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Chair: Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia



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• (1650)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.)): I call the meeting to order.

Mr. Lewis, I welcome you. After an afternoon with us, I think you'll want to transfer permanently to this committee. Obviously there is not always consensus, but it's a very friendly committee and we're fortunate for that.

Before we get started, a point was brought last week that perhaps the chair could withdraw, at the request of a Green Party member, a Green Party amendment. I looked into the matter a little more. My previous understanding was that once a Green Party amendment has been sent to the clerk it's deemed moved and therefore belongs to the committee, and the chair cannot simply withdraw it but it has to be withdrawn by unanimous consent.

My inquiries led to the following example from April 22 at the indigenous and northern affairs committee, where Ms. Atwin said, "I will withdraw it," meaning the amendment, "since it has the same context as others". The chair said, "Okay. PV-7 is not brought forward." The clerk said to the chair, "Mr. Chair, if I may, PV-7 is deemed to have been moved, so it would require unanimous consent to withdraw it. That's my understanding." Then the chair said, "Do we have unanimous consent to withdraw? I see that we do. Thanks, Ms. Atwin."

I just want to close the loop on that, and—

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Well....

Sorry.

The Chair: Yes, Ms. May.

Ms. Elizabeth May: I appreciate the chair looking into it again. I've had different experiences with different committees, but I'm not questioning what has been determined.

I'd like to again put it forward. I'm not sure where we were exactly, but I think I still had about seven or eight amendments relating to the expert advisory body independence of the committee where I was prepared to try to say that my amendments were no longer deemed put forward in favour of the Bloc Québécois' amendments.

I see Mr. Albas' hand is up too.

Maybe we could try for unanimous consent again, but I don't know what Mr. Albas would think about that.

The Chair: When we get to it, you can try.

Mr. Albas.

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Based on this, I'm glad that MP May got a chance to respond. She and I have communicated back and forth. I have a better understanding of what she was trying to do.

Obviously she best speaks for herself, but I seem to get the indication that she feels the process from the very beginning on this particular clause-by-clause—and Mr. Chair, please don't take offence—has been steamrolled or compressed and it has been very clear that members haven't been accepting of MP May's amendments, nor the Bloc's, nor the Conservatives'. Thus, it's becoming very apparent to me that she was just saying she doesn't want to be participating in a process in which she doesn't have faith that she is even going to receive a fair hearing.

Whether that's fair or not, I'll let members themselves decide, but I will make the motion that PV-26, PV-27, PV-28, PV-29, PV-30, PV-31 and PV-33 be removed from consideration by unanimous consent.

I just hope that the MP for Saanich—Gulf Islands takes from this that I appreciated her communications with me. I have great respect for her and her contributions to this process, as bad as it has been.

The Chair: Mr. Albas, let me pause for a second.

It's unusual. Usually it's the sponsor who does this, but if there is unanimous consent, we can—

Ms. Elizabeth May: To clean it up, Mr. Chair, I'm perfectly happy to move it again, as I attempted to do last time. I would just say that I appreciate Mr. Albas' speaking for me. The process has been unpleasant and I don't think there was good faith, but my reason for withdrawing these amendments is that I think it will speed things along, and I'm confident the Bloc Québécois amendments really make.... If there's still a good case to do this, I would hope the Bloc amendments pass. I do have a few more amendments, but I want to speed this along and assist in getting Bill C-12 out of committee.

Those are my reasons.

The Chair: Could you just read again which ones they are?

Ms. Elizabeth May: They are amendments PV-26, PV-27, PV-28, PV-29, PV-30, PV-31 and PV-33.

The Chair: You're asking that these amendments be withdrawn.

• (1655)

Ms. Elizabeth May: They were deemed moved. I'm asking for them to be deemed to have been withdrawn.

Mr. Dan Albas: I'm not sure if a non-member can make a motion at committee. That's why I made it, but I—

The Chair: No, that's okay. That's understandable, but she can withdraw them because they're her amendments.

Do we have unanimous consent for Ms. May to withdraw these—

Mr. Brad Redekopp (Saskatoon West, CPC): There's just one quick thing, Mr. Chair.

Ms. May did mention PV-26, and I believe that we already dealt with it in the last meeting. I don't know if that should be included or not, from a technical perspective.

The Chair: I think you may be right.

Ms. Elizabeth May: In that case, start with where we are, which I think would be PV-27.

Thanks, Brad.

The Chair: Okay, so it's PV-27 to PV-33.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Yes, but PV-32 was excluded because it deals with a different issue.

The Chair: Okay, got it.

Do I have unanimous consent to withdraw PV-27, PV-28, PV-29, PV-30, PV-31 and PV-33?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: I appear to.

(Amendments withdrawn)

The Chair: Congratulations, Ms. May. Your wish has been granted.

Ms. Elizabeth May: I'm just trying to help you guys along.

The Chair: We appreciate that.

Madam Clerk, you're keeping track of the time and how many minutes we will have met when we break for the vote.

(On clause 21)

The Chair: Okay. We were at CPC-17, and if I recall correctly, Madam Pauzé was up and Mr. Albas also had his hand up. If that's not the case—

Mr. Dan Albas: That's correct.

The Chair: Okay, that's correct.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Pauzé, you may go ahead. We are on amendment CPC-17.

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to start by setting the committee straight on something. Yesterday, in question period, I asked Mr. Wilkinson, the minister, about the lack of targets, and this is what he had to say:

It saddens me that the Bloc Québécois tried so hard to prevent the committee from moving forward. If we want Bill C-12 to pass to contribute to the fight against climate change, we hope the Bloc Québécois will support us on that.

If there is one thing I cannot be accused of, it is preventing the committee from moving forward. I was flabbergasted to hear such a thing. I usually wait a long time before I get to speak, and I respect the order of speakers.

The Chair: Yes, that's true.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: I think the Bloc Québécois has done its job. Neither Ms. Michaud nor I has ever abused our parliamentary privileges. In fact, I would say we have helped facilitate the bill and move it forward.

That is why I was so stunned. As a member of this committee, I work diligently and purposefully, with respect for procedure and the work of other members. Forgive me, but it feels good to get that out.

The Chair: I understand. Your comments are duly noted and are now part of the record.

Did you want to speak to amendment CPC-17?

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Yes, Mr. Chair.

When Mr. Albas put forward amendment CPC-17, the interpreter did a lovely job of rendering his comments, saying that the process had been truncated. I want to say I agree with Mr. Albas. Ms. May alluded to the same.

At one point, I attended the press conference on the green new deal, along with former NDP member Pierre Nantel and members from just about every party represented in the House. As I see it, the NDP betrayed the ideals it espoused back then by allowing a bill with no teeth and no guts to pass. A much stronger piece of legislation is needed to address the climate emergency we face.

In my riding of Repentigny, people are not allowed to water their lawns. I am not talking about a ban between certain times of the day. It is banned any time of the day because it's a drinking water issue. That is what you do in a climate emergency. I just wanted to add to what Mr. Albas said about the process being truncated. Nevertheless, there are still some good amendments that would help remedy the problem.

The Chair: All right.

Seeing no more hands up, I now call the vote.

I want to point out, however, that, if amendment CPC-17 is adopted—

[*English*]

Mr. Dan Albas: Mr. Chair, I just assumed you would go to me right afterwards.

The Chair: You're absolutely right, I apologize. I didn't see the hand, but you are next.

Mr. Dan Albas: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'll just remind everyone, because there may be people tuning in today who haven't had the opportunity to hear some of the Conservative amendments, this one, Mr. Chair, has to do directly with Bill C-12 in regard to the advisory body.

The government has set up one minister to basically appoint all 15 members. We've already seen the minister, before even passing Bill C-12, come forward with a list of names. It's almost like he doesn't need to bear witness to what Parliament says. I am hoping that after Matt Jeneroux's great opening salvo on the reason why we need to change the approach taken by the government here, this particular amendment would be welcomed by all parties.

Again, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce really liked this concept, as did the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers. If we really want to see more independence of the board, where it can act and have a diversity of skill and insight, then by giving, for example, six to the Minister of the Environment, three positions on the recommendation of the Minister of Industry, three on the recommendation on the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and three on the recommendation of the Minister of Finance, and having each minister I've named present who they believe should be on the board, you will end up with a stronger board and more of a sense of independence because it's not all at the behest of one minister. As I've said many times, Mr. Chair, it's an "all hands on deck" approach.

Again, we didn't have any indigenous witnesses. This would make sure that, through the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, that would happen, and there would be serious involvement in this particular body.

I just ask all honourable members to support this. This would be a beneficial change. I think it would be welcomed by many.

We'll let it go to a vote, Mr. Chair.

(Amendment negated: nays 7, yeas 4 [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

• (1700)

The Chair: We go now to BQ-21, which I unfortunately have to rule inadmissible. I will tell you—

[*Translation*]

Ms. Émilie Thivierge (Legislative Clerk): Mr. Chair?

The Chair: Yes, what is it?

Ms. Émilie Thivierge: Perhaps you should let Ms. Pauzé move her amendment.

The Chair: Yes, of course.

Go ahead, Ms. Pauzé.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: The amendment is admissible, but "independent expert committee" has to change to reflect what was adopted. Is that correct?

The Chair: Move your amendment, and then, I will explain the rationale.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: I need to change what comes after "The House of Commons appoints the members of the" to "Net-Zero Advisory Body".

Instead of the Governor in Council appointing the members of the [*Technical difficulty—Editor*] body, we are proposing that they be appointed on the recommendation of the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development. We are a committee of

elected representatives, and it should be our role to evaluate candidates and determine who the best people for the job are in accordance with the prescribed criteria.

It is possible to strike a balance. The amendment is consistent with many democratic processes as well as political representation. This way, the House would be giving the committee greater legitimacy and independence than if members were simply appointed by the government. The important thing here is ensuring impartiality. That's what this is about.

Mr. Albas talked a lot about the Governor in Council. Almost all of his party's amendments address the role of the Governor in Council. At our last meeting, Mr. Albas talked about the importance of a plurality of opinions and expertise. I don't always agree with him on the role the Governor in Council should have, but his preference for a collegial approach is fine by me, even if we don't see the issue the same way.

