



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

45th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

---

# Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs

EVIDENCE

**NUMBER 001**

Tuesday, June 10, 2025

---

Chair: Chris Bittle





## Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs

Tuesday, June 10, 2025

• (1540)

[English]

**The Clerk of the Committee (Christine Holke):** Honourable members of the committee, I see a quorum.

[Translation]

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

[English]

I must inform 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, entertain points of order or participate in debate.

[Translation]

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'm ready to receive motions for the chair.

[English]

**Tim Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga, Lib.):** Good afternoon, everyone. I'm looking forward to this.

I would like to put a motion forward to elect Chris Bittle as our chair.

**The Clerk:** It has been moved by Mr. Louis that Mr. Bittle be elected chair of the committee.

Are there any further motions?

(Motion agreed to)

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

I invite Mr. Bittle to take the chair.

**The Chair (Chris Bittle (St. Catharines, Lib.)):** Thank you.

I'd like to thank the clerk for that seamless election.

To the members of the opposition, I'm just as surprised as you are that I'm here. Thank you so much, everyone.

Before we continue, I would like to ask all in-person participants to consult the guidelines written on the cards on the table. These measures are in place to help prevent audio 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.

If the committee is in agreement, I'd like to invite the clerk to proceed with the election of the vice-chairs.

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

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

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

**Blaine Calkins (Ponoka—Didsbury, CPC):** Madam Clerk, I would like to nominate Michael Cooper.

**The Clerk:** It has been moved by Mr. Calkins that Mr. Cooper be elected first vice-chair of the committee.

Are there any further motions?

(Motion agreed to)

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

[Translation]

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

I'm now ready to receive motions for the second vice-chair.

• (1545)

**Hon. Élisabeth Brière (Sherbrooke, Lib.):** Madam Clerk, I would like to nominate Christine Normandin.

**The Clerk:** It has been moved by Mrs. Brière that Ms. Normandin be elected as second vice-chair of the committee.

Are there any further motions?

(Motion agreed to)

**The Clerk:** I declare the motion carried and Ms. Normandin duly elected second vice-chair of the committee.

[English]

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

[Translation]

I want to congratulate the vice-chairs.

[English]

Typically, we proceed to the routine motions of the committee.

Madam Kayabaga, if you'd like, go ahead.

**Hon. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to start by welcoming my colleagues. It's my first time on this committee, and I'm very excited to go through this learning experience.

Congratulations to you, Mr. Chair.

I would like to propose a routine motion, and I'm going to read it in, if that's okay with you, Mr. Chair. It reads, "That the three whips be delegated the authority to act—"

I'm sorry. Just a second. I think I have the older version. Let me just get the version that everybody else has. I think you might have received it by email. It reads:

That the three whips be delegated the authority to act as the striking committee pursuant to Standing Orders 104, 113 and 114, and that they be authorized to present to the Chair, in a report signed by all three whips, or their representatives, their unanimous recommendations on behalf of the committee for presentation to the House no later than 12 p.m. on Friday, June 13, 2025.

I think you do have the French version as well.

**The Chair:** We do.

Is there any debate on the motion?

Mr. Calkins, go ahead.

**Blaine Calkins:** Thank you, Chair.

I was expecting that we would deal with the regular predictable routine motions first, but we can start on page 7.

I'm wondering if my colleague across the way who moved the delegation of the authority of the whips would support an amendment that would add the following: "provided that the recommendations for the report referred to in paragraph (b) of the Order adopted by the House on Thursday, June 5, 2025, shall be presented to the Chair no later than 5 p.m. on Thursday, June 12, 2025, and that the Chair shall be instructed to present the report to the House no later than Friday, June 13, 2025."

**The Chair:** Mr. Calkins, do you have that written or in an electronic version that you can send to the clerk?

**Blaine Calkins:** Boy, I sure hope so.

Can we suspend briefly, Mr. Chair, while we get that to you?

**The Chair:** I think that's an excellent idea; we'll suspend for five minutes.

• (1545) \_\_\_\_\_ (Pause) \_\_\_\_\_

• (1555)

**The Chair:** I'll bring us back.

There have been some discussions. I'm not sure where we're at.

Mr. Calkins, perhaps you can read it in again, much more slowly, as I understand that there is not an electronic French version of this amendment.

**Blaine Calkins:** Certainly. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Once again, I will go slowly, so that simultaneous translation will be able to provide the French version as I read in English.

I move that the motion be amended by adding the following: "provided that the recommendations for the report referred to in paragraph (b) of the Order adopted by the House on Thursday, June 5, 2025, shall be presented to the Chair no later than 5 p.m. on Thursday, June 12, 2025, and that the Chair shall be instructed to present the report to the House no later than Friday, June 13, 2025."

**The Chair:** Is everyone clear on the motion?

I have Mr. Fergus—

I'm sorry, Mr. Calkins. Were you finished?

