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## **Official Report of Debates (Hansard)**

**Thursday 2 August 2001**

**Select committee on  
alternative fuel sources**

Organization

## **Journal des débats (Hansard)**

**Jeudi 2 août 2001**

**Comité spécial des sources  
de carburants de remplacement**

Organisation

Chair: Doug Galt  
Clerk: Tonia Grannum

Président : Doug Galt  
Greffière : Tonia Grannum

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

**SELECT COMMITTEE ON  
ALTERNATIVE FUEL SOURCES**

Thursday 2 August 2001

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

**COMITÉ SPÉCIAL DES SOURCES  
DE CARBURANTS DE REMPLACEMENT**

Jeudi 2 août 2001

*The committee met at 1001 in room 151.*

ORGANIZATION

**The Chair (Mr Doug Galt):** It's a little past 10 o'clock and we have representatives here from all three parties so maybe we should call to order the select committee on alternative fuel sources. This is our first organizational meeting. Thank you very much for coming out and being part of this committee. I apologize for the difficulty we've had in getting a date established for this particular meeting. I know in the summertime there's no date that's going to be apropos for everyone, but it seemed like August 2 was about as good a date as any, so we're now meeting and hopefully that has worked for all three parties to some extent. But I do apologize for the difficulty that some people are having during the summer.

Normally we would strike the subcommittee for administrative purposes at this point, but maybe it would be wise, in view of who is present, to just delay that for a little bit and make that a little later on.

I'd like to make a few opening remarks, if the committee would allow that, and then my thinking is—if you notice, the agenda is almost like a blank sheet of paper with some times on it. That was on purpose because the Chair did not want to be directing the committee but rather guiding it. I thought maybe what we could do was go around the table and allow each committee member a few minutes to express their thoughts and ideas on where this committee may or may not go. I'm sure all of you are as enthused as I am. I just think it's a great opportunity that we have to serve on this particular committee.

Just so you know some of the sequence that we might go through, I might call on Mr Gilchrist first to make a few comments after I finish, and then Mr Bradley, and then we'll just maybe alternate back and forth across the table until everybody has had an opportunity to express their thoughts and ideas as to where this committee should be going.

I kind of see this session as a bit of a brainstorming session to get our feet wet and to get an idea of where we want to go or don't want to go with the committee. It's probably one of the most exciting committees we've had the opportunity to serve on and I certainly look forward to being part of it.

As we look at the mandate that we've been given, it's a pretty broad-based mandate; it's a very wide-open one. The committee may have some ideas of where they want to scope it in certain areas because of the breadth of this particular mandate. They may want to look at ideas of dividing into some subcommittees to look at areas of specialty. I think the number one thing that we really need to accomplish here is to get everyone to a similar base of information, a common base to work from. On that, I've asked our researcher, Jerry Richmond, and also Bob Gardner, who is the director of research, along with Tonia Grannum, to pull together some information to distribute prior to our first meeting to be helpful to get started. I hope that's in order with the committee, since we couldn't meet in early July.

I kind of see this meeting as an opportunity to outline a map or course of action of how you'd like it to progress over the next 10 months or so. There are a lot of things that can happen. We can work from a full committee on everything, or we can have a lot of it drafted out by the administrative subcommittee, or we could have staff draft out a course of action. I'm in your hands as to your ideas and where you want to take it. Certainly the idea that I mentioned a little earlier of breaking out into subgroups of various specializations may be of help. We also need to be discussing briefings from whom, and certainly we have a lot of expertise in various ministries, like MTO and the Ministry of the Environment, as well as the Ministry of Energy, Science and Technology that we can be calling on.

We need to look at meeting times so that the Chair isn't caught trying to find the time when people are available. Hopefully we can set that out, if you'd like to have regular meetings when the House is sitting, and then otherwise, prior to the House sitting, what you would like.

We probably should talk about whether you want a special Web site for this committee that information can be posted on for the benefit of the public.

Then, of course, as mentioned in the motion, we do have the opportunity to employ staff, particularly for investigative purposes.

My number one priority in chairing this committee is that we do the right thing for the good of the people of Ontario. Ontario has often been referred to as the economic engine that drives the economy of Canada. Hopefully, in a non-partisan sort of way, we can be as

non-partisan as we possibly can and work on decisions from a consensus point of view and we can accomplish a lot of that. I do recognize that maybe when we get to report-writing time there will be some partisan positioning taken at that time and that wouldn't be surprising, but hopefully, as the committee works over the next eight or nine months, we can be as objective and as non-partisan as possible.

Maybe we can look now to the appointment of people to the official subcommittee. Do you have a motion from anyone?

**Clerk of the Committee (Ms Tonia Grannum):** I have a motion, yes.

**Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines):** I move that a subcommittee on committee business be appointed to meet from time to time at the call of the Chair, or at the request of any member thereof, to consider and report to the committee on the business of the committee; that the presence of all members of the subcommittee is necessary to constitute a meeting; and that the subcommittee be composed of the following members: Mr Galt, as Chair; Mr Gilchrist, Mr Parsons, Ms Churley; and that any member may designate a substitute member on the subcommittee who is of the same recognized party.

**The Chair:** Those in favour? Motion carried.

**Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina):** Any debate?

**The Chair:** Would you like to debate it?

*Interjection.*

**The Chair:** I have made a few comments and some thoughts and directions and ideas. As mentioned earlier in my comments, I thought we might go around the table and have different members make some comments as to how they see this committee going. I suggest that maybe we start with Mr Gilchrist and then Mr Bradley, and we'll work back and forth until everybody has had an opportunity. I know you have up to 20 minutes but I don't think that's quite necessary. We look forward to the comments of the committee and some of the directions that you would like to see it going.

**Mr Steve Gilchrist (Scarborough East):** I too am very excited at the potential embodied within the creation of this committee. As someone who has had a keen interest in hydrogen technology since 1986 and has been actively working toward advancing that issue, I see that as one of the potential subject areas that we may very well consider in the upcoming few months.

I think the most daunting task that faces us in this committee is the vast scope of what could be considered alternative technologies. It really will be a challenge for all of us to become expert on a vast range of technologies and different initiatives that have been pursued around the world. In Denmark today, for example, the second-largest industry of any kind is the manufacture and erection of wind turbines. You have other countries that have exploited geothermal, waste incineration. Some countries have already adopted a hydrogen strategy: Japan, Germany, Iceland, to name but three. So to some extent I think the challenge we have is coming to grips with that

range and then applying it within the Ontario context to determine not just the cost-effectiveness but the public capacity and interest in looking beyond Kyoto and the nominal 4% reduction in hydrocarbon-based pollution to something far bolder, far more visionary.

I think we have an opportunity and I would echo your comments about hoping this becomes a non-partisan enterprise, because I don't think any party has a monopoly on wanting clean air and clean water for their own families and for the other people in Ontario. The goal of this committee hopefully will be to review all of the options and put forward a paper that clearly articulates the cost-benefit analyses related to the adoption of any or all of those alternative technologies, and I would submit not just in a test bed somewhere but as formal governmental initiative to move our society away from the current high-pollution sources that are the means of manufacturing our energy today.

**1010**

The world, at least the Canadian world, didn't stop using coal because we ran out of coal. It stopped using coal because a technology came along that became more cost-effective than bundling a truckload of coal and dumping it down a chute for the furnace at homes right here in Toronto. Fuel oil became the next alternative and then, in time, that was replaced. Most homes in this country and in this province are of course now heated either electrically or with natural gas. So the fact that we haven't run out of natural gas or oil should not be the biggest determining factor, I would submit, for the final product of this committee.

