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Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Tuesday 11 May 2010

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Mardi 11 mai 2010

**Standing Committee on
Government Agencies**

Intended appointments

**Comité permanent des
organismes gouvernementaux**

Nominations prévues

Chair: Ernie Hardeman
Clerk: Douglas Arnott

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENT AGENCIESCOMITÉ PERMANENT DES
ORGANISMES GOUVERNEMENTAUX

Tuesday 11 May 2010

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The committee met at 0904 in committee room 1.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Good morning. We'll call the meeting of the Standing Committee on Government Agencies for May 11 to order. Thank you all for being here.

The first item this morning is the subcommittee report of Thursday, May 6. Can I get a member to accept the subcommittee's report?

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: I so move.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Discussion on the subcommittee report? If not, all those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

INTENDED APPOINTMENTS

DR. RACHEL ELLAWAY

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Dr. Rachel Ellaway, intended appointee as member, eHealth Ontario.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): That takes us to the intended appointment review. The first interview today is with Dr. Rachel Ellaway, intended appointee as a member of eHealth Ontario. Is the doctor with us this morning? If you want to come forward and take a seat there.

We thank you very much for coming in this morning. First of all, when you've taken your seat there, we will provide you with an opportunity to make a brief statement to the committee as to your appointment, and at that point we will then have questions from all three parties in rotation, with 10 minutes allotted for each party. We will start the questions and comments, on completion of your presentation, with the official opposition this morning.

With that, we turn the floor over to you. Again, thank you for being here, and carry on.

Dr. Rachel Ellaway: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Chair, members of the steering committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss my interest and suitability to serve on the board of eHealth Ontario.

I think the key question now is not whether we need an electronic health record system for Ontario but how we do it and what happens when we do it. The board, as it stands, currently brings together managers, clinicians

and technologists. These roles are, of course, critical, but as a scholar I cannot boast the same kinds of experience. Instead, I see my contribution as being complementary to the skills already at the table, and I'll give some illustrations of how that will be the case.

I can bring my expertise and experience to bear in five key areas, the first of which is around the use and collection of evidence. Developing e-health for our province involves much more than building electronic health records. It's a complex and challenging undertaking, and there are very significant risks associated with a purely technocratic approach. I can help the board to frame and ground what is done and how it is received, evaluated and validated.

The second one is informatics. Informatics is about not just the technical systems but how humans use them and what happens when they do. I can help to identify issues and opportunities arising from systems development that do not surface from a purely operational or technical perspective, particularly user and organizational reactions to and interactions with health information systems.

The third area is in learning. All systems are learning systems, and making the most of training and development, both around them and directly using health information systems, will be a critical factor in their success. I can assist the board in ensuring we have well-structured, sensitive and aligned education at many levels and in many forms in support of Ontario's e-health programs. I can also help the board with preparing professionals to work and lead in e-health environments. This goes wider and deeper than the how of e-learning down to the philosophy and alignment to e-health at both professional and organizational levels.

Standards: I have worked with a range of educational technology standards, and I am familiar with the standards—or at least some of the standards—required for eHealth Ontario, such as HL7 and SNOMED. I can help the board by drawing on my experience in developing and implementing technical standards, as well as the many underlying issues around standards and interoperability.

The fifth area is in the area of networking. As I stated, I see my background and my professional standing in networks as complementary to those of the existing members of the board. I would look to extend the scope of discourse through my links to academic, educational

and practice stakeholder communities, particularly those that may not be well represented at present on the board.

I'd like to conclude by saying that it would be an honour to serve, if I were asked to do so, and I am happy to take your questions.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Thank you very much for your presentation. As I said earlier, we'll start with the opposition. Ms. MacLeod.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Welcome to committee, Dr. Ellaway. I appreciate you taking the time to meet with us today.

Just a few brief questions: What has motivated you to seek this appointment? I notice in your background that many of the grants that you've worked on do speak to the need for electronic information, such as iDeal. You've got another one here, Inukshuk Wireless, creating inter-professional virtual patients. I'd be interested to know a little bit more of that sort of innovation.

Looking at the sums of money, one was a \$2-million project and one was \$65,000. As you know, we spent over a billion dollars at eHealth with nothing really to show for it. So it would be interesting, with the limited budgets and the success it appears that you've achieved, how you think that could translate and why you were motivated to seek this appointment.

Dr. Rachel Ellaway: I'll answer the motivation question first. There are a number of reasons. It's partly because information systems and the opportunity to use information systems is one of the things that fascinates and draws me through my academic career.

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E-health is a huge opportunity, but I've seen it stumble on many occasions. You'll be aware of the situation in the United Kingdom, which has had some troubles as well. One of the things that strikes me, one of the key issues, is that we often miss the human issues. We look to implement a technical solution, an object that has the business switches, but that doesn't necessarily achieve the goals because the goals are intrinsically human.

Through my work—and I hope that shows through my CV—it's the human dimensions of technology that interest me. That's one of the things that really draws me to act in some way within this project.

Regarding the question about scale and success, certainly I wouldn't suggest that e-health for Ontario could be done for \$65,000. The kind of money that we deal with in educational technology and education, as a whole, is never anywhere near, by several orders of magnitude, the kind of money that's available and will be used in this kind of environment. I fully acknowledge that I don't have the experience in those kinds of large projects, but I know that other people in the board do have that. But what they don't necessarily have is my experience in the informatics side, the human dimension and the educational side. As I said, I strongly believe that every information system is an education system.