I apologize, Mr. Fergus.

**Blaine Calkins:** Well, I normally would appreciate an opportunity to speak to the proposed amendment.

**The Chair:** That's why I came back to you.

**Blaine Calkins:** I think everybody understands what the amendment is attempting to do. I won't belabour the issue other than to say that this provides a bit of rigour on the timeline so that the committees of this House can be assembled and struck in a timeline that I think every member of this committee can support.

Thank you.

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

[Translation]

**Hon. Greg Fergus (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to thank my colleague, Mr. Calkins. I've had the pleasure of working with him a number of times in other committees.

I have no issues with the content of his proposal. However, as a member from Quebec and a francophile, I must insist that the proposed motions be distributed in writing to everyone on the committee and be available in both official languages. This is a matter of courtesy to members, especially the members who aren't fluent in the other official language. I can imagine that, if the situation were reversed, this would cause some controversy. This matters a great deal.

If everyone agrees to overlook the issue this time, I can live with that. However, please ensure that the documents are available in both official languages in the future.

• (1600)

[English]

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

We'll put the amendment to a vote.

(Amendment agreed to [See Minutes of Proceedings])

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

**Hon. Arielle Kayabaga:** Thank you, Chair. I'm going to read my next motion.

It reads, “That, pursuant to Standing Order 91.1(1), the Subcommittee on Private Members' Business be composed of one member from each recognized party and a chair from the government party, and that [name of member] be appointed chair of the subcommittee.”

Should I have read “Chris Bittle”? I apologize. It's my first time doing this.

**The Chair:** We'll suspend for one moment, please.

• (1600) \_\_\_\_\_ (Pause) \_\_\_\_\_

• (1600)

**The Chair:** We're back.

Ms. Kayabaga, do you have anything further?

**Hon. Arielle Kayabaga:** I move:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 91.1(1), the Subcommittee on Private Members' Business be composed of one (1) member from each recognized party and a Chair from the Government party; and that Élisabeth Brière be appointed Chair of the Subcommittee.

**The Chair:** Okay.

Is there any debate?

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** Go ahead, Ms. Kayabaga.

**Hon. Arielle Kayabaga:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'll read the next motion:

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.

**The Chair:** Is there any debate on the motion?

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** The analysts are more than welcome to come up. We definitely need their support. I know it talks about support “as needed”, but it's always needed. Welcome back. Thank you.

Go ahead, Ms. Kayabaga.

**Hon. Arielle Kayabaga:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll proceed with the next motion:

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.

• (1605)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Is there any debate?

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** Go ahead, Ms. Kayabaga.

**Hon. Arielle Kayabaga:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'll also move a motion on meeting without a quorum:

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.

**The Chair:** Is there any debate?

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** Please continue, Ms. Kayabaga.

**Hon. Arielle Kayabaga:** I have another motion. It is on travel:

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.

**The Chair:** Is there agreement?

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** Go ahead, Ms. Kayabaga.

**Hon. Arielle Kayabaga:** Thank you.

This is on the time for opening remarks and the questioning of witnesses.

The motion reads, “That witnesses be given five minutes for their opening statements; that whenever possible, witnesses provide the committee with their opening statements 72 hours in advance; that, at the direction of the Chair, during the questioning of witnesses, there be allocated six minutes in round one for the first questioner from the Conservative Party, the Liberal Party and the Bloc Québécois; that for the second and subsequent rounds, the order and time for questioning be as follows: Conservative Party, five minutes; Liberal Party, five minutes; Bloc Québécois, two and a half minutes; Conservative Party, five minutes; Liberal Party, five minutes.”

**The Chair:** Is there any...?

Go ahead, Mr. Calkins.

**Blaine Calkins:** I don't want to be a stickler, but I do believe Madam Kayabaga said “direction” instead of “discretion” when she was reading it. I just want to make sure that it follows the text that I have here, which is “at the discretion”.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Arielle Kayabaga:** I can read the French version.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Are we all good with the language—just to be clear—that Mr. Calkins has clarified?

**Blaine Calkins:** Just to be clear, I think it was just a verbal typo. The word I heard was “direction”, and the text that I have says “discretion”, so I want to make sure which word we're agreeing to.

**Hon. Arielle Kayabaga:** I said “discretion”. Maybe my accent didn't catch up, but it's “discretion”.

**The Chair:** Does that clarify things to your satisfaction, Mr. Calkins?

**Blaine Calkins:** Yes.

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

Is there any further debate?

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

**The Chair:** Go ahead, Ms. Kayabaga.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Arielle Kayabaga:** Concerning 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, 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.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Is there any debate on that motion? Is it agreed?

(Motion agreed to)

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Arielle Kayabaga:** Concerning 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.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Is there any debate on this? Do we have consent to proceed?