My amendment proposes that the members of the advisory body be selected on the basis of a process that is not solely controlled by the government. The amendment may address Mr. Albas's concerns. Entrusting a standing committee of the House of Commons with recommending the members of the body responsible for addressing climate change issues is the best way to ensure that the body's makeup is fair and representative. The various political parties are represented here, on the committee. We are all democratically elected, and the environment committee should submit its recommendations to the House of Commons for the collective endorsement of all members.

In conclusion, this amendment is consistent with the principles of transparency and democracy. It sets out a transparent process, one that recognizes the value of all members of the House, ensures all of Canada's regions are fairly represented and leaves room for the expertise sought by each party. This exercise in democracy is crucial given the important role the advisory body will have.

I'll give you an example. The chair of the United Kingdom's Climate Change Committee was selected this way. The various legislatures within the country selected the chair in a collegial manner. The decision was consensus-based, despite the different political parties and regions involved. I would like to see members support this transparent and democratic process, including the members of the Conservative Party, who argued extensively in favour of democratic governance on Friday.

• (1705)

The Chair: We are going to suspend in three minutes for voting.

Unfortunately, the amendment is inadmissible, and I'll explain why.

[English]

Subclause 21(1) of Bill C-12 provides that the members of the advisory body will be appointed by the Governor in Council, based on the recommendation of the minister, and that the Governor in Council will fix the members' remuneration. Amendment BQ-21 attempts to give the responsibility of appointing the members of the advisory body to the House of Commons, based on the recommendation of the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development.

As *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, third edition, states on page 772:

Since an amendment may not infringe upon the financial initiative of the Crown, it is inadmissible if it imposes a charge on the public treasury, or if it extends the objects or purposes or relaxes the conditions and qualifications specified in the royal recommendation.

Because the amendment seeks to alter the terms and conditions of the royal recommendation, it is, in my view, inadmissible.

That's my ruling, and I think it makes sense based on *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, third edition.

We only have about a minute. We're going to be going now to—

[Translation]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Mr. Chair, I want to appeal your ruling.

The Chair: We will proceed with the vote, and no debate is allowed, Ms. Pauzé.

If I'm not mistaken, Ms. Thivierge, the ruling cannot be challenged and the committee must proceed to a vote immediately. Is that correct?

Ms. Émilie Thivierge: Yes, the committee should proceed with the vote.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: May I not appeal the chair's ruling?

The Chair: Yes, you may, but the committee cannot discuss it. You may appeal my ruling, and then, the committee must vote on your wish to overturn my ruling. We will now proceed with a recorded vote.

Shall the chair's ruling be sustained?

(Ruling of the chair sustained: yeas 6; nays 5)

[English]

The Chair: The decision survives.

Why don't we break, and as soon as the Speaker reads the result of the vote, let's hop back on. I don't think we need to do a sound check or anything, so we'll pick up right where we left off.

When we come back we'll look at CPC-18.

I'll see everyone as soon as the Speaker announces the result of the vote. Thank you.

• (1705) _____ (Pause) _____

• (1740)

The Chair: Okay, I see that no—

[Translation]

Ms. Pauzé, do you have your hand up?

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Yes, I do, Mr. Chair.

I cannot let what happened before the meeting was suspended stand without saying something.

I want to make three things clear.

First, during the last vote, Ms. Saks was not able to vote. She even raised her hand when we were in the process of voting.

Was her vote recorded properly?

The Chair: Are you referring to the vote on your amendment?

Ms. Monique Pauzé: I'm referring to the vote on your ruling.

The Chair: You mean the ruling regarding the admissibility of [Technical difficulty—Editor].

Are you saying that her vote was not counted or that it should have been counted?

Ms. Monique Pauzé: She raised her hand while we were voting. Did she vote? Was her hand up? Was her vote recorded?

The Chair: It was a recorded vote, was it not?

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Precisely.

The Chair: Madam Clerk, was Ms. Saks's vote recorded?

Ms. Émilie Thivierge: Yes, I recorded it.

The Chair: All right, then.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Okay.

Second, I do not understand why the Bloc Québécois's amendment was ruled inadmissible. The law clerks looked at it before it was included in the package.

The Chair: I can't speak to that, because my opinion is based on the advice of the legislative clerks.

Regardless, a decision has been made. I ruled the amendment inadmissible.

You appealed the ruling, it was put to a vote, and my ruling was sustained.

What is the third point you wanted to raise, Ms. Pauzé?

Ms. Monique Pauzé: My third point has to do with what you said about the amendment relating to money.

Subclause 21(1) of Bill C-12 reads as follows:

The Governor in Council appoints the members of the advisory body on the recommendation of the Minister and fixes their remuneration.

All the Bloc Québécois's amendment would change is the wording “on the recommendation of the Minister”, replacing it with the wording “on the recommendation of the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development”. Then, it goes back—

The Chair: That is the crux of the problem. The fact that you are changing—

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Yes, but it does not require any more money.

The Chair: The money is not at issue; the principle is. It relates to the government's prerogative to legislate on remuneration. As a committee, we cannot take it upon ourselves to exercise that prerogative; nor can the House of Commons. Therein lies the rub.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: My understanding was that the Governor in Council was more or less the same as the government. In our view, the Governor in Council is not the one who should make recommendations.

The Chair: Your amendment takes away from the Governor in Council—

[*English*]

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): I have a point of order, Mr. Chair. Haven't we already voted on this ruling? Can we proceed with the meeting?

The Chair: Yes, we have.

[*Translation*]

Unfortunately, Ms. Pauzé, that is the answer.

We must move on because the committee has dealt with the matter.

Where are we?

[*English*]

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: We're on CPC-18.

Mr. Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Mr. Chair—

The Chair: We're at CPC-18.

Mr. Albas, do you want to propose that?

Mr. Dan Albas: I'm sorry. Whatever you said, Mr. Chair, was totally inaudible on the English channel.

The Chair: Do you mean what I said to Madam Pauzé?

Mr. Dan Albas: No, just that last little section.

The Chair: Would you like to propose CPC-18?

Mr. Dan Albas: No.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Dan Albas: I'd like to make a quick statement on that, Mr. Chair.

I have to say, we've had, as I said, many criticisms of the process, from having rushed hearings to not having enough witnesses to not receiving briefs in a translated form so that we could make the time—

Mr. Chris Bittle (St. Catharines, Lib.): Point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Is this a point of order?

Mr. Dan Albas: I just want to say that I've come to quickly understand what Ms. May has been saying and—

Mr. Chris Bittle: Point of order.

Mr. Dan Albas: —I think we're just not going to move any more of our amendments because I believe that this process is broken. We've had a number of rulings against amendments. We've had every opportunity.... The Liberals and the NDP have voted down every other amendment.

The Chair: Well, that's their democratic right.

Mr. Dan Albas: I'm not putting forward CPC-18.

The Chair: You're not putting forward CPC-18.

Well, PVC-27 was taken out, so we're now at—

Ms. Elizabeth May: Point of order.

The Chair: Yes, Ms. May.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: We're on NDP-5.

• (1745)

Ms. Elizabeth May: I'm very apologetic to point this out, but I came as quickly as I could after the vote was announced. It was [*Technical difficulty—Editor*] for all of you to resume. I don't know. You can resolve this for yourselves, but I don't think your votes should have counted on the last motion that took place in the main chamber because it wasn't resolved until just before I came.

I'll just flag that for you so that it doesn't affect the work of this committee.

The Chair: Could you explain that again? Did you just join us now?

Ms. Elizabeth May: I joined you as quickly as I could, and it seems that you were well under way.

The Chair: I'm sorry. I thought you were here.

Ms. Elizabeth May: I don't mind that I wasn't here, but the point is that your votes shouldn't have counted on that last vote—

The Chair: —in the House.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Yes.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: I think that's a matter for the House then, not for our committee.

The Chair: Yes.

Ms. Elizabeth May: That's right. I'm just flagging it for you and moving away.

The Chair: I'm going to stick to the clause-by-clause. That's challenging enough.

We'll go to NDP-5.

Mr. Bachrach.

Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Chair, I'm pleased to introduce this amendment. This deals with—and I believe I spoke a little bit about this prior—the make-up of the advisory committee, and lays out the expertise that we would like to see represented on that committee. I think it does speak for itself, but this also speaks to a number of the discussions we've had related to previous amendments.

The idea here is that we should be constraining the membership of the advisory body to individuals who have proven expertise in specific areas that are relevant to this legislation and to the goal of net zero by 2050, including indigenous knowledge; climate change science; relevant physical and social sciences, including economic analysis and forecasting; climate change and climate policy at the national, subnational and international levels, and so on.

I think folks are pretty familiar with this amendment, so I'll leave it at that.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Taylor Bachrach: There is one more thing, Mr. Chair.

I would add that this is taken directly from the approach used in New Zealand and the U.K., which are two jurisdictions that we've heard quite a bit about, both in the testimony and in the discussion at committee.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Albas.

Mr. Dan Albas: Mr. Chair, the Conservatives will not be voting in favour of this amendment.

I just want to note that while Mr. Bachrach has said that this is similar to things that have been drawn out of other jurisdictions, clearly the amendments that have been tabled by both the Liberals and the NDP are not what witnesses were calling for. I've talked to many stakeholders who have argued that these are not the kinds of provisions they want to see.

So that I'm not interrupted by Mr. Bittle again, I have to say that this process has been truncated. It has been steamrolled. We've seen people's amendments put forward in good faith and ruled out of order or just voted down without even a defence from the government or from the NDP. I think this is not a process that is suitable.

We will be voting opposed.

The Chair: That's on NDP-5. Okay.

[*Translation*]

Do you have your hand up, Ms. Pauzé?

Ms. Monique Pauzé: I was just waiting for the end of the interpretation to come through, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: That's right. I had forgotten about the interpretation.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: The Bloc Québécois is going to vote in favour of the amendment, but my fellow members and I think amendment NDP-5 would go wonderfully with amendment BQ-23. The NDP member mentioned the approach used in New Zealand and the United Kingdom. As everyone knows, the United Kingdom has the strongest climate governance in the world. It has set the standard.

When it comes time to discuss the Bloc Québécois's other amendments, which also support healthy climate governance, I hope the NDP members will look to the United Kingdom's example and vote in favour of our amendments.

