.

**The Chair:** Thank you, all.

We will now proceed to routine motions.

As you know, the committee must adopt routine motions as its first order of business. You all should have a copy of the routine motions adopted by the finance committee last time. These are simply a guide, a suggestion. The committee adopts the motions that it chooses.

I will go through them in order, and if any member of the committee has any suggestions on how to improve or change them, please signal me and we will have you speak to them.

The first motion is with regard to the services of analysts from the Library of Parliament: that the committee retain the services of one or more analysts from the Library of Parliament, as needed, to assist the committee in its work, at the discretion of the chair.

Could I get a mover for that motion?

**Mr. Randy Hoback:** I so move.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Hoback.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** Now I'll ask our analyst to join us here at the table.

The second item deals with the subcommittee on agenda and procedure: that the subcommittee on agenda and procedure be composed of the chair, two vice-chairs, a member of the other opposition party and the parliamentary secretary.

This one was adopted the last time. Is there any discussion regarding this motion?

Go ahead, Mrs. Glover.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** I'd like to propose an amendment. I'd like to include "the two parliamentary secretaries" rather than just "the parliamentary secretary", and then remove a member of the Conservative Party.

**The Chair:** So it would say "That the subcommittee be composed of the chair, two vice-chairs, and the two parliamentary secretaries"...?

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** Period.

**The Chair:** Period. Okay.

Mr. Jean, did you want to speak to that?

**Mr. Brian Jean:** That was going to be my suggestion as well.

**The Chair:** Is there discussion?

Go ahead, Ms. Sgro.

**Hon. Judy Sgro:** Clearly, if you have that, I don't know why you would have a steering committee. It would be dominated.

That's quite different from how you had it before. It's an additional Conservative on the steering committee. Is that...?

**The Chair:** The last time there was me, a vice-chair from the Liberal Party, a vice-chair from the Bloc, Mr. Mulcair as the NDP member, and Mr. Menzies as the parliamentary secretary. That was the last time.

**Hon. Judy Sgro:** Now you're seeking to have an extra Conservative on it.

**The Chair:** Mrs. Glover is proposing that there would be the chair, two vice-chairs, Mr. Brison would be a member, and the two parliamentary secretaries.

**Hon. Judy Sgro:** I am indicating that is not usually the way it is done, but it is the choice of the committee as to how the committee wants it done. I am just flagging that it is usually one less.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Ms. Nash.

**Ms. Peggy Nash:** The change here is you are taking away one opposition member and adding one government member. It might be more valuable to have another opposition voice.

I'm not sure why you need both parliamentary secretaries in this structure.

**The Chair:** Mr. Hoback.

**Hon. Judy Sgro:** Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** We'll come to you. We'll go to Mr. Hoback.

**Hon. Judy Sgro:** I'm wondering if Mrs. Glover could speak to the reason for the change.

**The Chair:** I'll go to Mr. Hoback, and then I'll go to Mrs. Glover.

**Mr. Randy Hoback:** Mr. Chair, if you would like to go to Mrs. Glover right now, that would be fine with me.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** The two parliamentary secretaries have some roles that are integral to what will happen in committee. Also, when we look at the makeup of parties and the numbers in the House of Commons, this reflects the makeup of the House of Commons. That would be our reasoning for wanting to position the subcommittee similar to what the numbers are in the House of Commons. The parliamentary secretary to the Minister of National Revenue is integral to the work that is going to be done here. She should be on the subcommittee.

**The Chair:** Is there any further discussion?

Mr. Marston.

**Mr. Wayne Marston:** It strikes me that is not similar to the makeup of the House. You have a significant reduction of the opposition here. Just speaking for our party, we have 103 members. It strikes me that a certain imbalance is happening when it comes to the opposition. I can understand your point about the work side of it, but it is the representation side that is of concern.

● (1750)

**The Chair:** Your concern is that it's five and three. Would five and four be better?

Mr. Jean, please.

