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# Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities

EVIDENCE

**NUMBER 001**

Monday, June 16, 2025

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Chair: Peter Schiefke





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Monday, June 16, 2025

• (1105)

[English]

**The Clerk of the Committee (Philip den Ouden):** Honourable members of the committee, I see a quorum.

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.

I must inform members that the clerk of the committee can only receive motions for the election of the chair. The clerk of the committee cannot receive other types of motions, entertain points of order or participate in debate.

We can now proceed to the election of the chair.

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

Go ahead, Mr. Kelloway.

**Mike Kelloway (Sydney—Glace Bay, Lib.):** I nominate MP Schiefke.

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

Are there any further motions?

Given that there are no further motions, I will now put the motion to the committee. Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the motion?

(Motion agreed to)

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

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

**The Chair (Peter Schiefke (Vaudreuil, Lib.)):** Thank you for the vote of confidence, colleagues. It's very much appreciated. I've said it before, but I'll say it again: I'm looking forward to working with each and every one of you to continue the good work we did in the previous session. Even with all the hoopla that was going on, I feel like we were able to do some really good work together. I know we'll continue in the same vein.

There are a couple of housekeeping things. I will read the statement that we're required to read at the beginning of every meeting. Then we'll move on with the election of the vice-chairs.

Before we continue, I'd 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 our participants, including the interpreters. You will also notice a QR code on the cards, which links to a short awareness video.

I'd also like to make a few comments for the benefit of members.

First, please wait until I recognize you by name before speaking. For those participating by video conference, click on the microphone icon to activate your mic. 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 will 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.

With that, Mr. Clerk, I look forward to working with you as well.

Colleagues, we will now begin with the election of our vice-chairs.

Go ahead, Mr. Lawrence.

**Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Clarke, CPC):** I would like to nominate Mr. Dan Albas.

**The Chair:** He is so nominated.

Go ahead, Mr. Barsalou-Duval.

[Translation]

**Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ):** I have a point of order, Mr. Chair. There is no interpretation right now.

**The Chair:** Since there is no interpretation, we will stop until we get word that the interpretation is working properly.

The problem has now been resolved. Thank you, Mr. Barsalou-Duval.

• (1110)

[English]

We have Mr. Lawrence nominating Mr. Albas.

Go ahead, Monsieur Lauzon.

[Translation]

**Stéphane Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation, Lib.):** I nominate Mr. Barsalou-Duval.

**The Chair:** You're nominating him for the second vice-chair. Is that correct?

**Stéphane Lauzon:** Yes, I nominate him for the position of second vice-chair.

**The Chair:** Okay.

We'll go one nomination at a time.

We'll start with Mr. Albas. Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the motion?

(Motion agreed to)

[English]

**The Chair:** It's unanimous.

Congratulations, Mr. Albas. I look forward to working with you, sir.

[Translation]

Does anyone want to move another motion?

Mr. Lauzon, you have the floor.

**Stéphane Lauzon:** I nominate Mr. Barsalou-Duval for the position of second vice-chair.

**The Chair:** Okay.

[English]

Is there any objection?

(Motion agreed to)

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

**The Chair:** It's unanimous.

[Translation]

Congratulations, Mr. Barsalou-Duval.

[English]

Now that we've gotten that out of the way, we have a slew of routine motions that we need to go through.

With that, Mr. Kelloway, I know that you volunteered to read us through those. I'll turn the floor over to you, sir.

**Mike Kelloway:** It's part of my initiation, I think, but here we go.

Under analyst services:

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:** Did we want to perhaps read through them all, and then...?

**Mike Kelloway:** Do you want me to go through them all?

**The Chair:** Can we do that, Mr. Clerk? Can we read through them all and then adopt them, or is there...?

**The Clerk:** It's as the committee wishes.

**The Chair:** Mr. Albas, go ahead.

**Dan Albas (Okanagan Lake West—South Kelowna, CPC):** It's my understanding that there's been considerable discussion previous to this meeting and that all parties have agreed to the routine motions as presented, so maybe we could take them as one block, as a single yea or nay.

**The Chair:** Are there any objections to that, colleagues?

There are not. That's perfect.

We have Mr. Albas moving that we adopt all of the routine motions as an omnibus.

(Motions agreed to [See Minutes of Proceedings])

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

Now I have the honour and pleasure of inviting Alexandre back as an analyst. We worked together for many years and we're going to be well served by his services.

We also have someone new, whom I just met this morning. I'll give you an opportunity to present yourself to the members of the committee.

[Translation]

**Khamla Heminthavong (Analyst):** Hello, my name is Khamla Heminthavong. It's a great pleasure to be here.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you.

For the members online, please remember that you're on mute.

We're good with the routine motions as adopted.

Go ahead, Mr. Muys.

**Dan Muys (Flamborough—Glanbrook—Brant North, CPC):** I served on this committee for the entirety of the 44th Parliament. A few committee reports that we worked on diligently with staff, the clerks and the analysts did not receive a government response prior to the dissolution of Parliament, so I'd like to propose that we move that those be retabled and that we ask for a response.