The Chair: I now call the vote.

(Amendment agreed to: yeas 7; nays 4 [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

• (1750)

The Chair: Amendment PV-28 has been withdrawn. That brings us to amendment BQ-22.

Over to you, Ms. Pauzé.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The committee members did not vote in favour of our amendment on the independent expert committee, so I realize they will vote against this amendment as well. I simply want to point out that the body's role should be enhanced and strengthened, as we heard from all the witnesses. The COVID-19 pandemic showed us that we mustn't let politics interfere with scientific advice. All of our amendments are meant to ensure scientific advice is available.

Ms. Le Quéré, who contributed to the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, told us that France's independent body, the High Council on Climate, helped to clarify the debates in that country and focus on the issues that really mattered. It provided robust evidence and increasingly specific information on blockages to progress, and the government was able to respond accordingly. That is why it has been effective. The high council provided transparency and accountability in France, increasing public awareness of, and support for, climate action. That is a more democratic way of doing things.

I urge the committee members to vote in favour of this amendment.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Pauzé.

I now call the vote.

[*English*]

Mr. Bachrach, your hand went up as I was calling it.

Mr. Taylor Bachrach: I'm sorry, Mr. Chair. I know you've already called the vote. I was just going to respond briefly to Ms. Pauzé.

The Chair: Okay, but I've called the vote.

Mr. Taylor Bachrach: Fair enough.

The Chair: Madam Clerk, if you could, please do a roll-call vote.

(Amendment negatived: nays 10; yeas 1)

The Chair: It does not carry.

We go now to CPC-19.

Mr. Albas.

Mr. Dan Albas: We're withdrawing this one, Mr. Chair, again for the same—

The Chair: [*Technical difficulty—Editor*]

Mr. Dan Albas: I don't think we're going to get any support for it. I'm not going to waste anyone's time with it.

The Chair: Okay.

That brings us to BQ-23.

Madam Pauzé.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: I'll move this important amendment. Of course, we'll have to change the name from "independent expert committee" to the name adopted. I believe that this was in relation to amendment NDP-4. That name prevailed.

Amendment BQ-23 provides important clarifications regarding the composition of the expert committee. This is about science and expertise, along with a lack of conflict of interest in relation to the committee's mandate. I'll say it again. Words have meaning. Legal experts, who can attest to this here, are fully aware of that. Some words are interchangeable, but others aren't. An objective, for example, isn't a target. That's why legislation must be concise.

With respect to the committee, the benefits of selecting members based on specific criteria related to their profile, training and expertise have been demonstrated. That's the important thing. This is about significant and multi-disciplinary skills and experience in the fight against climate change. Don't think that, in our view, only scientists should be on this committee. That isn't our position. However, many members should have that profile. It should be noted that the fight against climate change has involved experts and specialists from many disciplines, including applied sciences. Nevertheless, there are also economists, specialists in public policy development, experts in green finance and green taxation, and so on.

Moreover, part (b) states as follows:

(b) at least one member must be a health expert with experience relevant to the committee's mandate;

We want the committee to include a person who has relevant experience. This seems responsible and logical. Why is that so? As you know, since I've been doing environmental work, I've always put health and the environment side by side. This issue is still very important to me. I won't ignore it today. I share the opinion of thousands of physicians in Quebec and Canada. This includes one person who came to speak to the committee. Doctors in other parts of the world are calling for legislation that will protect the physical and mental health of the public.

I want to remind you that, according to Health Canada, the cost of pollution-related health issues accounts for 6% of Canada's gross domestic product, which is quite significant. If we believe in our institutions [*Technical difficulty—Editor*] think about that in our deliberations. I also want to remind the committee members that a person who came to speak on behalf of the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment as part of this study said that medical expertise must be included in this committee.

I'll give you the example of the United Kingdom, where a similar committee requires that six of the nine members, or 67% of committee members, have a scientific background. In France, 11 out of 13 members, or 85% of committee members, have a scientific background. In New Zealand, as noted earlier, two out of six members, or 33% of committee members, have a scientific background. In Quebec, nine out of 12 members, or 75% of committee members, have a scientific background. In terms of Canada, the minister announced—this winter, I believe—that the proportion would be one in 14, or 7% of committee members. The government, through various ministers, parliamentary secretaries and members of Parliament, has said countless times that we must rely on science and that it would listen to scientists.

Well, I want to tell you that it's time to keep this promise and that you'll have the opportunity to do so by voting in favour of amendment BQ-23.

Thank you.

• (1755)

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Pauzé.

We'll now vote on amendment BQ-23.

(Amendment negated: nays 10; yeas 1 [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

[*English*]

We go now to BQ-24.

Madam Pauzé.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Thank you.

Regarding amendment BQ-24, you won't be surprised to hear me repeat that the body's role must be strengthened and consolidated. Right now, what we have bears no relation to what exists in other places, where climate governance works. It doesn't work in Canada. We've been told this a number of times. We're back to say that it must be strengthened.

The Chair: Thank you.

[*English*]

Mr. Longfield, your hand is up.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: I just want to check with the officials whether there were any translation issues or whether we got that properly done on this one.

Mr. Vincent Ngan (Director General, Horizontal Policy, Engagement and Coordination, Department of the Environment): We just want to confirm that there is no difference in meaning given that federal legislation is co-drafted, meaning that both versions are being drafted concurrently, in English and French, at the same time, and not translated from one language to another. It means that both language versions of a statute are drafted. Therefore, there is no variance or difference in meaning.

• (1800)

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: Thank you.

The Chair: We'll go to the vote.

(Amendment negated: nays 10; yeas 1)

The Chair: PV-29 was withdrawn.

We go now to BQ-25.

Madam Pauzé.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Once again, with amendment BQ-25, we're looking at the independent expert committee. I certainly understand based on the voting pattern so far how the vote on this amendment will turn out. Again, effective climate governance is being rejected here.

The Chair: Thank you.

We'll proceed to the vote on amendment BQ-25.

[English]

(Amendment negated: nays 10; yeas 1)

The Chair: We go now to BQ-26.

Madam Pauzé.

[Translation]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: We believe that amendment BQ-26 is an important addition. Of course, the name “independent expert committee” should be replaced with the name that prevailed.

This is an important addition, which relates to the financial resources available to the committee, or advisory body. This committee must have sufficient resources to hire staff and must operate as a true public organization. The committee's work can't be accomplished without considerable resources. The lack of resources in the office of the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development has already been discussed in our committee meetings. The committee created by Bill C-12 must be given the financial resources to carry out its mission.

Once again, I want to say that the United Kingdom's committee accomplishes its mission with an administrative support structure at the organizational level, with analysts and researchers. The United Kingdom's committee has 35 full-time staff who help the committee. A support team is important. It's necessary to support these roles. The roles provide the technical, scientific, social and economic expertise required to sort out the issues, with sufficient and protected resources so that the team can determine and carry out its own work program.

Again, in the United Kingdom, where climate governance is effective, 35 people can help this committee. What will happen with amendment BQ-26?

The Chair: Unfortunately, based on the same logic as amendment BQ-21, amendment BQ-26 is out of order. I can read you the advice that I received, word for word. Basically, the reason is that, if the House passes this amendment, it takes over a financial power. Yet the House can't do that, according to the rules.

The amendment is out of order.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: I'm still wondering why the Bloc Québécois amendments were allowed to appear on the list of amendments and why amendment BQ-26 wasn't ruled out of order earlier.

Moreover, I just want to remind you that amendment BQ-21 recommends that the Governor in Council, rather than the minister, fix the remuneration. This doesn't involve the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development, but the Governor in Council. In my opinion, the amendment was in order.

• (1805)

The Chair: If you wish, you may appeal the chair's decision. We'll then vote on this.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: No, I don't want to do that, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Amendment PV-30 has been withdrawn. We'll now move on to amendment BQ-27.

You have the floor, Ms. Pauzé.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: I'll move amendment BQ-27, because we value the effectiveness of the process. To ensure effectiveness, we must have independent experts who are separate from the minister.

The Chair: I see no hands up.

[English]

Mr. Bachrach.

Mr. Taylor Bachrach: Mr. Chair, because we have called the advisory body the net-zero advisory body in several [*Technical difficulty—Editor*], I'm wondering whether all of a sudden referring to it as the “independent expert committee” is going to cause confusion or technical issues in the interpretation of the bill. Perhaps—

The Chair: Is that a question for Mr. Moffet?

Mr. Taylor Bachrach: Sure. Maybe Mr. Moffet could clarify.

I know there are a number of amendments that deal with the same thing. It seems to me that referring to the body as two things within the same bill would, at the very least, be confusing and could possibly cause issues in its interpretation.

Mr. Vincent Ngan: Go ahead, John.

Mr. John Moffet (Assistant Deputy Minister, Environmental Protection Branch, Department of the Environment): To be clear, there are actually two terms now in the bill. There's the lower-case “advisory body” which has still been retained in a number of provisions, and then there's the new formal title that's been given as a result of the amendment that was passed. I can't tell you that there would be a definitive legal problem, but I think your observation that introducing a third term might create some confusion.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Albas.

Mr. Dan Albas: I don't want to belabour a point, Mr. Chair, but I believe we've decided that on all parliamentary committees, even when we are virtual, we want to have neutral backgrounds. I take no exception to what Mr. Moffet has up, but we should have a consistent rule that's applied across all virtual committees.

The Chair: Yes.

Mr. John Moffet: My apologies. I'll take it down. This was a commemoration of the—

Mr. Dan Albas: No, I see nothing wrong with that. It's just that we need to have consistency.

Mr. John Moffet: Sure. I didn't appreciate the rule. I'll take it down.

The Chair: Okay, thanks.

The vote on BQ-27 is called.

(Amendment negated: nays 10; yeas 1)

The Chair: Shall clause 21 as amended carry?

(Clause 21 as amended agreed to: yeas 7; nays 4)

(On clause 22)

The Chair: PV-31 was withdrawn, so we are now on BQ-28.

The floor goes to Madam Pauzé.

• (1810)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Because I don't know when to quit, I come back once again to the need for the experts doing this work to be independent and to know what good climate governance is all about. We have a number of those who [*Technical difficulty—Editor*] all over the place. Why don't we use countries that are ahead of us as models? In the United Kingdom, for example, emissions have decreased by 28% since 2010, whereas Canada's are increasing or only slightly decreasing.