I would challenge all of us to look beyond today's costs for gasoline and today's costs for other hydrocarbon-based fuels and to look instead at the bigger picture. I think it's within all of us to do that, and I am pleased that the structure of the committee gave extra weight to the opposition, to not just symbolically but to effectively show that there is a balance on the committee. Hopefully that will support the idea of it having a non-partisan product at the end.

You mentioned the opportunity for the committee to hire staff. I would submit for the committee's consideration that one of the things we might want to do would be to look at getting one or more PhD students who might provide an enthusiasm and a contemporary focus on the subject matter, who would take on specific aspects of any research or other assignment on behalf of the committee.

At the same time, I would agree that a Web site is essential, not just as a means of pulling together information for the committee and for Ontarians in general about the range of the subject but to create an opportunity for people to share input as well. As we move along, and hopefully we'll be preparing draft reports, it would be useful to have some venue for all Ontarians to be able to reflect on their thoughts to whatever we've produced.

Having said that, I think there also will be a need for public hearings. But I would sincerely challenge all of my colleagues that, again, I think we have a lot of research to do before we're in a position to adequately

question those who would come before us at a public hearing and really get the maximum out of their attendance. So I would offer for your consideration that unlike what we do with bills that come before our committees, perhaps having the hearings as the first step might not be as appropriate as undertaking the sort of research that is undoubtedly required to get us all up to speed.

The other substantive suggestion I'd like to make is, given the scope of the technologies that are required, I'd ask for your consideration of whether or not we should create a series of working panels, subcommittees, each one of which would be charged with looking at a specific technology. I really question whether it's possible for all of us around this table to become expert on biomass, geothermal, hydrogen, the newest ways of cleaning coal, alternative hydrocarbons as an interim step, nuclear, battery technology, solar, wind, and on and on.

On the other hand, if the members of this committee already have particular interests—mine, as I've stated, is hydrogen—there might be an opportunity to both accelerate the rate at which we assimilate data by having more than one group looking at technologies generally, and in terms of any out-of-town research that has to be done, it would also be far more cost-effective. I think we could ensure that the panels have the appropriate weighting from both the opposition and the government and the Chair would be a member or an ex officio member of every working panel. I would offer that for your consideration as something that might allow us to assimilate the awesome amount of data before us within the relatively short time period we've been given under the House motion.

I would just sum up my introductory comments by saying again that I'm extremely excited. I think there is an opportunity for this to be one of the most effective committees that has been struck in the last six years and one whose product will be something that is genuinely lauded as being a bold and visionary and non-partisan approach to an extremely important topic facing this province today.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much for some of your thoughtful comments. Mr Bradley, would you like to—

**Mr Bradley:** Mr Parsons will speak first for us.

**The Chair:** Sure.

**Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings):** I share, I think, in the excitement of the other committee members, particularly because of my background as a professional engineer. It is just a topic that I appreciate and happen to have an interest in. I also think it's a topic that will affect my children and my grandchildren and my great grandchildren.

Very clearly, heavy reliance on fossil fuels cannot continue, for a number of reasons. I also firmly believe that the issue is not only economic, but also we're dealing with health and dealing with environment with it. But I also appreciate as an engineer that if you want to truly understand something, try to change it. I think that this committee will appreciate that as we start to look at what the alternatives are.

There are a substantial number of very exciting alternatives that exist to the traditional fossil fuel, all of which have some very strong redeeming features that make them very attractive, while I can assure you that every one of them also has some detracting features that present problems of their own. Our challenge will be not to go with the glitz and overlook when we're confronted with the downside of each and every one of these alternatives.

There is a tremendous wealth of information available. I have been literally inundated with groups and individuals when they became aware of this committee, wanting to share information with me. It enjoys strong support, I think, across every facet of our society that wants to be involved. So I would strongly encourage and advocate for an opportunity for a cross-section of these groups to present to us so that we can gather some information from them.

I also believe there will not be a magic solution. There is not an alternate fuel or fuel X out there waiting for us to implement, and then all of our problems will be solved. As I said, life is a compromise. I believe the energy usages for us in the future will be a compromise: a balance between the pluses and minuses for each fuel. We will continue to have to use a mix of fuels. The challenge for us will be to make recommendations that come up with the optimum mix, the one that has more pluses than minuses, to recognize the range that we will ultimately continue to use. For that reason, I personally would advocate for us to remain together as a group so that we become familiar with all of the options that are available, so that we are better positioned to suggest a compromise solution on the fuel mix. That concludes my remarks.

**The Chair:** We move to Mr Marchese.

**Mr Marchese:** I thought it was going to go back to you again, Steve. Not that the NDP counts, as you know; it's just a little party.

Mr Chair, just to tell you that Marilyn Churley is the member of this committee and she wanted to express her disappointment, because she wanted to be here and she was hoping it could have been on August 14 or 15, when she was available. She did indicate that she had said that she had sent that date in. That obviously didn't work out that way. So I wanted to express her disappointment as the environmental critic who would have liked to have been part of these discussions.

I would suggest, just to begin with, that we change the title and call it alternative fuels/energy sources, because as the researcher, Mr Richmond, and others indicated, they are two different things. "Fuels" just indicates one form of energy and "alternative energy" speaks to other forms. So we should just agree to change the title. The people who are following this discussion will say, "Why limit it just to fuels?" I think we should consider that before we move on in our activities.

**1020**

The third thing is that, just to agree with you, Steve, and the Chair, the point is to try to make this committee as non-partisan as possible. I think for the most part we

can and ought to try to do that because, as Mr Parsons said, this issue affects all of human life; it's not partisan. Environment is not selective as to whom it will damage. You can't protect yourself with money. When there's environmental degradation, it affects everyone generally, irrespective of class. We all have an interest in protecting our environment for the present and for the future, so my hope is that we would all do our best to be non-partisan, because we all have a stake in it.

In that regard, there ought not to be a division between economic considerations and environmental considerations. We should all be saying we need to look at this in a way that brings environment and economy together, because we all have a stake in it. We can't say, "We'll disregard the environment because we've got to keep jobs." We won't have jobs if the environment degrades to the point where people become ill and sick and die of it. So I think that's the kind of philosophy that should drive us in terms of looking at alternative fuels and energy sources for future lives.

I wanted to disagree with you, Steve, in terms of the hearings. My suggestion would be that we start with the hearings and then do other types of work that we want to do subsequently. My suggestion would be that we have a day here in Toronto, a day in the east, west and north, and do that as quickly as we can: hear from the various people who have an interest in this issue and get advice from them as to what they think we should be looking at and studying, rather than doing that at the end, because at the end we've almost decided what we want to do, based on our research and our own best thinking around these issues, of course, getting the best advice, naturally. But by that time we will have made up our minds on what we want to do, and it makes it more difficult to change our minds afterwards. So I suggest we hear them first as a way of shaping what we want to do, rather than the reverse. I would be interested in hearing what people have to say to that.

We might want to leave whether or not we divide into subcommittees until later, although I don't mind the idea of dividing into subcommittees if that's the direction we get. If that's what we feel we need to do as we go, I don't find any particular objection to it, although I am leaning toward the idea that the committee should try to stay together as we listen and as we study the issues, that rather than individually, the group acquire a greater knowledge on a particular issue. It would be good for all of us to have the same knowledge around them. That would be my immediate sense of where I would want to go, but I'm not tied to one or the other. But it's possible that, in hearing people, we may get a better sense of what we want, and that might give us a sense of direction.