**Mr. Brian Jean:** Yes, it is very important to have the parliamentary secretaries from both departments. What you are going to find is what I found in the past as the parliamentary secretary for transport for five years. You have much better discussions knowing what the government's agenda is, or at least having somebody at the table knowing what it is, being able to communicate clearly which minister it is going to be when an invitation is extended. The steering committee is able to make decisions on the spot instead of going back and forth.

This isn't a situation where they're going to be deciding policy or laws. It goes back to the whole committee for discussion and a vote confirming what the steering committee has decided anyway. Clearly it is a good connection to have both ministers' parliamentary secretaries there so they know what the ministers are doing. They have an idea of what the agenda is going to be. Clearly, members of the opposition don't know this.

It is not going to change anything the committee does over a period of time. In fact, what it will do—and in my position I have seen this clearly over the last seven years—is it will help everybody clearly understand which direction to go in. We won't have to go back and forth and send e-mails all over the place. We will be able to make a decision right at the steering committee. That's why it was going to be my suggestion. Simply, I think it is very important.

**The Chair:** Mr. Hoback.

**Mr. Randy Hoback:** Mr. Chair, I was just going to repeat what Brian said, but I want to make some clarification.

Basically what we are going to have is a chair, who would be you, two parliamentary secretaries from the Conservative Party, and two vice-chairs, one from each of the opposition parties. The makeup would be a tie, and then the chair. It would be equal for the debate, and the chair would be chairing the meeting, if I understand that correctly.

**The Chair:** That is correct.

Mr. Marston.

**Mr. Wayne Marston:** My understanding is it's a consensus group anyway. It's not where we'd be concerned about voting. It's more of a procedural thing, so there is a certain sense to it.

**The Chair:** That's a good point. We try to get complete consensus at the subcommittee or steering committee before bringing it to the full committee, because all of the motions that come out of the subcommittee have to be adopted by the full committee.

Okay? All in favour of Mrs. Glover's amendment?

(Amendment agreed to)

(Motion as amended agreed to) [See *Minutes of Proceedings*]

**The Chair:** We turn now to reduced quorum: that the chair be authorized to hold meetings to receive and publish evidence when a quorum is not present, provided that at least four members of each recognized party are present.

Is there discussion?

Mrs. Glover.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** I believe it's probably a good time to change this. I suggest we entertain having a government member and an opposition member as quorum. I think it would be prudent, and that would be my suggestion.

**The Chair:** So your suggestion is that it be the same up to "present, provided that at least four members"...?

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** I would say we could change it to three members, given there are only three parties, really. At least one would be from the government and one other would be from the opposition. It would not be three government members, but three members, one from government and one from opposition.

**The Chair:** Okay. Then it would read, "That the chair be authorized to hold meetings to receive and publish evidence when a quorum is not present, provided that at least three members are present, including one member from the government and one member from the opposition".

Is that correct?

Is there any discussion?

Is that amendment okay with members?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Motion as amended agreed to)

**The Chair:** Next is distribution of documents: that only the clerk of the committee be authorized to distribute to the members of the committee documents, and only when they exist in both official languages, and that witnesses be advised accordingly.

Is there discussion? Go ahead, Mr. Marston.

**Mr. Wayne Marston:** Does that put the onus on people who make presentations to us to do their own translation before they get here? I presume it does.

**The Chair:** No, not necessarily. In fact, the clerk will ensure that they are translated.

Go ahead, Ms. Glover.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** Mr. Marston makes a good point. Perhaps we ought to add a line that the clerk shall advise all witnesses appearing before committee of the requirement.

• (1755)

**The Chair:** Okay.

Can we add that statement, Mr. Marston?

**Mr. Wayne Marston:** My concern would be that some organizations that come before this committee won't have the ability or the budget to afford translation. I want to be sure we wouldn't be impeding receiving their documents by putting the onus on them, and that we would ensure it was carried through if they couldn't do it.

**The Chair:** Okay.

Ms. Glover, do you have any additional comments?

