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Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Wednesday 25 February 2015

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Mercredi 25 février 2015

**Select Committee
on Sexual Violence
and Harassment**

Committee business

**Comité spécial de la violence
et du harcèlement
à caractère sexuel**

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

**SELECT COMMITTEE
ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE
AND HARASSMENT**

**COMITÉ SPÉCIAL DE LA VIOLENCE
ET DU HARCÈLEMENT
À CARACTÈRE SEXUEL**

Wednesday 25 February 2015

Mercredi 25 février 2015

The committee met at 1608 in committee room 1.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We shall call to order a meeting of the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment against women. Our first order of business is to have a report tabled by our subcommittee, so I would ask Ms. Scott to do that.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Sure. The report of the subcommittee is as follows:

Your subcommittee met on Tuesday, February 24, 2015, to consider the method of proceeding on its order of the House dated Thursday, December 11, 2014, and recommends the following:

(1) That the Chair write to the House leaders to request a one-month extension of the committee's interim report deadline.

(2) That, subject to witness response, the committee intends to travel to Windsor, Kitchener–Waterloo, Kingston, Thunder Bay, Sudbury, Ottawa and Moose Factory.

(3) That the committee schedule three days of travel during the constituency week of April 6, 2015, and three days of travel during the constituency week of May 18, 2015.

(4) That each member of the subcommittee provide the Clerk of the Committee with the name and contact information of an expert witness that they would like to invite to appear before committee—can I say “witnesses”?

Interjection.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Witnesses—okay.

(5) That the Chair write to the minister responsible for women's issues to request a copy of an Ontario Women's Directorate stakeholder list and the appropriate contact information to distribute the committee's notification of public hearings.

That's the end of the report.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you, Ms. Scott. Now I'd like to open it up for discussion. Do we have any members who would like to comment on this?

Ms. McMahon, I understand you would like to move an amendment.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Yes. Thank you, Madam Chair. I do. I actually have two amendments.

The Clerk pro tem (Mr. Trevor Day): I'm going to hand the first one out regarding persons travelling with the committee.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Certainly. Staff?

The Clerk pro tem (Mr. Trevor Day): Staff.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Okay.

Thank you, Madam Chair. I shall now read the motion, which the Clerk is passing out.

I move that the committee authorize one staff person from each recognized party to travel with the committee, space permitting, and that reasonable expenses incurred for travel, accommodation and meals be paid for by the committee upon receipt of a properly filed expense claim.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Do we have some discussion on that? We have Ms. McMahon giving us a motion allowing all parties to have a staff person with them during our travels.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Chair?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Yes, Mr. Hillier?

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you, Chair. I've been on a number of committees over the years. I've not ever seen staff members come along on committee for travel. The Clerks' office and the research office do a pretty admirable job keeping us all informed, so I'm not quite sure what the rationale or the merit is to having staff travel and be included in this motion.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Would anyone like to speak to that?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I can speak to that. I welcome any comments from my colleagues, Madam Chair. It's a good question.

My understanding—and I'm new to this place—is that other committees that have travelled, including the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions, did have staff travelling with them as well. My understanding is that SCOFEA travels with staff, so I think there are precedents where staff travel, unless I'm incorrect. I welcome comments in this regard, but this is my understanding.

We tabled this motion in order to accommodate staff who will be there to assist us, as they do in the everyday functions of our work here at the Legislature.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Do we have any other comments? Yes, Mr. Hillier.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Maybe we could ask the Clerk one question, and one response back to the mover of the amendment. What is the historical record of staff attending and travelling with a select committee?

And then my other question, back to the mover of the amendment: Other than if it may have been done in the past, there would certainly be an added cost to this, to having staff travel. Like I said, on all my travels with committees we've never had staff.

So maybe the first part to the Clerk to respond?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Chair—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Yes, I recognize Ms. McMahon.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Thank you. We've got, on the one hand, your experience of never having staff and my experience, limited as it is, of having staff. I'm not here to be the arbiter of which of those experiences is more valid; I'm simply suggesting that staff are helpful. They help us in the execution of our activities. They keep notes. They keep records. I know we have legislative staff to do the same, but I think it's a bit like asking why we still have staff here.