So I really recommend that we do that in the earlier period, not to prolong it or delay it forever, but one day might do it here in Toronto; one day might do it in the east, west and north. That would give us plenty of advice, and people would feel good to know that all three political parties are engaged together in trying to find solutions as we consult people around the province.

These would be my brief remarks.

**The Chair:** Maybe I can just make a couple of responsive comments and then move over to the government side.

In connection with a change of title, that was a motion of the Legislature, and my understanding is that changing the title can only be done by the Legislature.

**Mr Marchese:** We can recommend that.

**The Chair:** If the committee so wishes. I think there's also a letter from Mr Ouellette suggesting a change in name. I'm not sure if it's consistent with your suggestion or not; I'd have to double-check that. But he was suggesting that as well.

In connection with hearings, the message I'm getting is kind of two-sided. One is later; one is earlier. Maybe, looking at when the House sits, we'll be guided by that to some extent. We don't want to be on the road when the House is sitting, so maybe the committee wants to have a look, and I certainly hear different information there.

As to preferring to stay together, maybe as we work down the road we'll have different ideas on how we want to handle that kind of thing. I appreciate your comments: well taken.

Mr O'Toole, would you like to make a few comments?

**Mr John O'Toole (Durham):** Thank you very much. First of all, I just want to say that for me personally it's an honour to represent my constituents on a very important policy matter.

To start with, I think in a completely non-partisan way it is an important issue because it touches on the word "environment." I live in a part of Ontario where, whether it's the Oak Ridges moraine or agricultural practices—and indeed, it's the home of the Darlington nuclear plant. It's a topic that's been around for as long as the nuclear debate's been around. So I think it's important to represent my constituents and stay close to the issue.

I suspect, if there are any qualifications—unlike Mr Parsons, I'm not an engineer, but I have worked in a technical environment almost all of my 30-plus years in the private sector. Working for General Motors, you might say I was always—they are large consumers of power in a manufacturing sense, but also in the products they produce, whether it's in diesel engines or whether it's in aircraft, and certainly the automobile. I've been instrumental, since being elected, in trying to encourage General Motors and the auto sector to look at alternative fuels like power fuel cells as well as electric vehicles. In fact, I've written to the minister and tried to set up relationships between OPG and General Motors and the automobile manufacturers alliance groups, as has been done in Quebec, as has been done in BC, supporting Ballard Power. There are other kinds of cogeneration applications occurring as we speak. Toyota and Ford have both introduced electric vehicles, as has General Motors.

In a general sense, going back to the name "alternative fuel" committee, I do support what Mr Marchese and Mr Ouellette have said, also in writing, that we as a group

state from the beginning that we're really looking at an energy committee. I think we can do that by a preamble statement that says we want to look at it holistically in terms of application of the use of fuels and alternatives.

But I think the main thing is the word "environment," whatever choices, and I agree with what you've said. The production of energy creates waste or by-products, and so it's a matter, as Mr Parsons said, of balancing the pros and cons while maintaining and respecting the importance of having a strong economy, which sounds sort of like an ideological position, but I don't think it is. I'm firmly convinced that having a strong economy is instrumental.

The whole Kyoto debate is about who gets the credits. It's about who has the ability—why do they exempt India? Why do they exempt China? Why do they exempt countries that are going to use energy as their advantage, and the emitting of pollutants, potentially, to advantage them in the economic debate?

I do want to say that I was very privileged to have served on the select committee on Ontario Hydro nuclear affairs with Dr Galt, as well as Mr Conway and Mr Kwinter and others who had a lot to offer to the debate. I found the non-partisan nature of great value in working through many of the things that we should be looking at. There are a lot of options. It's not just a simple case of biomass or electric or fuel cells.

Something that affects me directly is wind power. Not only is the Bruce application with OPG and their partners moving forward, but also I have in my riding a very controversial wind application on a farm operation. In the States that's the growing development: wind application on farms, cogeneration—a huge application. In the Midwest it's a big deal, a huge issue with noise and other kinds of things, but I'm very much drawn to that aspect of it.

Again, most importantly, I must think of my riding. The huge mega-project that's potentially coming to Canada is ITER, the international thermal experimental reactor. That project is second only to the space station in terms of project dollars. It's reported to be multi-billions. Canada has just recently signed on, and there will be a bid decided for the ITER project, which isn't an immediate solution but I think will be sometime within the next six months. It's very controversial in my riding. It's widely supported by Ontario, to the tune of \$300 million. We should know that. Again, it's an experimental application of the use of solar energy.

#### 1030

I'd like to summarize by saying I like the non-partisan aspect. I agree strategically with the approach Mr Marchese brings forward, and that is to hear from people like ourselves, who bring with them many understandings of where we are, before we leap to conclusions and consult with experts and definitively draw some conclusions, and then listen to the public, who are theoretically and technically not as well exposed to those options. I think you're right: let's hear from the people. Our mandate is to move forward at what speed and what

option and then sit down in a substructure to look at the various options, whether it's solar or whatever.

Right from the beginning, I hear a lot of consensus. I think there is a real willingness to try and find alternatives that we as Ontarians and people living in the world face. We have large pressures, whether it's Kyoto or whatever, in trying to force the government—whoever the government is, whether it's provincial or national—to really bring forward a strategic position that may help our children in the future.

It's a great opportunity, and I look forward to participating and being well educated at the end of the process.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr O'Toole, for your comments. They were much appreciated. The one in particular that seems to be working out here in the discussion is that of meeting with delegations.

**Mr Bradley:** The idea of looking at both alternative forms of fuel and alternative forms of energy is good. I don't even know if we have to change the name of the committee to do it because I think this committee can, through consensus, employ as much flexibility as possible. In my mind, I anticipated when we said "alternative fuels," and it may not necessarily have been in other members' minds, that we would also be looking at other forms of energy, and indeed at the virtues of conservation of energy and the conservation of fuel, which of course can make a major difference. I've talked to many people in industry who have been surprised, perhaps, themselves even, but delighted that their costs were diminished considerably through energy conservation measures that were probably prompted, as most of our action is in this field, by price, particularly a number of years ago when we had boycotts of oil and significant increases in the cost of fossil fuels.

So I think the maximum flexibility for the committee is useful and I certainly do not express an objection to looking at alternative forms of energy, because there are a lot out there that we are familiar with, but we may not be familiar with the details of them, and there are some perhaps that we have not been exposed to yet.

It's going to be essential—and this almost goes without saying—that we have a careful analysis of each of the options, because there is a lot of excitement. We watch television, we read newspapers, we get publications that come over our desks, and we become somewhat excited by a new development that is portrayed as the best development we've seen in years, only to be disappointed sometimes a few months down the line when we look at it with a more careful analysis. I think the advantage our committee will have is that we will be looking at these very carefully: looking at the analysis, looking at the cost benefits, looking at the environmental benefits. There are some alternatives, for instance, to fossil fuels, which have real problems for us, but there are some alternatives that are advanced that aren't necessarily better in balance than fossil fuels. Our committee has the advantage, I think, with staff, with people who make representations to the committee and with the expertise among the members, that we're not going to easily embrace one without

looking at that careful analysis of the alternatives to what exists at the present time.

I don't think we'll be reinventing the wheel. Others around the world have done what we are doing. But we will have the advantage, as members of this committee—through the report of the committee, the research papers that are provided, the testimony that is given and what we have gleaned from our experience on the committee—that we will be able to share with members of the Legislature on a bit more of an expert basis the alternative fuels and forms of energy that are out there and their pluses and minuses, because I have seen that too often.

