



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
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45th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

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# Standing Committee on Finance

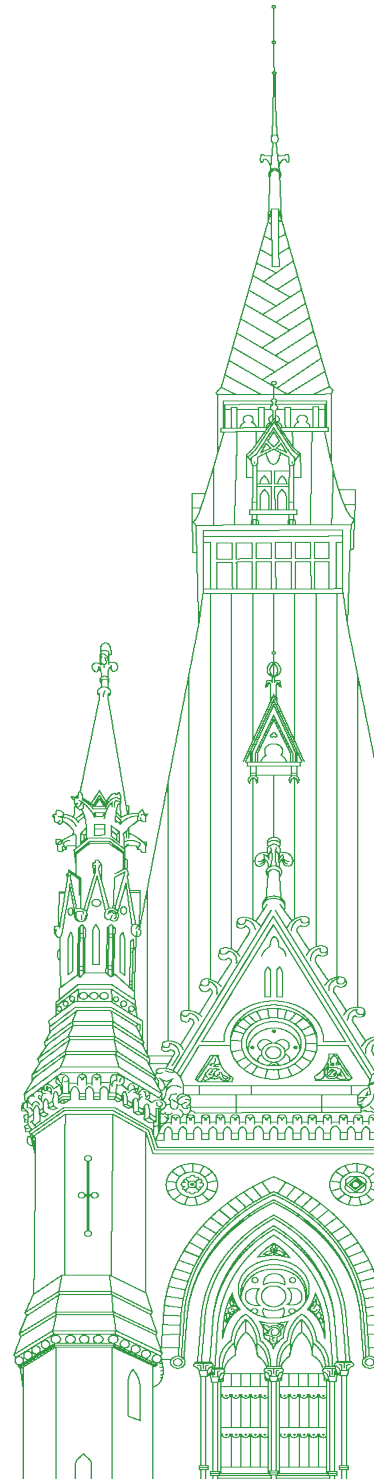
EVIDENCE

**NUMBER 001**

Monday, June 16, 2025

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Chair: Karina Gould





## Standing Committee on Finance

Monday, June 16, 2025

• (1105)

[Translation]

**The Clerk of the Committee (Jean-Luc Plourde):** Honourable committee members, I see that we have quorum.

[English]

Pursuant to Standing Order 106(3)(a), as the clerk of the committee, I will preside over the election of the chair and vice-chairs.

[Translation]

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

[English]

We can now proceed to the election of the chair.

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

[Translation]

Go ahead, Mr. Garon.

**Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ):** I would like to propose the Honourable Karina Gould.

[English]

**The Clerk:** Are there any further motions?

I see none.

[Translation]

I will now put the motion to the committee.

It has been moved by Mr. Garon that Ms. Karina Gould be elected chair of the committee.

[English]

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

(Motions agreed to)

[Translation]

**The Clerk:** I declare the motion carried and Ms. Karina Gould duly elected chair of the committee.

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

**The Clerk:** I invite Ms. Gould to take the chair.

**The Chair (Hon. Karina Gould (Burlington, Lib.)):** Hello, everyone.

Thank you very much for your support. I look forward to working with you.

[English]

If the committee is in agreement, I will invite the clerk to preside over the election of the vice-chairs.

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

[Translation]

I am now ready to receive motions for the position of first vice-chair.

Go ahead, Ms. Cobena.

[English]

**Sandra Cobena (Newmarket—Aurora, CPC):** I would like to nominate MP Jasraj Hallan.

[Translation]

**The Clerk:** It has been moved by Ms. Cobena that Mr. Jasraj Hallan be elected first vice-chair of the committee.

[English]

Are there any further motions? Seeing none, I will now put the motion to the committee.

(Motion agreed to)

[Translation]

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

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

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

I am ready to receive motions for the position of second vice-chair.

Go ahead, Mr. Turnbull.

[English]

**Ryan Turnbull (Whitby, Lib.):** I know it's a slightly easy decision with the Bloc, but I will say that Jean-Denis and I have worked together on past committees. I have found him to be a fantastic partner, not always in agreeing on issues, obviously, but I think he will make a great vice-chair. I would respectfully and humbly nominate him to be the vice-chair for the Bloc.

**The Clerk:** It has been moved by Mr. Ryan Turnbull that Mr. Jean-Denis Garon be elected as second vice-chair of the committee.

[Translation]

Are there any other motions?

(Motion agreed to)

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

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

[English]

**The Chair:** Congratulations to the two vice-chairs. I'm looking forward to, again, working with all of you.

Welcome to meeting number one of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance.

Before we begin, I would ask all in-person participants to read the guidelines written on the updated cards on the table. These measures are in place to help prevent audio and feedback incidents and to protect the health and safety of all participants, including the interpreters. You will also notice a QR code on the card, which links to a short awareness video.

[Translation]

Today's meeting is taking place in a hybrid format.

I would like to remind participants of the following points. First of all, before speaking, please wait until I recognize you by name. I would also ask committee members to raise their hand if they wish to speak. The clerk and I will do our best to maintain the speaking order. Finally, all comments should be addressed through the chair.

