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Standing Committee on Science and Research

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Wednesday, June 18, 2025

Chair: Salma Zahid



Standing Committee on Science and Research

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• (1635)

[Translation]

The Clerk of the Committee (Ariane Calvert): Honourable members of the committee, I see a quorum.

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

I must inform the members that the clerk of the committee can only receive motions for the election of the chair. The clerk can't receive other types of motions, can't 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 now ready to receive motions for the chair.

Mr. Noormohamed.

[Translation]

Taleeb Noormohamed (Vancouver Granville, Lib.): I would like to nominate Mrs. Zahid as chair.

[English]

The Clerk: It has been moved by Mr. Noormohamed that Ms. Zahid be elected as chair of the committee.

Are there any further motions?

Seeing none, I will now put the motion to the committee.

(Motion agreed to)

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

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

The Clerk: I invite Ms. Zahid to take the chair.

The Chair (Salma Zahid (Scarborough Centre—Don Valley East, Lib.)): Hello and good afternoon, everybody. Thank you for your trust in me to be the chair of this committee. I'm really looking forward to working with all of you to make sure that we do some meaningful work on this committee. It is an honour to be here with all of you and to be the chair. I'm looking forward to it.

Are all committee members okay to proceed with the election of the vice-chairs? Are we good? Okay.

I'll pass it on to the clerk.

The Clerk: 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.

Mr. Ho.

• (1640)

Vincent Ho (Richmond Hill South, CPC): I'd like to nominate my colleague Tony Baldinelli to be vice-chair.

The Clerk: It has been moved by Mr. Ho that Mr. Baldinelli be elected as first vice-chair of the committee.

Are there any further motions?

Seeing none, I will now put the motion to the committee.

(Motion agreed to)

The Clerk: I declare the motion carried and Mr. Baldinelli 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 prepared to receive motions for the second vice-chair.

[English]

Ms. Jaczek.

Hon. Helena Jaczek (Markham—Stouffville, Lib.): I would like to nominate MP Blanchette-Joncas.

[Translation]

The Clerk: It has been moved by Ms. Jaczek that Mr. Blanchette-Joncas be elected as second vice-chair of the committee.

Are there any further motions?

(Motion agreed to)

I declare the motion carried and Mr. Blanchette-Joncas duly elected second vice-chair of the committee.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you, Clerk.

Congratulations to both vice-chairs on your election and on being appointed as vice-chairs.

Before we continue, there are a few things I need to say.

I would 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 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. Please have a look at that.

Please wait until I recognize you by name before speaking. For those participating by video conference—no one is doing that today, but for future purposes—click on the microphone icon to activate your mic, and please mute yourself when you are not speaking. For those on Zoom, at the bottom of your screen you can select the appropriate channel for interpretation—floor, English or French. For those in the room, you can use the earpiece and select the desired channel.

I'll remind you that all comments should be addressed through the chair. For members in the room, if you wish to speak, please raise your hand. For members on Zoom, please use the “raise hand” function. The clerk and I will manage the speaking order as best we can. We appreciate your patience and understanding in this regard.

If you are all in agreement, I would like to go to the next item, which is the adoption of the routine motions.

The committee can adopt these motions one after the other in a group, or we can adopt them as a total group. These routine motions have been adopted by the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

The first one is about analyst services. I will read that so we can have our analysts.

It is:

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.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Okay, we can have our analysts come up and take their seats. Thank you.

Now we will proceed to the other routine motions.

What is the desire of the committee? Should they be adopted as a group, or should they be read one by one and adopted?

Mr. Baldinelli.

Tony Baldinelli (Niagara Falls—Niagara-on-the-Lake, CPC): Congratulations, Chair, on your appointment. We all look forward to working with you.

I would suggest that we could approve all of these with unanimous consent, if we have that, and adopt all the motions as a group.

• (1645)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Baldinelli.

Do all the members have the routine motions?

Do you want me to read them, or will we adopt them?

Regarding all the routine motions, including those related to the subcommittee on agenda and procedure; meeting without a quorum; travel; time for opening remarks and questioning of witnesses; document distribution; working meals; travel, accommodation and living expenses of witnesses; access to in camera meetings; transcripts of in camera meetings; notices of motion; orders of reference from the House respecting bills; whips' access to digital binders; and the maintenance of order and decorum, is it the will of the committee to adopt all those motions?

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

The Chair: We'll go to Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed and then Mr. Baldinelli.

Taleeb Noormohamed: Madam Chair, I was going to suggest that if we have dispensed with all the items that are required, and given that there is obviously now work for you to do as the chair and for all of us to go back and start to think about, perhaps we can move to adjourn the meeting.

The Chair: Is it the will of the committee to adjourn the meeting?

[*Translation*]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski—La Matapédia, BQ): No.

[*English*]

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Baldinelli.

Tony Baldinelli: Thank you, Madam Chair.

As we are in committee business, I want to propose a motion that carries on some of the work from the previous Parliament with regard to two studies that were completed by the science committee, yet not tabled for government response.

I want to propose a motion. I move:

Given the tireless work that committee members, staff, the clerk, analysts, and witnesses contributed to producing the following report, and given that the report was unable to receive a government response before Parliament was dissolved,

that the committee adopt the report entitled “Distribution of Federal Funding Among Canada's Post-Secondary Institutions” and any corresponding supplementary or dissenting reports adopted during the 1st Session of the 44th Parliament;

that, pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee request the government to table a comprehensive response to the report; and

that the Chair present the report to the House.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Baldinelli.