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** I understand Mr. Marston's position. I don't dispute that at all. I think it's best when they know ahead of time that it is a requirement, because otherwise we get into a discussion. I don't want them to feel as if they've done something wrong if they weren't advised before appearing, and then the discussion happens about whether they're in an official language or not. That's why I suggest that the line stay.

**Ms. Peggy Nash:** In cases where witnesses don't have the ability to do translation, if they give the clerk enough notice, is it proper that the House would do that translation for them?

**The Chair:** Absolutely. That is the common practice.

The only times we have not had documents in both official languages were when they were called at such short notice that we did not have the time to translate the documents.

**Ms. Peggy Nash:** So it can be done as long as we notify presenters. Large organizations would have the ability to translate, but in the case of a small group or an individual, if it's a reasonable number of pages and as long as they're notified, the House can do that.

**The Chair:** Exactly.

Are we okay with this motion as worded?

(Motion agreed to) [See *Minutes of Proceedings*]

**The Chair:** We now have working meals. That's not very controversial. Is that okay with everyone?

(Motion agreed to) [See *Minutes of Proceedings*]

**The Chair:** Okay.

Next is witnesses' expenses: that, if requested, reasonable travel, accommodation, and living expenses be reimbursed to witnesses not exceeding two representatives per organization; and that, in exceptional circumstances, payment for more representatives be at the discretion of the chair.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** Merci.

The next one is staff at in camera meetings: that, unless otherwise ordered, each committee member be allowed to have one staff member and one other staff person per party present at an in camera meeting.

I'm assuming everyone knows what an in camera meeting is.

Is there discussion? Are we all okay with that?

Go ahead, Ms. Glover.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** I'm wondering if we could add, "In addition, each party shall be permitted to have one staff member from a House officer attend in camera meetings".

That would be from the House officer's staff.

**The Chair:** You mean a whip or House leader.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** Yes.

**The Chair:** Maybe you could read exactly what you want to add.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** Maybe I'm reading the wrong one. I'm sorry.

**The Chair:** No, I think it's the right one. You would like to add—

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** It's that a staff member from a House officer attend in camera meetings. It would be from the whip or House leader's office. It's one member from each party's House or whip's office.

**The Chair:** I think we're all okay with that. Thank you, Mrs. Glover.

(Amendment agreed to) [See *Minutes of Proceedings*]

(Motion as amended agreed to)

**The Chair:** We will now go to in camera meeting transcripts: that one copy of the transcript of each in camera meeting be kept in the committee clerk's office for consultation by members of the committee.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** Next is notice of motions: that 36 hours' notice be required for any substantive motion to be considered by the committee, unless the substantive motion relates directly to business then under consideration; and that the notice of motion be filed with the clerk of the committee and distributed to members in both official languages.

Go ahead, Mrs. McLeod.

**Mrs. Cathy McLeod:** I would like to add, as it was a bit of an issue in the last round, that completed motions that are received by the close of business shall be distributed to members the same day.

● (1800)

**The Chair:** Do you want to add that at the end of this motion?

**Mrs. Cathy McLeod:** Yes, please. The first part is fine.

**The Chair:** Maybe read it one more time.

**Mrs. Cathy McLeod:** It would be 48 hours' notice rather than 36, and then at the end it would be that completed motions that are received by the close of business shall be distributed to members the same day.

**Mr. Wayne Marston:** In our last subcommittee there was a clarity issue over when the timing starts. It should be either three o'clock or five o'clock on the day in question so as to give everybody a clear understanding of when the 48-hour or 36-hour period begins.

**The Chair:** Are there any comments?

Go ahead, Ms. Nash.

**Ms. Peggy Nash:** We have a proposal that we set a deadline of four o'clock on a normal day and two o'clock on Fridays in order to allow the clerk the time to get the motion and—

**The Chair:** This would be with respect to completed motions.

**Ms. Peggy Nash:** Yes.

**The Chair:** Is there general agreement that it be 48 hours instead of 36 hours? As well, with respect to the completed motions, I think the opposition is saying they're okay with it if we specify a time of 4 p.m. normally and 2 p.m. on Fridays.