• (1110)

[English]

With the agreement of the committee, we can proceed to the consideration of routine motions. The committee clerk has circulated a draft of routine motions that the committee adopted in the last Parliament.

As a reminder, a motion must be moved by a committee member. It is easier to consider the routine motions one by one.

Mr. Turnbull, go ahead.

**Ryan Turnbull:** I'm going to read, one by one, the routine motions into the record. The first is with regard to analyst services. I move:

That the committee retain, as needed and at the discretion of the Chair, the services of one or more analysts from the Library of Parliament to assist it in its work.

Should I go through all of them, Chair, or would you like to do them one at a time?

**The Chair :** One at a time sounds good.

Is everyone in agreement with this?

(Motion agreed to)

**Ryan Turnbull:** The next motion deals with the subcommittee on agenda and procedure. I move:

That the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure be established and be composed of four members, the Chair and one member from each recognized party, as designated by each party's whip; and that the subcommittee work in a spirit of collaboration.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair :** If you don't mind, I'd like to invite the analysts up, please. Thank you so much.

Please continue, Mr. Turnbull.

**Pat Kelly (Calgary Crowfoot, CPC):** I have a brief point of order, if I may.

You were asking for consent to adopt the motion...?

**The Chair :** That is correct, yes.

**Pat Kelly:** All right.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Good. Thanks.

**Ryan Turnbull:** The next motion is about meeting without a quorum. I move:

That the Chair be authorized to hold meetings to receive evidence and to have that evidence published when a quorum is not present, provided that at least four members are present, including two members of the opposition parties and two members of the government party.

(Motion agreed to)

**Ryan Turnbull:** Next is a motion about travel. I move:

That, when travelling outside the Parliamentary Precinct: (a) the meeting begin after 15 minutes, regardless of whether quorum is present; (b) no substantive motion may be moved during such meetings.

(Motion agreed to)

**Ryan Turnbull:** This motion deals with time for opening remarks and questioning of witnesses. I move:

That witnesses be given five (5) minutes for their opening statements; that whenever possible, witnesses provide the committee with their opening statements 72 hours in advance; that, at the discretion of the Chair, during the questioning of witnesses, there be allocated six (6) minutes for the first questioner of each party as follows:

First round:

Conservative Party

Liberal Party

Bloc Québécois

For the second and subsequent rounds, the order and time for questioning be as follows:

Conservative Party, five (5) minutes

Liberal Party, five (5) minutes

Bloc Québécois, two and a half (2.5) minutes

Conservative Party, five (5) minutes

Liberal Party, five (5) minutes

(Motion agreed to)

**Ryan Turnbull:** I'll continue.

The next motion is on document distribution. I move:

That only the clerk of the committee be authorized to distribute documents to members of the committee and only when the documents are in both official languages; and that all documents submitted to the committee in both official languages that do not come from a federal department or members' offices, or that have not been translated by the Translation Bureau, be sent for linguistic review by the Translation Bureau before being distributed to members, and that the witnesses be advised accordingly.

(Motion agreed to)

**Ryan Turnbull:** The next motion is on working meals. I move:

That the clerk of the committee, at the discretion of the Chair, be authorized to make the necessary arrangements to provide working meals for the committee and its subcommittees.

(Motion agreed to)

**Ryan Turnbull:** The next motion is on travel accommodation and living expenses of witnesses. I move:

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

(Motion agreed to)

**Ryan Turnbull:** The next motion is on access to in camera meetings. I move:

That, unless otherwise ordered, each committee member be allowed to be accompanied by one staff member at in camera meetings and that one additional person from each House officer's office be allowed to be present.

That, during in camera meetings, committee members may be informed by the committee Chair of the MPs who have been designated as substitutes for permanent members, in order to know which MPs are authorized to speak and vote during these committee meetings. That only those who have been recognized and identified as such be authorized to speak, in keeping with the usual agreed rules of order and decorum.

(Motion agreed to)

• (1115)

**Ryan Turnbull:** The next motion is on transcripts of in camera meetings. I move:

That one copy of the transcript of each in camera meeting be securely retained by the committee clerk for consultation by members of the committee or by their staff; and that the analysts assigned to the committee have access to the in camera transcripts.

(Motion agreed to)

**Ryan Turnbull:** This motion deals with notices of motions. I move:

That a 48-hour notice, interpreted as two nights, be required for any substantive motion to be moved in committee, unless the substantive motion relates directly to business then under consideration, provided that:

- (a) the notice be filed with the clerk of the committee no later than 4:00 p.m. from Monday to Thursday, and no later than 2:30 p.m. on Friday;
- (b) the motion be distributed to members and the offices of the whips of each recognized party in both official languages by the clerk on the same day the said notice was transmitted if it was received no later than the deadline hour;
- (c) notices received after the deadline hour or on non-business days be deemed to have been received during the next business day.