I do not understand the committee's stubbornness in not considering effective measures used in other places that have good governance, and in refusing to follow in the footsteps of those who have succeeded.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Pauzé.

[*English*]

The vote is called.

Mr. Chris Bittle: I have a point of order, and I think this one is fair, Mr. Chair. Mr. Albas did have his hand up.

The Chair: Did he? I'm sorry, but it didn't show up.

Mr. Chris Bittle: In all fairness—

The Chair: If you say so, yes, absolutely.

Mr. Dan Albas: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to MP Bittle for that.

I have a quick question.

Just to be clear, when Madam Pauzé is tabling these amendments, I'm making the mental change in my mind that she's updating them to have the NDP's amendment to the name of the advisory panel. Is that not the case? It seems that sometimes this is being applied and sometimes it isn't.

Maybe Madam Pauzé can let us know if that's the case.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: The NDP did indeed propose an amendment to change the title of the committee in question. But I asked whether I could still propose my amendments and have them considered. I was told that I could, so that's what I'm doing.

[*English*]

The Chair: Does that answer your question, Mr. Albas?

Mr. Dan Albas: Yes. Thank you.

The Chair: The vote is called.

(Amendment negated: nays 10; yeas 1)

The Chair: We will now go to G-14.

Mr. Saini, I believe you're proposing this one.

Mr. Raj Saini (Kitchener Centre, Lib.): Yes, Mr. Chair.

I am pleased to introduce a motion to amend subclause 22(1) of the Canadian net-zero emissions accountability act. This motion clarifies that this body's annual report must set out the result of its engagement activities. It increases the accountability of the act.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Albas.

Mr. Dan Albas: Mr. Chair, I will be supporting the amendment, not just because it comes from the honourable member MP Saini but also because it does, I think, result in a better outcome. Conservatives have said that we do support transparency and accountability. This is one small measure that improves the bill, and we are not so ideological, Mr. Chair, that we will not support an idea that improves upon Bill C-12. We will be supporting this amendment.

Again, there was some charm inherent in Mr. Saini's presentation, and I will applaud him for that.

• (1815)

The Chair: That's noted.

Congratulations, Mr. Saini, on your success and your charm, of course.

Madam Pauzé, I see your hand is up.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: I am sorry, Mr. Chair. I really thought I had all the right documents, but I do not have that amendment.

Can you just read it slowly?

The Chair: Yes, I will read it again.

The amendment reads: que le projet de loi C-12, à l'article 22, soit modifié par substitution, aux lignes 4 et 5, page 9, de ce qui suit:

au ministre un rapport sur ses conseils et ses activités dont le contenu fait état notamment du résultat de ses activités d'engagement.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Thank you.

The Chair: My pleasure.

[*English*]

We'll go to the vote.

(Amendment agreed to: yeas 11; nays 0)

The Chair: Amendment PV-32 was not withdrawn by Ms. May, so she has the floor.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Chair, this amendment is the first one—and the reason I removed all the other ones together, of course, was that they were on the same theme as Madam Pauzé's excellent amendments relating to the independent expert advisory committee that we had hoped to put in place.

This amendment is on the question of the report of that committee. Subclause 22(2) says the minister must publicly respond to the advice of the advisory committee, but the public is not to be aware of the advice submitted by the advisory committee because its annual report—which is referred to in subclause 22(1) and subsequently further amended by G-14, which you just accepted—isn't required to be put anywhere for the public to read.

This is proposed subclause 22(1.1). It's very clear and very straightforward. I hope you'll accept it:

The Minister must publish the annual report

—of the net zero advisory committee—

on the website of the Department of the Environment after receiving it.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Longfield.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: I'm going to oppose this amendment, just because we have a motion coming up from Mr. Bachrach that is, I think, more rigorous, that has the public reports requirement in it and that requires that an annual report to the advisory body be made public within 30 days of its receipt and be responded to within 120 days. Those reports already go onto government websites, so this is redundant with respect to an upcoming motion.

The Chair: Mr. Albas.

Mr. Dan Albas: Mr. Chair, I just hope for Mr. Longfield's sake that Mr. Bachrach doesn't suddenly pull a fast one on him and not put that motion forward.

(Amendment negatived: nays 10; yeas 1)

The Chair: We go to amendment NDP-6.

Mr. Bachrach.

• (1820)

Mr. Taylor Bachrach: Mr. Chair, this adds words after line 2 on page 9. It inserts the following:

(1.1) When providing its advice and preparing its report, the advisory body must take into account a range of factors, to the extent they are relevant to the purpose of this Act including environmental, economic, social and technological and the best available scientific information and knowledge, including Indigenous knowledge, respecting climate change.

Again, this reflects much of the testimony we heard from various witnesses related to the importance of the best available science and the importance of indigenous knowledge.

I hope the committee sees fit to support the amendment.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Albas.

Mr. Dan Albas: Is Mr. Bachrach [*Technical difficulty—Editor*], or is he including the updated name of the committee, as he has pointed out on other occasions? That could be an issue.

The Chair: I'm not quite sure how to answer that.

Mr. Taylor Bachrach: I can speak to that, Mr. Chair, if you'd like.

The Chair: Yes, go ahead.

Mr. Taylor Bachrach: We heard from the official earlier about the fact there are two versions—a short version and a longer version—of the name of the advisory body. In both cases, the words “advisory body” appear. The way I interpret this is that when simply “advisory body” is used, it refers to the longer form of the same name. My issue with calling it an “expert committee” is that it's entirely different, and that could result in confusion. Often in cases like this there's a shorter version that uses some of the words but not others, so I think it's clear enough. I did not intend to replace it with the longer version.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Albas.

Mr. Dan Albas: I appreciate MP Bachrach for weighing in on that. If he had wanted to take a more charitable viewpoint, we would have simply said to include the new term in it. That probably would provide some consistency. Again, the Conservatives believe that when a good idea comes forward and it's worthy of support, we should support it. In this case, because we've raised a number of concerns about this particular government's tendency to reject anyone else's ideas, especially when we're talking about a subject that this advisory panel will be engaging on, which by its very nature may be very divisive, we do need them to consider things like social, economic and technological factors, the best scientific information available and indigenous knowledge.

This is one of the amendments we're going to support and are glad to support, because quite honestly, Bill C-12 would be lesser without having some reference to the social, economic and other factors that are included in this amendment.

The Chair: Thank you.

(Amendment agreed to: yeas 11; nays 0)

The Chair: We're now on NDP-7.

Mr. Bachrach.

Mr. Taylor Bachrach: NDP-7 amends lines 3 and 4 on page 9 with the following:

Minister's response

(2) The Minister must make the annual report available to the public within 30 days of receiving it and then, within 120 days of receiving that report, the Minister must publicly respond to the advice that the advisory body includes in it with respect to matters referred in paragraphs 20(1)(a) to (c), including any national greenhouse gas emissions target that is recommended by the advisory body if the Minister has set a target that is different from it.

As Mr. Longfield indicated earlier, this is a more elaborate and robust version of what Ms. May was suggesting. An important component is the requirement that if the minister chooses to set a greenhouse gas emissions target that is different from that which the advisory body recommended, he or she should provide a rationale for why this was done.

• (1825)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Bachrach.

(Amendment agreed to on division)

The Chair: PV-33 was withdrawn.

(Clause 22 as amended agreed to on division)

(On clause 23)

The Chair: Shall clause 23 carry?

Mr. Dan Albas: I'm opposed.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Excuse me, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Clause 22 carried.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: I heard “clause 33”, Mr. Chair. We are on clause 23, aren't we?

The Chair: No, we were talking about amendment PV-33

Ms. Monique Pauzé: I am sorry, I was confused.

The Chair: Now we are on clause 23.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Okay.

I would like to move an amendment.

The Chair: Did you send it to the clerk in writing?

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Yes, I'm doing that right now. I am checking that everything is in order.

Madam Clerk, I hope that you will be getting it right away.

I move that Bill C-12, in Clause 23, be amended by replacing lines 14 and 15 on page 9 with the following:

and on the key measures that federal departments, agencies and Crown corporations have taken to manage those risks.

The Chair: So you have sent it to the clerk and she will send it to us.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Yes, Mr. Chair, that's right.

Have you received it, Ms. Crandall?

[*English*]

Mr. Raj Saini: On a point of order, Mr. Chair, can you explain what's going on?

I thought we voted on clause 22. Aren't we supposed to now vote on clause 23?

The Chair: Yes, but you can have amendments from the floor.

Mr. Raj Saini: Doesn't that come after?

The Chair: After what?

Mr. Raj Saini: What Madam Pauzé is saying sounds like BQ-29. Is it not?

The Chair: No. She has an amendment from the floor.

Mr. Raj Saini: I'm sorry. I didn't hear that part. Sorry about that.

The Chair: You scared me, Mr. Saini.

What we need is the wording. It has to be sent to all the members, so we know what we're voting on. That's what I'm waiting for.

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Angela Crandall): I've just sent it.

The Chair: Okay, here it is.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Pauzé, would you like to say a few words about your amendment?

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Yes, Mr. Chair.

This is not the first time you are hearing me say that, as always, we are doing this from the standpoint of the transparency and accountability that this bill is supposed to promote. For us, it is essential that the report consider the various sources of funding and the mechanisms used by the state. As such, we are specifying that the report by the Minister of Finance must focus on the measures undertaken by the public [*Technical difficulty—Editor*], but also by Crown corporations and federal agencies. We can then have a much more complete picture of the risks and opportunities related to climate change.

I will also take this opportunity to mention a report by the Canadian Institute for Climate Choices that Mr. Albas quoted at the last meeting. However, first I would like us to remind ourselves that the International Energy Agency's position on the matter is that it's important to note that technologies for eliminating carbon are neither an alternative to reducing emissions nor an excuse for delaying action.

Since our meeting is public, I want to show what the report by the Canadian Institute for Climate Choices actually says:

There are many solutions we know will be central to reducing emissions in the next decade—electric vehicles, more efficient buildings, and non-emitting electricity like wind and solar are all safe bets. Canada has every advantage, and little risk, in rapidly scaling up these solutions. At the same time, Canada will need to spread its bets by investing in a portfolio of wildcard technologies to increase the odds that some of these solutions will come through when we need them.