*D'accord?*

Okay, everybody is very agreeable. That's excellent.

(Motion as amended agreed to) [See *Minutes of Proceedings*]

**The Chair:** The next motion is on location of meetings: that all meetings of the finance committee be held in Centre Block and televised whenever possible.

That's unless it's at La Promenade, where the chair has his office.

Go ahead, Mr. Jean.

**Mr. Brian Jean:** Bluntly, I'm not sure. Obviously I'm not the parliamentary secretary, but a lot of us have offices at La Promenade. I know this is used a lot for hot issues going from finance to different committees, so instead of changing offices and buildings constantly, I don't understand why it couldn't be left to the chair's discretion. If we were to have votes that night, we'd know in advance whether Centre Block was open.

There are a lot of us at La Promenade. With no disrespect to this great historical endeavour called Centre Block, it's a lot more comfortable there, and the air conditioning actually works. A lot of work is going to be done by this committee, and when you sit six hours in a building that isn't air conditioned, it's not a lot of fun. It's a much better facility, frankly.

Rather than have a motion like that, I'd prefer to leave it to the discretion of the chair.

**The Chair:** There is no requirement to pass this specific one.

I have Mr. Marston, and then Ms. Glover.

**Mr. Wayne Marston:** At La Promenade, are there any facilities for televising?

**A voice:** No.

**Mr. Wayne Marston:** There aren't? That's surprising.

**A voice:** One Wellington has....

**The Chair:** One Wellington has them.

Do they expect that they will get those? They're supposed to.

Mr. Marston, are you finished?

**Mr. Wayne Marston:** I'll just say that it can be at the discretion of the chair.

**The Chair:** Yes, if it's controversial, we can leave it to the discretion of the chair, and obviously if we have the Governor of the Bank of Canada with us, we could endeavour to have it here in order to have it televised.

Ms. Glover.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** I was just going to say that while I'm not at La Promenade, I'm happy to go to La Promenade, although I would suggest that the chair use his discretion when there are votes. If we could be in Centre Block, it would just make it easier for us to get to and from, particularly during the winter months. That would be my recommendation for when you make your decisions, but I'd be happy to have the chair make those decisions.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Van Kesteren.

**Mr. Dave Van Kesteren:** I'd just like to throw in my opinion on that too. I think this committee will sit a little longer many times, and there will be times when we need to be close to the House, so I think that whenever possible we should keep it here.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

The clerk is just reminding me that we are scheduled to sit from eleven to one, our normal time, but you're correct: especially during pre-budget hearings, we may in fact go longer.

So I take it that we don't wish to pass that...? Okay.

The next item we need to deal with is questioning of witnesses. Obviously, this order is what we followed in the last two Parliaments, and it has to be substantially changed because the parties have substantially changed in terms of their numbers.

I am looking for suggestions. I suspect we'll have quite a discussion in terms of speaking order and questioning of witnesses. Are there any suggestions?

Ms. Nash.

●(1805)

**Ms. Peggy Nash:** Well, I would certainly propose that as the official opposition we'd kick off the questions, and then there would be an alternation.

I'm looking at the order the health committee has come up with, which is NDP, Conservative, Liberal, and Conservative, for seven minutes each. This is just the health committee's plan. Then, for five minutes each, it is NDP, Conservative, NDP, Conservative, NDP, Conservative, Conservative, and Liberal.

**The Chair:** Okay. That's one suggestion.

If members want me to, just for reference, I can read out what the procedure and House affairs committee and the government operations committee have.

The procedure and House affairs committee has, for round one, the government for seven minutes, the NDP for seven minutes, and the Liberals for seven minutes; for round two, the government for four minutes, the NDP for four minutes, the government for four minutes; for round three, the government for four minutes, the NDP for four minutes, the government for four minutes; for round four, the government for four minutes and the NDP for four minutes.

At the government operations committee, they've gone to five-minute rounds all the time. They have no seven-minute rounds. This is how it goes: New Democratic Party, Conservative Party, New Democratic Party, Conservative Party, Liberal Party, and Conservative Party.