In terms of the innovation and the success of the projects, again, they are down to paying attention to the human dimension. They are down to ensuring that tech-

nology is an enabler. It's there, it's present, but it's not the key focus. It's still about people working with people.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Interesting. It leads me to two questions I wasn't expecting to ask. One is, have you seen a system anywhere in the world that has added that innovation with the human systems that's working and that has cost us less than \$1 billion, or it's working and it has cost us that, but it's effective? Is there any nation right now or any state that might be doing this?

Dr. Rachel Ellaway: "Working" is an interesting qualifier. I was with you until you said "working." One of the key things is that these things are intrinsically processes; they're not artefacts that can be delivered, plugged in and then the job is done. Therefore, anything that has been done—and I'm thinking, for instance, of Australia. Australia has been using electronic health records for several decades now, and pretty successfully.

One of the key things that happens when you use electronic systems—and I'm sure that you use phones and computers in these kinds of environments—is that as soon as you start using a technical system, you start getting changed by it. So it's not that there is a pre-defined set of goals that can be fulfilled; it's that the goals actually change and develop as the system is used.

So "working," in terms of operational, in terms of delivering benefits—absolutely; "working," in terms of a finished, resolved set of situations—unlikely to ever happen.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Let me just say, Dr. Ellaway, that one of the biggest challenges eHealth has right now is not only getting electronic health records, which you acknowledge is only part of what their job is to Ontarians, but also to restore public trust and gain back the confidence of Ontarians who feel betrayed—the question of ensuring that cost is kept in line, that not only budgets are met, but that time targets are also achieved.

I'm just wondering if you've familiarized yourself with the Auditor General's report and if you have any comments about how, as a board member, you would improve upon some of the issues that you saw there.

Dr. Rachel Ellaway: Yes, I have read the report; it was very interesting, and I was struck again by how many of the issues the auditor was getting to, that although they were largely around fiscal and process, they largely exposed issues of the human dimension. I'm thinking, for instance, of some of the criticisms around the uptake of the SSHA's email system, that although there was a spend and there was infrastructure put in, one of the key findings was that people didn't value it. They didn't recognize that there was any benefit to them using it and indeed suggested that they found it a hindrance, in some cases.

Certainly, from my perspective, I would look to either pre-empt or when those issues are starting to surface, to be able to pay attention to them and to draw them into the mix, so that we're not just looking at purely budget sheets but at the human dimension, as well.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Just one final question. Obviously, because of the auditor's report, there is a great

deal, as I mentioned, of expectation. How would you balance those expectations by doing things the right way through the new protocols established by the Legislature and getting things done effectively, so that we are meeting targets and there are electronic health records in Ontario?

Dr. Rachel Ellaway: Not being party to the actual business of the board, I can't say exactly what has been done so far. But I would certainly look to ensure that there are key performance indicators that cover not just process and fiscal objectives, but also things that may have meaning to the stakeholder communities: goals, consultations, involvement and seeing values reflected in what is going on.

If you think about the analogy of a tool, a screwdriver fits to your hand. A screwdriver that doesn't fit to your hand is of no use. I would look to ensure that we do have measures and a reflection of those key issues that do represent the human alignment between what is done and what we're trying to achieve.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Thanks very much, Dr. Ellaway.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Thank you very much.

Mr. Hampton. No questions?

The government.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: Thank you very much, Dr. Ellaway, for coming in and for putting forward your name to stand for this. I was struck by the fact that you walked in with your computer and we're still shuffling paper.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: We've got too much paper on our desks right now.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: It's amazing, isn't it? Maybe we'll end up in that digital era at some point.

I wanted to ask you a question. I think what you've hit on is that we have technology, and how we use it and how we actually trust it influences our decision-making processes. One of your studies—I just wanted to know if you could share with us what you learned—was about the phenomenon of educators refusing third-party digital materials in the for-learning objects. Having spent a number of years in that particular field and knowing how resistant people are to change—it's often educators, because we're so used to our books and erasers and chalk—and how we've moved on and how difficult that has been, I would be very interested in your general idea of how you think that application might be applied from what you've learned from that study.

Dr. Rachel Ellaway: Absolutely. We identified a number of key factors, but I'll just draw a few that I think are relevant to the eHealth Ontario project. A key one was risk. Individuals considered that their professional standing was at risk by using digital materials that in some way denigrated or removed from their expert status: Other people had done what they could do, and by using other people's materials, they said, "Well, I'm just as good as them; I'm not necessarily the world's expert on X."

I think that may translate to the eHealth Ontario environment, particularly with specialists and physicians who have particular working processes. Being required to move to a cookie-cutter approach, particularly if that may actually affect their ability to practise or practise safely, is a major concern. We did see that in the United Kingdom, for instance.

Another key issue was around copyright and rights. I don't think that necessarily applies quite as well to eHealth Ontario, because it's not about whether this is copyright, but I do think it goes down to things such as information security and trust in a system that is not in some way going to expose them.

There's a phenomenon, which has been recognized with electronic health records systems, that any kind of note, any kind of entry into the system intrinsically becomes part of the record, and many physicians may or may not have some reluctance to having that level of scrutiny, that level of track on everything they've done. Assuming that all of you use computers—I won't ask, but let's assume that you do—you may have done a Web search and you probably used Google, which means that Google knows something about you. There's that same phenomenon of risk and uncertainty around what the system is doing about me and around me that creates real hesitancy in any kind of professional.

The third one is just in terms of usability and flexibility. People have established working practices in teaching; they do things in certain ways. They can adapt, but by and large they have a familiarity with how they do things. Digital materials can be very disruptive. Digital systems—electronic systems—can be very disruptive, not just because they may do things well, but do things differently. They may miss nuances; they may miss structures that are important, either as a personal value or in terms of assuring the process runs as it is supposed to.