We have a motion on the floor. Is there any discussion?

Ms. Jaczek, go ahead.

Hon. Helena Jaczek: I would agree. As a member of this committee in the last Parliament, we certainly worked very hard on that report. I would very much like to hear the government response to the work we did.

The Chair: Is there any other discussion?

(Motion agreed to)

Tony Baldinelli: I have a second motion that my colleague Ms. DeRidder would like to read.

Kelly DeRidder (Kitchener Centre, CPC): Thank you.

I have a notice of motion for report 13:

Given the tireless work that the committee members, staff, the clerk, analysts, and witnesses contributed to producing the following report, and given that the report was unable to receive a government response before Parliament was dissolved,

that the committee adopt the report entitled "Science and Research in Canada's Arctic in Relation to Climate Change" and any corresponding supplementary or dissenting reports adopted during the 1st Session of the 44th Parliament;

that, pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee request the government to table a comprehensive response to the report; and

that the Chair present the report to the House.

The Chair: I'm sorry, but I need a clarification.

Are you giving notice of the motion, or are you moving the motion?

Kelly DeRidder: I'm moving the motion.

Tony Baldinelli: We are moving it.

The Chair: I just wanted to be clear.

We have a motion on the floor.

Ms. Jaczek, go ahead.

Hon. Helena Jaczek: Again, we laboured long and hard and came to some very interesting conclusions, so, yet again, I would concur that we would like to have a government response.

The Chair: Thank you. Is there any other discussion?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Is there any other discussion?

Mr. Blanchette-Joncas, go ahead.

• (1650)

[Translation]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Thank you, Madam Chair. Congratulations on your election.

As a member of the Standing Committee on Science and Research during the 44th Parliament, I would like us to continue a study that was obviously dropped when Parliament dissolved.

I move the following motion:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the Committee undertake a study on the impact that the various criteria for awarding federal funding have on research excellence in Canada; that the Committee evaluate whether the criteria used are still appropriate within the evaluation committees, allow for the achievement of program objectives, strengthen the development of knowledge, and contribute to innovation, research and science in Canada; that the Committee assess whether modifications should be made to these criteria; That the evidence and documentation received by the committee during the 1st session of the 44th Parliament on the subject be taken into consideration by the committee in the current session. Furthermore, that the Committee devote at least 4 meetings to this study and report its findings to the House.

[English]

The Chair: There is a motion on the floor.

Ms. Jaczek, go ahead.

Hon. Helena Jaczek: I will agree with MP Blanchette-Joncas that it was a very interesting study. I would say that we can continue with it. It was fairly controversial in terms of some of the witness testimony that we had here, and we will have an opportunity to ask for some more witnesses to round out some of that discussion.

I would concur that we would need probably four more meetings of this committee to really have a well-balanced report to present to the House. I concur with that motion.

The Chair: The motion is being distributed to all of the members.

Do the members need a few minutes to go through the motion, or is everyone okay to have a discussion on that?

Jagsharan Singh Mahal (Edmonton Southeast, CPC): I need time to look it over.

The Chair: I'll suspend the meeting for a few minutes so that members can have a look.

The meeting is suspended.

• (1650)

(Pause)

• (1655)

The Chair: I call the meeting to order.

We have a motion, and it has been distributed to all of the members of the committee in both official languages.

Is there any discussion?

Mr. Noormohamed, go ahead.

Taleeb Noormohamed: Madam Chair, obviously being new to this committee, I have been given to understand that we've already had, I think, five meetings on this important study. I think we all recognize the importance of this study. There are other things I suspect are going to come our way in the fall and other areas of interest that we're going to want to cover. If there is a willingness, we would be open to amending this to suggest two meetings. Then hopefully we can move forward to other things that we will want to discuss and ensure that we can get the response to this done in a timely fashion as well.

The Chair: Are you moving an amendment to the motion?

Taleeb Noormohamed: Yes.

The Chair: Can you please repeat the amendment you are proposing?

Taleeb Noormohamed: I would simply keep it the same and change the number four to two. That's really it.

The Chair: We have an amendment proposed by Mr. Noormohamed, so we will have to deal with that right now.

Is there any discussion?

We have Mr. Blanchette-Joncas.

[Translation]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I would just like to clarify a few things.

Unless I'm already suffering from amnesia at my age, I thought that I heard a few minutes ago that our colleague, Ms. Jaczek, decided that we would hold four committee meetings to carry out this important study.

I can appreciate that my colleagues in the government have slightly different opinions. However, I did hear earlier that we would be holding four meetings.

I'm perfectly willing to listen to my colleague's amendment. However, I would just like him to explain why he's talking about two meetings instead of four.

What's his rationale?

[English]

The Chair: Thank you.

Is there any discussion?

We have Mr. Baldinelli.

Tony Baldinelli: I agree with my Bloc colleague. The governing party's experienced member, who was on the committee previously, had indicated her support for four meetings earlier and indicated it was an interesting study that needed to be investigated. I would suggest that we keep this to four meetings, and I support the Bloc motion to do so.

The Chair: We go to Ms. Jaczek.

Hon. Helena Jaczek: With all great respect for my colleague here, he wasn't here to hear the discussion and I was, as was Mr. Blanchette-Joncas. Quite honestly, to even refresh our memory of what had occurred, I think that four meetings is quite reasonable. I do understand the need for efficiency, but I think quite honestly that members of this committee will find it very interesting. There are so many criteria involved in the allocation of research funding. It is a complicated subject, and we certainly had a good sense of the diversity of opinion, but I don't think we got anywhere near to making recommendations or feeling able to do so. With all due respect to my colleague, I would say that four more meetings would not be unreasonable.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Jaczek.