On his own, your chair has a suggestion. Again, it's just a suggestion. We should all think about it. One consideration is the NDP first, Conservatives second, Liberals third, and Conservatives fourth. That would be round one. In round two, the NDP would be first, the Conservatives second, the NDP third, and the Conservatives fourth. Round three would have the NDP first, the Conservatives second, and the Conservatives third.

My own personal view as the chair for this rationale is that every member on the committee, aside from the chair, should have an opportunity for one round of questions, whether it's for seven minutes or five. That's just the principle I'm recommending as the chair. To me, you're all equal as members of this committee. You should all have one chance to question before someone gets a second turn. That's just my advice.

So there are a few options. I'm looking forward to suggestions and discussion.

Ms. McLeod, please.

**Mrs. Cathy McLeod:** First of all, if we could establish a couple of principles we agree on, then we could work out the details. I think the first principle would be that it's appropriate that each person have an opportunity. The second principle would be that, as Ms. Nash indicated, they would like to lead off, and that seems fine. I think having some rebuttal, as government, is appropriate.

We're used to that seven-four and seven-five, but one committee did five minutes for everyone, so do we actually want to do seven-four or seven-five, or just fives? I think those will establish the parameters, and then we can get into the specific order for each round, if people agree with the principles of whether it should be just five minutes or seven and four with everyone sharing.

• (1810)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

We'll go to Ms. Nash, please.

**Ms. Peggy Nash:** I'd like to support the proposal by the chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Jean.

**Mr. Brian Jean:** Further to the principle that you enunciated earlier, which I think is a very wise principle, because we were all elected by Canadians across the country, I would suggest that the proposal by the parliamentary secretary is very good. It gives everybody adequate time. I think your idea of having it alternate, as you suggested, is good, but I think five minutes would give each member the opportunity to express the position of their constituents who actually sent them here to decide on things. It would give everybody equal opportunity. Then, there are usually rounds left over at the end so that if somebody really wants to make some extra points, they can have the opportunity to do so instead of us just burning the time.

My suggestion would be the five minutes, as was mentioned by Ms. McLeod. I think it's a good idea to have those rounds at five minutes and have them alternate equally.

**The Chair:** So you're recommending five minutes for everyone?

**Mr. Brian Jean:** Yes, I'm recommending five minutes for everybody, instead of a four and seven, because usually with seven minutes there's sharing time and so on.

**The Chair:** But are you okay with the chair's proposal?

**Mr. Brian Jean:** I think the chair's proposal is excellent.

**The Chair:** That's the chair's proposal with five minutes. Okay.

I have Ms. Sgro and then Ms. Glover.

**Hon. Judy Sgro:** Could you give me your proposal again?

**The Chair:** The proposal is that round one would be number one, NDP; number two, Conservative; number three, Liberal; number four, Conservative.

Round two would be NDP, Conservative, NDP, Conservative.

Round three would be NDP, Conservative, Conservative.

**Hon. Judy Sgro:** So what you're suggesting is that the Liberals would have one opportunity at five minutes per meeting?

**The Chair:** Yes. It depends on how long the meeting is and how many rounds there are. After round three, especially if it's five minutes, we'd just simply go to round one again.

**Hon. Judy Sgro:** Right, and we would go through it again.

I'd just like to point out for my colleagues in the NDP that when there was a majority Liberal government, we made sure that the others had two questions, as did the Liberals. Given the fact that we

are only three parties, not four, as we were previously, it would just seem, in the interest of fairness, that everybody should have a chance to participate. I'm here as an associate member, and it's clearly your....

I think what the health committee did gives a relatively fair opportunity for everybody to get sufficient time to participate in the meeting. I'll leave that up to you. If we look at it, the Liberals would get a chance to have two questions. I think we all want to be fair; we want to get information on the table; and we want to work in a collegial way. I'll leave it in your hands.