I think all of those were clearly identified in terms of electronic material reuse, and again, I think they will at least potentially apply in quite a lot of measure to the eHealth Ontario environment.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: Could you draw a conclusion from your work—I'm just thinking about banking and its issue around security; the use of computers is phenomenal. Obviously, there's risk management in that initiative or undertaking. Is there a greater reluctance to walking into the digital world in the field of medicine than there is in some other fields?

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Dr. Rachel Ellaway: I don't think so, no. If you actually observe doctors, by and large they are very digitally interested; many will implement their own systems. Indeed, that's one of the challenges, that there are systems being implemented in local environments that already challenge a more integrated model. So I don't think it's an issue that there is a reluctance around digital materials; I think it's more about control and authority and being able to make sure that you can do things the way you need to be able to do them, rather than necessarily having to do it in a certain machine-like way.

Banking is very structured, and you can define the rules. You can say, "This transaction happens in this way, and only happens in this way." Once you start doing that in health care, you have to involve physicians to make sure that that algorithm you're applying is actually safe and meaningful, but also, you have to ensure that you're not inadvertently adding something dangerous or inappropriate to the system. A classic would be, for instance, making "no known drug allergy" a default in a system, so that just by not entering it, you're making an affirmative statement that the individual does not have a drug allergy rather than saying "unknown." It's little details like that, but they're very important. Banking doesn't necessarily have that level of nuance.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: Thank you, and I wish you well.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Thank you very much. That does conclude all the time for the interview. We thank you again very much for coming in and we wish you well in your future endeavours.

Dr. Rachel Ellaway: Thank you all very much.

MR. COLIN HESLOP

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Colin Heslop, intended appointee as member, College of Trades Appointments Council.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Our second interview is with Colin Heslop, intended appointee as a member of the College of Trades Appointments Council. Thank you very much, Mr. Heslop, for attending this morning. As we mentioned with the previous individual, we will ask you if you wish to make an opening statement, and upon conclusion of that statement we will have 10 minutes for each party to ask questions and get a better handle on your presentation. We will start the round this time with the third party.

With that, again, thank you very much for coming in, and the floor is yours to make your presentation.

Mr. Colin Heslop: Members of the committee, I'm pleased to be here. I'll use scribbled notes, but I do use a computer. I'm good with a computer but I feel more when I write something—right?—I feel part of it.

I'm pleased to be here to provide you the opportunity if you have any questions that you may want to ask me with respect to my intended appointment to the Ontario College of Trades Appointments Council.

I would like to cover a few points that may raise some questions for you. I'd like to cover some of my past and present skill trades and apprenticeship work involvement and knowledge that I believe, if appointed, would benefit the appointments council during the transitional phase of the college.

I served a full electrician apprenticeship in England, and I've worked as a qualified electrician in England, Australia, the United States and Canada. I have been involved with apprenticeship training and mentoring to various degrees in those countries. In Canada, I hold my Ontario 309A construction and maintenance certificate of

qualification with a red seal standard; also my 309D, which is electronic control; and my 442A industrial electrician's licence. I attended night school at Mohawk College in Hamilton in the late 1980s to obtain my 309D electronic control certificate—licence. I recognize and understand the roles of the community colleges and training providers; learning and training doesn't stop once you've completed an apprenticeship.

In more recent and present times, I have worked for the CAW, the Canadian Auto Workers, as a skilled trades education coordinator responsible for developing and delivering education programs to skilled trades and apprentices, including a program for women in trades, an awareness program for women to consider an apprenticeship and a trade as a non-traditional career choice.

I have been appointed by government, industry and labour to various apprenticeship committees, councils and boards such as the Industry Training Authority, ITA, in British Columbia and the Ontario Council for Automotive Human Resources, CAHR. I'm a member of Canadian Labour Congress and Ontario Federation of Labour apprenticeship committees.

In 1996, I was appointed by Minister John Snobelen—Conservative government—to the electricians' provincial advisory committee, PAC. As we know, the PACs will be phased into the trade boards under the Ontario College of Trades in the coming months.

Also, through the New Democratic government in the 1990s, I was a participant and had roles with the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board, OTAB. There was \$32.5 million in funding for the Ford Motor Co. in Oakville, and I was responsible for skilled trades training and establishing a technical training centre at the Ford facility in Oakville.

Since 2005, I have been the CAW national director of skilled trades, representing over 20,000 skilled trades across Canada: journeypersons and apprentices, the majority of whom work in Ontario in the industrial, service and motive power sectors. The department establishes policies and standards and directs the affairs of the skilled trades and apprentices. We have a staff of five people.

I also have bargaining responsibilities. Apprenticeship training and broad-based opportunities for apprenticeship, including for women, are always key demands on our bargaining table. We've been successful, in the last few years, in bargaining over 800 apprenticeship opportunities in various trades at major Canadian Big Three auto companies. We've also been successful in other sectors where we have skilled trade workers in establishing apprenticeship opportunities.

Due to the economic downturn in the manufacturing sector, we have worked with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; with other groups, adjustment centres; and with corporations in identifying and merging traditional classifications into newer classifications because of the downsizing of skilled trades—difficult situations, issues with that, but we were able to move forward and complete that.

Also, we have been involved at the CAW with emerging trades within the rail industry; for example, railway car technician, which was first established in Ontario and now we're working with the governments of BC and Alberta to implement that new trade as well.