(Motion agreed to)

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Arielle Kayabaga:** Concerning 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.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Is there any debate? Are we agreed?

You took your glasses off, and I was concerned, Mr. Calkins.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** Please continue.

• (1610)

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Arielle Kayabaga:** Concerning 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.

**The Chair:** Ms. Normandin, you have the floor.

**Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Chair, we're proposing an addition.

Madam Clerk, I believe that you already have the text ready for distribution.

I'll read it to you.

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 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.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Okay.

I have Mr. Fergus.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Greg Fergus:** I just have one question. Will this prevent members who have other duties to attend to from being replaced by fellow members during a meeting?

**Christine Normandin:** The wording doesn't prevent this. The committee must be informed of the substitution so that we always know which members are authorized to speak in the committee.

We want to avoid situations where more members than expected attend a meeting and changes take place without our knowledge. Sometimes, members attend by video conference and others do so in person, and we don't know which members are substitutes. When a substitution takes place, we want to be informed, particularly by the chair.

This doesn't prevent a substitution from taking place during the meeting. We just need to be informed.

[*English*]

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

**Blaine Calkins:** Could I get clarification from my colleague? Is the text she's offering replacing or in addition to the existing text?

[*Translation*]

**Christine Normandin:** It's an addition.

[*English*]

**Blaine Calkins:** Thank you.

I don't have a problem with it per se. I just don't recall the chair of the committee ever having trouble knowing who the substituted members were for the purposes of voting and being eligible to speak at the committee. If this is a problem that we're expecting to have to deal with, then I can certainly support it. I just don't know what the actual problem is.

[*Translation*]

**Christine Normandin:** I can answer my colleague's question.

This actually addresses a situation that we have already encountered. Multiple members logged in at the same time, and since the substitutes hadn't been correctly identified, we didn't know who was authorized to speak and vote. As a result, the number of members from one party exceeded the number of seats allocated to that party, and we didn't know who was authorized to speak.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** I have Mr. Fergus and then Mr. Calkins.

[Translation]

**Hon. Greg Fergus:** Ms. Normandin, could we ask the clerk to inform us of each substitution, or should the clerk ask the chair to make a brief announcement of the substitutions?

**Christine Normandin:** Our motion already states that the chair will inform us of any substitutions. That said, if we want the clerk to inform us directly, rather than notifying the chair, who then relays the information to us, I support this friendly amendment.

• (1615)

[English]

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

**Blaine Calkins:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I wonder if you or the clerk could advise me of what the Standing Orders and the rules and procedures actually are. It's one thing to be able to vote at committee; I don't know if those rules are exactly the same for being able to speak or ask questions at the committee.

In the past, members of the House of Commons have been allowed to attend various committee meetings, even as independent members or members without official party status, in order to ask questions of witnesses. We've had agreements—I guess maybe unwritten agreements—to be allowed to do that. I'm seeking clarification on whether the rules about being able to question witnesses or take the floor are the same as the rules when it comes to being able to vote on a question put before the committee.

**The Chair:** We will get you that information. Perhaps we can go to Madame Normandin first.

[Translation]

**Christine Normandin:** I can make a clarification to shed light on my colleague's analysis of our proposal.

This proposal applies only to in camera meetings, which are limited to a certain number of people. This also makes it easier to keep track of the number of people.

Our proposal doesn't apply to regular meetings that aren't in camera.

[English]

**The Chair:** Would you like a couple of minutes to discuss this situation?

Mr. Cooper, go ahead.

**Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Sturgeon River, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like to seek clarification on the scope of this amendment. Standing Order 119 provides that a member, if recognized by the chair, can speak at the committee even if they're not a member of the committee and would not be able to vote.

You indicated that this would apply to in camera meetings, but if we convened as a whole committee, for example, and a motion was moved to move in camera, would this amendment apply such that only members or official substitute members would be able to speak? That would seem to infringe upon Standing Order 119.

[Translation]

**Christine Normandin:** I gather that the proposal won't prevent members from speaking. We're simply asking that substitute members be clearly identified so that other committee members know about them.

Technically, this proposal doesn't prevent anyone from speaking. It simply asks that substitute members be clearly identified, in particular to keep track of the number of people eligible to attend a meeting and authorized to speak.

[English]

**The Chair:** So that we're on the same page, let's clarify this. On the one hand, you're saying that anyone can speak, but in the writing of the motion you're saying it's only those who are authorized to speak.

Does that run counter to your interpretation of the motion, and will we run into problems moving forward?

[Translation]

**Christine Normandin:** A number of members may attend the committee meetings at the same time. However, the 40 members from one party sitting at the table wouldn't all be authorized to speak. We know that there must be five Liberals—including the chair—four Conservatives and one Bloc member. This wouldn't be a breach of parliamentary privilege.