(Motion agreed to)

**Ryan Turnbull:** The next motion is on orders of reference from the House respecting bills. I move:

That in relation to orders of reference from the House respecting bills:

(a) the clerk of the committee shall, upon the committee receiving such an order of reference, write to each member who is not a member of a caucus represented on the committee to invite those members to file with the clerk of the committee, in both official languages, any amendments to the bill, which is the subject of the said order, which they would suggest that the committee consider;

(b) suggested amendments filed, pursuant to paragraph (a), at least 48 hours prior to the start of clause-by-clause consideration of the bill to which the amendments relate shall be deemed to be proposed during the said consideration, provided that the committee may, by motion, vary this deadline in respect of a given bill; and

(c) during the clause-by-clause consideration of a bill, the Chair shall allow a member who filed suggested amendments, pursuant to paragraph (a), an opportunity to make brief representations in support of them.

(Motion agreed to)

**Ryan Turnbull:** The next motion is on technical tests for witnesses. I move:

That the clerk inform each witness who is to appear before the committee that the House Administration support team must conduct technical tests to check the connectivity and the equipment used to ensure the best possible sound quality; and that the Chair advise the committee, at the start of each meeting, of any witness who did not perform the required technical tests.

(Motion agreed to)

**Ryan Turnbull:** On whips' access to digital binders, I move:

That the clerk of the committee be authorized to grant access to the committee's digital binder to the offices of the whips of each recognized party.

(Motion agreed to)

**Ryan Turnbull:** On maintenance of order and decorum, I move:

That, during meetings, the Chair, if necessary, use her prerogative to suspend the meeting to maintain the order and decorum necessary to ensure the application of the House of Commons' policies on workplace health and safety.

(Motion agreed to)

[Translation]

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr. Turnbull.

[English]

That was a good read-in.

Under the chair's prerogative, I'm going to suspend the meeting for five minutes to speak with the clerk. We'll return to business in five minutes.

Thank you very much.

• (1115)

(Pause)

• (1120)

**The Chair:** I call the meeting back to order.

Go ahead, Mr. Hallan.

**Jasraj Hallan (Calgary East, CPC):** Thank you, Chair. First, congratulations on your new role.

Since we're in committee business, as you said before we suspended, I want to move a motion.

**Ryan Turnbull:** I have a point of order, Chair.

**The Chair:** I don't think I've said that yet.

**Jasraj Hallan:** I believe you said something along those lines before we suspended.

**Ryan Turnbull:** I have a point of order, Chair.

**The Chair:** Go ahead, Mr. Turnbull.

**Ryan Turnbull:** I apologize for interrupting.

I just want to clarify something before Mr. Hallan speaks. I would appreciate the clarification. Are we in committee business, Chair? I don't think Mr. Hallan is able to move a motion if we're not in committee business.

**Pat Kelly:** On that point of order....

**The Chair:** If you give me a moment, I'm going to suspend for a moment to confer with the clerk.

Thank you.

● (1120)

(Pause)

● (1125)

**The Chair:** Since I don't think I said that specifically, but I did say something loosely, I will formally ask committee members if they want to move to committee business at this point in time.

Go ahead, Mr. Kelly.

**Pat Kelly:** If I may, this is on the point of order. We were, in fact, passing committee business. The meeting was called, we elected a chair, and then you, as chair, immediately entertained a series of motions that were committee business.

I think it is clear that we are conducting committee business at this committee meeting.

**The Chair:** Okay. I will confer with the clerk and get back to you in a moment.

Okay. I had asked the committee if we wanted to go to routine motions, which was with regard to the organization of the committee, and hadn't yet opened it up for future business relating to the committee. The committee had agreed at that time to discuss organizational business. However, I will ask the committee right now if we want to move to any additional items for this committee meeting. We can have a conversation about that.

Do we want to open it up to any further committee business?

**Pat Kelly:** I move that we move to committee business.

**The Chair:** All right. We will put this to a vote, then.

(Motion agreed to: yeas 5; nays 4)

**The Chair:** Based on the result of the vote, we are moving to committee business with Mr. Hallan.

**Jasraj Hallan:** Since we're moving into committee business now, I'd like to move my motion:

That, given that Canadian families and small businesses have to budget before they spend and given the economic uncertainty facing Canada, that it be reported to the House the committee calls on the Minister of Finance to table a budget before Parliament closes for the summer.

We do have this on notice to the clerk, in both official languages.

The Prime Minister said he was a man with a plan, before the election and during the election. We heard that multiple times, but it turned out that it was not true.

**Ryan Turnbull:** I have a point of order, Chair.

My understanding is that committee business is conducted in camera.

● (1130)

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

There's another point of order, and then I'll confer with the clerk.

**An hon. member:** A point of order—

[Translation]

**Jean-Denis Garon:** As far as I know, we have not yet received the motion in both official languages from the clerk so, as a francophone, I cannot fully judge its merits.

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

**Jean-Denis Garon:** Madam Chair, we just received the motion by email.

**The Chair:** Yes, the clerk just sent it by email.

[English]

Mr. Turnbull, my understanding is that committee business can take place in this way unless it's of a secure nature.

I will turn to Mr. Hallan.