Just as there is with my work, there will be other issues that need to be addressed with the college of trades, and I'm sure that working together with all stakeholders in a collaborative manner, not in a pure representative capacity as these committees and councils require, but through skills, experience and knowledge, I believe we can address the issues and be able to move forward with the skilled trades and apprenticeships that are so important to a thriving economy in Ontario, as well as the rest of Canada.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Thank you very much. We'll start with Mr. Hampton.

Mr. Howard Hampton: I'm always interested in why people take on these chores. Why did you take this on?

Mr. Colin Heslop: I've been doing similar chores for quite some time. I really like being a tradesperson. I loved doing my apprenticeship. I believe it's a worthwhile career, and I believe the added benefits for people to consider the skilled trades or apprenticeship—it's a worthwhile career, a good career, a good-paying job and interesting. The opportunity to be involved with the development and implementation of such things as a college of trades or skilled trades, education and training programs at the floor level while it's being developed is very interesting to me. I love it; I enjoy it.

Mr. Howard Hampton: You're certainly getting in at the floor level. In fact, some people would say that there are a lot of challenges facing the organization. In some respects, for at least the next year you have to be almost all things. How do you see that happening? How do you see the council doing all those things in the short run?

Mr. Colin Heslop: I think the key thing is a collaborative working relationship. You have to leave your hat at the door per se to address the issues for the common good and the broad-based requirements of the council.

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I believe that the correct people on the council, and then into the college of trades and into the divisional boards and the trade boards etc. are key. I believe there is a desire to make apprenticeship work in Ontario better than how it has been working. I'm positive. My glass is always half full. Again, there are difficulties—personalities; some stakeholders have certain issues. But hopefully, working together collaboratively, you can get through those issues.

I had the situation working in the ITA in British Columbia, on an ITO board there; that was the first one with labour representation. Prior to that, the British Columbia government was just using industry boards. They felt there was a need for more broad-based recognition as a reflection of the province, which included labour.

I was appointed to that with another labour person and we worked very well together with the boards, with

industry, with management. And now, other ITOs in British Columbia are also providing that voice for labour, because they have a commitment, they have a passion for apprenticeships, they have an understanding of apprenticeships and trades and they have something to add to it. I think that will be mirrored, I would imagine—hopefully—with the college of trades.

Mr. Howard Hampton: I don't pretend to be an expert on this, but I do know there is, shall we say, some debate, some discussion around apprenticeships and how apprenticeships should be structured in Ontario. How do you see the board addressing some of those issues?

Mr. Colin Heslop: Again, collaboratively working together. There's the adjudicator process, which can really help, and I think that is a good provision of the act, where you can address some of the harder issues that have been out there for many years, such as ratios, for example.

It's key to get the experts on the subject matter on boards or committees who are committed to making the apprenticeship system work. I believe it can work. We have to forget some of the old issues and we've got to look at the issues and move forward.

Mr. Howard Hampton: When you say you have to forget some of the old issues, what would you describe those as?

Mr. Colin Heslop: Old issues such as the ratios, adversarial approaches between the different stakeholders, length and term of apprenticeships, recognition of emerging trades.

Mr. Howard Hampton: Do you think the issue of ratios is going to go away?

Mr. Colin Heslop: I think there's always going to be some form of ratios, but as long as you've got a journey-person training an apprentice or mentoring an apprentice, that's good, whatever that number is, whether it's one to one, three to one, five to one or eight to one. It varies, I would imagine, depending on the amount of tradespeople available in that trade; looking out into the future, what the attrition will be for that trade, what the needs are for that trade.

You certainly wouldn't want to see a ratio, I don't believe, where you have more apprentices than tradespeople. I was at an apprenticeship conference two weeks ago in British Columbia and they had one employer out there that employed 71 apprentices and one tradesperson. That's a ratio that's not good. The finished product—the qualified journey-person at the end of the day will not be there through that sort of apprenticeship training. But they are taking steps to address that.

There are issues with ratios. They're out there, but they need to be addressed fairly and according to the trade or the sector or the industry. I believe the structure of the college of trades, recognizing the four divisional boards, can address that and put that forward to the governing board.

Mr. Howard Hampton: In most workplaces that I've been to in the last year or so, what I hear being repeated over and over again is, "Most of our skilled trades are in

their late 40s, their 50s. They're going to be retiring soon. We're going to have a real problem in terms of replacing skilled trades." Do you agree with that?

Mr. Colin Heslop: Yes. But that's been around for quite some time. I remember Jane Stewart on the front page of the papers, I think it was in 2001: "We're going to be one million tradespeople short within 10 years." We're basically there now. In British Columbia, at that conference—there's a 160,000 shortage of skilled trades over the next five years. The workforce is older. It is retiring. Some people are staying longer in the workforce, but one of the main problems across Canada is that the opportunities are not there for apprentices. Employers are not taking on apprentices. I believe that if we can find a way to revitalize apprenticeship programs in all sectors and provide those opportunities, we'd be able to create the apprenticeship programs needed for the industry, and then eventually for the tradespeople, once they graduate from the apprenticeship program, to go into that industry.

There will be a shortage, but on the other hand, in Ontario we have the shortage that was predicted, but we've also had a manufacturing economy that's been struggling and a lot of plant closures, which has resulted in a lot of skilled trades being laid off. They're adjusting themselves within the workforce.

But we are getting older. Me too.

Mr. Howard Hampton: Thanks very much.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Thank you. The government: Ms. Cansfield.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: Just to thank you again. We're delighted that you've put your name forward. I have no questions. Thank you very much.

Mr. Colin Heslop: Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Ms. Pendergast.

Ms. Leeanna Pendergast: Good morning, Mr. Heslop. Thank you for being here this morning, and thank you for your presentation.