The proposal simply states that, when a substitution takes place, the substitute member must be identified. This doesn't prevent a member from speaking. This is about letting all committee members know who can speak, based on the rules of procedure governing the number of people eligible to attend a meeting.

• (1620)

[English]

**The Chair:** Mr. Fergus, I see your hand is up.

If I can just clarify, I've seen circumstances in which one side of the table was full of members and different people were speaking at any given time on points of order and that type of thing. Are you saying that we keep the certain number of individuals at the table and that they can sub out as needed, but we're always aware of who is...? Yes, that's the purpose of the motion. Okay.

Go ahead, Mr. Fergus.

[Translation]

**Hon. Greg Fergus:** Thank you for the clarification, Ms. Normandin. That makes perfect sense. I support your amendment.

[English]

**The Chair:** Is there any further debate on the issue?

I have Mr. Cooper, and I see Mr. Calkins is....

Go ahead, Mr. Cooper.

**Michael Cooper:** I'm still not entirely clear on the implications of this amendment vis-à-vis Standing Order 119. Could Madame Normandin address that?

I realize it's a technical point, so I invite the analysts to address my concern that this amendment could conflict with Standing Order 119.

**The Chair:** We need to suspend for a moment.

• (1620)

(Pause)

• (1625)

**The Chair:** I'm going to bring the meeting back to order.

Mr. Cooper, in answer to your question, Standing Order 119 applies only to public meetings.

Is there any further debate on the issue?

Seeing none, I ask all those in favour of the motion to so indicate.

The motion is carried.

Go ahead, Madame Kayabaga.

[Translation]

**Hon. Arielle Kayabaga:** Concerning transcripts of in camera meetings, I move:

That one copy of the transcript of each in camera meeting be securely retained—

[English]

**The Chair:** I'm sorry. I messed up again. It was the amendment that carried.

(Amendment agreed to [See Minutes of Proceedings])

**The Chair:** All those in favour of the motion, please so indicate.

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

**The Chair:** I apologize. I'll figure this out eventually. It's a day one problem. I offer my apologies for that.

**Hon. Arielle Kayabaga:** You're doing fine, Chair. It's your first day.

[Translation]

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.

[English]

**The Chair:** Is that agreed to on consent?

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** Go ahead, Madame Kayabaga.

[Translation]

**Hon. Arielle Kayabaga:** I'll keep going.

[English]

Here's another motion I'm putting forward:

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.

• (1630)

**The Chair:** Thank you so much.

Is there any debate?

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** Please go ahead.

**Hon. Arielle Kayabaga:** This motion is on orders of reference from the House respecting bills. It reads as follows::

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 that is the subject of the said order that they would suggest that the committee should 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.

**The Chair:** Is there any debate on this one? Do we have consent?

(Motion agreed to)

**Hon. Arielle Kayabaga:** The next motion is on technical tests for witnesses. It reads as follows:

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.

**The Chair:** Is that agreed?

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** Please continue.

**Hon. Arielle Kayabaga:** This is my final motion. It is on whips' access to digital binders:

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.

**The Chair:** It's all good. I see thumbs-up.

(Motion agreed to)

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

Next is Madame Brière.

**Hon. Élisabeth Brière:** It's for the next step.

**The Chair:** It's for the next step. Okay.



**Hon. Élisabeth Brière:** I would like to present some motions.

**The Chair:** Go ahead.

**The Chair:** I'm sorry. Do we have a copy of the motion?

We can suspend for a moment and get a copy.

• (1630)

(Pause)

• (1640)

**The Chair:** I'm going to go back and clarify that these are in fact notices of motion. If I have the committee's indulgence to go back to routine motions and if everyone's okay with that, we can do that.

[Translation]

Ms. Normandin, you have the floor.

**Christine Normandin:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

On the back of the previous motion passed around is another proposed routine motion. It states as follows:

That, during meetings, the Chair, if necessary, uses his 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.

[English]

**The Chair:** Is there any debate on the motion?

I have Mr. Fergus.

[Translation]

**Hon. Greg Fergus:** Once more, I want to thank Ms. Normandin for moving an important motion. This motion is about ensuring the health and safety of everyone, including the interpreters, who provide an essential service to the House of Commons. Without interpretation, none of the House business can be conducted. I applaud her.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you so much.

Go ahead, Mr. Jackson.

**Grant Jackson (Brandon—Souris, CPC):** Thank you, Chair.

I'm very proud and honoured to be on this committee. I have just a couple of questions about the scope and how far this would go.

Obviously, we want to protect our translators and the important work they do. In what types of instances would the chair be able to suspend a meeting? What would it take for drastic action to be taken by the chair to shut down a meeting, based on what somebody is doing with one of their microphones?

I'm just trying to get a handle on how much power this would give the chair in terms of the scope.