We have Mr. Noormohamed.

Taleeb Noormohamed: I find myself in a particularly interesting and perplexing situation here where I think we should do six meetings. Look, I think this is a very important topic and discussion. I am fully in support of the motion, as I said. The rationale for proposing two is that I suspect we're going to have an extremely busy fall, given that there are a number of new things that this committee is going to have the opportunity to discuss, particularly around artificial intelligence, digital transformation, digital innovation, things that are going to be coming its way. My thinking, when I made the suggestion, was that we would be able to address this important matter, given that we have had lots of discussions about it, and then ensure that there is sufficient time for other things.

What I would hate to see is for this study to, yet again, get hung up because there's something else that's important; then another motion comes up and the work never gets done on this. If the will of the committee is to do four, who the heck am I to argue? I just

don't want us to see this thing end up hanging, because there's something urgent that replaces the important. That's all.

The Chair: We'll go to Mr. Mahal.

Jagsharan Singh Mahal: I agree with Mr. Noormohamed as well. At the same time, given the complexity and the vastness of the issues that are in there, if we are efficient enough to cover them before the four meetings, then why not? However, if we need four meetings, I don't think that's a bad idea at all. As long as there is that flexibility to switch it either way, we should be okay with that.

● (1700)

The Chair: I really don't know what testimonies have already been heard. I will look into it. However, I think we should make a decision if we want to start with this study when we come back in the fall. We need to make a decision about the number of meetings so that, accordingly, the number of witnesses and their names can be given to the clerk, so that they can plan and invite the witnesses for the study. That is just my suggestion. It is up to the will of the committee members. Whatever you decide, I will do that.

There are no further hands. Seeing no agreement, maybe we can take a vote on the amendment proposed by Mr. Noormohamed.

Taleeb Noormohamed: I'm just going to withdraw the amendment. It's fine.

The Chair: Do we have unanimous consent for Mr. Noormohamed to withdraw that?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Amendment withdrawn)

The Chair: We have dealt with the amendment, so we are back on the motion as presented by Mr. Blanchette-Joncas.

Is there any discussion? I see none.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Ho.

Vincent Ho: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'd like to move a motion that is very topical to the events of the House of Commons in the last week—yesterday, actually.

I move that, pursuant to Standing Order 108(3), this committee undertake a study on the existing research, and the research that is currently ongoing, on the capacity of Canada's power grid, or lack thereof, with respect to meeting the planned expansion of the government's new electric vehicle, or EV, mandate, which the Liberals voted in favour of on June 17, 2025—that was yesterday—and that the committee study this matter for no less than five meetings; and that the committee report its findings to the House of Commons; and that, pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee request that the government table a comprehensive response to the report.

The Chair: Have you sent this motion? Have you given the...?

Vincent Ho: We can circulate it.

The Chair: We will have to get the motion distributed to all of the members so that they can have a look. I'll give you a few minutes so that the motion is distributed in both official languages to all of the members. I'll suspend the meeting for a few minutes so that the members can have a look.

The meeting is suspended.

• (1700)

(Pause)

• (1710)

The Chair: I call the meeting to order.

We have a motion that has been distributed to all the members. The motion has been moved by Mr. Ho. Is there any discussion?

Mr. Noormohamed.

Taleeb Noormohamed: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I find this motion quite interesting because it starts to raise a series of constitutional questions in respect of jurisdiction. I'm very curious about this, as a British Columbian, where the provincial government has set a mandate of 100% EV adoption by 2035, and more importantly, for the purposes of this conversation, about the fact that the Government of Quebec has also indicated it intends to get to 100% EVs by 2035 in a tiered program.

I'm very curious about this conversation, philosophical in nature, particularly when there are provincial issues and jurisdictional issues at play in respect of what provincial grids look like and what provincial hydro corporations are actually doing to support this. I am curious why this isn't something that the Conservatives would want provincial governments to take up as part of their own conversations in Quebec and in British Columbia, and to challenge, for example, the Government of Quebec as to why it thinks it's a good idea to do this. This is not necessarily a federal issue in the way it's currently being characterized in this particular motion.

Provincial governments have a profound responsibility and profound trust that requires them to think these things through. I would be particularly interested to hear from my Bloc colleague about how he would rationalize this conversation and challenge the sovereignty of the Government of Quebec on this particular issue, when it has made it abundantly clear that it is part of its commitment to the environment and its commitment to ensuring that we are fighting climate change, something that we certainly believe on this side of the table.

How does playing gotcha politics on something like this help assert the important moves that the Government of Quebec—in my case, the Government of British Columbia—and others have made in trying to fight climate change in terms of increasing EV adoption and incentivizing people to do this? Quebec, I think, has put in place a policy where it intends to have one EV charger per 16 EVs. Now, I can't imagine that Hydro-Québec, which has done incredibly smart work in this area, would be making those decisions without having thought this through.

If we want this to be a discussion where we bring in provincial hydros and grill them—and we can start with Hydro-Québec—I don't know that it serves anybody's purpose in trying to do what I think many of us want, especially if we look at the vote in the

House yesterday, with the defeat of the Conservative motion. Why would we want to go down this road? We intend not to support the motion, if that wasn't obvious.