What we have to be cautious about—and this is natural if this is going to happen—is that we simply don't become a committee which is a repository for magic boxes. We've all had those provided to us as members of the Legislature, the magic box which will solve all problems. While we want to listen, we have to remember that our committee may be deluged with these magic boxes, which may not merit further consideration. I think some of us may already have received some communications from people who have the latest invention that will save the world—and maybe it will; we can't entirely close our minds to it—but I think logistically speaking that's one of the things we have to look at, because we will all have limitations on our time as a committee, and each of the members here has responsibilities other than being a member of the Legislature, which is important in itself, our constituency responsibilities and so on.

I think we will want to hear—this goes without saying as well, and others have alluded to this—from people with a good degree of expertise in these areas and some balance and objectivity when we hear from them. That's going to be difficult in some cases, because some of us have a bias ourselves toward one form of energy or another and some are enthusiastic about one form or another, but ultimately when we do the final analysis we'll have to have that objectivity.

It may well be that someone from one side is presenting and someone from the other side is presenting. I had a chance a number of years ago to be in Washington in my capacity as Minister of the Environment, listening to people who had some alternatives to what was existing. They sounded very good and you were quickly wanting to embrace them, only to listen to the other side which told you, "To produce this form of energy or this form of fuel, here are the consequences as well." There's a balance ultimately that you're going to choose on that.

I like the idea of the select committee as preferable to the standing committee because it does allow us to focus. You've had some experience, Mr Chair—Mr O'Toole has mentioned it—in dealing with Hydro affairs. I sat on a committee in 1979 that dealt with Hydro affairs and the boilers at Pickering and some problems that were encountered on that occasion. It's a very good committee to have and a very select focus on that particular issue.

I think this committee has a lot of potential. My personal preference is that all members of the committee be exposed to each of the areas. I see some virtue in

specialization or subcommittees, but ultimately my preference, if I had to come down on one side or another, would probably be on the whole committee being exposed. That doesn't mean the whole committee is traveling to one place—that isn't always necessary, of course—but I think as much as possible involving the whole committee is very useful so that the report we finally produce is going to be genuinely a consensus and one based on knowledge, not simply on whether I think Ernie Parsons is right on something he advises me, or Steve Gilchrist or Marilyn Churley may be right in a specific area, but rather a chance for all of us to look at it.

One thing you mentioned, Mr Chairman, which I think will be helpful is I hear flexibility but I also hear focus. But I hear flexibility so that we're not confined as much. We have some expertise in the legislative library operation that is going to be very helpful to us. Perhaps as staff, Mr Gilchrist has mentioned the possibility of a couple of PhD students who are experts in a field, who are doing specific study and analysis. That may be useful to the committee as well.

I look forward to what we are doing with a great degree of enthusiasm and hope we are able to come up with something that others have not been able to come up with, or that we're able to analyze what others have come up with and determine whether it suits Ontario, as opposed to other jurisdictions.

1040

**The Chair:** OK. Thank you very much, Mr Bradley. If I can just draw your attention, there seems to be a concern over the name. I guess in my mind "fuels" and "energy" are pretty close together. But just going to the motion, it states, "recommend ways of supporting the development and application of environmentally friendly, sustainable alternatives to our existing fossil fuel sources." I think, from the statement in the original motion, it's very open.

The other sentence I just wanted to share with you is from Mr Richmond and I think it's rather apropos. It's on page 2: "In fact, there appears to be some overlap and confusion in the usage of the terms 'alternate fuels' and 'energy' and 'renewable energy.'"

Just with those thoughts in mind, as you're wrestling with whether you are comfortable with the name of this committee or not, I thought I would share that with you.

Ms Mushinski or Mr Hastings, which one would like to go next?

**Mr Marchese:** You don't have to, of course. Mr Chair, you don't have to—

**The Chair:** No, I'm just offering.

**Ms Marilyn Mushinski (Scarborough Centre):** No, I'll speak. Given that I've just been given a challenge to speak, I intend to speak.

That was going to be one of my questions, Mr Chairman, in that the terms of reference under the votes and proceedings report states quite clearly that "a select committee on alternative fuel sources be appointed to investigate, report" etc.



I am wondering, looking at Mr Ouellette's submission, if there would be any protocol requirements to actually change the name of the committee, or whether this committee is well within its rights to change it to "energy" or "fuel and energy," if it wishes.

**The Chair:** My understanding is that's not something the committee can change. It has been passed by motion in the Legislature, and to have it changed we'd have to request that the Legislature make that change. That is my understanding.

**Ms Mushinski:** OK, good. Then I would just briefly draw your attention to Mr Ouellette's submission of July 20. His apologies, of course, are extended to this committee for his inability to be here today and that's why I am sitting in for him. I would just certainly draw your attention to his submission and, as a substitute member, say I'm very encouraged by what I've heard this morning. Clearly, there seems to be a lot of commitment and dedication from all of the members of this committee to fulfill the mandate of the terms of reference of the select committee.

I would encourage the committee to think outside of the box. Politics does have a way sometimes of interfering with one's ability to think outside of the box.

I had a lot of experience at that at Metro council. When we were looking at alternatives to the Beare landfill, we actually did take a trip to Indianapolis to look at their energy reclamation alternative incineration of garbage. Clearly, there are all kinds of examples of alternative ways of treating our garbage in other parts of the world.

In fact, I'm very encouraged by the information that Mr Richmond sent out. It's interesting that Denmark seems to be on the leading edge of a lot of alternative fuel mechanisms. It's also interesting to see that they have a high overall recycling target and yet 78% of their household waste stream was incinerated in 1999.

So I would encourage this committee to look at the advantages as well as the disadvantages, and weed out some of the political challenges we faced as we were looking at these alternatives a few years ago. Hopefully, those biases won't drive this committee to reject other sources of energy because of those political arguments.

I think it is important that we do clearly set a business plan approach for this committee. I think it's important that you look at benchmarks. I think it's important that you look at performance measures and make sure that results are measurable, comparable and accountable to the taxpayers because at the end of the day, no matter what this committee chooses, it is the taxpayer that's going to have to pay the freight.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much for your thoughtful comments.

**Mr John Hastings (Etobicoke North):** As Mr Durham East says, it is a privilege to serve on this committee; I know the riding name has changed, but Mr O'Toole mentioned the importance that this committee can play. My expectation would be that it hopefully won't be just another committee that will produce a

report and there will be little in terms of actual results which you could go back and trace from whatever findings we come up with on whatever type of alternative energy, fuel or renewable sources of energy we look at.

I'd like a bill to say in a few years, if I'm still on this earth, that there is at least one thing this committee could point back to and say we worked to get the issue resolved and to get it in action. I don't want to see a committee which works on studying stuff and then we don't end up producing specific outcomes. This ought to be an outcome-focused committee, not just a going-through-the-exercises committee. If that's too high an expectation, then maybe my expectations of politics are still too high.

In terms of how we actually operate, I think one of the ways the subcommittee could look at how we conduct ourselves as an enterprise would be, if you're going to have hearings, to focus on a specific theme for a given week. For example, Mr Gilchrist has a great interest in hydrogen. I would think that we could have a whole week or a number of days, maybe two weeks or whatever, where the committee looks at hydrogen—period; or fuel cells and how that little part would fit into the overall functioning of the committee, what kind of recommended outcomes could we see if we utilized some of that energy in demonstration projects, if that were one of the things. That would be actually one of the things I would like to see us do, to actually see some of this stuff so when we report back, we have not just the traditional verbal text of a report, but some actual evidence on videotape or video conferencing or however it's produced. I know most of it will be in text form, but when you're dealing with science and technology and you don't have an extensive background in same, I think it's most helpful in persuading people of your case—whatever it is for whatever energy source—if you can actually show them diagrams.