**The Chair:** I'll turn it over to Madame Normandin in one second. It is her motion, not mine.

The only comment I have, because you are new and we want to protect the interpreters, is that we have this inclination to lean in toward the mics. It sounds like you're like me and that volume usually isn't a problem, so you can stay back and the microphone will still pick up your words.

[Translation]

Ms. Normandin, you have the floor.

**Christine Normandin:** This motion is prompted by real-life situations. For example, on some occasions, multiple people have spoken at the same time, preventing the interpreters from doing their job. The excessive noise generated at the same time posed a health and safety issue.

Obviously, the chair retains the prerogative to suspend proceedings. Let me clarify that the motion doesn't call for him to adjourn the meeting, but rather to suspend it.

The motion serves as a reminder that the chair may suspend the meeting for health and safety reasons. In the past, some chairs have been reluctant to do so because they didn't feel that they had the authority. This guideline isn't really a guideline, since the chair retains his prerogative. It serves as a reminder that the health and safety of interpreters, for example, warrant the suspension of a meeting.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

[English]

Mr. Cooper, did you have your hand up?

**Michael Cooper:** I did, yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I support the spirit in which this motion has been brought forward. The only issue I have is with the example Madame Normandin cited, which is a situation in which there could be some back-and-forth between members and more than one member would be speaking at the same time. This happens from time to time in committees.

It is true that it imperils the ability of the interpreters to interpret, but it doesn't imperil their health and safety, at least from what I understand from what the translation bureau has stated.

[Translation]

**The Chair:** Ms. Normandin, you have the floor.

• (1645)

**Christine Normandin:** At a minimum, it is a breach of members' parliamentary privilege if the interpreters are no longer able to interpret. That could have been mentioned in the motion. In any event, when the interpreters cannot keep interpreting, either because of decorum issues or because of health and safety risks, there's a problem.

Every time an issue comes up, I don't want to have to ask the interpreters whether they can keep interpreting from a health standpoint. This puts a lot of strain on them. I must say, the interpreters do an outstanding job. In many cases, they interpret our remarks in extremely difficult conditions. It is only when they've hit their limit that they tell us they are no longer able to do their job.

Making sure that interpreters are safe and that their health is protected is a real concern. It's important that the chair feel he is justified in suspending the meeting in those situations. We have to make sure that everyone can do their job without jeopardizing their health.

[English]

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

[Translation]

**Hon. Greg Fergus:** I support the motion for all the reasons Ms. Normandin talked about.

I would even take the argument a bit further. When I had the privilege of being the Speaker of the House of Commons, one of my roles was as administrator of the House of Commons and its employees. I can confirm for Mr. Cooper that there were indeed times when the health and safety of interpreters was in jeopardy. Their hearing is a tool they need to do their jobs, so it's very important to be respectful of that. What's more, this would encourage much calmer, much healthier debate, something that would benefit all members.

[English]

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

**Tim Louis:** Thanks, Chair.

I have a grammar question. We need to finish this part of the conversation before we can move on.

In the English version.... It's my understanding, Chair, that this would apply to all committees—or is it just ours?

**A voice:** It's just ours.

**Tim Louis:** Okay. I'm sorry.

Is this just for our committee?

**The Chair:** It's just for our committee.

**Tim Louis:** Okay. I take it back, then. I thought it was a “his” or “her” prerogative. I thought it was for other committees.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** I see no further debate.

(Motion agreed to [See Minutes of Proceedings])

**The Chair:** I'll turn the floor back to Madame Brière. Just to confirm, this is putting a motion on notice.

Please continue.

**Hon. Élisabeth Brière:** Do you want me to read it again?

**The Chair:** Yes, please, just for the sake of lining all of this up.

[Translation]

**Hon. Élisabeth Brière:** All right.

The motion reads as follows:

That pursuant to standing order 108(3)(a)(i) the committee direct the Clerk of the committee to invite the Officials responsible for the Long-Term Vision and Planning and Centre Block Rehabilitation to brief Members on current plans and progress.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

[English]

Go ahead, Mr. Louis.

**Tim Louis:** Is this just for notices? Can I also put a motion on notice?

I can. Okay. Thank you.

I would like to table a motion. I move:

That pursuant to Standing Order 108.3(a)(iii), the committee direct the clerk of the—

**The Chair:** I'm sorry. Give me one second.

**Blaine Calkins:** I have a point of order, Mr. Chair. I apologize to Mr. Louis.

Are these motions that are being put on notice, or are these motions being put forward?

**The Chair:** They are just notices.

**Blaine Calkins:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Please continue, Mr. Louis.

**Tim Louis:** I appreciate my colleague's clarification.

I'll start again. I move:

That pursuant to Standing Order 108.3(a)(iii), the committee direct the clerk of the committee to invite officials from both the House of Commons and the Parliamentary Protective Service to provide a briefing on security risks, updates and other issues to members, and that this briefing, or parts of it, be done in camera, should officials recommend.