**Jasraj Hallan:** I'll continue.

Once again, the Prime Minister, before and during the election, said multiple times that he was a man with a plan. He said that he had some type of plan to get this country back on track. However, he helped over the last five years, as Justin Trudeau's main economic adviser, to cause the worst inflationary crisis in Canadian history with the most rapid interest-rate hikes in Canadian history. He supported a consumer and an industrial carbon tax that went up every single year. That made the cost of food go up every single year and forced more and more families to go to food banks. In fact, it doubled food bank usage in this country, making the rate of inflation on food go up faster than any other country in the G7. They made more and more Canadians go into insolvency because they doubled the cost of housing.

This is the same Prime Minister who, over the last five years, caused all this pain and misery. Then he turned around and said that he had a plan. A budget is a plan. At first he said that there would be no budget. Then, through Conservative pressure, he said that there would be a mini-budget. Now, supposedly, we're supposed to have a full-on fall budget, but the one in four families who are skipping meals, who are standing in food bank lines, can't wait for that. Canadians are desperate to know the state of Canada's finances after this government has already promised.... The Prime Minister has promised that he's already going to spend more than Justin Trudeau. In fact, the total debt on Canadians today is around \$1.27 trillion, and the Prime Minister has promised that he's going to spend more than Justin Trudeau right away, with about \$600 billion in new spending.

Canadians need to know what's going to happen to their taxes. They need to know what's going to happen to Canada's credit rating with all this expenditure. We all know that, on this Prime Minister's advice, they drove out around \$600 billion of good Canadian investment to other places, mostly to the U.S.

Under the Liberal government's watch, now more than ever, unemployment is up; it's at 7%. Youth unemployment is up. There are no jobs for the youth who are graduating, so a lot of them are moving out. We've heard of newcomers who are living in their cars and living under bridges. This doesn't sound like a first world country anymore, after 10 years of Liberal government. They've now refused to present a budget to Canadians that would be clear and transparent on what way and what direction they're going to take the government.

They put up anti-energy laws, such as Bill C-69, which doesn't let any new pipelines get built. What Canada desperately needs is to become an independent energy superpower. With that bill in the way, no mines are going to get built, no pipelines are going to get built, and no big infrastructure can get built. We've seen that. That's why investment has been fleeing out of Canada. With Bill C-48, we can take our product to the west coast, but it can't go anywhere. Those are markets that desperately need Canadian energy.

The world needs Canadian energy, but this Liberal government wants to make sure that our product stays in the ground. Other dictatorships are the ones that are benefiting from that. The environment doesn't benefit in any way—because clean, low-carbon energy can come from Canadian energy because we have the best economic standards—

**Ryan Turnbull:** I have a point of order, Madam Chair. I believe that the bells are ringing for a vote.

We don't have unanimous consent to continue because I think many of us want to go up to the House to vote.

**The Chair:** Do we have unanimous consent to continue?

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Chair:** Do the members want to come back after the vote? Is it that, yes, they do? All right, then we want to come back. That's great.

We are suspended for the time being. Thank you. We'll see you after the vote.

• (1130)

(Pause)

• (1225)

**Jasraj Hallan:** We're saved by the bell.

**The Chair:** Everyone's back following the vote.

Mr. Hallan, I believe the floor is yours.

**Jasraj Hallan:** Thanks, Chair.

As I was saying, with Bill C-48, the tanker ban, which lets our resources get to the west coast but we can't sell them to any markets off of that coast because of the ban itself, and the industrial carbon tax, which needs to be removed to make Canada more competitive on the world stage, not to mention our low-carbon energy, which is the highest in environmental and human rights standards—probably around the world—and it's something that we should be proud of, this Liberal government is set on keeping our good product in the ground, enabling more dollars for dictators and less powerful paycheques for our people here in Canada. That's not to mention the job-killing oil and gas cap, which, according to Deloitte, could cost 110,000 good-paying Canadian jobs. This attack on our energy sector over the last 10 years, by this government, shows how unserious they are.

It is Canadians who are asking for a budget this spring. They cannot wait until the fall. What Canadians are asking for in that budget is a plan to unlock our energy industry, to unleash our resources and to get rid of some of those anti-energy bills that the government brought in. What they're asking for is to control the cost of living in this out-of-control inflationary crisis, which this government created, in which food prices are the highest in the entire G7. They're asking this government to bring in some common-sense policies—or adopt ours, in fact—that would actually get homes built in this country.

Of course, that also includes controlling the government's spending so that interest rates don't go up...caused by inflation. As I said before, this new Prime Minister wants to spend more than the old guy, Justin Trudeau, and he was upfront with that on day one. It could make inflation and interest rates go up.

In this budget, Canadians want crime under control. Under this government, the “soft on crime” policies they brought in—Bill C-5 and Bill C-75—give repeat offenders easy access to bail. What we see in this country is that Canadians are scared. They're scared to be at home or in their cars, and they're scared to send their kids to school alone. This country is not safe anymore because of the “soft on crime” policies of this government. Those two bills need to be repealed. Canadians are saying that now, under this government, criminals have more rights than victims do because repeat offenders are easily getting bail. We need to keep repeat offenders in jail and not give them bail. We see across this country that extortions are up more than 300% because Canada has become a safe haven for criminals and those who are committing extortion.