I guess it would help me if you would articulate for me precisely what your concerns are in having staff along with us. That might help to get at why you're raising this as a particular concern.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Mr. Hillier?

Mr. Randy Hillier: Well, first off is, as I said, I've been on a lot of committees. I've never experienced that before. We've been able to conduct our business professionally and adequately at all times in the past with the assistance of the Clerks' office. I know that there's going to be added cost; whenever there's an added cost, I look to see what is going to be the added benefit to that added cost.

I guess I'll just go back to looking for—because the member mentioned that she's of the view that staff travels with committees. I haven't seen it, but maybe if the Clerks' office could give us some factual background—

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Staff travels with SCOFEA.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We'll recognize Mrs. McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you, Chair. Through you: I have limited experience with travelling committees; however, I think that part of the work product that's coming out of this committee is an interim report to the House. I would think that staff was there to help take notes and to help to be there as part of the discussions, to be able to then help us out with our duties through there. I would have expected staff to be there simply because it's a select committee and we want to keep detailed notes of our travels to make that worthwhile in our report.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): The Chair recognizes Ms. Jones.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Thank you. If I can: I have participated in the last two select committees, and in both cases we didn't have additional staff. The researchers whom

we were provided with through the standard process of the committee were excellent and, I would suggest to you, based on the outcomes of both of those reports, more than adequate. If you speak to the members who participated, we did not have staff from the various parties participate or travel with us. It was strictly legislative research, the Clerk and Hansard.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): The Chair recognizes Mrs. McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you, Chair. I think, certainly, that I'm fairly sensitive, because of my prior work as a nurse, dealing with some pretty sensitive issues in the emergency department and through the course of my nursing work, and I do recognize that some of the folks who are coming to speak to us—there's a fair bit of sensitivity through that.

When we were first talking at our first meeting, when we were talking about sensitivity training and if they would have to appear in front of all of us—if I recall correctly, we were talking about trying to be able to have private meetings with an individual if that was a little better. Through the course of the work, I just wondered if staff would be helpful to be able to record those kinds of things in a less obtrusive way when you're dealing with somebody sensitively.

I do know that, when people are trying to tell such an emotional story in a vulnerable situation—and I'm sure that Ms. Scott would recognize this, as well, in her previous work as a nurse—people want your undivided attention. They don't want you writing notes. They don't want you to be looking at your BlackBerry. I would prefer somebody recording some of that in a less obtrusive way. I'm just saying, with the sensitivity of the type of individuals that we're dealing with—it's not like a budget submission or anything else. These are deeply personal, vulnerable emotions that are coming forth from our witnesses. That's all I'm saying about that.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you, Mrs. McGarry. For the record, just so that we all know, any staff travelling with us would not be there during in camera meetings; only during public meetings.

Ms. Jones, you had something else that you wanted to say?

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Yes, I just want to respond. Again, with the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions, there were some very personal, challenging stories that the committee heard. I think that we did a good job in respecting the deputants. Hansard does record all of it.

There was actually one example I can give you with the developmental select committee where a deputant requested that their presentation not be recorded on Hansard for public consumption. So there are opportunities and abilities for you as committee members to accommodate those unique requests for various reasons. Again, I would just encourage you to speak to the members who participated in those two select committees, because it did work and it wasn't related to outside staff.

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Having sat on a number of committees now—and I don't know this Erin personally, but I can tell you that the researchers who are provided for us are exemplary. We should tap into their abilities and use what is standard procedure.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Just another point that I'd like to make, and that is that in camera meetings are not recorded in Hansard.

Did we have someone else who wants to speak to this?

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: I don't know—maybe I missed this, but I was just wondering: I think there was a question to the Clerk to know the history. I was subbing on the finance committee and there were staff with us. So I just wanted to hear back what the Clerk has to say.

The Clerk pro tem (Mr. Trevor Day): The finance committee is one committee that does, during pre-budget consultations and through their subcommittee report, in I'd say the last four or five years now, normally allow for one staff member per party to travel along with the committee at the committee's expense. But it is the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs during pre-budget consultations.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Is that the only committee?