• (1715)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Noormohamed.

We have Mr. Baldinelli next.

Tony Baldinelli: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I thank my colleague for his comment.

I believe we can propose a friendly amendment that could answer some of the questions from my Bloc colleague and assure him of some of the concerns he's raised to me. I'll propose that after some of my comments.

What we're doing is responding to an issue the government has mandated and to the questions and concerns that have been expressed to us, as parliamentarians, across this country. Not only are individual constituents responding to us, but I'm also hearing from the major auto producers—Ford, General Motors—that have great concerns with this government's EV mandate, and that have asked the government to backtrack from its position. In fact, the Canadian Vehicle Manufacturers' Association has come forward, stating that the government is wrong in its EV mandate position. It's essentially saying that, with the U.S. tariffs now in place—it's quoted from X—pursuing that policy would be like “putting the puck in our own net”, and I agree with them.

I have a GM V8 engine facility just next door to my riding in St. Catharines, and I also have one that is local, in Tonawanda, New York, which is not even a 30-minute drive away. GM just made the largest engine investment it's ever made, \$888 million, into the facility in Tonawanda, New York. Do you know what, Madam Chair? We make the exact same engine as they do in Tonawanda. It's the V8 that goes into the Silverado, and we make a Silverado in Oshawa. What has GM done? They shut down a third shift in Oshawa.

My GM facility in St. Catharines is two million square feet in size. I had the pleasure of working there for four summers as a student, as a university student. They put me through university, and I'm brand loyal because of it. The vehicle I drive today is a 2022 Buick Enclave. Its engine was made in St. Catharines. The vehicle was manufactured in Michigan. What happened recently? General Motors removed that V6 engine line from St. Catharines, with the hope that one day they would pursue EV engines. Guess what. They put that on hold.

Ford Motor Company has put on hold EV production at Oakville. In fact, it is going back to ICE engine production and vehicle production in Oakville because the demand from consumers is not there. What is challenging for the auto sector in Canada is that the jobs that are going to be impacted.

The United States, through its tariffs, and this president.... He's made it abundantly clear that his job is to ensure that auto workers are employed in the United States and not in Canada, so why is it that this government is helping him do that? What we're doing is driving investment, auto investment, out of Canada. General Motors just made another \$4-billion announcement, taking jobs out of Mexico and returning them to Michigan. Why is it that this government, through its policies and pursuing this EV mandate, is almost complicit in helping Donald Trump achieve what he's looking to do, which is to return jobs to Michigan?

Do you know what, Madam Chair? I want to ensure that there are still good-paying auto sector jobs in southern Ontario. There was a report in The Globe and Mail just the other day that said we are at risk of losing 50,000 auto worker jobs. That would be devastating for the Canadian economy. Since the 1960s, the success of the auto sector, in both Canada and the United States, was based on the regulatory harmony that existed between both countries, from the Auto Pact on. That regulatory harmony was looking at both countries. What they did, in a sense, was that they controlled what came out of the tailpipe. They didn't regulate what the consumer purchased in terms of a vehicle.

• (1720)

They regulated the environmental standards that needed to be pursued. Both countries agreed to that. They then left it not only to the consumer to decide but to the manufacturer to get in line to do that. We are nowhere near that with this EV mandate. Ford, GM and even Honda are telling us not to pursue this. It's astounding to see a government continue to pursue something that's going to fail so miserably.

What we're seeking to do is ask, "Do we even have the capacity here, for example, in Ontario, to be ready for that?" I know that the Independent Electricity System Operator in Ontario did a report in December of 2023. That report dealt with what it is going to take for Ontario to get to net zero as a province in terms of electrical production. The federal government tried to say to the provinces, "Let's do it by 2035." Guess what. That was simply impossible, and the provinces let the federal government know that. In that report, it said that, in Ontario, it's going to take us to 2050 to get there, and that it was going to cost \$400 billion to do so. That would take us from 42,000 megawatts to 88,000 megawatts. The Ontario government is doing it. It's pursuing small modular reactors, for example. That's a key policy plank, and do you know what? I'm pleased that they're doing that. I have companies in my riding such as E.S. Fox that are going to be important companies in helping to build that out.

As of today, we are in no position to be ready for a 100% vehicle mandate. That's why we put forward this motion. I think we can propose a friendly amendment to answer some of the concerns that my Bloc colleague had as well as my Liberal friend's earlier concerns, so that we look at the issue without touching upon the juris-

dictional issues that he mentioned earlier on. I think we can get there with your support, and I want to propose that friendly amendment now, if I could.

The Chair: Please go ahead.

Tony Baldinelli: I want to go forward with this, and I think we can make the motion read like this:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(3), the committee undertake a study on the existing research, and the research that is currently ongoing, with respect to the planned expansion of the Liberal government's new EV mandate which they voted in favour of on June 17, 2025; and, that the committee study this matter for no less than five meetings; and, that the committee report its findings to the House of Commons; and that, pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee request that the government table a comprehensive response to the report.

That would be my amendment.

• (1725)

The Chair: Thank you.

We have an amendment. I'll read it.

The amendment is to, in the second line after "currently ongoing", delete "on the capacity of Canada's power grid, or lack thereof". The motion would read as follows:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(3), the committee undertake a study on the existing research, and the research that is currently ongoing, with respect to the planned expansion of the Liberal government's new EV mandate which they voted in favour of on June 17, 2025; and, that the committee study this matter for no less than five meetings; and, that the committee report its findings to the House of Commons; and that, pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee request that the government table a comprehensive response to the report.