Lastly, Canadians want to see a plan for immigration. The Bank of Canada said that it was the population growth under this government—this out-of-control population growth—that was contributing further to the housing crisis. The Liberals expanded the population growth in order to get more votes, but Canadians are suffering without proper services. There are not enough jobs. There are not enough homes because new home starts have gone down under this government, not to mention that housing costs have doubled. Even newcomers are not able to survive.

I came here as a newcomer, and so did my family. Back then, you could live off of one paycheque. It's just not the same anymore. Canada is not the same country anymore. That's what we keep hearing all over the place, so we need to restore what Canada used to be. It used to be a place where your hard work could earn you a powerful paycheque that could afford affordable housing and groceries, and you could have those things while living in a safe neighbourhood. That was the Canadian dream, and that dream needs to be restored.

That's why now, more than ever, Canadians need a budget from the Liberal government—now, in the spring, before the summer starts—so that there's some assurance that this Prime Minister, who said he had a plan, actually shows that he has a plan. Once again, we are calling on this Liberal government to release a budget this spring to give Canadians some assurance that they can live in that Canada we once used to know and still love.

● (1230)

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

I have Ms. Cobena next.

**Sandra Cobena:** Thank you.

It is my understanding that this Prime Minister values private sector practices. In that light, I would like to share this, as finance professional of 14 years. If I were to pick up a file and see that revenues are going down, expenses are going up and there is no forecast, no budget, no plan, and not only that but the funds are being requested in a very short timeline, that would be an immediate decline.

Further to that, it would be a referral to the financial restructuring team, particularly given a history of consistent deficits and poor management. Particularly, given the tight timeline, if anybody was reviewing a file like this, I think everybody would think it's some sketchy business. With that, I am very concerned that there is no

desire to put a budget forward this spring. I think it's highly irresponsible, particularly because we have an affordability crisis. I don't think it's a very complex concept to think that you cannot spend your way to affordability. That is very irresponsible.

We cannot be borrowing to fund affordability measures. Without the benefit of a budget, that's exactly what it looks like, because we are not seeing any reduction in spending. We are only seeing a reduction in revenue. Despite the fact that there are a lot of moving parts in the economy right now.... There's instability, and that's exactly why we need a budget. We need to adopt this basic private sector practice of preparing a budget before we spend. I have not seen any responsible manager go off and prepare a list of expenditures before even considering what they have in terms of revenue.

As I see it at this moment in time, any measures of affordability would be funded by borrowing. That is like going grocery shopping with your credit card, knowing that you're going to pay more later because there is interest. Right now, with the \$486 billion of spending that is being requested, that spending will go on the national credit card, and the interest is mounting. That is poor management; it's highly irresponsible. We need to respect taxpayers' dollars, and because of that, we need to see a budget. We need to see the flow of funds, the revenues, the expenses and what the real plan is. We cannot be playing with words and saying, “Oh, yes, we have a plan, but we're going to keep you blindfolded until we actually spend the money.”

That's it. Thank you.

● (1235)

**The Chair:** That's great. Thank you, Ms. Cobena.

I now have Mr. Turnbull.

**Ryan Turnbull:** Thank you, Chair.

It's great to be back in committee with so many colleagues. This being our first meeting, it was important that get set up.

Congratulations to you, Chair, and congratulations to the vice-chairs.

I think it's a bit unfortunate that we're starting out this way, given the fact that we have Bill C-4 legislation to consider, which should be the priority, as is the formal practice of most committees on the Hill when the government has....

I want to acknowledge that we seem to have done a good job of standing all together in voting for Bill C-4. I believe it got unanimous consent, or it got the support of all members of the House of Commons who voted. It's great that it's now at committee. It's a bit unfortunate that we're spending a lot of time debating a motion, but it is the prerogative of members on the committee to bring forward motions. I totally understand that they're able to do so. I certainly would prefer to have an in camera session to consider committee business, where we could put on the table to study all the potential motions that each party has and come up with a schedule for the fall that would have us using our time very efficiently and effectively to get our business done.

I know that all of us as elected members of Parliament want to use our time. Time is the greatest resource we have. It certainly is important that we use it effectively, that we value each other's time and that we work to get things done. I know that Bill C-4 offers considerable tax relief for Canadians at a time when I know they need it. I think we can all agree on that. That's how members have voted in the House, so I know we have their support.

I know that this motion speaks to the desire that the Conservative Party has for an immediate budget. I find that interesting, to say the least, given the fact that their leader, Pierre Poilievre, who no longer has a seat in the House, would not commit in his 100-day plan to submit a budget. It's interesting that there often seems to be, from my just under six years on the Hill, a double standard with the Conservative Party and its members. If the election had turned out differently, I'm sure they would not be tabling a budget within the timeline they would have set out for the government. There was no commitment to do so, at least, which would indicate that there was no desire to do so or no willingness to do so.

Now, we just came out of a federal election—

• (1240)

**Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC):** I have a point of order, Madam Chair. This point of order is directly related to Mr. Turnbull's comments and the fact that he's actually putting things on the table that are, in my opinion, directly not true.