The Clerk pro tem (Mr. Trevor Day): I'd say, with any regularity, yes, that is the—

Ms. Sylvia Jones: And only for pre-budget hearings.

The Clerk pro tem (Mr. Trevor Day): Yes, and only for pre-budget hearings.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: All the other work of SCOFEA doesn't have that.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Should we ask our legislative researcher, perhaps, to reply to us to get us some information on that to see if there are other committees that do travel and if they do have staff assigned?

Interjection.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We do have a motion. Yes, Mr. Dong.

Mr. Han Dong: I just want to speak to this very quickly. I look around at this side of the committee, and I see that if we need to compare the amount of experience in committee, there isn't a comparison. I respect the fact that the members across have more extensive experience on committees. So if you are telling me that it's your experience that the staff are not necessary, then I have nothing to compare it to.

However, I look at the complexity of this issue; the demographics and the community that we're looking to cover is pretty unique. It's very different than standard government operating—you know, where we share all the estimates; or public accounts, where you have time to study the thing. So I think it will be very helpful to have the staff coming along with us.

Then I looked at the budget. I'm thinking about the actual cost. We can sit here and debate back and forth. I don't know what the cost is for that additional staff per party, but I wonder, given the benefit, is it worthwhile for us to go on back and disagree with each other on one staff per party?

That's it.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Any further debate? Mr. Hillier.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Yes. I don't want to belabour the point, but I'll just restate: When the committee is having public hearings, Hansard records everything. We have complete, detailed, factual notes and comments to refer to. When and if the committee meets in camera, there are no other staff allowed. Accommodations can be made for Hansard not to record that; however, the staff would not be able to provide any assistance there.

I'm not going to continue on the discussion. That's my position. I just don't see much benefit to it.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Just to clarify, legislative research will be there in camera, but no one else besides the committee.

Mr. Randy Hillier: But not staff.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Yes, Ms. Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Again, I don't want to belabour this either, but I know there are a lot of new committee members and I'm totally appreciative of that. The Hansard-taking is good to refer to. Research does a great job. When we come back for report writing too, they do the drafts that we see, so there's lots of time to come back to deputations to have input from everyone.

It is tough, the deputations we will hear. I asked Ms. Jones to come down to committee today just because she's been on two select committees of sensitive natures and similar to what we're going to hear.

So I just want to reassure you that it's an added cost that I don't think you actually need, and I just wanted to make you feel comfortable that you've got backup in research, you've got Hansard where possible, and we collectively do the report writing. We can ask people to come back to clarify things to committee if we need to. I just want to kind of put that out as, can I say, a comfort call out there. There's lots of backup. It's just a cost that, I think, we don't need to incur.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Yes, Ms. Jones?

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I was just going to say, if you're concerned about the deputations and their comfort level, I think that you should also be thinking about how comfortable they are going to be with a lot of additional people in the room that they don't know what their role is. The Chair will very ably explain what the role of Hansard and the Clerk and the research is, and it might actually increase the comfort level if there are fewer people, visually, there.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): And again to stress, if there are people who are concerned about sensitivity, they have the option of going in camera.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: They do.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): And in camera, we won't have all of these extra people there.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Yes. You have to make, obviously, those requests prior to your presentation beginning. But again, I can tell you from personal experience that we had to deal with that as a committee, where some requests, because of the sensitive nature of the mental

health and addictions issues that they wanted to raise—they very specifically requested that Hansard not be taken for their deputation, but still felt strongly enough about the issue that they were prepared to come before committee.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ms. Lalonde.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: I know we can probably go on, and I would suggest that maybe we take a vote on this, if that's all right with everyone?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Are the members ready to vote? Just so that we know what we are voting on, there is an amendment to the subcommittee report. It reads: "That the committee authorize one staff person from each recognized party to travel with the committee"—

Mr. Randy Hillier: Chair?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'm just going to finish this—"space permitting, and that reasonable expenses incurred for travel, accommodation and meals be paid for by the committee upon receipt of a properly filed expense claim."

Mr. Hillier, you wanted to speak to this?