I'm noticing in your CV that you were with the CLC and the OFL for five years working on increased opportunities for apprenticeships. I'm also noticing that over 10 years, you were involved with McMaster student nursing outreach. I guess I'm asking if you could elaborate for us, please, on your involvement or what experience you would bring to the table either with those groups or from your experience in the UK, Australia and the US in terms of engaging youth. You've mentioned your relationship with women and engaging women in the skilled trades, but what experience might you bring in engaging youth in apprenticeship in terms of—

Mr. Colin Heslop: Well, the Mac SOC outreach is for homeless in Hamilton. It's student nurses who go out and provide assistance to the homeless and near-marginal-housing homeless people, so not so much with the youth or apprenticeships there.

But what we have done and what we've engaged with youth—we go to the CAW, we go to colleges and we go to secondary schools and provide presentations to the youth for them to consider a skilled trades apprenticeship. Through the CAW Family Education Centre in Port

Elgin, we've also provided classes for the Assembly of First Nations women and daughters to consider trades as an apprenticeship. We've been doing that initiative for the past six months. We promote broad-based apprenticeships where we have women in skilled trades, when 20 years ago there were none. We now have a reasonable amount—not a great amount, but at least we have broken that barrier per se, and women and youth are provided opportunities to go into a trade.

Also at the bargaining, we've bargained collective agreements where we will take ratios—this is another form of ratio—of so many from inside the plant, where existing workers can apply to go into an apprenticeship program, and the others will come from the youth in the communities so that they provide opportunities for the youth.

But youth is key. I support the opportunity for youth to get into apprenticeships.

Ms. Leeanna Pendergast: You said that you made presentations in secondary schools as well?

Mr. Colin Heslop: Yes.

Ms. Leeanna Pendergast: What would happen if you came into my school and presented to students and they were very interested in what you had to say? What would the follow-up be? How do you then engage them?

Mr. Colin Heslop: Because of the lack of opportunities that I touched on earlier—that's one of the issues out there, the opportunities. The employers are not taking on apprentices. The awareness is there now. There are youth who want to enter apprenticeships. I normally start off and say, if it's in Ontario, that, due to the economic situation that we're in, it's very difficult to find apprenticeships, but if you are interested, it's a worthwhile career. I would then explain that and give advice on how they would try to find an apprenticeship program and then go through the benefits of being a journeyman, a tradesperson; the community college; the requirement of training; the support of red seal mobility, that if you have a trade that is recognized as red seal, then you have the opportunity of mobility to work throughout Canada. Also, there's international recognition of standards that are recognized elsewhere so that you can travel, that it's a worthwhile career.

I'm probably living proof that you can travel being a journeyman or a tradesperson. If I hadn't started my apprenticeship and completed it—which is important, the completion of the apprenticeship—then I wouldn't be here today.

0940

Ms. Leeanna Pendergast: I suspect that once they meet you, sir, and you model what you're asking them to do, they're probably engaged at that point.

Mr. Colin Heslop: I'm living proof that it's a worthwhile career and that opportunities are there.

Ms. Leeanna Pendergast: Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Ms. MacLeod.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Welcome to the committee, Mr. Heslop. I appreciate you taking the time to meet with us today. I have a couple of quick questions for you.

Just to pick up and expand upon my colleague from the third party Mr. Hampton's questions about apprenticeship ratios, I'm wondering: Do you think they need to be lowered or maintained? You did talk about sector by sector, but in general, do you think they need to be lowered?

Mr. Colin Heslop: I think, as I said, the individual sector should look at that, because they have issues that are peculiar to their sector. But generally speaking, if there's a shortage of skilled trades and it's justified and you can prove that, then obviously I believe that the ratio should drop and then be reviewed. I believe there are provisions and consideration for the college of trades to look at it on a four-year cycle, which makes sense.

What we do within the CAW where we have apprentices is we have joint apprenticeship committees that do attrition predictions over the next five years. If we have six electricians retiring at 65—I know that now you don't have to retire at 65—then we start five apprentices so that when the journeyman retires, then the apprentice will graduate and fall in.

I think you have to try and tie in the attrition rate, what the need is, and adjust the ratio. Again, you don't want a ratio that's out of whack, where the apprentice isn't receiving the proper ongoing training and mentoring.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: In Alberta right now, in most of their fields, their apprenticeship ratio is one to one. They also have a very good safety record, by many accounts. I'm just wondering what the difference is and why there is a difference in Ontario.

Mr. Colin Heslop: Well, some places would have one to one. You can bargain that, right? What does Alberta have—60,000 apprentices? They have quite a large number of apprentices there. But if you go to BC, where they've got the situation where there are more apprentices than journeymen on the shop floor, they've only got, say, 25,000 with a similar population. Alberta is a booming economy, obviously with oil resources, natural resources, probably the fastest-growing economy. It's sluggish somewhat now, but it will pick up again. Their need and their projections for future skilled trades are probably greater than, say, in Ontario, because of our manufacturing base. Maybe a ratio in Ontario would be different to Alberta's because of the needs in that province for journeymen.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I reviewed your CV in great detail, and I appreciate you providing that to the committee. I just want to be clear: You work with the CAW.

Mr. Colin Heslop: Yes. I'm the national director of skilled trades.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Now, I notice on your resumé as well that you work with the Canadian Labour Congress and the Ontario Federation of Labour, as well as ACORN.

Mr. Colin Heslop: No, I'm appointed to the apprenticeship committees of the COCA and the OFL.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Okay, so you work with them?