**The Chair:** Ms. Glover and then Mr. Marston.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I was here last Parliament, and it was truly unfortunate the way some of the speaking orders went, because there were a number of times when Conservative members were never allowed to speak during a meeting. That is why I would like to support your suggestion, because it affords every single person who sits on this committee an opportunity to have a voice without another member speaking twice. So in the interest of fairness, I think what you've proposed, Chair, is actually the fairest of them all. It takes into consideration the official opposition's position to start, and I too will support the five-minute rounds, because I think in that way we actually get to hear from more members of this committee.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Marston.

**Mr. Wayne Marston:** I have a question. There is only one Liberal member?

**The Chair:** There is only one Liberal member.

**Mr. Wayne Marston:** Then that person has the equal option of speaking, under what you've proposed, and each has that other option, so I would support the chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Hoback.

**Mr. Randy Hoback:** I agree with Mr. Marston. If there were two Liberal members here, I think we'd want to give each one five minutes to speak, but the reality is they have only one member here. It would be the same reality if there were one Conservative here. They would have only one chance to speak.

It looks to me as though you have consensus on this issue, and I'd suggest we move forward.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Ms. Sgro.

• (1815)

**Hon. Judy Sgro:** I have a question. Is the five minutes to be shared, or is the five minutes exclusively for that individual?

**The Chair:** Members can share their time as they see fit.

**Hon. Judy Sgro:** And there are no issues with that?

**The Chair:** In fact in the last session a member of the NDP questioned a member of the government with his five minutes, which was quite interesting. You just can't ask the chair any questions, Ms. Sgro.

**Hon. Judy Sgro:** We'll ask those outside.

**The Chair:** That's right.

Okay, I see Mr. Van Kesteren.

**Mr. Dave Van Kesteren:** I have just a quick question. When I add that up, that's 55 minutes, and if we had two witnesses, we'd have 20 minutes and we'd have some additional time. What would happen? Would we return to the top again with the NDP, Conservative, Liberal, and Conservative?

**The Chair:** Yes, then we would start with round one. So in fact given how most meetings operate, frankly you would probably get through four rounds. So the likelihood is you would probably have two Liberal slots. That's generally how it worked in the last session.

**Mr. Dave Van Kesteren:** Okay, that's fair.

**The Chair:** And in the last session, typically, colleagues, I tried to finish at the end of a round. If we had to go a couple of minutes over to give the final round some time, that's what I did last session. Often at the end of the round we'd have Mr. Mulcair, who was our NDP member last time. I wouldn't just cut off his time halfway through.

We're seeking consensus, then, for that proposal. Is there agreement on that?

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** Was that five minutes or seven minutes?

**The Chair:** It's five minutes.

And I suggest we allow the chair some latitude and say that witnesses be given five to ten minutes to make their opening statements. If we have fewer witnesses, obviously we can have longer statements, but if we have more, especially pre-budget, I really would like, as the chair, to be able to say five minutes maximum.

Is there agreement on that?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Okay, that's it for motions.

Now I will just put our analysts on the spot to introduce themselves. Again, these analysts are your analysts. They are the committee's analysts. Obviously they work very directly with me, as the chair, but they are here to assist all members, and they do an outstanding job. I can attest to that for both of them.

Mark, do you want to introduce yourself?

**Mr. Mark Mahabir (Analyst, Library of Parliament):** My name is Mark Mahabir. I am a lawyer. I specialize in tax, and I work with the Library of Parliament. My division is macroeconomics and trade.

**Ms. Brett Stuckey (Analyst, Library of Parliament):** Hi. I'm Brett Stuckey. I am an economist by trade. I'm also in the same section, macroeconomics and trade, and I've been on the committee for about a year.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Colleagues, I do want some guidance from you, the committee, in terms of how to deal with the budget bill. We have a vote. The bells will ring at 6:30. We have a vote at 6:45 tonight on the motion introduced by the House leader. I think we can probably presume

this motion will pass, so I would just counsel you that this motion says that if the bill is not reported back by Monday, June 20, 2011, during routine proceedings—which on Monday, as you know, follow question period, so at three o'clock—it shall be deemed to have been reported from the committee without amendment.