Budgets are budgets. Every party committed to putting a budget on the table in the House of Commons—

**The Chair:** Mr. McLean—

**Greg McLean:** —and Mr. Turnbull cannot say that my party did not.

**The Chair:** Mr. McLean, I believe that's debate. Thank you very much.

**Ryan Turnbull:** Thank you, Chair. That's not a point of order.

I know that the Standing Orders are quite specific about points of order, but the member, Mr. McLean, is certainly able to contest the veracity of a claim that I make on the record at any point when he has the floor. However, until then, I would appreciate just being able to finish providing my perspectives and thoughts, as is my right, which is protected under the Standing Orders, as are the rights and privileges of members of Parliament to speak their minds in all parliamentary proceedings.

I was starting to say that we just came out of a federal election. The House has only been back for three weeks. We've tabled some very big pieces of legislation that make some huge leaps forward on behalf of Canadians. All of the things that the government is currently implementing were part of our platform and were disclosed to the public in advance.

We received a mandate from the Canadian people. We formed government. I understand that other members form the opposition parties, respectively. They're obviously going to hold us to task, and I appreciate that at all times. However, I also think that there needs to be reciprocity here in terms of understanding that we formed government with a mandate from the people and a clear plan and platform, which is a fully costed platform and which was voted for

by the Canadian people, and we have confirmed numerous times that there will be a budget in the fall of 2025.

I would just remind members of Brian Mulroney, who unfortunately passed away, who was a very honourable member of Parliament and quite a good prime minister. I certainly looked up to him, and I met him once. From my perspective, he was a very good Progressive Conservative leader, and he did not table a budget for 300 days. Just think about that. He earned all of our respect. He was a great prime minister. All of us can acknowledge the work that Brian Mulroney did—I should say the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney—but he did not table a budget for over 300 days. That's not to say that budgets shouldn't be tabled, but it is an informal practice. There's no actual statutory requirement as far as I understand to table a budget within a number of days. There is an importance to budgets, but they're not the only way that governments express their plans.

The Conservatives keep saying we don't have a plan. Well, we do have a plan. We have a platform that was disclosed to the public and that Canadians could scrutinize. In fact, when they looked at that plan, they voted for us. They put us in our seats, and by us, I mean the Liberal Party members who formed government. Granted, it is a minority Parliament a few seats short of a majority, but it is a strong mandate for a minority government nonetheless, and certainly we are implementing that plan.

I would suggest that a fall budget is what we've committed to. It's what we will deliver. There's a real importance to forming that budget by having budget consultations.

Chair, I had hoped today that maybe we'd have some informal discussion with a real collaborative tone and talk about how the committee might work together to do pre-budget consultations leading into the fall, where we could obviously have the runway that's needed to formulate a budget that really reflects where the country is at and where we see the country going.

I don't want to diminish the importance or the role that a budget plays. It certainly plays an important role, but it is not the only tool for expressing the government's plan, by any means. What I would suggest—and I have some other thoughts—is an amendment to MP Hallan's motion. It reads as follows: “That the committee call on the Minister of Finance to table a budget.”

I think that simplifies it and gives the essence of what every member here could agree to. I think it would get us to a point of consensus, which is always what we try to achieve at committees: getting as close to consensus as possible. I know that my colleagues will have thoughts on why a budget is important. Certainly, with the commitment to doing that in the fall, I'm sure that all committee members would happily agree to this amendment.

• (1245)

Thank you very much, Chair. I'll cede the floor.

**The Chair:** Thank you, MP Turnbull, for that and for proposing that amendment.

Is there anyone who wishes to speak to the amendment?

**Pat Kelly:** Thank you.

I'm not certain the amendment's in order. It changes the meaning significantly. I would argue that the very point of the main motion is to table a budget before Parliament closes. That's an essential element of the main motion.

Be that as it may, I have the floor and I have some remarks to address the amendment and the main motion. If you've ruled it in order, we'll continue.

Look, this government campaigned on the urgency of our time with the multiple crises facing Canadians—many of which were 10 years in the making from the current government's tenure—and then refused to table a budget. That's why we called on it to table a budget before we rise. I will oppose the amendment and vote for the main motion.

In absence of a budget, all we have are the main estimates that the government has tabled. There's \$486 billion in budgetary spending with no budget. It's almost half a trillion dollars in budgetary spending with no budget. If the budget is not tabled until, say, November, we'll be at about 20 months without a budget in a time of crisis, when the other party campaigned on an immediate budget. Past governments, including the former Conservative government, tabled budgets very quickly after elections. This is something that is ordinarily done.

In the absence of a budget, we can merely look at these estimates of \$486 billion and compare them to last year's main estimates. That comparison reveals the extent to which the government is not governing in accordance with the platform and promises made during the election, because it is allowing additional bloat to the size of government, which has expanded 40% in the tenure of this government, and the main estimates indicate that it is getting even worse. The use of private contractors has also increased.

I would argue—or hope, actually—that we should defeat the amendment and pass the main motion. I call upon the Liberal members of this committee to vote in favour of the main motion. They campaigned on the platform of a plan to deal with the crises of this moment. I hope Liberal members want to put pressure on the government to do the right thing and table its budget so that Canadians know how it's going to finance and pay for this and what taxes are going to have to increase in order to fund the spending that is clearly increasing as a result of these main estimates.