Mr. Colin Heslop: I believe it's phrased there as "such as" appointments. Some are industry, some are government, and some are through labour.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: And you worked with a group called ACORN?

Mr. Colin Heslop: ACORN? Did I work with ACORN?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Yes.

Mr. Colin Heslop: What we did was a wonderful thing. With Hurricane Katrina, back in 2005, as we know, New Orleans was devastated. Within the CAW, not to wander off too far, but we have a strong social conscience, and we believe that our lives extend beyond the plant gates and collective bargaining and that we can offer some sort of support to people in need. What we did through the skilled trades department is we located and identified 70 skilled trades volunteers who gave up their time. We went to New Orleans and we constructed seven homes in the ninth ward of New Orleans. To be able to construct these homes that were damaged, nearly destroyed, by Katrina, we had to get permits and licences, so we collaborated and worked with ACORN, which you've probably heard about; it's a community organization. They were able to identify and get the permits, because you needed somebody in the United States. We had a working relationship where they identified homes, and we reviewed those homes to see if they were suitable. We provided the labour, the materials etc. ACORN provided the licences and the permits.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I see. So there's a strong working relationship there between the CAW and ACORN?

Mr. Colin Heslop: On that project. We're not continually working with them on every issue, but we work with a lot of different organizations. If we can help people, then we'll work with people.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Now, as you're probably aware, the CAW donated about \$200,000 to the Working Families Coalition, which also seems to be the driving force behind this legislation, that partnership of working families. They're considered friends who helped draft the rules, and by many accounts some believe that it's excluding people. You talked a little bit earlier about the different stakeholders that you're going to need to talk to, and I'm wondering who you define as the different stakeholders that you would have to work with. And, given the number of labour groups that have contributed to the Liberal Party, do you believe that they should be part of this—

Mr. Colin Heslop: Sorry, can you say that again? I just missed it—a little bit too quick.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Sure. There are two questions there. Who do you think are the different stakeholders? And the second question is, given the number of labour groups that contributed to the Liberal Party, do you think those contributors should be part of this board?

Mr. Colin Heslop: I believe—

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: And if I could tack on just one final question, what do you think the role of business is—

Mr. Colin Heslop: I should write this down, because I only have a memory capacity of two questions. But to answer the two questions: First, on the stakeholders, the

stakeholders would be industry, government, academia and labour.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: And you would consider industry as business as well.

Mr. Colin Heslop: Industry, I class as business, yes.

On the other piece, about people who contribute to the Liberal Party: If they contribute to the Liberal Party, that's their choice, but I don't see how that would reflect with the college of trades. I think it's based on knowledge, skill and experience, and what contributions an individual can give.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Mr. Heslop, just to go back, then, to your stakeholders, what kind of composition do you believe the college of trades should have in terms of those four groups: industry/business, government, academia and labour—the composition of this board?

Mr. Colin Heslop: I think how it's laid out in the act, in the numbers, is pretty fair. The trade boards, I believe, are two employees from labour, two from industry/business. I don't know the final composition, all the people who have been put forward for the appointments council. I know there are people from labour, which is very important there. Again, you hang your hat at the door, but when you have a committee working together collaboratively, you've got to recognize all the stakeholders around apprenticeship and training, and that includes labour. I know some people, like in BC earlier on, didn't wish to have labour, but they recognize it's a benefit. They do have labour now and it's working well, provided you get the right people.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Just one final question, back to the Working Families Coalition and the activity in which they've been engaged in previous elections: Do you think those organizations who were involved with Working Families and have taken a position in elections to assist one political party over two others should have representation on this board?

Mr. Colin Heslop: I believe that if a person has the skill, the knowledge, the experience, the commitment, the passion for trades and apprenticeship, they should be on the board. I think political affiliations and so forth are something else that people are entitled to, but it should not interfere with their work on the board. They shouldn't be in a representative capacity, that position.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Thanks very much, Mr. Heslop.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Thank you very much for your presentation this morning and for being here and enlightening the committee. We thank you very much and we wish you well in your future endeavours.

Mr. Colin Heslop: Thank you. It was a very good process. It strengthens the whole system.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Our third and final interview for today is Hugh Laird, intended appointee as a member of the College of Trades Appointments Council. I'm not sure whether Mr. Laird is presently in the audience.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: We're a little early. Do you want to recess?

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): The delegates—it is suggested that they arrive early. The actual appointment for Mr. Laird was at 10 o'clock. With the committee's consent, we will recess and take a coffee break until 10 o'clock to make sure we give the applicant every opportunity. I understand from his office that he is on his way.

The committee recessed from 0950 to 1002.

MR. HUGH LAIRD

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Hugh Laird, intended appointee as member, College of Trades Appointments Council.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): We'll call the committee back to order. I would just point out that our third and final interview today is with Hugh Laird, intended appointee as a member of the College of Trades Appointments Council. I believe Mr. Laird is now present, if you wish to take a seat at the front there.

First of all, we very much appreciate your agreeing to come to the interview this morning. As we do with all our appointees, we will ask if you wish to make a brief opening statement. Upon the conclusion of that opening statement, we will then have questions and comments from the committee members. This time, the commencement of the questions will be with the government side.

With that, again, thank you very much for being here. The floor is yours to make your presentation, Mr. Laird.

Mr. Hugh Laird: Thank you very much. I would like to thank the Standing Committee on Government Agencies for the opportunity to speak today with respect to my intended appointment as a member of the College of Trades Appointments Council. By way of an introduction, my name is Hugh Laird and I'm the executive director of both the Interior Systems Contractors Association of Ontario as well as the Interior Finishing Systems Training Centre, located in Vaughan, Ontario.