We have an amendment on the floor.

Go ahead, Mr. Noormohamed.

Taleeb Noormohamed: Madam Chair, an amendment is not supposed to materially alter the nature of the motion.

The motion initially sought to discuss the power grid. It has now gone from discussing the power grid to a philosophical debate about the EV mandate. If the research component of this and the motion initially talked about the capacity of the power grid, and we've now removed the entire reference to the thing that the study was about, that's a new motion, Madam Chair. That's no longer an amendment to an existing motion, because the materiality of the motion has changed completely.

I think the amendment is inadmissible.

The Chair: Give me just a second and let me consult with the clerk.

• (1725)

(Pause)

• (1730)

The Chair: Looking at the amendment that has been proposed, my ruling is that it changes the purpose of the original motion, so I rule the amendment out of order.

We are back on the motion as presented by Mr. Ho.

Seeing no debate, is it the will of the committee to adopt the motion?

(Motion negatived: nays 5; yeas 4)

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Ho.

Vincent Ho: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'd like to move another motion in connection with this. I find it kind of ironic that Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed talked about jurisdictional issues and about B.C. and Quebec having purportedly their own mandates. However, yesterday, the government went out and asserted federal jurisdiction on.... I just find it kind of ironic, the—

Taleeb Noormohamed: I have a point or order, Madam Chair.

I know the member is new, but I think it's important that we follow the rules of the committee. Of course, decorum is important. There's a misrepresentation of what was said, and the facts as laid out do not.... I mean, I think this is important. I don't know what the rationality is. If there's a motion to be presented, present the motion. However, the preamble to the motion can't be "Mr. Noormohamed did X or Y, and the vote was X or Y."

The Chair: That is debate.

Mr. Ho.

Vincent Ho: I'll continue with just the motion.

I move:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(i), the committee undertake a study on the existing research, and the research that is currently ongoing, with respect to the planned expansion of the Liberal government's new [electric vehicle] mandate, which they voted in favour of on June 17, 2025; and, that the committee study this matter for no less than five meetings; and, that the committee report its findings to the House of Commons; and that, pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee request that the government table a comprehensive response to the report.

That's all.

The Chair: Okay, I'll suspend the meeting. I just need to consult the clerk on this. I'll suspend the meeting for two minutes.

• (1730) _____ (Pause) _____

• (1735)

The Chair: We have a motion that has been moved by Mr. Ho. I hope that everyone has looked at that motion.

Is there any debate on the motion moved by Mr. Ho?

Mr. Ho.

Vincent Ho: Referring back to what was said on the debate of the other motion, I find it ironic that the Liberal members of this committee are talking about jurisdiction when they just asserted federal jurisdiction yesterday through a vote in the House of Commons. I find it kind of rich that they're talking about EV mandates in British Columbia and Quebec, when they just imposed one yesterday, one that's pretty drastic and will require hundreds of billions of dollars of investment to support the grid and the infrastructure. We understand that it will require working with multiple levels of government to deliver and that it's one that would add \$20,000 to the cost of a new vehicle for everyday consumers. We know how out of touch the Liberals are, but \$20,000 is a lot of money to the

average family. It would risk 40,000 good-paying, Canadian auto sector jobs. Many of them are in the ridings of members of this committee. Those are jobs that we will never get back.

We want to understand more about the effects of this EV mandate, and we want to see if there's additional research that could uncover whether this Liberal government has implemented on Canadians a mandate that Canadians did not ask for.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Ho.

Next we have Mr. Noormohamed and then Ms. Jaczek.

Mr. Noormohamed.

Taleeb Noormohamed: You can go ahead. I'll go after.

The Chair: MP Jaczek.

Hon. Helena Jaczek: Thank you, Madam Chair.

This is the science and research committee. What I'm hearing from the members opposite relates much more to government policy rather than an intense investigation of the research on which that policy is potentially based. It is, in my view, not appropriate for study in this particular committee. It potentially could go to another committee that looks more broadly at industry or something like that.

This committee has, to date—and I speak advisedly because I've been on it for a number of years.... We ask for witnesses who are experts in scientific research to come in front of this committee to give us their findings. We create recommendations in relation to those findings. The way this motion has been presented, in my view, it simply does not fit within the mandate of this committee.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Noormohamed.

Taleeb Noormohamed: Thank you, Madam Chair. I have a couple of things.

My friend opposite may be surprised to know that his home province of Ontario also has a 100% EV mandate by 2035, so he may also want to have this discussion with, arguably, the most popular Conservative in the country: Doug Ford.

I know there's a lot of grasping at straws, on the other side, for meaning. One area of meaning might be to reflect on why Canadians from coast to coast to coast elected a Liberal government.

He's using words like "out of touch". The reality is that the party that is out of touch is the party that has no interest in dealing with climate change. It's the party that has clearly proven it has no understanding of where the will of the voters actually is in terms of the agenda to build a stronger country with investments in the type of infrastructure this country requires and needs, in partnership with provinces run by Conservatives like Doug Ford, who have an eye on building a strong economy and helping to deal with climate change; New Democrats like David Eby in British Columbia; and the Premier of Quebec and his government.

One of the key elements of federal laws and federal rules is to reflect what is actually happening in provinces. We're going to talk about jurisdiction. Power grids in this country are supplied by provincial power suppliers. If we're going to be talking about research in that area—and that seems to be what the member opposite wants to do—I would encourage him to talk to the Doug Ford government, given that he represents a riding from Ontario. If he has concerns about what Quebec is doing, work with his Bloc colleague to interrogate what the Government of Quebec is doing.