That is why we are proposing this amendment. We want it to be possible to see all the measures that have been taken, not only by departments, but by all federal agencies and Crown corporations.

● (1830)

The Chair: Thank you.

We are now going to vote on the amendment moved by Ms. Pauzé, dealing with clause 23.

[*English*]

(Amendment negatived: nays 10; yeas 1)

(Clause 23 agreed to on division)

The Chair: We will go to amendment BQ-29, proposing new clause 23.1.

Madam Pauzé.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Mr. Chair, I would like to provide some clarification, because there has been a lot of confusion as to where this amendment would be placed.

Because this really is a matter for the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development, this amendment actually goes under the heading Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development.

My assistant has been in touch with Ms. Thivierge to clarify the situation. Let me make it clear that it is really important for this to be included under the heading Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development, because that is what it applies to.

Is that going to be a problem? I can introduce the amendment now.

The Chair: You just moved your amendment, did you not?

Ms. Monique Pauzé: No, I was just explaining that the amendment must absolutely be inserted under the heading Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development.

The amendment should be placed near subclause 24(1). I will let the legal drafters decide, but I know that they have considered the matter and that it is important.

The Chair: So you want to insert the amendment under subclause 24(1). Is that correct?

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Yes, under the heading Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development.

The Chair: Ms. Thivierge, could you clarify that?

Ms. Émilie Thivierge: It is where you want it to be, Ms. Pauzé. Since it comes before line 18, it is under the heading Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development.

It comes before line 18 and not after line 17, and that makes all the difference. Just because it says that the amendment refers to clause 23 does not mean that it will be part of clause 23. It will be inserted just before subclause 24(1).

Ms. Monique Pauzé: That is excellent.

The Chair: What are you saying exactly, Ms. Thivierge?

Does the amendment stay where it is or do we have to move it?

Ms. Émilie Thivierge: No. It's just where Ms. Pauzé wants it to be.

The Chair: Okay. You have reassured Ms. Pauzé.

Ms. Pauzé, the floor is yours.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: If I may, I will introduce amendments BQ-29 and BQ-30 together. Amendment BQ-29 is important for us, but the arguments for amendment BQ-30 are the same as those for amendment BQ-29.

So I can introduce them together to avoid repeating myself.

The Chair: Hang on, it's not as simple as that.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Oh, okay.

The Chair: No.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: I can introduce them separately.

The Chair: That would be a better way to proceed, if you don't mind, Ms. Pauzé. I have a decision to make about amendment BQ-30, and it's a little more complicated.

We now move to a vote on amendment BQ-29.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: So I am going to introduce amendment BQ-29.

The Chair: I thought you had already done that. As that's not the case, let me invite you to introduce it.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Thank you.

This amendment makes the commissioner's review of the action plan more specific—

• (1835)

[English]

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: On a point of order, don't we vote on BQ-29 first?

The Chair: That's what we're doing. Madam Pauzé is moving BQ-29, and then we'll vote on it.

This is not BQ-30, Mr. Longfield.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: That's fine. I thought she was going on to BQ-30, because she said—

The Chair: No.

[Translation]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Thank you.

Amendment BQ-29 provides details for the commissioner's review of the minister's action plan and for the specific objectives of the commissioner's review. Without an independent review, the government's action plan can never really be evaluated against the objectives. It means that the public will never have an idea about the relevance and effectiveness of Canada's climate policy.

The commissioner is part of the principal accountability mechanism. It is the best transparency we have in monitoring the progress. Rejecting amendment BQ-29 is, once more, rejecting transparency. The Bloc Québécois has introduced other amendments on transparency, and the committee has always chosen to vote against them. You have one more chance to vote for transparency.

Our amendment proposes that the commissioner be involved in evaluating the minister's report. Without this amendment, the minister will continue to do his own evaluation. In our view, the commissioner must therefore be involved twice, once to evaluate the plan and once to evaluate the report. The two are not the same.

In this matter, I am going to once more turn to the experts who came to testify before the committee as part of a study proposed by Ms. Collins. That study was about the possibility of making the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development a true independent officer, in the same way as the Office of the Auditor General, for example.

During that study, Corinne Le Quéré, the chair of France's High Council on Climate and a member of the Committee on Climate Change in the United Kingdom, clearly indicated that it would be desirable to have an independent commissioner. But she repeated that, in terms of Bill C-12, the commissioner could well play a more important role. She came to testify to that effect on two occasions. Most recently, she said this:

In the bill, the monitoring of the measures implemented is quite weak. The commissioner of the environment and sustainable development is responsible for this monitoring. The commissioner is asked to submit reports fairly infrequently, meaning every five years. There isn't any real reason to wait that long to follow up on the legislation, policies and measures in place so that adjustments can be made quite quickly.

Once again, she added:

... the current design of the legislation makes the advisory group too close to the minister, and the independence isn't quite visible enough. It must be at arm's length. The distance isn't very visible. As a result, the advisory group is too close to the government and too far from the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development, who monitors policy.

These two positions, the one that looks back and the one that looks forward, should be brought together. In addition, they would need to be supported by a very strong analytical technical team that could analyze the reasons for past shortcomings in order to make projections and support the advisory committee. That way, past reports and future recommendations would play a much stronger role.

That final paragraph speaks to what I previously presented to the committee.

She also said that an essential characteristic of an effective framework is to require the government to disclose in a timely fashion the key information that the public needs to correctly evaluate the effectiveness of the promised new climate measures. In her view, the basis of a parliamentary democracy rests on an informed electorate.

Many in that electorate are parents of children who, in 30 years, will have to take up the burden that we are leaving to them. We must think of them.

I'd like to remind you that it was the NDP, through Ms. Collins, who introduced the motion asking for the commissioner to be more independent.

Finally, I would like to quote a passage from Ms. Collins' speech, on November 4, 2020 on Bill C-12. In it, she dealt with the role of the commissioner:

● (1840)

The NDP has pushed for an independent climate accountability office and the appointment of a climate accountability officer, who would undertake research and gather information and analysis on the target plan or revised target plan; prepare a report that includes findings and recommendations on the quality and completeness of the scientific, economic and technological evidence and analysis used to establish each target in the target plan; and advise on any other climate change and sustainable development matters.

Let me point out, by the way, that the plan has no targets.

In that passage, we clearly see what the Bloc Québécois members and the witnesses invited to appear for the study have been saying. A considerable part of what they have been saying is found in these two amendments. The one we are currently discussing is amendment BQ-29.

If we want to be logical in terms of the work the committee did before Bill C-12, and what the experts and the witnesses came to tell us, I invite the members of the committee to vote in favour of amendment BQ-29.

The Chair: Thank you.

[English]

Mr. Bachrach, did you want to add something? Your hand is up.

Mr. Taylor Bachrach: Mr. Chair, I want to thank Madam Pauzé for recognizing the hard work of Ms. Collins. She laid out many of the arguments that my colleague made at ENVI. I note that Ms. Collins brought forward a motion at this committee to both strengthen the mandate of the environment commissioner and make the environment commissioner an independent officer of Parlia-

ment. Unfortunately, other members chose to vote against that motion and it was not successful.

We certainly support the spirit of this. The challenge that we have with this amendment is that it's putting the cart before the horse. It's speaking to an expanded mandate for the commissioner before that mandate has been created. We are going to keep up our efforts in the House to expand the mandate of the environment commissioner and make that position an independent officer, and hopefully at some point in the future, once we're successful with those efforts, we will be able to amend this act accordingly.

At this point, I think we're essentially calling in this amendment for the commissioner to perform a role that he or she is not empowered to perform under the legislation.

I'll leave my comments at that, but I appreciate Madam Pauzé's recognition of Ms. Collins' work and the spirit behind this.

The Chair: Thank you.

(Amendment negatived: nays 10; yeas 1)

The Chair: Now we will go to BQ-30.

Mr. Dan Albas: Mr. Chair, it's been well past two hours. Could we request a five-minute break?

The Chair: That's a good idea, Mr. Albas.

We will have a five-minute break and we'll start up again at 6:49.

● (1840)

(Pause)

● (1850)

The Chair: We're at BQ-30, I believe.

Amendment BQ-30 is inadmissible in its current form, or it became moot, as BQ-15 was defeated. Moving it would be inconsistent with the decision made on BQ-15 not to include the annual progress report in the bill.

However, BQ-30 could be moved without the word "annual". If Madam Pauzé wants to move BQ-30, I guess she could move that the word "annual" be taken out.

[Translation]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Yes, that is my suggestion.

The Chair: You are introducing an amendment, Ms. Pauzé.

How do we proceed, Ms. Thivierge? Ms. Pauzé has not introduced her amendment yet, and she agrees with taking out the word "annual".

Is it a subamendment or is it just something she can do with her amendment?

Ms. Émilie Thivierge: She just has to do more or less what she did beforehand. When she introduces her amendment, she can mention that she is taking out the word "annual".

The Chair: Does everyone have to agree with that?

Ms. Émilie Thivierge: No, that is not necessary.

The Chair: Okay, I understand.

Ms. Émilie Thivierge: When she introduces it, she can simply mention that she is removing that word from her amendment on her own initiative.

The Chair: Okay. Great.

Ms. Pauzé, is that what you're going to do?

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Yes, that is what I'm going to do.

The Chair: Okay.

[English]

Mr. Albas, you had your hand up before we got to BQ-30.

Mr. Dan Albas: I'm not sure what happened there, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: That's fine.

We'll let Madam Pauzé propose BQ-30, and I think when she proposes it, she's going to do so without the word "annual", if I understand.

[Translation]

The floor is yours, Ms. Pauzé.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Once again, the intent of this amendment is to strengthen the role of the commissioner. When Ms. Collins introduced her motion, the committee did not vote in favour, but we have moved on. We are now talking about Bill C-12 and we have another opportunity to strengthen the role of the commissioner.

The amendment proposes that, within six months after the progress report is tabled, the commissioner review the progress report. I am taking out the word "annual", which used to go with the term "progress report".

Amendment BQ-29 dealt with the action plan. Amendment BQ-30 proposes that the commissioner can double-check the report. Once again, this is about strengthening the climate governance and the role of the commissioner.