Mr. Randy Hillier: Chair, could I ask for a 10-minute recess, please?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Yes.

The committee recessed from 1629 to 1639.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Welcome back, committee members. We are now prepared to vote on a motion that was brought forward by Ms. McMahon.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Just a point of order: Because we have new people on the committee, I just wanted to let people know that amendments can be withdrawn before they're voted upon—

The Clerk pro tem (Mr. Trevor Day): Not now.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Not in a select committee?

The Clerk pro tem (Mr. Trevor Day): By requesting the recess, we are now into the voting procedure.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Okay. As a general rule, we can.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Can I make a comment before the vote?

Interjection.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Okay. Can I ask for a recorded vote, then, if I can't make a comment before the vote?

The Clerk pro tem (Mr. Trevor Day): Sure.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): So we are now going to be having a recorded vote on the motion brought forward by Ms. McMahon.

Ayes

Dong, Lalonde, Malhi, McGarry, McMahon, Natyshak, Sattler.

Nays

Hillier, Scott.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): The motion is carried. Now, is there any further debate on any issues? Yes, Ms. McMahon.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Chair, I have another amendment to the subcommittee, if I may.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Please read it.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: In doing so, Madam Chair, I propose to, on the subcommittee report, replace items 4 and 5 of that subcommittee report with the following motion:

I move that,

The committee identify, by consensus, six expert witnesses to act as advisors to the committee; and

That the expert witnesses may be called on by the committee, on an as-needed basis, to provide their guidance and perspective on the issues before the committee; and

That the expert witnesses may be invited to appear as a group before the committee in Toronto, either in person or by teleconference, but will not travel with the committee; and

That the expert witnesses may be reimbursed for any reasonable costs associated with their appearance, subject to the approval of the Board of Internal Economy pursuant to standing order 122(c).

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. So, just to be clear, you are suggesting that we strike 4 and 5 and replace it with the amendment you have just read?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: That is correct.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Do we have any discussion? Yes, Ms. Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Can I just ask a point of order? The subcommittee report is reporting on what we decided yesterday. Can we make amendments to what we decided yesterday?

The Clerk pro tem (Mr. Trevor Day): The subcommittee report is a recommendation by the subcommittee—members of each—to the full committee. This is the opportunity for the full committee to adopt that report or to make changes to make it more adoptable by the committee.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Before it gets adopted, okay. So if those changes are made, the opening line no longer is true, then: "Your subcommittee met on Tuesday and recommends the following...."

The Clerk pro tem (Mr. Trevor Day): The committee still recommended the opening, its initial version, and the committee has now—the minutes will reflect what was initially recommended and then how it was amended throughout.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Oh, okay. I got it. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Any more discussion? Yes, Mr. Hillier.

Mr. Randy Hillier: I'm somewhat surprised reading this through. Again, we're seeing some things happening that I've not seen before. This committee is, by its very definition, an advisory panel to the House. We make recommendations to the House under the instructions and the mandate from the House. To see that we're going to

mirror this committee with another advisory panel of six—I've not ever seen that. I've never even seen it mentioned in the standing orders that an advisory panel to a committee has ever happened. It may be that through the discussion we'll hear some justification and some merit, but if I'm reading this correctly, six expert witnesses will sit as advisers to this committee, in addition to our caucuses and our constituents?

Anyway, I'll just leave it. I would love to hear some justification or rationale in some past experience with an advisory panel to a select committee.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ms. Jones, you were next.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I'm sorry—Trevor, is it possible to circulate the motion that was passed in the House to formulate this select committee? My memory is not great, but I certainly don't remember in that motion any mention of an advisory panel to advise the select committee. It is, to my colleague's point, a serious anomaly that I think—I don't think you want to go down that route. Are we the select committee or are we a shadow panel for another panel that's made up of six expert witnesses? I'm a little confused.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ms. Lalonde.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: I'm just going to read for Ms. Jones: "The committee may seek the advice of experts and those with experience of sexual violence and harassment for the purpose of developing recommendations." I think it's good that we're having this discussion. I think the number six is six, but ultimately that number or these advisers wouldn't be coming all the time. I think there's more of a structure, that if we feel, as a committee, the need to seek those advisers, we would do so. So the mandate of this select committee is that we could have that availability to us. It doesn't mean that they'll be sitting with us at every meeting; it's more if we collaboratively feel that there's a need to have this advice panel with us to help us. We're going to be meeting with several people—

Interjection.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Pardon me?