The reality is, as Madam Jaczek pointed out, that this committee is not where we need to be having this discussion, first of all.

Second of all, if we're going to have a thoughtful, intelligent discussion about electric vehicles in this country, why don't we actually think about the way in which Canadians have overwhelmingly chosen to make these moves? Why has battery production become something this country has begun to lead on?

What Conservatives are trying to use this committee to do, Madam Chair, is to play gotcha politics with science. The reality of the way the world is moving is that electric vehicles—electrification—are not, or should not, be a partisan issue. If Conservatives in Ontario, New Democrats in British Columbia, the Government of Quebec, the Government of the United Kingdom under both Conservatives and Labour, and the European Union, where you have a wide range of political views represented... My goodness, even India and China are talking about moving aggressively towards electrification and electric vehicles and putting in mandates that are far more aggressive than the provinces and this country have done. I think the real question we need to be asking is why Conservatives don't see this as an important move forward.

Again, we're talking about the motion yesterday—the gotcha policy. The motion was defeated by members of Parliament who represent every single province and territory of this country. If we're calling all of those folks out of touch, that's remarkable.

We're at a place right now in this committee where we have the choice to decide whether we want to entertain motions that are going to be gotcha politics or we actually deal with the types of science and research questions that this committee has done in the past, which I know the Bloc member is very interested in conducting, which we are certainly interested in doing and which members of the Conservative Party who are not ideologues would also like to see being done.

Madam Chair, in the first instance, this motion shouldn't be in this committee by the very nature of the way it has been presented. There's also a philosophical question about why we're trying to

avoid a jurisdictional conversation when, in fact, the reality of this motion presents us with the requirement to interrogate Hydro-Québec, Ontario hydro and BC Hydro, and to call into question the policies of the Government of Quebec and the Government of Ontario. I suspect a whole lot of Conservatives aren't super happy with doing that.

If that's what they want to do, Madam Chair, that's great, but I certainly don't think that's the will of this committee. I don't think it's the mandate of this committee, and I'm fairly certain it doesn't reflect the overwhelming majority of where Canadians placed their votes in the last election.

• (1740)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Noormohamed.

Mr. Mahal.

Jagsharan Singh Mahal: Thank you, Madam Chair. I want to touch upon two issues.

First is the jurisdictional issue that my friend on the other side of the table keeps referring to. My difference is that, when the Liberals proposed this change, pushing Canadians into an EV mandate, it's not a black and white thing. You cannot push everything on the provinces and also say that this jurisdiction belongs to the provinces so we cannot talk about these issues in this committee.

Yes, we can talk about anything in this committee if it has any ancillary effects on.... The federal government announced that it is going to go strong on an EV mandate. It is going to penalize normal Canadians with \$20,000 per vehicle if they make their choice and they don't want to go for EVs.

We want to make sure that the provincial grids are strong enough, or what agreements the federal government is going to make to ensure that the provinces are ready for it. That is my difference from the member opposite. It's not a black and white issue, per se, that this is provincial jurisdiction and we should not be talking about it at this committee.

Second, it's not clearly an industrial thing. The Liberals are pushing to take the combustion engine out of the market. It is a science issue. The technology—the innovation of battery cells—is a science issue. It's not an industry thing, in my opinion. We should also be mindful of that.

Thank you.

The Chair: We have Mr. Ho.

Vincent Ho: Thank you, Madam Chair.

There is a lot of research conducted on EVs, and this committee wants to understand more about it. Many Canadian universities have begun to study this. The research could be quite broad. It could perhaps be about understanding whether EVs are appropriate in rural areas in this country. It could study whether there are the charging stations and networks that support having that many EVs on the road in urban areas in the country.

This looks like a case of Liberal hypocrisy, time and again, and this is just a prime example of it. The Liberals just voted for a federal EV mandate yesterday, and now they want to shut down this committee's call to conduct additional research on it. That's just hypocrisy. This is one day later—24 hours later. They then raise issues. If I'm not mistaken, there are Liberal members of this committee saying it's not the right committee.

Does that mean that if it were a different committee, you would vote in favour of it?

They're starting to talk about jurisdiction. Again, we're not encroaching on the jurisdiction of the provinces. Unlike the Liberals, we respect the Constitution. If there's a party against research, it sounds like it's the Liberals, because they're voting against conducting research on a mandate that they just imposed on Canadians—one that they're not calling for.

We're not against EVs. I know a Liberal member wants to sling mud at us and say that Conservatives don't support EVs. We support consumer choice. We're simply against the mandate that taxes Canadians, that restricts consumer choice and that kills potentially tens of thousands of jobs permanently. We want to have an honest discussion—

• (1745)

The Chair: I'm sorry for interrupting, Mr. Ho.

Can you move your mike a little further, please? It's creating problems.

Vincent Ho: I'm almost done.

We just want to conduct—

The Chair: It's creating a popping sound.

Vincent Ho: Thank you.

Again, to impose a mandate that could cost hundreds of billions of dollars for Canadians and for the economy, it's fair and reasonable to call for additional research to see whether it's even realistic. I find it's just another classic example of Liberal hypocrisy, where they voted for something yesterday and, 24 hours later, they want to shut it down. Which one is it?

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Ho.

We go to Mr. Blanchette-Joncas.