● (1650)

**The Chair:** Thank you so much.

The clerk will be sending an electronic version of this motion. I know we have a copy, but we'll have a more formal notice provided tomorrow.

Go ahead, Mr. Fergus.

[Translation]

**Hon. Greg Fergus:** Now it's my turn to give notice of motion. Here it is:

That pursuant to standing order 108(3)(a)(i) the committee direct the Clerk of the committee to invite the Speaker and House officials for an update on the House and its related matters.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you so much.

Is there any further business?

Go ahead, Madame Normandin.

[Translation]

**Christine Normandin:** I would like to propose a motion for debate regarding a study of the 45th general election. I'm not sure whether the motion has been sent out already. As I understand it, you have the motion.

[English]

**The Chair:** We will suspend for a moment.

● (1650)

(Pause)

● (1655)

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

At the moment, we're not in committee business. I am a mere servant to the committee. What the committee decides is up to them in terms of moving to that point or in seeking unanimous consent to go there.

We are not at a point of forgoing the 48 hours' notice. Should the committee wish to go there.... I see Mr. Calkins' look. I've given that look to chairs many times—maybe not quite that aggressively, Mr. Calkins, but I have been in that moment.

The other item that I notified Madame Normandin about is that we do not have resources past 5:30. That's the other side of this discussion.

My suggestion is that if everyone has motions they want to put forward, we can do that now and have either a committee business meeting or a subcommittee meeting next, and then continue forward based on that. I leave it in your hands.

Madame Normandin, you have the floor. If you wish to provide a notice of motion, please go ahead, but I'll rule that you can't move your motion right now unless we move into committee business.

[Translation]

**Christine Normandin:** I would propose that we move into committee business, so we can debate the motion. However, if other committee members want to give notice of other motions, I am prepared to yield the floor temporarily, but I would ask that we move into committee business after that.

[English]

**The Chair:** I appreciate the hypothetical, but does anyone else wish to provide notice of a motion?

Absent that, I will go back to Madame Normandin's call to move to committee business.

Does anyone wish to provide a notice of motion?

Seeing none, we'll go back to Madame Normandin.

[Translation]

**Christine Normandin:** I move that we use the 32 minutes we have left to debate the motion, if we can move into committee business.

[English]

**The Chair:** I see no debate on that item.

(Motion agreed to)

[Translation]

**Christine Normandin:** The motion has gone out to everyone, but I haven't read it formally. It reads as follows:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(a)(vi), the Committee undertake a study—

[English]

**Hon. Greg Fergus:** I have a point of order. If we are in committee business, Mr. Chair, should we not go in camera?

**The Chair:** That's a good point. One moment, please.

We don't necessarily have to do that, Mr. Fergus. That's a motion that you may wish to move later. Madame Normandin has the floor.

It's not necessarily something that automatically happens, and then we would have to reset.

Thank you.

[Translation]

**Christine Normandin:** Since it hasn't been read, I'd like to finish reading the motion for the record.

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(a)(vi), the Committee undertake a study of the changes that need to be made in the implementation of the electoral process and the application of the Canada Elections Act in order to prevent the failures and breaches that occurred during the 45th general election, and that this study include, but not be limited to, the incidents that have already been made public, provided that, in the order listed, the Committee invite the following witnesses to testify for a period of two hours per block of witnesses: (a) representatives of each of the political parties who wish to speak on this subject; (b) electors or representatives of elector groups; (c) the Chief Executive Officer of Elections Canada; and (d) any other witnesses the Committee deems relevant;

That the Committee report its observations and recommendations to the House.

• (1700)

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you so much.

I see Mr. Fergus and then Mr. Calkins.

**Hon. Greg Fergus:** No. I will cede the floor.

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

**Blaine Calkins:** Thank you, Chair.

I want to thank my colleague from the Bloc Québécois for moving this motion. From my first glance at the text, I certainly understand what the intent is. I will be supporting this motion, Mr. Chair.

I'm wondering if my colleague who moved the motion could give us any information about what her expected timeline is, or if she would like to have a date for this recommendation to be sent back to the House. Does she have some deadlines? I would like to get a sense from her of the timeline she would like to have this done in.

[Translation]

**Christine Normandin:** The time frame for the study would obviously depend on the availability of witnesses.

One important witness we would absolutely have to hear from is the Chief Electoral Officer. If the motion is adopted, we could go ahead and send him an invitation so that, ideally, he could appear before the committee in an upcoming meeting.

The rest would depend on the availability of witnesses and their willingness to appear. The motion calls on the committee to hear from party representatives and representatives of elector groups, if they wish. If none wanted to appear, the study could be put on hold for a time. Some of the study, then, would depend on unknowns, in terms of the timetable.