I think the picture format is very effective, which gets me to the Web site. I think we ought to have a Web site, that is essential, but not just a Web site that looks like a brochure. If this is going to be a brochure, then I can pick up a booklet and look at that. It ought to be an active operation, so it needs sufficient maintenance. It ought to have several links to other sources.

*Interjection.*

**1050**

**Mr Hastings:** Yes, ministries across Canada, the US, Europe and municipal. For example, we should probably have a link to the Canadian Energy Research Institute. If we're looking at hydrogen, there should be a link to the California fuel partnerships or the BC hydrogen stuff.

As a former Hydro commissioner in Etobicoke, which helped start my career in politics, I found that under the old monopolistic system where we had just Ontario Hydro, we were severely inefficient. There were a lot of opportunities in the mid-1980s that we missed. We did a little bit. OH started to flex its thinking muscles, finally, to look at how you could use cogeneration, how you could use district heating. To me, this committee is sufficiently flexible on how you interpret what Mr

Richmond has put in his initial submission here, along with Bob. We ought to look at the existing carbon-based or electricity or how these things work in combination. The district heating concept to me is one of the things we ought to be looking at in terms of efficiency of electricity generation and transmission, the ultimate payouts. I recently had an opportunity to visit a company in London, Ontario, called Trigen, which is very much into district heating. It's not just a concept; it's a functioning reality. They are a very small producer but they are efficient, and that's what we need to be looking at, the demand side of this situation.

I don't see any conflict, really—I know lots of people probably want to manufacture one—between the energy sector, the economy and the environment. To me, they are all one. In fact, if we are a smart committee thinking outside the box, as Ms Mushinski has mentioned, in my estimation we ought to be looking at these alternative approaches to the use of energy from an environmental viewpoint, but not just saving the environment, which is great and should be a priority here because we need to practise at home what is probably not being utilized abroad—which leads me to another two issues I think the committee ought to take a look at.

One is, how would our recommendations, how would our approach on these alternative uses of fuels and the combination of existing gas, water cooling, district heating, geothermal, wind—the latter two are ones I'm most interested in. But trying to take a broader holistic picture, I think we ought to be looking at the huge potential that is available to us already in Ontario if you look at the number of companies and associations that we could be showcasing for economic development. This to me is a committee which I know is looking at alternative fuels, but I'm looking at how we can translate those alternative fuels which will improve and enhance environmental quality and simultaneously create jobs.

Is there a phraseology in the mandate of the committee to be looking at that? We have a lot of innovative environmental companies here in Ontario, from hydrogen through to geothermal to solar. I'm not just thinking of solar panels on the side of your house or how solar is applied by the universities in the car races across North America, but at very simple things that can be done to improve energy efficiency in the heating of buildings. I have a couple of ideas there.

I think we should be looking at this from a job creation viewpoint, if possible, and how our excellent technologies in many of these areas can be helpful to export development. In other words, this is where you help to save the environment over time but you also combine that with how you enhance the number of jobs and what is required in that area, which might be educational initiatives or skills development. Because if we're the committee of the future, you have to think about those things down the line in planning for them, hopefully.

Essentially, I hope this committee will be a major mover and a group that can make a major paradigm shift

in the ways in which we can produce outcomes and recommendations, and in ways of people looking at stuff in a different way. There is the whole area of ethanol, and we have companies in Ontario, which gets us into the biomass and the bio-diesel stuff. That area has a big impact on agriculture, I think. So how we approach this has linkages to other things, not only in the environment and the energy sector but in the economy as a whole.

I would hope that we would open our minds and look at what other countries and states are doing, because we're in a competition here. The race is on and things are being done. Speaking to a couple of companies recently, I found that they're saying, "We're in Ontario, but there doesn't seem to be a lot of encouragement from the broader public, from government, etc." There are folks out there who would like to move these companies to other places in the world and that's where we miss the whole job creation potential in terms of saving and enhancing environmental quality.

Finally, if this is a committee that really wants to function well, I think we need to look at the R&D gaps, what may be missing and how that needs to be financed. I would hope we would look at the financial side—if you take biomass as an example, but it can be any alternative form—of how we can translate that into a practical, demonstrable thing in reality and get these things up and going, more so than just the traditional grants that governments have provided in the past to groups, which then fade out. If you look at the report of the Ontario hydrogen institute, it was a grand initiative. Why did it fail? It says in here that it lacked political will. It probably had other things that it was lacking—financing. That's where I would like to see us invite in, at some point, the people from the Investment Dealers Association. How do you finance this stuff and which things have the greatest potential to get up there and actually have an impact on producing energy at an effective, reasonable cost, whether it's Mr Ouellette's small power producers or the district heating concept or biomass? How do we translate that practically?

Those are some of the things I would hope we would look at over time; that we'll not only do the hearings, we'll actually look at demonstrations where they're available, wherever they are. Hopefully, we'll end up with an effective report that has produced some results, or a result, and something we can point back at and say, "We did that," and whatever that is will have some impact on the environment and on our economy.

#### 1100

**The Chair:** It's certainly been interesting hearing the comments around the table. There are a lot of similarities. I would certainly reflect the comments made by many that it is a privilege to serve on this committee. It's really exciting to be able to serve and to represent my constituents, as well as the constituency of the whole province. Congratulations to all the members for some of the thoughts they've put into this prior to coming to this meeting and the ideas and directions you want to see it go in.

I would like to call on our researchers a little later for some comments about what they can do for us, some of the things they've put before us and some of their thoughts on putting them before us at this time. But maybe before we go there, I'm looking for direction, next steps. Do you want to direct your subcommittee to draft ideas of public hearings or getting information meetings or whatever? I'm at your mercy, so to speak, as to what you would like to be the next steps to get going. It is August 2. We have slightly less than 10 months, short two days, to our final report. There hasn't been too much mentioned about an interim report, but I wouldn't be surprised if we would like to have an interim report on some of the information we've found by January, or some time such as that, and then a more detailed report come May. But I am looking right now for next steps and am looking to you people for direction.

**Mr Gilchrist:** I certainly agree. I think, given the relatively short time frame, it is critical that the subcommittee meet with all due haste to consider the various options before us.

I just wanted to make one thing clear, to Mr Marchese in particular: I don't disagree for one second about the issue of the hearings. I guess what I was suggesting is not doing it at the end but more at the middle. I want to make sure that when we have public hearings—and maybe what we need are two rounds of public hearings, if I can take from your comments that you want to have as the first input some definition offered from the public of what their interest is.

My only concern is that before we go out there, it would be useful to know what the range of options is so we know that nothing has slipped between the cracks and that some group out there which may truly believe, notwithstanding what everyone around this table thinks they know about the terrain in Ontario, that there really is an option for geothermal, for example. The standard newspaper advertisements we put out to prompt people's attendance may or may not reach all people in the province. It struck me that if the researchers could come up with a range of options, we might actually go and search out the groups who could come forward and bring their expertise at the outset.

So I don't disagree, if you're prepared to some extent to suffer the chances, with whatever steps the researchers and the clerk's office can do to go through their files and make sure anyone who has commented on energy issues in the past gets a direct invitation. I'm comfortable with that. But what I would like to offer to you and the other committee members is, having sought that initial input from the public, we then go out—we've done our research, we've pulled together all of that research, as Mr Bradley has pointed out, as have previous select committees, all the information that is sitting out there. As we draft even our interim report, I think we would want to test that in the public arena again. So I would agree with you, Chair, that there is a need for an interim report but I would submit to you, after we first cobble that together, that's when we really need public input on whether the

direction it looks like the research will point us is in is the right one from the public's perspective.