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

**Dan Muys:** I can specify what those are, if you wish.

**The Chair:** Yes. Do you want to read those in to make sure we are all on the same page?

**Dan Muys:** Sure.

It is:

That the committee adopt the report entitled "The Erie Lake Connector: A Project in the Best Interest of the Public?" and the corresponding supplementary and dissenting reports that were adopted in the first session of the 44th Parliament; that, pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee request the government table a comprehensive response to the report; and that the Chair present that report to the House.

That's one of them.

There are four studies.

**The Chair:** Go ahead.

**Dan Muys:** I won't reread the whole verbiage. I'll just cite the studies.

There was one, "Towards Accessible Air Transportation in Canada". That was a study we completed that did not receive a response. The third one was "Issues and Opportunities: High Frequency Rail in the Toronto to Quebec City Corridor", and then the fourth one was "The Role of McKinsey & Company in the Creation and the Beginnings of the Canada Infrastructure Bank". All of those were completed. There were reports tabled, and dissenting reports, but there were no comprehensive responses.

• (1115)

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

We've all heard the terms of Mr. Muys's motion. I think there were discussions prior to the meeting as well.

All those in favour of retabling those reports in the House, please so signify.

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

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** Mr. Barsalou-Duval, are you in favour of...

**Xavier Barsalou-Duval:** Mr. Chair, I must admit that I haven't been following closely, but I assume this is about getting the reports and the government responses, which I have no problem with.

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

[*English*]

Thank you, colleagues.

Go ahead, Mr. Albas.

**Dan Albas:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Congratulations on your role. I look forward to working with everyone.

I would like this committee to debate the following motion so that we can refer it to the House: "Given that BC Ferries has announced that it will purchase four new full-size ferries from a Chinese state-owned company rather than from a proven Canadian shipbuilder such as Seaspan in north Vancouver, and given that the Liberal government is set to subsidize this purchase with a handout to BC Ferries, that it be reported to the House that the committee calls on the government to attach to its transfer payments to BC Ferries a common-sense condition of buying Canadian-built ships built by Canadian workers."

If you like, I can read that in French as well.

**The Chair:** If you'd like to, Mr. Albas, sure.

**The Chair:** Are you giving notice of motion here?

**Dan Albas:** No. I'd like us to debate this now so that we can get this immediately before the House as a recommendation—or reported to the House, I should say.

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

**Mike Kelloway:** I'm just wondering when you can get that sent to us in both official languages so that we can review it as well.

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

Can we have that? Is there any objection to suspending for five minutes while that's being sent around so that people can have a look at it and have discussions?

This meeting is suspended to the call of the chair.

• (1115)

(Pause)

• (1125)

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

Mr. Kelloway, you have something to say, and then we'll go to Mr. Barsalou-Duval.

**Mike Kelloway:** Thanks, Chair and the member opposite, for putting that forward.

Our thought on this is that we will have some time to plan our approaches, studies and thoughts going forward in September.

When it comes to BC Ferries, there is, I think, some reasonable debate on our side that would focus on the fact that this is predominantly a provincial matter.

What we're hoping to do is focus on Bill C-5, the one Canadian economy act. There's a lot to pack into the next 48 hours with respect to witnesses from different stakeholder groups that are coming in. Our hopes, expectations and thoughts here are on looking at planning our schedule in September. Maybe this will be part of it or maybe it will not, but right now we have quite a few things in the hopper that relate to Bill C-5.

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

I'll turn it back over to Mr. Albas, as it was his motion.

**Dan Albas:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Look, we are facing some trade-offs here. I obviously know that there is some important business that the committee wants to attend to. However, if we do not require the government to immediately tell the Province of British Columbia and BC Ferries that they need to start doing shipbuilding here in Canada, whether that be at Seaspan in north Vancouver, Davie shipyards in Quebec or another shipyard, the fact right now is that the B.C. government and BC Ferries are proceeding to purchase ships from this state-owned enterprise.

If we are going to be responsible members of Parliament, we need to immediately give notice to the House of our opinion that this should not go forward. I would simply ask that everyone support this common-sense amendment to support Canadian jobs at Irving shipyards, Davie shipyards or Seaspan, and make that statement right now, because the B.C. government is being pressured. We need to tell BC Ferries to stop this procurement process and to restart it.

If we, as members of the transport committee, don't immediately put our feet down and say that this is not tenable and that Canadian jobs should be supported first, I'm afraid that if we simply wait until we get to this—maybe in the fall—then that option point will have passed us by, and we will only have ourselves to blame.

I ask all honourable members to support Canadian jobs and Canadian steel, especially during this time when our steel and aluminum industries are being hit so hard. We must stand firm that we cannot be offshoring to places that subsidize their steel and have lower environmental regulations and substandard labour situations that allow them to undercut Canadian enterprises like shipbuilding and steel.

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

[Translation]

Mr. Barsalou-Duval, do you want to add anything?

**Xavier Barsalou-Duval:** Yes, Mr. Chair.

I just want to say that I did not receive advance notice of the motion on the table right now, since the committee had not yet been formed. If I had received advance notice and had been able to look at it, I might have been able to make a judgment on what it contains, but I'm not prepared to do that now.