The Interior Systems Contractors Association of Ontario was incorporated on September 1, 1971. Originally, it was incorporated as the Drywall Association of Ontario. In 1980, it was renamed the Interior Systems Contractors Association. We employ approximately 20,000 construction workers in several trades: drywall and acoustic, thermal insulation, eaves, asbestos removal, drywall taping and plastering, fireproofing, residential steel framing and mould.

ISCA plays a major role in the negotiation of collective agreements with the carpenters and painters. As part of the EBA, ISCA is responsible for the negotiation of both the ICI and residential agreements. ISCA also, while working with its partners in labour, operates the largest apprenticeship training centre in North America. The training centre, known as IFSTC, trains over 300 new apprentices every year in four different trades, and upgrades 4,000 journeypersons annually.

It is this keen interest in apprenticeship and development of skilled trades that has led me to this committee today. I have a long history of supporting trades training

in Ontario and felt that I had something to offer the newly formed college of trades. It is with this in mind that I submit my name for consideration.

While I appreciate the politics of the appointments process, I would like to point out that over the past 37 years, I have had the privilege of working with all three political parties. All three parties have formed governments, and all three have been keenly aware of the work that ISCA and IFSTC have done to promote the skilled trades within the province.

It has been a privilege to serve the industry, and it is an honour to be considered for the appointments council so that I can continue to serve.

Again, I would like to thank you for the consideration and welcome any questions from committee members that you should have.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Thank you very much for your presentation. Again, I apologize for rushing you on arrival and putting you in the chair immediately.

Mr. Hugh Laird: I had a few hiccups getting here.

Ms. M. Aileen Carroll: Me, too.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): With that, we will turn it over for questions from the government caucus.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: We understand that the traffic was a bit difficult.

Mr. Hugh Laird: It was, yes.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: One of our colleagues had a lot of difficulty as well.

Ms. M. Aileen Carroll: I thought I supported infrastructure.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: Thank you very much for putting your name forward. I was curious: One of the challenges we have is actually reaching out to our young people to get them engaged in apprenticeship in the first place. We have this feeling that every child needs to go to university as opposed to looking at the trades as a viable option.

You've obviously had a great deal of time that you've spent with students, with apprenticeship over the years. What do you think you've learned that you'll be able to bring to the college in terms of helping in an outreach capacity?

Mr. Hugh Laird: We were one of the first groups to hire a full-time outreach person. What this person does is he goes to some colleges, mostly high schools and ethnic groups to promote apprenticeship and to try and get apprenticeship back to where it was 30 or 40 years ago, where a kid would come out of high school and serve a four- or five-year apprenticeship. We kind of lost that about 30 years ago, I would guess, when the school system got rid of all the technical schools, and everything went computer. We thought it was wrong then. We still think it's wrong. Hopefully we can get back to that old European-type model.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Ms. MacLeod?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Thanks very much, Mr. Laird. I appreciate you making the time to see us here at committee today. I really do appreciate that.

I have a quick question, in terms of memberships in professional organizations on the CV that came forward. It's really just a technical question. You're the trustee of Local 675 and trustee of Local 1891. Which union is that?

Mr. Hugh Laird: I'm a trustee on the health and welfare and pension plans for both of them. Local 1891 is the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades and Local 675 is the International Brotherhood of Carpenters.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Okay. Thank you for that. I really appreciate it.

I'm just wondering what motivated you to seek this appointment.

Mr. Hugh Laird: Everybody in the industry knew that it was happening, and several people asked me if I'd be interested in it: COCA, the construction council, some people in the building trades, my own board of directors and school trustees. They asked me if I'd put my name forward and I thought about it and said—

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: And then you won the lottery and got to show up here at committee.

Just a quick question, and I asked this of your colleague earlier, whom you will be sitting on the committee with, Mr. Heslop. What do you think of the board structure? We talked a little bit. I apologize; you weren't here. We talked a little bit about the stakeholders this organization is going to have to deal with. He mentioned, and I quite agree, that it will be industry and business, academia, the trades—he had one more. Help me with it. Academia, trades—and government. Oh yes.

I'm just wondering what type of balance you think this organization is going to have to strike with all of those stakeholders in terms of not only its composition but also in terms of dealing with them.

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Mr. Hugh Laird: The composition of the board is quite diverse. It's something new. I really don't know how it's going to shake out, to be very honest with you. I really don't, because it's fairly loose right now. People have to get to know each other. As in any other board, if the board isn't working as a cohesive unit, nothing's going to happen. I think that would be a challenge, to put the initial people together and get everybody on the right page and take it from there.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: You have some additional challenges, too, just because you are a brand new board, as you mention, and you're transitioning. I guess that's another question I have: What challenges do you see as a new member of this organization as the council assumes the role of a board of the Ontario College of Trades in the transition period?

Mr. Hugh Laird: I think that's why some people asked me to join the board: because I've been doing it all my life. I've served an apprenticeship. I currently administer four, and I've been in construction all my life. People in the industry represent their particular group, but I think I'm perceived as being a fair and honest

person. All through my life I've always gotten along with the other trades, the other organizations, and I think that's why they wanted me to be here.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Right. I think they're called divisional boards. Do you know if there's going to be a policy that the council is going to have to follow in selecting the members and the chairs of the divisional boards from employer-employee board members?