To come back to your original question, I'd like to see the subcommittee meet—I don't know when Ms Churley is returning—literally on the day that all four of us are first available, and challenge the subcommittee to put together an aggressive time frame to hold those initial hearings and then allow the researchers and the committee members to get out there and start tackling this project. I'm just concerned that come September 24 when the House returns, all of us will be diverted by the other day-to-day activities in the Legislature and it will become doubly difficult to give the sort of attention to this issue that it deserves.

**The Chair:** Mr Marchese, I think you wanted to comment.

**Mr Marchese:** First of all, Marilyn Churley is available on August 15, so I wanted to tell you that.

The second point about the hearings is that the hearings ought to happen in September and can happen in September, assuming members are available. That would be probably prior to the House coming back. So what we would be accomplishing is hearing from the public.

My point about the hearing is to say to Ontarians—not just the experts—“We want to hear from you.” Some experts could come, but what you want is the general public to be able to say, “Thanks for inviting me.” It could be experts and people who have a stake or an interest or an inclination toward one form of fuel or energy alternative. It could be anything, and that's the point.

We could, with the help of the researcher, put together the various options that you were talking about—these are the various options that are there—and prepare some possible questions that we want people to respond to as a way of helping to possibly shape or frame the discussion or the focus. We could do that, and the subcommittee could agree to that so that research could come up with some suggestions about, “Here is the range of options you were talking about, here are the kinds of questions we would want people to respond to,” the subcommittee approves it and we're off and running.

We could announce this as quickly as we want for September hearings, and I think we could get that out of the way. I wanted to point out, by the way, the Web site—we would need somebody, obviously, to supervise that, and I'm not sure if the researchers can or have the time to be able to do that. That's where Steve's suggestions about some PhD-type or types might come in useful, because if you have the Web site, you're going to have thousands of people offering suggestions. That's going to take a whole lot of time from an individual, or possibly even two, to deal with in terms of getting information and synthesizing it in some form that's useful to the committee. I wanted to make that point about the Web site.

Those are my suggestions about the hearings.

They could, Steve—I wanted to point out, in the beginning you could have them in the middle or at the end. So you could have the hearings in the beginning to get

the feedback. We would do our work based on that in terms of the direction we get and then come back to the public at the end with our suggestions, so beginning and end in that synchronized—

**The Chair:** OK. Thank you very much. There's one thing I'm not hearing as we talk about the public hearings, and that's getting briefings from some of the ministry people that we have. There are three ministries in particular I would think might want to well understand what we're already doing as a provincial government as we head out. So I would think we should be looking at one or two days, or maybe one day, where we hear from the Ministry of Energy, Science and Technology, the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Transportation. I think they have different departments, different branches. We need to know what we're doing, what's there, in some detail, not super detail, before we head out. Just a thought from the Chair.

Mr O'Toole and then Mr Hastings.

**Mr O'Toole:** I'm just responding to the contribution to the next step suggestion. I want to start by saying we've been given a fair amount, on our own, of opportunity to look at Web sites, and Steve Gilchrist has done a fairly significant job already of just jumping on it. I'm sure some of us have as well.

Just looking at the background material that's been provided by Mr Richmond and Mr Gardner, that's something I want to certainly spend some time on.

Saying that, Steve mentioned in his opening remarks having some connection with the academic institutions. I think it's absolutely critical. They're the people who are supposed to be charged with looking at the latest methodology and technology. And as Mr Hastings said as well, I think the Web site is critical. If we want public connectivity all the way through this process, we can be commenting as a committee, we can be commenting and receiving comments and, as well, every day or every week or every so often, we would be putting forward our plan and looking for feedback on the next steps.

So I'm saying the steps—what I see is having the staff currently—which they are doing—as well as connecting up with some of the reference material here from the federal level of government and some of the obvious contacts there, as well as our own energy, science and technology committee. If I want to wrap around that what resources we have already, I would only add the academic people we should be talking to, finding a graduate student who's doing work and linking that up with the energy, science and technology funding. They are already providing, either federally or provincially, funding, either grants, directly or indirectly, or recognition money under—what are some of those grants called? Anyway, they're under Minister Wilson's ministry. That could probably fund the work that could be done and they could be maintaining the Web site, part of it, at least putting out papers or reference materials on that site. So we have our existing research staff; we could take on a couple of graduate students who would be working under some PhD person, either at Waterloo—one of the high-

tech schools. Queen's has a very high electrical engineering thing. So I'm sure we could get one.

**1110**

At that point in time I kind of want to go back and make sure we individually represent people, normal, everyday people, some of our constituents. As Ernie knows, I've had one biomass project and a wind project brought to my attention and it's important that I at some time would like to evaluate that in a more informed way and bring it to the committee. Perhaps they could appear before the committee. But I'd like to hear from the general, average people, not some lobbyist group on power, and it may be appropriate to be here or London or perhaps Kingston, and hear from Joe Average or Joe like you and me.

At that point in time, with the specialists that we have, it would be a good time to take a reading and say, "OK, the subcommittee shall look at fuel cells," and then actually engage a specific expert in that field, and two or three members of this committee and others might look at biomass and the impact on corn and markets for ethanol etc. We might want to be part of that committee and may want to look at expert testimony as well as potentially visiting a corn operation or an ethanol plant, even here in Ontario. Then at the next point we would probably have an interim report, and then it would be good to look at next steps of how we decide on an action plan, as opposed to just a report.

That's my comment: let's use the resources we have. We may want to engage a couple of additional fresh, young, enthusiastic people who are doing graduate studies in technology and energy, and harness that in relationship with the ongoing government activity, but not lose track of the general public too quickly. We'll be talking up here and they'll be listening down here. So I'd like to keep them engaged and use that Web site. I think it's an excellent idea, John, to put forward what we're hearing, talking points that we would like their feedback on, and refine it. It's sort of like a funnelling process. We're starting here; let's not get there too quickly. I would think by the fifth month we would be well on the way toward a draft report, focusing it down to some real options for the future.

Keep in mind, for me—this may not even be appropriate to say—the market opens in May 2002. What relevance is that? Well, basically under Bill 35 there is a requirement for OPG to divest themselves of 80% of generation, down to about 35%, I think. So there are going to be coming forward all kinds of generation options. Really, fuel is how you generate power. I don't care if you're using corn, water or nuclear; this whole equation that we're looking at is going to give governments in a policy sense—how do we deal with the Nanticoke plant, how do we deal with the eventual phasing out of coal or coal as we know it options?

I think there's some real linkage with that timeline of May. I'd like to say five months from now. So it gives us August, September, October, November. By the end of December or in December we would report an interim

report from this committee and we would then take our next steps of what we do over the winter period.

**The Chair:** We may want to look at something like an interim report as a status report—this is what's happening in Ontario, this is what's happening worldwide—and then our final report more along a recommendation line, possibly.

**Mr O'Toole:** Oh, yes, a final report would be far more progressive. It would be—

**The Chair:** Direction.

**Mr O'Toole:** —the policy directions.

**The Chair:** Mr Hastings.

**Mr Hastings:** First off, I think this committee needs to be seized with a sense of urgency, not leisure. That requires, then, that the subcommittee, in the development of its planning, ought to set out—it will take probably a month, but there ought to be set out sufficiently, almost weekly, what the committee intends to do. Whether it gets to doing some of that will be interesting to map, but I think we ought to be seized with some urgency.