[Translation]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I would like to clarify the Bloc Québécois' position.

First, Quebec didn't wait for the federal government to have a zero-emission policy for electric vehicles. That's one thing.

I'm also open to the idea of conducting a wide-ranging study on electric vehicle research. However, from our perspective, we can't conduct a study that falls under a federal government mandate that already encroaches on Quebec's jurisdictions. I would like my Conservative and Liberal colleagues to understand this position.

I'm open to the idea of talking about research and innovation regarding topics such as electric vehicles. However, the Bloc Québécois won't support the idea of conducting a study that falls under a mandate already assigned to Quebec within its territory. I hope that this is clear to my colleagues. We won't support an initiative to conduct a study on the electrical infrastructure capacity of Hydro-Québec, a jewel of the Quebec government.

I'm open to discussion, but that's the Bloc Québécois' position.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you.

We have Mr. Ho.

Vincent Ho: I would like to go back to one point that one of the Liberal members of this committee mentioned about it being in a different committee.

I'm going to read from the mandate of this committee. It says that one of the committee mandates is to review the “reports of the Chief Science Advisor”. One of the things that the chief science adviser does is study EVs.

Again, this is fully within the mandate. We understand that perhaps other aspects of it could be studied in a different committee and then could be overlapped, but this is certainly something that falls within the purview of this mandate.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Ho.

Seeing no further debate, we will have a vote.

Ms. DeRidder.

• (1750)

Kelly DeRidder: I wanted to mention that this is a broad view of a study that could be completed on all electric vehicle components. For example, in my region alone, VW has launched a research centre for electric vehicle batteries, so the battery research as a component to this would be helpful to understand and know.

I would like to reiterate that this is a broad view of EV research, all components. I agree with Vincent on the fact that it could be a study on the range of what's required in order to support the EV move and the technology.

The Chair: Thank you, MP DeRidder.

Seeing no further debate, I'll call for the vote.

(Motion negated: nays 5; yeas 4)

The Chair: Ms. Jaczek.

Hon. Helena Jaczek: Madam Chair, there was another motion which we did vote on in the previous Parliament, and we were going to study at this committee. It's regarding antimicrobial resistance. There was certainly in the previous Parliament some enthusiasm to go ahead with that, so I have a motion to propose. I move:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(i), the committee study antimicrobial resistance (AMR), including (i) resistant organisms, (ii) what is driving an increase in AMR, (iii) clinical and economic impacts of AMR in Canada, and (iv) what is needed to support research for new antimicrobial agents, nonpharmacological strategies to eliminate or modify AMR bacteria, new methods of antibacterial drug identification and strategies that neutralize virulence factors, and that the committee allocate a minimum of 6 meetings to this study, and that the committee report its findings to the House.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Jaczek.

We will have the motion distributed to all members.

I'll suspend the meeting for two minutes so that members can get the motion in both official languages.

The meeting is suspended.

• (1750) _____ (Pause) _____

• (1750)

The Chair: I call the meeting to order.

The motion, in both official languages, has been sent to all members by email.

Is there any debate?

Tony Baldinelli: We just got it.

The Chair: Okay.

Tony Baldinelli: Just one more minute would be appreciated. Thank you.

The Chair: I hope all members have read the motion.

Mr. Baldinelli.

• (1755)

Tony Baldinelli: If I may, Madam Chair, I defer to the expertise of my colleague with regard to the study itself, but earlier we turned down a motion to request a study saying that study didn't fit within the science committee. Would the proposal for this motion not fit better with the health committee?

The Chair: Ms. Jaczek.

Hon. Helena Jaczek: That's certainly a question that is relevant for sure. It actually goes way beyond human health. The use of antimicrobials is very prevalent in the veterinary profession. It has impacts in terms of economics as well. It's a complicated question, but it goes well beyond human health, which is closely the mandate of the health committee. I would like to emphasize that your predecessors on this committee were, in fact, quite enthusiastic to pursue this.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Jaczek.

Mr. Ho, go ahead.

Vincent Ho: The Liberals just shot down a motion studying something that NSERC provides funding for, which, in my view, falls under the purview of this committee. Would this motion not

fall under health? You mentioned economic implications, so perhaps the commercialization of this research. Would that not fall under industry? You also talked about vets using it, so would that not fall maybe under something like the regulation of professions, which, again, is more economy-focused and would perhaps fall under health as well? We find that this is just not under the purview of this committee.

Again, it is another case of Liberal hypocrisy, because they just voted against.... They're laughing, for the viewers at home.

Taleeb Noormohamed: I have a point of order, Madam Chair.

I know the member is new, and I recognize that he is already falling into the Conservative trap of using the committee to get clips, as he just pointed out. I think it's important to get to the personal nature of the comments—

The Chair: I'm sorry. Mr. Ho has the floor.

Vincent Ho: Thank you.

That point of order was rather condescending, which, again, fits the character of most members of the Liberals on this committee, but anyway....

The Chair: I will request that you not make comments like that with respect to—

Vincent Ho: Thank you.

I finished stating my point, but, again, it seems like it falls under a different committee.

The Chair: Seeing no further debate.... Mr. Baldinelli, go ahead.

Tony Baldinelli: Again, to my colleague, who answered the questions perfectly, is this something that you believe requires six meetings, or is there something that could be done in four? It seems like a lot of meetings.

The Chair: All the questions should be directed through the chair.

Tony Baldinelli: I ask that question through you, Chair. I apologize.

The Chair: Are you proposing that as an amendment?