Thank you, Chair.

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

Go ahead, Monsieur Garon.

[*Translation*]

**Jean-Denis Garon:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

We understand that, since the amendment has been moved by the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Finance, it is practically straight from the minister's mouth. So it is not surprising since what the minister wants is to not table a budget. He was appointed in January and had just one thing to do: Prepare a budget. As I said in the House, we know what the minister is like: He makes a lot of announcements, but doesn't finish what he starts. So I am pretty

sure that there is part of a budget somewhere or estimates that he could present to us.

They keep invoking Brian Mulroney's record to justify not tabling a budget. Right opposite me, though, is Mr. Leitão, who tabled a budget every year as Quebec's finance minister. Let me say that, when Brian Mulroney was elected in 1984, I was two years old. That is the only digestible example that the minister and his parliamentary secretary have been able to come up with. The government of Brian Mulroney was not just talking points like the current government is. The current senior officials were appointed by the Liberals, while the Conservatives had to set things up when they took office. In the present case, nobody had to get set up. It is true that we have lost a few very good ministers, but that's another topic, and I will not mention any names.

The Liberals' new hobby horse is saying that the election platform presented during the campaign takes the place of Parliament. We have just come from a vote in the House, and the Conservatives just voted in favour of that. They said they were voting in favour of the Liberal election platform. You can see where I'm going with this. What is being said to justify there being no budget is very important. The Conservatives are saying today that, in the end, the Liberal election campaign is sufficient to circumvent Parliament since the Liberals won. That is exactly what they are saying.

The Liberals are using the parts of their platform that suit them. By the way, the platform was very short on details and contained no legislation, analysis or appendices. And yet those are things that Mr. Turnbull would have opposed if there had been a vote a few months ago since he was an environmentalist who had been working for the Liberals for quite some time. All of a sudden, the Liberal platform is enough to circumvent Parliament, to shorten committee work, erase democracy and not invite any more witnesses, and all because there is not much time.

The Liberal election platform did in fact include a financial platform. We are being told that bills are being tabled that were in the Liberal election platform and that this justifies circumventing Parliament. If there was a financial platform, why isn't there a budget? The Liberals are picking and choosing. In other words, they are deciding to use the parts of the platform that suit them.

Let me give you an example. We were supposed to collect \$20 billion in counter-tariff revenues. We are pleased that there are fewer counter-tariffs if that means there are fewer tariffs and trade wars. That is not the problem. The Liberal financial platform stated that the \$20 billion would be used to help businesses and workers. That amount is directly related to the tariffs imposed. As a result, if fewer tariffs are being imposed, those counter-tariff revenues are not needed as badly to balance things out. Yet the Liberals have decided to use that \$20 billion to pay for tax cuts. That is why we now have Bill C-4, which includes tax cuts. To be clear, I am not necessarily opposed to tax cuts, but they need to be studied.

The fact is that the Liberals are unable to keep their promises and table a budget, much less a balanced budget. The Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance tell us they are working on an accounting reform based on the way it is done in Great Britain, which is a unitary state without provinces. Regarding this reform, they say that increasing transfers to the provinces would increase the current account deficit.

I see Mr. Turnbull checking the time. I have six minutes left.

Transfers to the provinces could nonetheless be used to build hospitals, but the Liberals say that increasing those transfers would increase the current account deficit. At the same time, however, under their accounting reform, the cost of building an airport or military base could be amortized over 20, 30 or 35 years. That is exactly what the Liberals are in the process of doing.

So there was a financial platform in the Liberal campaign, but it was shoddy work. It was not balanced. Not only did the minister lie to the House when it was studying the estimates—and I raised a question of privilege in that regard last week—but he is unable to tell us how he is going to fund all of that. He doesn't know—

• (1250)

[English]

**Ryan Turnbull:** I have a point of order.

Madam Chair, the rules of decorum apply in committee just as they do in the House. The member implied that the minister lied in the House. That is a direct violation of the rules of decorum.

[Translation]

**Jean-Denis Garon:** I withdraw my remarks, Madam Chair. I simply wanted to point out that I had raised a question of privilege in the House last Wednesday to tell the Speaker that, in our opinion, the minister lied to the House on the night the estimates were studied. I wanted to save the committee some time, which is why I did not go into detail. Thank you to my colleague for helping me clarify that. He knows that he is greatly appreciated.

This will have to be constantly repeated to Quebeckers: The Liberal platform is not a piece of legislation, a committee or Parliament. It is not balanced. If the Liberals want to present their entire platform all at once, let them table it in the House. If however they want to start choosing the parts for which they are willing to table measures right away, such as parts that appeal to the government's friends or oil developers, I do not agree with that. If they think they can table measures by proposing tax cuts without knowing how they will be funded and put things off by preparing an accounting

reform that will conceal the state of public finances, I do not agree with that.

What's more, the last time I checked, Brian Mulroney did not call an election in 1984 when there were fixed election dates. Although that calendar is not binding, the Prime Minister deliberately broke away from the calendar. An election has never been called for the purpose of tabling a budget.