That said, if the committee votes in favour of the motion, we can have the analysts start working on this over the summer. I see them smiling. They'd have something to sink their teeth into until we come back in the fall.

[English]

**The Chair:** I have a question, if I may, about how we would then go forward.

Subsection (b) has “electors or representatives of elector groups”. That seems to encompass a lot of Canadians, whereas referring to representatives of each of the political parties and the Chief Electoral Officer is very specific.

This is very broad, and I don't know how we would interpret it in terms of timing and witnesses and having an estimate of what that looks like.

[Translation]

**Christine Normandin:** You're right. We had some people in mind when we were drafting the motion, but we didn't want to limit the study, since there may have been incidents during the election campaign that we don't know about yet. One group I can think of is indigenous communities who weren't able to vote in certain ridings because the polling stations were closed.

Once the motion has been adopted and is in effect, so to speak, interested parties could contact members on the committee, who could then ask the clerk to send those people an invitation. I should point out that, in any event, we would spend a total of two hours hearing from witnesses in relation to that aspect of the study, whether it's representatives from one, two, three or four groups.

[English]

**The Chair:** I understand what you're looking at, but doesn't subsection (d) address that concern? If you have concerns about indigenous voters or any particular group, the parties would then supply that list, rather than....

I'm trying not to leave it too vague so that the clerk has to try to interpret what it looks like.

In terms of a timeline, what are we looking at?

• (1705)

[Translation]

**Christine Normandin:** Yes, I think item (d) covers the potential representatives referred to in item (b). You make a good point.

I would be open to a friendly amendment to remove item (b) from the motion, since the committee's intention would be known given the discussion we're having now, after all.

[English]

**The Chair:** Go ahead, Madam Kayabaga.

**Hon. Arielle Kayabaga:** Thank you, Chair.

I want to move an amendment to her motion.

I move as follows: “That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(a) (vi), the committee undertake a study of the changes that need to be made in the implementation and interpretation of the electoral process and the application of the Canada Elections Act when casting a ballot in a federal election; and that this study include, but not be limited to, the incidents that have already been made public, provided that, in the order listed, the committee invite the following

witnesses: (a) representatives of each political party who wish to speak on this subject”.

I'm going to skip subsection (b) for now and go to subsection (c), which would read, “(c) the Chief Executive Officer of Elections Canada; and (d) any other witnesses the committee deems relevant; and that the committee report its recommendations, observations and recommendations to the House.”

**The Chair:** I'll ask you to repeat it, but for clarification, are you deleting subsection (b)?

**Hon. Arielle Kayabaga:** I added “and interpretation” after “implementation”. After “Elections Act”, I added “when casting a ballot in a federal election”. I struck out “in order to prevent the failures and breaches that occurred during the 45th general election”, and I skipped subsection (b) as a clause.

**The Chair:** You skipped (b) as a clause. Are you deleting (b) as a clause?

**Hon. Arielle Kayabaga:** Just for discussion, yes.

**The Chair:** Okay. We're deleting subsection (b).

Going to debate on the amendment, I see Madame Normandin.

[Translation]

**Christine Normandin:** The amendment covers a number of things, so I will try to address them in order.

Removing item (b), I see as a friendly amendment. I agree with just taking it out.

As far as adding “and interpretation” goes, I see it as a friendly amendment as well. The act has to be interpreted when it is being implemented, so I have no problem with that addition.

However, I am opposed to removing the part that reads “in order to prevent the failures and breaches that occurred during the 45th general election”. One reason is that Elections Canada has already admitted that problems and failures occurred. I think that contributes to the purpose of the study, so I object to that part of the amendment.

[English]

**The Chair:** I have Mr. Calkins, and then we'll go to Madam Kayabaga.

**Blaine Calkins:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I appreciate Ms. Normandin's acceptance of the three changes proposed in the amendment by Ms. Kayabaga. There are three, Madame Normandin, and I understand that you consider two of them friendly amendments. I just want to state for the record that I would like it—even though it's your motion, Madame Normandin—if we kept the “electors or representatives of elector groups”, item (b), in the list.

My rationale for suggesting that would be that it's not.... Witnesses come before this committee in a couple of ways. The most common way, of course, is that we, as members of Parliament and of our various political parties, submit witness lists to the clerk of the committee, but it's also perfectly acceptable for everyday, ordinary Canadians, once they find out that a study has been undertaken by a committee, to submit written briefs as part of the study. Quite frankly, it's even acceptable for them to make a request to the clerk that they would like to physically appear, either in person or virtually, before the committee.

I think removing section (b) might deter people who would not otherwise understand that they would be entitled to do the same thing under item (d): "any other witnesses the committee deems relevant". The way I would interpret item (d), if I were reading this as an everyday citizen of Canada, is that "any other witnesses the committee deems relevant" means only the ones that the committee has decided to take under consideration, whereas I would interpret item (b) to mean that I'm invited as an elector or a representative of an elector group to make a case before the committee. Therefore, I would strongly recommend that item (b) be left in the language of the original motion.