I understand my colleague's concern, but I don't think this is a good time to go to a vote. I therefore move that the motion simply be introduced. That way, we'll have a chance to come back to it a little later and make an informed decision when we have all the facts.

● (1130)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Barsalou-Duval.

Mr. Lauzon, you have the floor.

**Stéphane Lauzon:** In that case, Mr. Chair, I move that you adjourn the debate.

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

[English]

We have a motion to adjourn debate on this.

(Motion agreed to: yeas 5; nays 4)

**The Chair:** Colleagues, if you're in favour, I'd like to discuss Bill C-5 to make sure we're all on the same page over the next couple of days.

I see your hand is already up high, Mr. Barsalou-Duval.

[Translation]

**Xavier Barsalou-Duval:** I didn't mean to interrupt you, Mr. Chair, but I was wondering whether we would have time to introduce other motions after discussing Bill C-5.

There aren't necessarily any motions that we need to debate or take a position on right away, but I'd like to have a chance to give notice of some motions so that everyone around the table knows what topics I'd like the committee to address.

Can I do that now, or do I have to wait until the end of the debate on Bill C-5?

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you.

[Translation]

I think that our priority should be studying Bill C-5. If there is any time left, we can discuss other topics. Tomorrow or Wednesday, we can see what needs to be done.

[English]

I just want to make sure everybody is on the same page and we know exactly what to expect.

On that, I open the floor to discussions or comments on this.

Mr. Lawrence, go ahead.

**Philip Lawrence:** Thank you.

I think everyone around this table would agree that Bill C-5 will be an important piece of legislation, and I look forward to working productively on it.

On that note, my starting position is that I believe the committee should act as if the Bloc amendment is going to be accepted by the House. If it's not accepted by the House, all that would mean is that there would be less committee debate.

I think it's incumbent on us to give the clerks the time, in accordance with the Bloc amendment. There are going to be about 12 hours or so of testimony, and we will want to give those clerks, starting tomorrow—I feel sorry for the clerks—the maximum amount of time to contact these individuals so that we can get as many of those witnesses as we possibly can. That would be where I would propose to start our discussion.

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

This is just a point of clarification for the clerk. The Bloc motion states that it would be from 10 a.m. until midnight tomorrow. Is that on top of Wednesday, or would that be replacing Wednesday's time?

**Philip Lawrence:** It would be in addition.

**The Chair:** Okay.

Based on your assessment, because this would definitely fall on your shoulders, Mr. Clerk, would we be able to secure the witnesses by tomorrow at 10 a.m.?

**The Clerk:** I can do my very best.

**The Chair:** You can do your very best, but there's no guarantee. Okay. Thank you, Mr. Clerk.

Are there any other questions or comments, colleagues, or are we all good to go?

Do you want to suspend for a couple minutes to figure out what this all means?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** This meeting will be suspended to the call of the chair.

● (1130)

(Pause)

● (1140)

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

Colleagues, as you can see, the bells are ringing. Do I have unanimous consent to continue for a couple minutes until we conclude the business of Bill C-5?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** We have unanimous consent.

Mr. Albas, you have a motion you want to propose to the committee members.

**Dan Albas:** Yes. Given the uncertainty, in that the House has yet to give direction to this committee, I think that as an abundance of caution, I move as follows: "That the committee direct all parties to submit to the clerk, by 1 p.m. today, their intended witnesses for Bill C-5; that the chair and the clerk be tasked with establishing the most efficient schedule for tomorrow; and that the chair and clerk report back when they have a work plan."

That last part would be based on what the House of Commons decides today.

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

[*Translation*]

Mr. Barsalou-Duval, you have the floor.

**Xavier Barsalou-Duval:** I have just one question, Mr. Chair.

I'm all for getting our witness list in by one o'clock today, or as soon as possible, so that the clerks can get to work. Do we have an idea of how many witnesses the committee would have time to hear from if the amendment to the government's motion were adopted?

The reason I ask is that I want to get a sense of how many names we need to submit. Would it be 5, 10, 15 or 20 names? Obviously, some witnesses are deemed more appropriate than others. Some

witnesses are more important to us, and we don't want to be prevented from hearing from them because other names have been submitted.

**The Chair:** That's a good question, Mr. Barsalou-Duval.

In the best-case scenario, we should submit the names of 36 witnesses, three times twelve. However, when we hear from the minister, he is usually the only witness to appear. In my opinion, between 28 and 36 names should be submitted, at most. If we can invite three for each block, that would be great.

Mr. Albas.

[*English*]

**Dan Albas:** It might behoove everyone to put forward their witnesses ranked from the number one choice and all the way down, so that the clerk can make quick decisions.

**The Chair:** Does that work for everybody? Are we all in agreement?

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

**The Chair:** Mr. Clerk, is there anything else you need to be able to move forward with this?

If there's nothing else, colleagues, we have a vote now, so I will adjourn the meeting and look forward to possibly seeing you all here again tomorrow morning at 10 a.m., and if not, at 3:30 p.m.

[*Translation*]

Thank you, everyone.

[*English*]

This meeting is adjourned.

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