With respect to briefings, my preference would be that it ought to be all the ministries that are involved. We ought to get a synthesized, very holistic briefing, not departmental. That would require, then, that they all be in the same room most of the day or whatever time this takes, because they'll get briefed too. We need to get out of the silo approach to briefings, and it'll help them.

With respect to the Web site, I think that is a very key element here, because you're going to get hundreds of people wanting to make a submission, and they're not all going to be handled. So we've got to get people who do want to make a submission to look at doing it on the Web site, however that is structured, and that's going to require significant dollars and resources, in my estimation, if you're going to make it effective. We need to approach the chief information or technology office for assistance in that area.

I think also it's a great opportunity for this committee to practise what we do not necessarily always preach, and that is, we ought to engage co-op students. The Ministry of Energy, Science and Technology has over the last two to three years been in partnership with a number of companies and groups in the sponsoring of science fairs. To me, there ought to be some area in there for engaging some of these young people. If you attend any science and technology fair today, even at the high school level starting out, it is not any longer, "Let's look it up in the encyclopaedia." That's gone by the way. If you look at even the most start-out science projects, they have a sense of innovation and excitement. So we ought to look at those folks, the winners and the ones who are starting out—because this is happening every year. We talk about how our children are our future. Then let's put it into practice where we get some of that kind of involvement.

I've had a number of students as co-op folks for many years. Here's a great opportunity for the research people to get involved in doing some mentoring of research people, because that's a great opportunity for future jobs and they get to see what a researcher does and how he or

she does it. So I think the committee itself has that capacity.

In the Web site development and maintenance, yes, they are going to have to be professionals, but I think there are lots of opportunities for IT people who are looking for jobs to get this experience. That translates for them into a potential opportunity down the line after we've folded our tents.

I think we need to look at those approaches in terms of getting the job done.

**Mr Parsons:** I would certainly concur with the suggestion that we get the subcommittee together as soon as possible and develop a timetable. I'm also starting to lean toward perhaps there being merit in the two rounds of public consultation: hear initially what's out there, get some advice from the research people, and then return in a much better position to ask questions perhaps the second time.

One question I certainly have is that I am not convinced, although we're looking at the future for energy, that we know where we are right now. What fuels do we use now, in what quantities? What are their costs? Are there subsidies on their costs now? What are the side effects of all the fuels that we use? What's the human cost of asthma? What's the financial cost of asthma?

I think before we venture into the future, I personally would like to know where we are now. I look at the 401 and I see eight million cars a second going by, but I don't think we have a real grasp of the quantity of fuel that we're consuming now and what we're putting in the air. I personally would like to get a sense of where we're at at this instant. I know we have to bring changes but I think we can quantify in hard facts why we have to produce changes and that, perhaps, will better define where we need to go.

**1120**

**The Chair:** I had originally mentioned three ministries, but two more popping into my mind now are finance and health. Maybe we might think in terms of a half day, three hours per ministry, kind of along the thinking of Mr Hastings, where they come in collectively and get us up to date as to where we're at with those particular ministries and what harm is it causing or not causing. Maybe I'm off on the number of ministries we should be looking at. Certainly we'll take advice from the committee.

Ms Mushinski, I think you wanted to comment.

**Ms Mushinski:** Yes, just as a follow-up, I certainly don't have any difficulty with what you are saying, but I think if we have that data, it needs to be comparative. We need to know what it means within the context of perhaps the North American or maybe even the European environment. If we expend 20 million gallons of gas in one day, what does that mean in terms of other jurisdictions, etc?

**The Chair:** My apologies to you, Mr Marchese. You did have your hand up and I missed that point.

**Mr Marchese:** What Ernie and Marilyn were saying I agree with in terms of the kind of base information. I

agree with John in terms of getting all the related ministries together to come and bring their presentations with respect to what they're doing or ought to be doing. They might comment on that, I don't know. I don't think it should be three hours each. I don't think we need that; I really don't. Besides, we can't take it.

**The Chair:** I was just making a suggestion.

**Mr Marchese:** No, I appreciate that. But I think we can get them all together and hopefully expedite that as best we can. I'm not sure what each ministry might need, and it's hard for me to propose what that might be, but I would think anywhere from 45 minutes for each ministry ought to be able to do it and if they can't, it's a bit of a problem. But if we need to come back to it we can—that's the other thing.

I want to suggest first of all that I think there's agreement on the change of title. If we can do it as a committee, we need to request a change of title because the title as it is now written refers only to certain things. We might think it means other things, but at the moment, as written, "fuel" refers to the petroleum, coal industry and agricultural industries and there's been interest in wind energy, solar energy and the others. So I think we need a title change. If we can do it, we should make that request. I think if there's agreement on that, then we can move on.

The other suggestion is about timelines. I think the researchers should put together something that says here are three or four pages we're going to put out to the public, these are the suggestions we think ought to be there in terms of what we are thinking about in terms of alternative fuels and energy and here are the kinds of questions we are putting forth as a way of soliciting feedback. That would happen in September. Our first meeting with the ministries would happen early in September. I would try to get from Marilyn what dates are appropriate so we can try to fix those dates as quickly as we can so we can put out this information to the public as soon as we can. We don't need to wait too long to try to fix those dates in September. I'm not sure we can do that today but I think there's agreement that we should do that in September—that is, the meetings with the ministries and the hearings in the first three or four weeks of September. I think we should agree with that and try to get that done as quickly as we can.

**Mr O'Toole:** It should be in August.

**Mr Marchese:** Well, that's my point. In terms of the Web site, it should come later. Once we have the hearings and we know what direction we're moving in, then we set up the Web site with a specific purpose. We don't want people to just spill their hearts out in relation to what they feel, but I think we should focus the Web site on what it is that we have then agreed as a committee that we are focusing on. It shouldn't just be an open Web site for any comments—that would be my suggestion on the Web site—but it should come after the hearings. My suggestion is that we not try to make a timetable for the whole year now; that we try to develop the timetable once we've had the hearings, which will give us a better sense of what we're going to do. So we agree on the

dates of the hearings, we come back as a committee after the synthesis of it and agree what we're going to do, and then put out a timetable for what we're going to do for the rest of the time.

**The Chair:** OK, the point's well taken.

**Mr Gilchrist:** I wonder if it would be useful to put a motion on the floor, just to move along. I think we're all agreed that hearings are in order, and sooner better than later. It seems to me we have a number of issues before us, so if you'll indulge me a compound motion; we can sever it, if that's the wish of the committee. But let me start off here:

That the subcommittee, with the assistance of legislative research, shall develop a database within the next month of the academic, government and private sector expertise that the committee could access, to assist in the preparation of its report and recommendations; and that the subcommittee be empowered to develop a work plan for public hearings and ministry briefings, including dates, locations and potential witnesses; and that the legislative research service develop a list of potential questions to pose to presenters to assist in acquiring a sound framework for further research and review, as well as potential questions on other content for a Web site; and the Chair, in conjunction with the subcommittee, shall pursue the issue of committee staffing, office allocation and budget.

It's a big motion. I'm comfortable, if all committee members are comfortable with that. Otherwise we might break it down at each end.

**Mr Marchese:** Could I ask you on that last point about committee staffing, did the Chair review that?

**Mr Gilchrist:** No, the Chair with the subcommittee, I said. For example, the BIE probably won't want four people traipsing in, and the Chair would be the first to go to the BIE for the budgets.

**The Chair:** Is everybody clear? Do you understand that motion? It is quite long and detailed. Would you appreciate it being re-read?