The Chair: Okay.

We are now calling the vote on amendment BQ-30.

(Amendment negatived: nays 10; yeas 1 [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

[English]

(On clause 24)

The Chair: We go now to amendment BQ-31.

Go ahead, Madam Pauzé.

[Translation]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Thank you.

To come back to the commissioner's role in the original version of Bill C-12, it's virtually a cosmetic role.

In fact, the commissioner came to speak to the committee about his role, and as an example he referred to a rail safety report on an abysmal situation that he wrote in 2008, I believe. The recommendations in that report were not acted upon by any jurisdiction. A few years later, the disaster happened in the Lac-Mégantic area.

We therefore want the commissioner's role to be more than just cosmetic. In the original version of the report, the commissioner did not assess the action plan or the minister's report based on his ability to achieve the target.

Our previous amendments were about the action plan, the annual report and the assessment. That was what was important, but I believe we differ on the significance of the climate emergency.

In BQ-31, rather than remove the initial provisions involving the commissioner, we're making a clarification. We're going to try to go a little further. We want the commissioner to conduct a review, as provided, but to do so two years before each milestone year to allow for rectification in the event that progress suggests we may fail to achieve the target.

The amendments I mentioned earlier were more substantive, but this one proposes a slight correction.

If the government, with the support of the NDP, of course, doesn't want the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development to play a meaningful role, someone needs to explain to me why not.

I referred earlier to Ms. Collins, who was a member of the committee. She had introduced a motion to consider the importance of giving the commissioner a more substantial role. She asked that the committee look into making the commissioner an independent officer much like the Auditor General, who currently directs his work. Again, it would be rather inconsistent not to support our amendment. We may have missed an opportunity when Ms. Collins put forward her motion, but this is another chance to strengthen the role.

To conclude, I will repeat some facts that everyone knows. Canada has never met its targets, never achieved even one of its targets. With a track record like that and given the demands and what I would call best practices, the legislation must contain safeguards. It's precisely the role of the commissioner to identify failures and determine what corrective measures should be taken. Our amendment strengthens that role. We're not asking that everything be changed, of course, we only want to strengthen the commissioner's role. It seems to me that it's the least we can do.

● (1855)

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Pauzé.

I want to make it clear that if BQ-31 carries, PV-34 becomes inadmissible, because both amendments deal with the same line.

[English]

Mr. Bachrach.

Mr. Taylor Bachrach: I was just going to say, Mr. Chair, that BQ-31 also has implications for G-15. I believe the introduction of the 2026 emissions objective changes things for those years leading up to 2030, so we prefer the wording of G-15. It also impacts, as you mentioned, PV-34.

I'll leave it at that and speak to the next amendment.

The Chair: Thank you.

(Amendment negatived: nays 10, yeas 1)

The Chair: We go now to amendment PV-34.

Ms. May.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to Monique Pauzé for making a number of the points that I will reiterate here in terms of my briefer amendment.

The current form of Bill C-12 is that the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development must put forward a report on an examination of the Government of Canada's implementation of measures, etc., to achieve its most recent greenhouse gas emissions target, etc.

The current scheduling of the report from the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development is to be once every five years. My amendment would change it to once every three years.

I'm anticipating the comment, because Mr. Bachrach just made it, that somehow there's some conflict with the upcoming Liberal amendment that the first report must be submitted no later than the end of 2024, referring to the report of the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development. Obviously, there's no conflict: It's a question of the sequencing.

If Mr. Baker's amendment goes through, as unlikely it is that a government amendment will pass in this committee—forgive the sarcasm—once Mr. Baker's amendment goes through, the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development will have a report that is due, the first one, in 2024. The way the act now works, the next one would be in 2029 and so forth.

If my amendment is accepted—and I urge you to really consider this—the first report can be in by no later than the end of 2024. The next one would have to be before the end of 2027, which is really rather helpful, because under the government's approach to the first milestone year and the advance reports, the next report would be not from the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development, but from the department, to assess how well it's doing to hit its 2030 target. That one would be coming in 2028. The timing works here. There are no inconsistencies. There are no conflicts.

It just makes sure that for the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development, bearing in mind that the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development already has a statutory responsibility to report annually on various matters, this would mean that once every three years they would be reporting on climate targets, progress reports on climate targets and the other matters that are set out in clause 24 of Bill C-12.

I really do hope against hope that you're going to accept this moderate, modest, small improvement to the scheme of the act.

Thank you.

• (1900)

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. May.

Mr. Bachrach.

Mr. Taylor Bachrach: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, Ms. May for that explanation.

I fear that you may have misinterpreted my earlier remarks. We've always supported an expanded role for the environment commissioner within the environment commissioner's mandate, so I appreciate your bringing forward this amendment.

(Amendment negatived: nays 9; yeas 2)

The Chair: We go to G-15.

Mr. Baker.

Mr. Yvan Baker: Mr. Chair, I'm pleased to introduce a motion to add a new subclause 24(4) to the bill. It requires that the first CESD report be submitted by the end of 2024. Basically, the rationale is that this increases accountability between now and 2030.

The Chair: Mr. Albas.

Mr. Dan Albas: Mr. Chair, I have a quick question for either of the officials, Mr. Ngan or Mr. Moffet.

There's nothing in this bill like.... In this particular amendment, they're just asking for this to be done at a certain time, for the environment commissioner to submit a report, but effectively, if I were commissioner—and thank goodness I'm not, for all your sakes—I would want to do this right off the bat. I would want to start right away. Does the commissioner not have the independence to do this already?

The Chair: Mr. Ngan or Mr. Moffet.

Mr. John Moffet: The commissioner has a wide range of discretion, absolutely, and as Ms. May observed, does write an annual report on topics of his or her choosing within the confines of the broad mandate, so, yes, the commissioner could issue a report in 2023, 2024, 2025. Of course, what this does is make it absolutely mandatory that the commissioner do so.

• (1905)

Mr. Dan Albas: Okay. It's like when you have a brand new car—you're going to drive it. I appreciate the answer.

The second question is that there's no funding in this legislation for that. We've seen the government draw criticism because it has not funded the Auditor General sufficiently. Does Bill C-12 give any extra resources? Obviously, if the environment commissioner were forced to do this—and as I said, they would probably do it anyway—that would draw resources from other activities. Is there any money in this?

Mr. Vincent Ngan: John, I can answer.

Mr. John Moffet: Thanks, Vincent. Yes.

Mr. Vincent Ngan: The last time the commissioner of environment and sustainable development released a report was in 2017. The next report, highly likely, will be released between now and 2024.

Before the tabling of the bill, Environment and Climate Change Canada conducted consultations with the office of the commissioner of environment and sustainable development. They are comfortable with the existing reference levels they have for continuing to conduct the work. We have not heard of any concerns or issues relating to whether or not their existing resources can support this work. To make a long story short, just to answer your question, based on our consultations there are no red flags.

Mr. Dan Albas: Actually, Mr. Ngan, you were very [*Technical difficulty—Editor*] and you should be commended for that, but the question was, is there any additional money in Bill C-12 now that the government is making this mandatory through this amendment?

Mr. Vincent Ngan: Based on the consultation with the office, we think no additional resources are required to discharge this role.

Mr. Dan Albas: Okay, but that means they're going to have to cut something else, because you're making it mandatory—not you, personally, but this amendment. Are there any additional monies levied? I do know you can write into legislation a particular sum.

Mr. Vincent Ngan: Mr. Albas, I agree with where you're coming from, your concern about resources. That said, they have not expressed any concerns about using existing reference levels to discharge this. I think this is a hypothetical scenario. You're asking whether additional resources should be given to them through this legislation, so—

Mr. Dan Albas: I'm just worried that something's going to get cut. I do appreciate your trying to answer the question, though I don't think you did. As far as I can see, there's nothing written in here to outline that there will be an extra allocation in this legislation.

Mr. John Moffet: You're right; the short answer is no. The government has not allocated additional money at this time for the CESD to fulfill these roles. You're correct.

(Amendment agreed to: yeas 7; nays 0 [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

(Clause 24 as amended agreed to: yeas 7; nays 4)

(Clause 25 agreed to on division)

(On clause 26)

The Chair: On amendment G-16, go ahead, Ms. Saks.

• (1910)

Ms. Ya'ara Saks (York Centre, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I'd like to introduce an amendment to add new subclause 26(2) to Bill C-12, the Canadian net-zero emissions accountability act. This motion clarifies that any regulation made by the Governor in Council under the act “must align with the international standards to which Canada adheres”.

This improves the act by ensuring that the regulations made under the act align with Canada's international commitments. It's something that we've heard a lot about.

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

(Clause 26 as amended agreed to on division)

(On clause 27)

The Chair: Mr. Bittle.

Mr. Chris Bittle: Mr. Chair, this is just a minor amendment.

We sent the language to the clerk in both official languages, I hope, and she can correct me if I'm incorrect. Hopefully, we can send that around.

The Chair: We have sent it.

Mr. Chris Bittle: Excellent.

It's amending clause 27 by replacing line 20, on page 10, with the following line—and I won't read it out, but I'll explain it.

The amendment removes “subsection 7(3)” from clause 27 and clarifies that the documents produced under the act are not subject to the Statutory Instruments Act. The Statutory Instruments Act provides for the examination, registration, publication and parliamentary scrutiny of regulations or other similar instruments, and these requirements are not appropriate for the types of documents produced under the act.

Proposed subsection 7(3) is removed from clause—

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Mr. Chair, I have a point of order.

The Chair: You have the floor, Ms. Pauzé.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Since the interpreter doesn't have the amendment—

The Chair: I understand.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Could Mr. Bittle read it a little more slowly?

[*English*]

The Chair: With whatever you're saying, could you say it slowly? The interpreters are having trouble.

Mr. Chris Bittle: Sure. I'm happy to go a little slower.

I wasn't reading the amendment; I was just giving the rationale.

It's a very brief amendment. I don't know the similarity in French and English, but I—

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Ms. Pauzé, you have the amendment in front of you. I believe we all have the amendment in front of us in both official languages. Mr. Bittle is simply explaining certain things.

Mr. Bittle, you may continue, more slowly if possible.