I have no problem with the addition of "and interpretation" to the motion, but I do believe that the other proposal by Madam Kayabaga with reference to casting a ballot would significantly limit the scope of the study to a point where I think items that would be important to Canadians would be missed.

I would encourage colleagues at the table to keep those points in mind when deciding on how to vote on this amendment. I would not be in support of that particular change, or those two changes, but I am in support of the one proposed change.

• (1710)

**The Chair:** I appreciate that.

Again, it's at the committee's discretion. If you wish to open it that wide in terms of what the committee will receive, that is the decision of the committee.

We'll go to Madam Kayabaga and then Mr. Cooper.

**Hon. Arielle Kayabaga:** Thank you, Chair.

Just for clarification, I realize now that I would have to subamend. My intention was not to remove subsection (b). There was still conversation with the clerk on whether there was the possibility of doing this, and I wanted to wait for that discussion to end.

Maybe I can move a subamendment to put back subsection (b), since there has been a motion to remove it. Does that make sense?

**The Chair:** Perhaps we can do it on unanimous consent.

**Hon. Arielle Kayabaga:** Yes.

**The Chair:** I understand that Mr. Cooper still wishes to speak, but we can do it on unanimous consent, based on what Mr. Calkins, Madame Normandin and Madam Kayabaga are saying. We're in agreement to keep the first two points that—

**Hon. Arielle Kayabaga:** Chair, is there unanimous consent to keep subsection (b)?

**The Chair:** Yes. It's to keep the first two points, but then leave in clause (b).

Do we have consent?

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

**The Chair:** Mr. Cooper, do you wish to speak? No, you're good for now. That's excellent.

We'll vote on the amendment. All those in favour of the amendment—

I'm sorry, Madame Normandin. You wish to speak. Go ahead, please.

[*Translation*]

**Christine Normandin:** I actually just need clarification on what we are voting on.

The reality is that the amendment has two parts. One is to add the words "and interpretation", and the other is to remove part of the motion and replace it with something else.

Are we voting on the entire motion? If so, I move that we split the amendment and have two separate votes.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Usually we do this all at once.

Madam Kayabaga, could you reread your motion as amended, please?

**Hon. Arielle Kayabaga:** It would read as follows: "That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(a)(vi), the committee undertake a study of the changes that need to be made in the implementation and interpretation of the electoral process and the application of the Canada Elections Act when casting a ballot in a federal election in order to prevent the failures and breaches that occurred when casting a ballot in a federal election."

Then we're going to end with, "That this study include but not be limited to the incidents that have already been made public, provided that, in the order listed, the committee invite the following witnesses to testify for a period of two hours per block of witnesses: (a) representatives of each of the political parties who wish to speak on the subject; (b) electors or representatives of elector groups; (c) the Chief Executive Officer of Elections Canada; and (d) any other witnesses the committee deems relevant; that the committee report its recommendations, observations and recommendations to the House."

• (1715)

**The Chair:** I have just one point of clarification: It's the "Chief Electoral Officer".

**Hon. Arielle Kayabaga:** It is "Chief Electoral Officer," yes.

**The Chair:** I think it's just a translation issue.

Is there any further debate on the subject?

Mr. Fergus, go ahead.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Greg Fergus:** Mr. Chair, could you please give us a couple of minutes to go over the whole thing?

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Yes, absolutely. We'll suspend for two minutes.

● (1715)

(Pause)

● (1725)

**The Chair:** I would like to call this meeting back into session. There seems to be some good discussion. I hope that continues.

I was clear that we don't have resources after 5:30, so I will adjourn the meeting to the call of the chair.

---









Published under the authority of the Speaker of  
the House of Commons

---

### **SPEAKER'S PERMISSION**

---

The proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees are hereby made available to provide greater public access. The parliamentary privilege of the House of Commons to control the publication and broadcast of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees is nonetheless reserved. All copyrights therein are also reserved.

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the Copyright Act. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the Copyright Act.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

---

Also available on the House of Commons website at the following address: <https://www.ourcommons.ca>

Publié en conformité de l'autorité  
du Président de la Chambre des communes

---

### **PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT**

---

Les délibérations de la Chambre des communes et de ses comités sont mises à la disposition du public pour mieux le renseigner. La Chambre conserve néanmoins son privilège parlementaire de contrôler la publication et la diffusion des délibérations et elle possède tous les droits d'auteur sur celles-ci.

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la Loi sur le droit d'auteur. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre des communes.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la Loi sur le droit d'auteur.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

---

Aussi disponible sur le site Web de la Chambre des communes à l'adresse suivante :  
<https://www.noscommunes.ca>