**Ms Mushinski:** No.

**Mr Marchese:** No, that's OK.

**The Chair:** Everybody's comfortable? Those in favour? Those opposed? The motion is carried.

**Mr Parsons:** I guess the marching order is there.

**The Chair:** Everybody was in favour.

**Mr Hastings:** In terms of ministries that ought to be involved here, I was trying to go through the list: certainly finance, health, energy, science and technology, agriculture and rural affairs, natural resources—

**Ms Mushinski:** Municipal affairs.

*Interjection.*

**Mr Hastings:** Pardon?

**Mr Marchese:** Let's bring them all.

**Mr Hastings:** MTO. Those would be the top seven or eight. If there are agencies that are linked to them, then you go to them later, like the energy board, if that's required.

**The Chair:** I think there are some key, major ones that we want to hear from first, and then that may trigger the need to go to other areas and other ministries.

**Mr Hastings:** We could just hear them on a first and second level, probably, in terms of where this could go.

**Mr Gilchrist:** Put them in the same room in the Macdonald Block. We're allowed to adjourn to any venue. I don't know, Jim, in your time whether we've ever had that sort of almost free-for-all, where at the same table you've got the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of the Environment and MEST, and when one says something, any member of the committee could then turn to someone else and say, "OK, that sounds great, but"—as you commented earlier—"there may be another side to that coin."

**Mr Bradley:** There's a great advantage to having them together for that very reason, because each ministry has a certain bias. You've witnessed that within caucus, within cabinet, wherever it happens to be. People have witnessed the different viewpoints from ministries. It is an advantage to hear, without exploiting those, the different viewpoints and make a determination where we want to go. Yes. The answer is yes.

**Mr Marchese:** There's also a pecking order, as you might imagine, where some ministries might think they're more important than the others and have more clout than the others. As a result, some ministries might feel a little intimidated. But I think that room thing is a good idea, absolutely.

1130

**Mr O'Toole:** I'd be more comfortable, if I were the Minister of Consumer and Business Services, for instance, where they are acting with small business and they are trying to create—and yet they are involved, because many of these are kind of micro-businesses starting up or whatever. It's hard to think of one that isn't involved.

My only point is this, and I don't mean this in any partisan way: I don't want it to be a shooting gallery for ministries; they won't come. I'd be more comfortable with us as a committee defining specifically what is the data dealing with asthma or whatever for the ministry. I need to know what it costs. We hear that three out of 10, whatever, have breathing problems. It could become a shooting gallery, the ministry rep there, saying, "What's the cost to the health system?" of blah, blah, blah.

I would prefer that we draft concerns—that might be part of our important responsibility—and if necessary, have a contact person with the ministry who is going to watch this file, whether it's energy and science, whether it's environment, whatever, who could respond to concerns and bring forward their—I see a shooting gallery like this. It's like estimates. You bring in a ministry; it ain't productive sometimes. Jim, you know exactly what I'm talking about. It's a great opportunity for you to pull out the little bandstand and start firing off the guns. That's going to ruin the committee's mandate.

I've made the point that if you have questions, it's appropriate to have those questions addressed by the

ministry, whether it's the cost of asthma or whether it's the investment dollars for capital tax relief for some high-tech—

**Mr Marchese:** I'm sorry; I missed that. What—

**The Chair:** Just a minute.

**Mr O'Toole:** The public forum could be reduced by using it as an opportunity to embarrass the ministry, to get press.

**The Chair:** I think we're starting to get into some details here. Mr Gilchrist has put a motion on the floor, and part of that motion is to have the subcommittee deal with some of these issues and get on with having a schedule. I know Ms Churley is not here, but since we're all here now and planned kind of an open-ended day, maybe the subcommittee—and you represent your party—can meet shortly after we adjourn, or possibly at 1 o'clock, to at least look at preliminary directions as to recommendations for the committee.

**Mr Marchese:** You want to have a subcommittee right after this meeting? Is that what you're suggesting?

**The Chair:** That's what I'm suggesting.

**Mr Marchese:** I don't know about that, Mr Chair. Is that what you were thinking?

**Mr Gilchrist:** He said it.

**The Chair:** I'm just trying to get on and make things happen here. This is August 2. We have 10 months less two days.

**Mr O'Toole:** That's two weeks from today.

**The Chair:** Two more weeks.

**Mr Marchese:** Are you serious? I mean, Marilyn is available August 15. I really—

**The Chair:** What I was kind of hoping, Mr Marchese, is that we could draft out a schedule, and when she's back she'd be part of the committee and we'd get on with it. I don't think your thinking and her thinking are going to be that much different in how we draft a schedule of events.

**Mr Marchese:** I don't know about that.

**Mr O'Toole:** I'm not meeting on Fridays.

**Mr Marchese:** We could adjourn this meeting and then talk briefly about some things, if you'd like.

**The Chair:** OK. We'll take it from there.

Maybe I could just turn to research and have them make a few comments about what they've put before us and what their ability is as far as what they can do for us down the road. Mr Gardner?

**Mr Bob Gardner:** Thank you, Dr Galt. We've seen some of our marching orders already with Mr Gilchrist's motion. We can certainly put together the database of experts for the subcommittee to consider and potential questions for you to consider as well.

The short answer to what we can do for you is that we can provide research support at every stage of your deliberations, from the background research that Jerry Richmond has put together already for you, to questions as they arise to help with potential witnesses, to drafting your report at the end. We'll be working very closely with the subcommittee on what we can do for you there.

Two specific comments: you've mentioned the Web site. We clearly hear your consensus that you think this would be an excellent tool for the committee. What I would suggest to you is that we go away and work up a plan and bring it back to the subcommittee in a couple of weeks.

One of the things that I'm sure you'll want to consider is that any Web site the committee sets up be well coordinated with the Legislative Assembly Web site and that we have enough resources to maintain it. As you know, the critical thing with any electronic resource and with a Web site is that once it's up, you've got to maintain it. We certainly have those resources. We may very well be negotiating with the Chair for some additional contact resources to help out with that, but within the assembly we certainly do have the experience and the resources to do whatever you require there.

On the question of specific staff for the committee and the idea of some PhD students, you may want to think back to the experience of the select committee on Confederation in the early 1990s in which the committee held enormous, very extensive hearings. Additional professional staff and research assistance staff were hired for it. They were located in my outfit, in the research service. One thing you will have to worry about with getting academic PhD students in is how to supervise them and

how to make sure the chunk that a particular student is doing coordinates with the work that another student is doing. We're happy to do that kind of work for you.

Again, we can talk about this and offer advice to the subcommittee. We'll bring those deliverables to the subcommittee, and I would suggest that, working with our colleagues, we also bring you at least a draft plan on your Web site.

**The Chair:** I think we've covered almost everything there is to be covered. It's not quite 12 o'clock yet. We're dusting right along. Thanks very much for all the comments from committee members. I think the committee will now stand adjourned—

**Mr O'Toole:** If I could make just one comment, and I do not want this to serve in any negative way, but before the subcommittee takes over, I'd like to stay completely informed of all of the steps. There is an appropriate time for the subcommittee to make logistical decisions in terms of our agenda and time, going to the Board of Internal Economy and all that stuff, but I don't want to get segged off into just biomass or just fossil. I'm part of the debate here, and part of that debate is being educated.

**The Chair:** OK. Thanks for your comments. The committee now stands adjourned, and we'll meet with the subcommittee very shortly.

*The committee adjourned at 1137.*









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## SELECT COMMITTEE ON ALTERNATIVE FUEL SOURCES

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