Mr. Hugh Laird: I do not know that, no.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: A final question I have on apprenticeship ratios—I've mentioned this previously to Mr. Heslop: What are your thoughts on apprenticeship ratios? You probably do know that in Alberta they have, in many of their fields, a one-to-one apprenticeship ratio. I'm just wondering: What are your thoughts there, and do you think we need to lower apprenticeship ratios in the province? Why do you think there's a difference between what's happening in Alberta and what's happening here in Ontario?

Mr. Hugh Laird: I think that apprenticeship ratios are best left to the individual trade. The four that I do, I have thoughts on them, but—

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Could you share them?

Mr. Hugh Laird: Yes. We believe the one-to-four for the four trades that we do is sufficient.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: It's painting and construction?

Mr. Hugh Laird: Drywall, ceilings, exterior insulated finishing systems, and hazardous material abatement.

When you get into hazardous material abatement, the contractors there might want the one-to-one ratio. We haven't had that meeting yet because it's a brand new trade. We just got approval of it a few months ago. That may go to a one-to-one ratio. I don't know. But I don't feel qualified to speak on what an electrician or a plumber ratio should be. I think that should be left up to the individual trade—

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: That's a fair point. It was in terms of your trades. I just want to say thanks for coming today.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Mr. Hampton.

Mr. Howard Hampton: Thanks for taking the time to be here, and thanks also for taking me through the centre and trying to educate me on some of what's happening in the skilled trades today.

The body that you're going to be appointed to has a pretty ambitious agenda for the next year. Some would describe it as having to be all things to all people. You're taking on a lot of challenges. How do you see all that unfolding, from your perspective?

Mr. Hugh Laird: I wish I could give you a definitive answer on that, but I can't. It's a brand new board. It models some other things, like nurses, teachers, doctors etc. As far as I know, those other boards work well. I think that what this is going to do will be more instant.

Years and years dealing with the apprenticeship system in Ontario with all three parties was very cumbersome. It would take for ever and ever to get things done. What I see of this one, it looks like the mechanism is there to get an instant response to a problem, because everything is changing.

As I mentioned earlier, we've just started a new hazardous material apprenticeship. A bunch of the people are working in this building right now. If the contractors and the workers decide that this training regime is no good, it takes a long time, under the current system, to change things.

What I see with this new system, I think, will be more responsive because the people who are actually making the decisions are the people who work in the industry. It's not really going to government and having government drag it out, which they do, because it's just the way that you guys do business here.

Mr. Howard Hampton: I want to touch on something that my colleague from the Conservative Party touched on. The issue of training ratios or apprenticeship ratios is a contentious one. Sometimes you even hear it on the floor of the Legislature. How do you see that being sorted out? I don't claim to be an expert on this, but it seems to me that if there's disagreement within a particular trade on what the ratios ought to be—employers want one thing, and skilled trades want another thing—somehow this has to be sorted out. How do you see that being sorted out?

Mr. Hugh Laird: I don't think, with all the skilled trades, that it's going to be a contentious issue. I know that it is with one that I've heard of. I've heard that the electricians have a problem. That's the only one that I really know of. For the rest of them, it seems to work well. The employers and the unions will sit down and say, "What is the best thing to do?" It has never been a problem with the apprenticeship that I served and the four that I administer; it has never been a problem. I don't know. I believe that the people who actually make their living off it are capable of making that decision.

To answer your question, "What do we do if they can't come to a decision?", that's a very tough question. We'd have to see what the guidelines to the board allow for that. I can't answer that right now.

Mr. Howard Hampton: Okay.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Thank you very much for your presentation this morning. We again apologize for the rushing of it, but we got it all completed. We wish you well in your future endeavours. Thank you for coming.

Mr. Hugh Laird: It wasn't your fault; it was mine. I apologize. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Okay, we can now go to the concurrences. The first concurrence is the intended appointment of Dr. Rachel Ellaway, intended appointee as member, eHealth Ontario. Can we have—

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: Could I have a recorded vote, please, on all of these?

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Yes, but before we can do that, we would have to have someone who would move the concurrence, so we have something to vote on.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: Yes, I will move the concurrence.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Thank you.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: I'd be pleased to move concurrence for Dr. Rachel Ellaway's appointment as a member of eHealth Ontario.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): You've heard the motion. Discussion?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Mr. Chair, if I may? Dr. Ellaway was certainly a very fascinating person who appears to have very good credentials and has done some very interesting work.

That being said, the official opposition, until there's a public inquiry into the \$1-billion boondoggle at eHealth, will not be able to support any of the candidates at this time. I just want that noted.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Thank you. Any further discussion on the motion?

Ayes

Albanese, Arthurs, Cansfield, Carroll, Hampton, Sandals.

Nays

MacLeod.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): The motion is carried.

Our next—

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Mr. Chair, if I may? Given that my colleague Jim Wilson, who's also our critic, was unable to be here—he's on House duty at the same time—I'm wondering if I could request a deferral for seven days on the two appointments to the college.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): That can be done, so we will. That was a request for both the next two or just for Mr. Heslop?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: No, for both—and Mr. Laird.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Okay. We have a request for the deferral of the consideration of the next two appointees to our next meeting. That brings us to the end of our meeting and concludes the business of our intended appointees.

Is there any other business of the committee that anyone wishes to bring up? If not, we will reconvene here at 8:30 or 9 o'clock; we leave that to the committee. We will have our first delegation at 9 o'clock. We will have to do our concurrences prior to that. If you wish, we still can still set it to—we'll say 8:45, so we can do the concurrences. The concurrences per day must be dealt with at the start of the next meeting. We'll set the meeting for 8:45 so we'll have 15 minutes for the concurrences to deal with before we have to do our first intended appointee. Okay?

With that, thank you very much for your participation. This meeting stands adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 1022.

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