[*English*]

Mr. Chris Bittle: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I'll just pick up from where I left off, that "subsection 7(3)" is removed from clause 27, because it changed in the course of our review. Originally, it was referred in the minister's authority to extend the time limit on setting the 2030 target. It was then replaced by government amendment G- 3 with a new subclause 7(3), which provides that each greenhouse gas emissions target "must be as ambitious as Canada's most recent nationally determined contribution communicated target under the Paris Agreement."

Basically, since the Statutory Instruments Act would not apply in this situation, "subsection 7(3)" should be removed in order to clarify, based on amendments we've made before.

• (1915)

[Translation]

The Chair: You have the floor, Ms. Pauzé.

Then we will give the floor to Mr. Albas.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Mr. Chair, I'd also like to add an amendment, which was just sent to Ms. Crandall. I would like to know—

The Chair: Is it a subamendment to Mr. Bittle's amendment?

Ms. Monique Pauzé: No, it isn't.

The Chair: First we will finish debating Mr. Bittle's amendment.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: All right, Mr. Chair.

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Albas.

Mr. Dan Albas: Mr. Chair, this just shows that this process, as I've said, has been compressed. The government, in its hurry to make a deal with the NDP, didn't do its homework, and now is making these last moment Hail Mary-type passes to make sure that the bill is somewhat functional.

This is not a great process. Quite honestly, someone on the government side should be asking questions about why they can't get both sides of the equation to equal.

The Chair: That's noted.

(Amendment agreed to: yeas 7; nays 4 [See Minutes of Proceedings])

The Chair: Madam Pauzé, you have an amendment.

[Translation]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Yes, Mr. Chair.

Has everyone received it, Ms. Crandall?

The Clerk: No, Ms. Pauzé.

[English]

I'm just getting it ready.

[Translation]

I will send it in a few seconds.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Okay.

The Clerk: It has now been sent.

The Chair: Ms. Pauzé, I'm told that your amendment does not fall under clause 27, it becomes a new clause, clause 27.1.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Exactly. That's how it was written, 27.1, right?

The Chair: Yes, but clause 27 hasn't carried yet, Ms. Pauzé.

Do we need to vote on that first, Ms. Thivierge?

Ms. Émilie Thivierge: Yes, we need to vote on clause 27.

The Chair: All right.

Ms. Pauzé, we will debate your amendment after Ms. May's.

Is it Ms. May's, correct, Ms. Thivierge?

Ms. Émilie Thivierge: Yes, that's correct, because the committee received Ms. May's amendment before Ms. Pauzé's.

The Chair: Perfect.

May we vote on clause 27 as amended, Madam Clerk?

[English]

Mr. Albas, I think your hand is up from before.

Mr. Dan Albas: Mr. Chair. I'm sorry.

(Clause 27 as amended agreed to on division)

• (1920)

The Chair: Now we'll go to PV-35.

Ms. May.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Chair, I think committee members will recall that a number of the few witnesses we had spoke to the question of justiciability to make sure that this bill could have some measures that have accountability. Unfortunately, this was paired with my amendment that said the minister must achieve the targets. However, there remain a number of mandatory duties: the minister must prepare targets, must set milestone years and must take into account science.

Subclauses 7(1), 7(2) and 7(4), clause 8 and subclauses 9(1) and 9(2) include mandatory duties that could engage an application for judicial review. That's why I'm proposing clause 27.1, which was supported by, I think, West Coast Environmental Law and by a number of other organizations. It provides some guidance that this legislation anticipates judicial review of ministerial obligations, and says that where someone could seek judicial review within the Federal Court and relief, it's available under subsections 18(1) and 18.1(3) of the Federal Courts Act.

I hope members will find that this amendment deserves support so it can become part of Bill C-12.

(Amendment negatived: nays 5; yeas 2)

The Chair: Now we go to Madam Pauzé's proposed new clause 27.1.

[Translation]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: I believe everyone has received the proposed new clause 27.1.

This proposed new clause would require that a thorough review be conducted of the act's provisions and operation five years after the act comes into force. This would be done by a committee of either the Senate or the House of Commons, or both—it would be a joint committee. Parliament or one of the chambers, whatever the case may be, would set up or constitute that committee for that purpose.

So the Bloc Québécois is proposing this final amendment because it is in keeping with our values. While we were supportive of the work that went into clause-by-clause consideration and we acted with due diligence in that respect, I share the view of many here, as well as Mr. Albas and Ms. May, that Bill C-12 should have gone to committee so that there would have been greater opportunity for more testimony and, more importantly, more time. It was foreseeable that questions would come up, that procedural issues would arise, and that we would receive a whole host of briefs and correspondence.

There's nothing unusual about the amendment I'm proposing, and I think all members of the committee are well aware of that, given the complexity of the subject matter this bill addresses. The quality of our environment is at stake. It is about our planet and our health. We're experiencing a drought right now. Quebec farmers are worried about their crops. Farmers feed us. So this is an important issue.

We feel it's critically important to be able to do this review exercise. A first review would happen in 2026. So we would have the commissioner of environment and sustainable development's report in 2024, and the 2023 and 2025 progress reports, which would provide data for the review.

In our view, it's all the more important to include this clause because we're in a climate emergency. I think everyone recognizes that. We need to be able to rectify this, not just in terms of what Bill C-12 contains about plans and reports, but in terms of the legislation itself.

I will conclude by quoting Lord Deben, who chairs the Committee on Climate Change in the United Kingdom. Lord Deben says that there must be nothing less than a constant reminder. We must hammer home the reality and point out over and over again where climate change denial is leading us and the negative economic effects that flow from turning a blind eye. Canada needs to fully grasp what its behaviours and inaction on climate change are causing in other countries around the world.

I would add that every time we fail, Canadians continue to pollute more.

• (1925)

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Pauzé.

The vote is called on Ms. Pauzé's amendment about adding a new clause, clause 27.1.

(Amendment agreed to: yeas 6; nays, 5 [See Minutes of Proceedings])

[English]

The Chair: Congratulations, Madam Pauzé.

(Clause 28 agreed to on division)

(On clause 29)

The Chair: We're on PV-36.

Ms. May.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Chair, if in discussing this amendment anyone from the government side is prepared to explain the way the current law is drafted, I'd appreciate that. Let me just explain what my amendment does.

The current language for proposed section 29, "Coming into Force", states:

Section 23 comes into force on a day to be fixed by order of the Governor in Council.

On the question of why it would be that the aspect of the role of the Minister of Finance and the report of the Minister of Finance, of which much has been made in the way this bill has been promoted, why is that section carved out from the coming into force of the bill? Proposed section 23 would only come into force, under this, on the day fixed by order of the Governor in Council. We'd like the entire act to come into force the day after it has received royal assent. It makes it cleaner.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. May.

Mr. Albas.

Mr. Dan Albas: I have a question for Mr. Ngan and Mr. Moffet.

Is there anything that specifically would cause issues with this act if this amendment were to be put in place? Is there anything with time schedules in terms of reporting? I can't think of any, but I'd like to hear from you.

Mr. John Moffet: First of all, as a matter of standard judicial interpretation, the entire act will come into force on royal assent unless otherwise provided for in the act—the whole act, except for this provision.

On the reason for this provision, I'm going to defer to my colleague from the Department of Finance, who has been patiently waiting to address questions around this particular provision.

Mr. Millar.

Mr. Samuel Millar (Director General, Corporate Finance, Natural Resources and Environment, Economic Development and Corporate Finance, Department of Finance): Thank you very much for the question.

This particular provision, clause 23 of the bill, deals with a report related to government operations and financial risks and opportunities of government operations. In a way, it's a little distinct from the rest of the bill, which deals more broadly with the economy writ large.

The logic of the coming into force is that we wanted to make sure that this report reflects the very latest in reporting that is currently under development around financial risks and opportunities. This clause would allow the government to take stock of that and make sure that the report is aligned to the maximum extent possible.

• (1930)

Mr. Dan Albas: Mr. Millar, I do appreciate that, but ultimately this creates a bit of a loophole. Technically the law would be the law of the land, but the government would then get to choose when to start applying it after the Governor in Council says that it's coming into force. Is that correct?

Mr. Samuel Millar: That is correct. It's also a fairly standard element of bills.

Mr. Dan Albas: Well, governments love to keep discretion... What's the old term? Anyway, I think they wanted to keep that discretion to themselves.

(Amendment negated: nays 6; yeas 5)

Mr. Dan Albas: We were close that time.

The Chair: Yes, that makes it exciting—playoff hockey, in a way, there.

(Clause 29 agreed to: yeas 7; nays 4)

(On clause 2)

The Chair: The committee will remember that we agreed to postpone the study of clause 2. We are now ready to go back to clause 2.

The amendments that were submitted in relation to clause 2 start on page 1 of the package with BQ-1.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Chair, if I may interrupt, I was previously informed that my amendments on the preamble would not be in order. I want to save you and others time, and I just ask that when it comes to that, because I am called to other business in the House, you withdraw my amendment.

The Chair: Is that PV-37?

Ms. Elizabeth May: Yes.

The Chair: Is that your last amendment?

Ms. Elizabeth May: Yes.

The Chair: Do we have unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Amendment withdrawn)

Ms. Elizabeth May: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

• (1935)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Excuse me, Mr. Chair.

[*English*]

The Chair: You also have PV-1, Ms. May.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Excuse me, Mr. Chair, but I raised my hand.

The Chair: Yes, I will come back to you, Ms. Pauzé.

[*English*]

Madam May, are you still there?

[*Translation*]

Ms. May seems to be having technical difficulties.

You have the floor, Ms. Pauzé. Would you like to speak to BQ-1?

Ms. Monique Pauzé: No, that's why I raised my hand. I wanted to inform the clerk that I am giving my speaking time to Ms. Michaud from here on in. Also, since it's the last time I am going to speak on the bill, I'm just going to say a quick word.

First, I thank the committee for agreeing to at least one of the Bloc Québécois amendments. The fact remains that Canada is making choices that are concerning with this bill, which frankly has no teeth.

In many respects, we are ignoring what economic experts keep saying, which is that this is unacceptable, we need to act, and we have a climate emergency. Is it not the government's role to protect the common good? Will we overcome the challenge of climate change, or will we force it on future generations with only lip service to that responsibility?