That means that as the committee, we have to study it by Monday afternoon. One option is obviously to come back as the committee tonight to hear from officials and witnesses and to do clause-by-clause. Those are the three items we have to do. We could do those tonight. We could do them tomorrow morning. We should be cognizant of the NDP's convention in Vancouver. We could meet Monday morning. So we could meet one of those times or two of those times, but as the chair I would like your input as to when we should study.

I have Ms. Glover first.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Seeing that the officials have been patiently waiting, I would suggest that we try to move forward if the opposition wants to hear from officials and if members on this side want to hear from officials. The officials are present and I would suggest that we move forward on it this evening.

Then I would entertain suggestions from the opposition with regard to whether or not they want to hear from witnesses. That would have to be done potentially on Thursday; however, I might note that Mr. Brison would like to be here. I have spoken with him and unfortunately he is not available Thursday morning. That's unfortunate, but I do want to respectfully indicate that if the committee did want to hear from witnesses, Thursday might not entirely work out for Mr. Brison.

We have to do clause-by-clause. I would suggest that on Monday we meet to do clause-by-clause, which would mean that if we are going to hear witnesses it might be a very long meeting on Monday, but it does have to be done before the afternoon.

Those are my comments.

• (1820)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Jean.

**Mr. Brian Jean:** Mr. Chair, just very quickly, all of those times are fine with me, but I'm just curious. Based on your experience, if everything goes moderately normally, what would be the time expectation to have it finished so that it could be reported back by Monday?

**The Chair:** That's a good question.

In terms of the officials, I'll just clarify. They have been waiting very patiently, and we do thank them for being here. One option is to hear from them tonight.

Obviously, they did give a briefing last night, at which many of the members or their staff were present. They gave a fulsome briefing.

It depends on how many questions there are for the officials, but my sense is that is if we have witnesses on Monday morning, I think we could do witnesses Monday morning and then clause-by-clause.

I'll just point out to members that if they have a question of the officials but perhaps want to hear from a witness first, they can always raise it with the officials during the clause-by-clause examination of the bill.

My sense is that hopefully we could do that within a two- to three-hour period. Maybe I'm being optimistic, but we could certainly book a three-hour or four-hour time slot tomorrow morning or Monday morning, if the committee is amenable. I think we could finish it within that time.

This is a much smaller budget implementation bill—thankfully—than normal, although we were able to get through those bills in a very timely manner as well.

Ms. Sgro, please.

**Hon. Judy Sgro:** Mr. Brison has indicated—and I believe he has had some discussions—that he wanted a representative from C.D. Howe and someone from the university as well, and they can't be here until Monday morning.

**The Chair:** Yes. I think that was indicated to me as the chair. Monday morning would be best for witnesses for Mr. Brison, and I think for Ms. Nash as well.

Is that...?

**Ms. Peggy Nash:** Yes, Mr. Chair. We're fine with doing the clause-by-clause and having witnesses on Monday if Mr. Brison is not available tomorrow.

We do have just a couple of minutes, and I know that we had a question on the mortgage insurance section, part 7. While we're here and before the bells ring, could we take advantage of the officials being here to ask that question? It might help clear up some concerns we have.

**The Chair:** Okay. As the chair, I'm going to recommend that we bring those officials forward and attempt to deal with this before 6:30.

Then, for Monday morning, can I suggest 10 a.m.? That gives us four hours—if we need it—before question period to finish it. Is that agreeable?

**Ms. Peggy Nash:** Yes.

**The Chair:** Ms. Glover.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** I have just a quick question, Chair, because it would be nice if we could dismiss the other officials if they're not required. Are there any other questions from the opposition that would require the officials to stay? Otherwise, if we could dismiss the others, they would be grateful.

**Ms. Peggy Nash:** It's just mortgage insurance.

**The Chair:** Just mortgage insurance? Okay.

That's what we're going to do.

I'm going to very quickly adjourn and then reconvene another meeting to deal with the budget bill.

This meeting is adjourned.

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