Tony Baldinelli: No. First of all, it's just a question, because she sat previously on the committee, and my colleague from the Bloc did as well. It's just to get his input, because they both sat on that committee. You both indicated that the former Conservative colleagues found interest in this. I'm just asking whether or not this is something that requires holding six meetings.

The Chair: Thank you.

Would Ms. Jaczek like to add to that?

Hon. Helena Jaczek: I think, Mr. Baldinelli, as you become used to this committee, you will find that we have such an exceptional research community in Canada, and there is great eagerness to come and explain their positions. Quite honestly, with six meetings, I think you'll find they'll go very rapidly and that they will be of great interest to you. This was the decision that we came to a consensus on in the previous Parliament.

• (1800)

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Jaczek.

Mr. Mahal, go ahead.

Jagsharan Singh Mahal: Madam Chair, may I move to adjourn the meeting now?

The Chair: Are you calling like...?

Jagsharan Singh Mahal: I would like to adjourn the meeting.

The Chair: Do we have unanimous consent?

Hon. Helena Jaczek: Madam Chair, I would prefer that we make a decision on my motion and call the question.

The Chair: Monsieur Blanchette-Joncas, go ahead.

[Translation]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Thank you, Madam Chair.

First, I would like to thank you for your understanding regarding my brief absence.

I'm open to the idea of conducting this study. However, like some of my colleagues, I'm wondering which committee would be best suited to carry it out. Perhaps it would be the Standing Committee on Health. It also concerns research, and I'm quite open to that.

However, I don't know whether six meetings are too many for this study. We could start with four meetings and add more if we need up to six. I'm open to the idea. We know that this will set a precedent for this committee. Afterwards, we'll all want six meetings to carry out our studies.

Perhaps the analysts can tell us. How many meetings were held per study in the previous Parliament? I think that this could give us a good reference point.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Blanchette-Joncas.

We'll get input from the analyst.

Grégoire Gayard (Committee Researcher): I will just need a couple of minutes to look at the previous work of the committee to know how many meetings we used for previous studies, if you want a precise answer.

The Chair: Mr. Mahal had raised his hand.

Go ahead, Mr. Mahal.

Jagsharan Singh Mahal: Madam Chair, thank you. Since my colleague on this side and from the Bloc raised the issue that it might be similar to the health committee or that other committees might be appropriate for this job, could my friend on the other side perhaps answer whether they have checked with other committees?

They might be working on the same. We don't want to waste our resources on the same thing if two committees are doing it.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Mahal.

Go ahead, Ms. Jaczek.

Hon. Helena Jaczek: Through you, Madam Chair, in fact, I did discuss this with members of the health committee, and they felt quite, as I do, that the fit is better here because there's not just an impact on human health.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Ho.

Vincent Ho: Given that there's such an intense and enthusiastic debate about which committee this should be at, we should probably go back to look at whether this is the appropriate committee. I know Helena had that discussion, but maybe it's something to reconsider.

I want to make a motion to adjourn the meeting, and I believe it's by majority, not by unanimous consent.

The Chair: We are having a debate, so we have Ms. DeRidder and then Mr. Noormohamed.

Kelly DeRidder: For ease of efficiency, it was brought up earlier by Mr. Noormohamed that we might have other things coming forward in the fall, so maybe we'd go to four meetings and then go from there. That's all I have.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Noormohamed.

Taleeb Noormohamed: I want to thank my colleague across.... If we're willing to, say, start with four, and if we can get it done in four, we're certainly open to that.

The Chair: Mr. Noormohamed, are you proposing an amendment?

Taleeb Noormohamed: Yes, it's an amendment to make it four meetings.

The Chair: We have an amendment by Mr. Noormohamed that it be four meetings.

Go ahead, Mr. Baldinelli.

Tony Baldinelli: We'll get there, but first of all, my colleague moved a motion to adjourn. Does that not force a vote immediately, Madam Chair?

It's not by unanimous consent. Does that not then impose upon you the requirement to hold a vote to adjourn the committee?

• (1805)

The Chair: He moved it, but there was.... I'm sorry for not calling the vote, but there was no consent. Some members of the committee said no, so that's why we did not go to that.

Tony Baldinelli: Does it require unanimous consent to move a motion to adjourn?

The Chair: It has to go to a vote, but there were—

Tony Baldinelli: Let's go to the vote.

The Chair: Order, please. We went through that. I'm sorry. The vote was not called, but we had “no” from the other side.

Right now, we have the motion. Let's vote on that, and then we have the vote.

Taleeb Noormohamed: Madam Chair, on a point of order, though, we are in a debate. We have speakers on the list. You can't call to adjourn the meeting while we are in the middle of a debate.

The Chair: Right now, we have the motion on the floor. You are proposing an amendment. Let's deal with it, and let's go into that.

I request that all the members please speak through the chair.

We have an amendment to reduce it to four meetings. Is there any discussion on the amendment?

Go ahead, Mr. Noormohamed.

Taleeb Noormohamed: I want to thank Ms. DeRidder for offering that suggestion. We're happy to make that amendment on the basis of her recommendation.

(Amendment agreed to)

(Motion as amended agreed to: yeas 9; nays 0)

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Noormohamed.

Taleeb Noormohamed: In the spirit of my colleague across the table, I'd like to move to adjourn the meeting.

The Chair: We will go to a vote.

(Motion agreed to: yeas 9; nays 0)

The Chair: The meeting is adjourned. Have a nice summer.

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