It seems to me that the environment is part of the common good, and I find that the Bloc Québécois has kept its word on climate responsibility. It introduced a bill through Ms. Michaud, Bill C-215, which was, however, rejected. We reached out to the government in this study for the common good, for more transparency, more democracy, more rigour and more accountability.

The votes I cast for the Bloc Québécois were therefore not coloured by compromises that, let's face it, did not significantly improve this bill. As the expression goes, we remained "straight as an arrow". The must-have elements, which would have made this bill a true climate bill, are unfortunately missing.

I'm a little worried for all of us, for Canada, for the future, and for my children, because Canadians are going to continue to warm up the planet.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Pauzé. Once again, I congratulate you on the passage of your amendment.

Ms. Michaud, I invite you to introduce amendment BQ-1.

The Clerk: Excuse me, Mr. Chair, but I have not yet received the form from the whip confirming that Ms. Michaud is replacing Ms. Pauzé.

The Chair: Since we did not receive the form, Ms. Pauzé, you have to introduce amendment BQ-1 yourself.

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): You should have received the form, Madam Clerk. However, Ms. Pauzé can introduce the amendment in the meantime.

The Chair: Ms. Michaud, I would indeed ask that you please proceed as such, because the meeting is coming to an end.

Madam Clerk, when you get the email from Ms. Michaud, could you please let us know?

Ms. Pauzé, you may now introduce amendment BQ-1.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: I will read it, and that may give the clerk time to receive the form.

We want to define the word “commissioner”. The amendment reads:

commissioner means the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development appointed under subsection 15.1(1) of the Auditor General Act. (Commissaire)

We want to define that word because it comes up in the bill. It's important to determine who we are talking about.

The Chair: Thank you.

The vote is called on BQ-1.

[English]

(Amendment negated: nays 10; yeas 1)

The Chair: We'll go to G-1.

Ms. Saks.

Ms. Ya'ara Saks: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, colleagues, for hanging in there.

I'm pleased to introduce an amendment to clause 2 of the bill. This amendment adds a definition of “Indigenous knowledge”, which means “the Indigenous knowledge of the Indigenous peoples of Canada.”

Other amendments propose that indigenous knowledge be considered at various stages in the planning and reporting on our progress to net zero. This amendment provides a definition for that term wherever it is used throughout the act.

• (1940)

The Chair: Ms. McLeod.

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Thank you, Chair.

This government talks about the UN declaration, but this appears to be very symbolic. There was no conversation and there were no indigenous witnesses. Of course, there were some briefs. To throw in terms at this stage that don't have appropriate testimony.... Although it's important, I want to highlight the complete lack of consultation in spite of the words to the contrary.

(Amendment agreed to: yeas 7; nays 0)

The Chair: The ruling I'm making at this moment applies to PV-1 and BQ-2, as they are identical.

The amendment seeks to make a substantive modification to add the year 2025 as a milestone year in the interpretation clause. As *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, third edition, states on page 773:

The interpretation clause of a bill is not the place to propose a substantive amendment to a bill unless other amendments have been adopted that would

warrant amendments to the interpretation clause. In addition, an amendment to the interpretation clause of a bill that was referred to a committee after second reading must always relate to the bill and may neither exceed the scope of nor be contrary to the principle of the bill.

In my opinion, the proposed amendment is a substantive amendment to the interpretation clause. Since no amendment to the bill has been adopted to justify amending the definition of “milestone year”, I rule PV-1 inadmissible, and BQ-2 inadmissible at the same time.

Go ahead, Madam Clerk.

The Clerk: I just wanted to confirm that Madam Michaud has been substituted in now.

The Chair: Thank you.

Next is BQ-3.

Madam Michaud.

[Translation]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

It's no more complicated than that. We're working on the definitions.

We wanted to define the Paris Agreement, simply because the bill mentions it. In our view, it's pretty important to do that, since it's mentioned in terms of meeting the 2030 targets. All nationally determined contributions also fall under the Paris Agreement. So we just want to define the Paris Agreement.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Michaud.

The vote is called on BQ-3.

[English]

(Amendment negated: nays 10; yeas 1)

The Chair: Shall clause 2 carry?

Ms. Émilie Thivierge: Mr. Chair, it would be “as amended”.

The Chair: Thank you, Madam Thivierge.

I don't know what I'd do without our legislative clerk.

Shall clause 2 as amended carry?

• (1945)

Mr. Dan Albas: On division.

(Clause 2 as amended agreed to on division)

The Chair: Now we go to the preamble.

The amendments proposed to the preamble start on page 112, so we go back to PV-37. Unfortunately, PV-37 is inadmissible as no amendment to the bill to justify amending the preamble has been adopted.

Ms. Émilie Thivierge: Mr. Chair, I'm sorry to interrupt.

I believe it was withdrawn by unanimous consent.

The Chair: It was withdrawn. I even wrote that on PV-37 in my own handwriting and didn't see that.

Madam Thivierge, thank you for mentioning that.

We go now to G-17.

Mr. Baker.

Mr. Yvan Baker: Mr. Chair, I'm pleased to introduce an amendment to add a new paragraph to the preamble of the act. This paragraph states that the Government of Canada has international and national climate change reporting obligations and that it "wishes to improve transparency and accountability" by increasing "domestic reporting obligations".

This amendment situates the planning and reporting obligations introduced by this act in the broader ecosystem of domestic and international obligations to plan or report on our progress in addressing climate change.

The Chair: Thank you.

The vote is called on G-17.

Mr. Dan Albas: On division.

Mr. Yvan Baker: Madam Michaud has her hand up.

The Chair: Well, the vote was called. Was her hand up before I called the vote?

Mr. Dan Albas: Let her be heard. It's probably a better thing to have a person heard.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Ms. Michaud, I ask that you be brief, as I have already called the vote.

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'm sorry I raised my hand a little too late.

I believe it's good that we're talking about nationally determined contributions again, since that's the target the government set in the bill. They promised to include the new 40% to 45% greenhouse gas reduction target, but they didn't deliver, which is disappointing. Of course, they will define that in the preamble.

To be honest, I must say that I would have voted against the amendment, because we wanted a real target in the bill.

The Chair: Ms. Michaud, please keep your remarks short, because I have already called the vote.

Ms. Kristina Michaud: The one time the Bloc Québécois voted against an amendment, the minister held that against us during question period in the House of Commons. I think that's reprehensible.

I will reflect on my vote on this amendment. I think it's shameful that we are talking about the nationally determined contribution in the bill, when the target still hasn't been set.

The Chair: All right.

Thank you.

[*English*]

(Amendment agreed to: yeas 6; nays 5 [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: On NDP-8, we have Mr. Bachrach.

Mr. Taylor Bachrach: Mr. Chair, I'm going to have to find it here in my list, because my—

The Chair: Would you like me to read it?

Mr. Taylor Bachrach: Sure. In the interest of time, that would be helpful.

The Chair: It's that Bill C-12, in the preamble, be amended by replacing line 6, on page 2, with the following:

change, including by taking Indigenous knowledge into account when carrying out the purposes of this Act;

Mr. Taylor Bachrach: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I think it's fairly self-explanatory. This is to recognize the importance of indigenous knowledge being taken into account, as the amendment states.

The Chair: I'm calling the vote, unless somebody wants to propose that it pass on division.

Nobody does. Okay.

(Amendment agreed to: yeas 11; nays 0)

The Chair: We will go now to NDP-9.

Go ahead, Mr. Bachrach.

• (1950)

Mr. Taylor Bachrach: This amendment inserts the following wording:

Whereas Parliament recognizes that it is the responsibility of the present generation to minimize impacts of climate change on future generations;

I believe this is an incredibly important insertion into the bill to clearly state why we are undertaking this important work.

The Chair: I've been advised by the clerks that NDP-9 is inadmissible as no amendment to the bill to justify amending the preamble has been adopted.

The amendment seeks to make a substantive modification by adding to the preamble that "Parliament recognizes that it is the responsibility of the present generation to minimize impacts of climate change on future generations", an element which does not appear in the bill.

Unfortunately, while it's a good sentiment, I have to rule it inadmissible.

We will now go to NDP-10.

Mr. Bachrach.

Mr. Taylor Bachrach: Mr. Chair, I don't know—

The Chair: I ruled it inadmissible. You can challenge this if you'd like.

Mr. Taylor Bachrach: I won't challenge it at this time.

The Chair: I'm sorry about that. As I said, it's a nice sentiment. Unfortunately, I can't accept it, based on the advice of the legislative clerks.

However, you still have the floor for NDP-10.

Mr. Taylor Bachrach: Moving on to NDP-10, this is to insert the words "and ambitious action" in the sentence, which would read,

Whereas climate change is a global problem that requires immediate and ambitious action by all governments in Canada as well as by industry, non-governmental organizations and individual Canadians;

It's similar to one of our previous amendments. This is to emphasize the need for ambition in conducting this work.

(Amendment agreed to on division)

The Chair: Shall the preamble carry?

Mr. Dan Albas: On division.

Ms. Émilie Thivierge: Sorry, Mr. Chair. It's the preamble as amended.

The Chair: Yes. What would we do without our legislative clerk?

Shall the preamble as amended carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Dan Albas: I'll try it again. As amended now, the vote is on division.

(Preamble as amended agreed to on division)

The Chair: Shall the short title carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Dan Albas: On division.

The Chair: Shall the title carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Dan Albas: On division.

The Chair: Shall the bill as amended carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Dan Albas: On division.

The Chair: Shall the chair report the bill as amended to the House?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Dan Albas: On division.

The Chair: Shall the committee order a reprint of the bill as amended for the use of the House at report stage?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Dan Albas: Sure.

The Chair: On division, you mean.

Mr. Dan Albas: On division.

The Chair: Okay. Got it.

Colleagues, this has been a great accomplishment. I know that not everything was the object of consensus, but I congratulate and thank all the members, the witnesses, the interpreters and the clerk and legislative clerks who allowed us to get this bill through committee clause by clause. Thank you.

Madam Clerk, is there anything else we need to do before we adjourn?

The Clerk: No.

The Chair: Do I have a motion to adjourn?

Mr. Dan Albas: So moved.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Thank you again, colleagues. Have a good evening, what's left of it.

The meeting is adjourned.

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