The Minister of Finance dutifully repeats his lines. He tells us constantly that the world has changed. He repeated that every 10 minutes during the election campaign as a reason for opposing certain oil projects while supporting others, or for initially supporting the carbon tax and then opposing it. The world has changed, but it seems that public finances have not changed enough for a budget to be tabled.

The fact is that the government is afraid to table a budget. It does not know how to balance it and what to put in it. I think we need a budget as soon as possible, or at the very least an economic statement providing a minor update including all the—

**An hon. member:** [Inaudible]

• (1255)

**Jean-Denis Garon:** Madam Chair, I can't hear myself talk over my colleague, even though I have a strong voice.

**The Chair:** For my part, Mr. Garon, I am listening attentively.

**Jean-Denis Garon:** I know, Madam Chair. We really appreciate you already.

The fact is that the government is afraid. At the very least, it should immediately table a budget update including all the new measures that have been put forward. It is a question of democracy, in my opinion.

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

You have the floor, Mr. Leitão.

**Carlos Leitão (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, Lib.):** Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

You will not be surprised to hear that I support my colleague's amendment, for various reasons.

First of all, a budget is indeed very important. It is so important in fact that we have to take the time we need to prepare it properly. Asking for a budget to be tabled within four days, as our Conservative Party colleagues are doing, makes absolutely no sense. So we will take the time we need to present a budget to Canadians, but not any longer than we need, and we certainly could not do it in four days.

There are a number of reasons for that, the main one being the current context. My colleague, the member for Mirabel, said that, in another life, I presented a budget quickly after an election, but the current context is completely different from the one in 2014. It is marked by tremendous uncertainty brought on by the ill-considered, cavalier and ultimately unproductive actions of our neighbour and biggest economic partner, the United States. So it would have been ill-advised for us to rush to table a budget as quickly as our colleagues have been demanding in the past few days.

I do not have the exact date, but there will be a budget in the fall, and all those matters will be addressed at that time.

Furthermore, our colleagues from the Conservative Party have repeatedly raised the issue of inflation. As I think I said once in the House, the inflation we have seen since 2022—

[English]

**Greg McLean:** I have a point of order, Madam Chair. Are we speaking to the amendment, or are you ruling it out of order right away? Are we speaking to the actual motion now?

• (1300)

**The Chair:** They are speaking to the amendment. I'm allowing them to—

**Greg McLean:** The amendment has been raised. He's not speaking to the amendment at all. He's speaking to the motion. Your ruling should now be, in my opinion, Madam Chair, whether this is an acceptable amendment to the motion or undoes the intent of the motion.

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

Could the member stick to the amendment at hand? Thank you.

[Translation]

**Carlos Leitão:** Certainly, Madam Chair.

The amendment calls for the budget to be tabled, indeed, but at a later date. Once again, if we insist on tabling the budget in the fall, that is because it would be ill-advised to rush to table a budget within a few days. That cannot be done. That would constitute a—

**Jean-Denis Garon:** A point of order, Madam Chair.

My understanding is that the meeting is over and we do not have unanimous consent to continue.

**The Chair:** Thank you. Yes, it is one o'clock.

[English]

We will adjourn the meeting right now. Thank you.

**Pat Kelly:** I'm not opposed to.... We are past the allotted time, but as chair, you cannot adjourn or suspend a meeting without the unanimous consent of the committee when there is somebody on the speakers list.

**Ryan Turnbull:** On a point of order, that's not true. I've been a part of seven standing committees, and there have been many cases

when the chair gavelled us out on time at the end of a meeting. That's been the standard practice in almost every committee I've been on. There's been a very rare occasion....

The meeting notice says 11 until one. The meeting ends at one unless there's unanimous consent to continue.

**Pat Kelly:** Consent is implied when we're on our normal timed rounds of speaking and you get to the appointed hour. Consent to adjourn is implied and chairs will adjourn, but when there is an active motion being debated, you cannot just gavel the meeting out.

[Translation]

**The Chair:** Go ahead, Mr. Garon.

**Jean-Denis Garon:** If my colleague is right and that is what the Standing Orders say, we could stay here until September 1 as long as there is someone on the speakers' list.

The clerks can check whether the Standing Orders say that, as long as there is someone on the speakers' list, we can stay here until 2029?

**The Chair:** We will check that.

[English]

I'm going to suspend the meeting for a couple of minutes while we sort this out.

Thank you.

• (1300)

(Pause)

• (1305)

**The Chair:** I call the meeting back to order.

Thank you very much for raising that issue, Mr. Kelly.

I want to inform committee members that there are resources available only until 1:30.

Mr. Leitão still has the floor. Of course, any member could move to adjourn the meeting while they have the floor. However, you can't do that during a point of order.

I will return the floor back to Mr. Leitão.

**Carlos Leitão:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I move to adjourn the meeting.

**The Chair:** Given this, I will move to a vote on the motion to adjourn.

(Motion agreed to: yeas 9; nays 0)

**The Chair:** After that vigorous debate and points of order, we are adjourning this meeting. Thank you.







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