Ms. Laurie Scott: I'm not in order, but go ahead.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): If you can wrap up, Ms. Lalonde.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Yes. Ultimately, this is it. It is part of our mandate, and we're suggesting that it will be part of our committee moving forward.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Next, I recognize Ms. McMahon.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: This is a good conversation, and I'll hopefully add some value to it.

Previously in my career, I was at the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women when we did the rape shield law that changed the course of legislation in this country when it came to violence against women. That was in the 1990s. In the context of that, we brought together a national consultation of women's groups, and there were committee hearings much like we are undertaking here. We also relied on the advice and the assist-

ance of experts such as Lee Lakeman from the Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centres and a diverse group of individuals who guided us through the legislation—the Legal Education and Action Fund, for example.

I know that we're not writing legislation here. I want to be clear in that. But it resonates with me from the perspective of what we're trying to do here—hear from people and so on. We were guided in that, it seems to me, very similar work by experts who provided us with advice and counsel as we moved along our way. That is the very nature of what we're trying to propose today.

I offer that by way of clarification in terms of these learned people who would help us and guide us in our work. That is the intent of this motion. I hope that's helpful.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): May I just ask a question of clarification? When you talk about six, how are they to be appointed?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: By consensus of this committee.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Mr. Natyshak, you were next.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: It would seem to me that provision number 4 under the subcommittee report already provides us the function of calling on expert witnesses and expert advice within the realm of what we will be discussing. In contrast, the amendment actually limits or boxes in who we would be qualifying as experts. That then forces this committee to, by consensus—and I would like some clarification on what that actually means. My colleague here has a stack of six people already who I think are well qualified to provide expert testimony. Which one of those are we going to have to tell don't qualify as being on this expert panel?

I don't think as a committee we want to limit ourselves from calling on a broad swath of experts from all areas. Keep us, I guess, as open-minded as possible as to who can come and help us out.

If you can explain to me why six; it seems a little bit arbitrary to me. Why do we have to identify them as—what is it called? We're identifying them and qualifying them as the expert panel. There are lots out there that I'm sure want to help us, and we should keep it as broad as possible.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ms. Jones, you were next.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I completely support what my NDP colleague just said. I think that often when we think of committees, we think of people who have proactively asked to appear. But again, looking back at my history with the other two select committees, we did actively, proactively, reach out to experts in the field and say, "We need your help. We want your advice. We want your expertise." We didn't always wait for people to come to us. There was a whole series of asks, for lack of a better word—CAMH, people who were actually doing very exciting, innovative things in the field of mental health and addictions and developmental disabilities—where we

reached out to them as a committee and said, “Please come. We want to hear from you.”

1650

We didn’t do it just at the beginning. We started with a list of the obvious ones that we should hear from, but as we progressed as a committee and heard from people, we started to make further recommendations, saying, “Based on what that deputation just presented to us, we should be finding out what they are doing in BC, because they talked about a jurisdiction that was doing an excellent job.” We did it through the course of the entire time that we were acting as that select committee.

To reinforce, I think you really are limiting yourself if you are saying, “Let’s pick the six experts in the field,” because today, right now, those six experts may not be the same ones that you end up wanting to hear from at the end of this process.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I recognize Ms. Sattler. You were next.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I agree with what has been said. I really don’t think that this motion is necessary, because the committee has the ability at any time to call and to recall witnesses to the committee. As Ms. Jones just pointed out, to kind of predetermine who are going to be the six experts—the committee may discover that there are gaps in our knowledge and areas that we hadn’t identified when we went into this, and we have these six experts, whose job then becomes—you know, we’ll be seeking out the advice of the people whose expertise we feel we need as we do our work. I don’t think it’s necessary or appropriate to try to guess or anticipate in advance who the six experts are. I like the flexibility of identifying a starting list of who we know we want to hear from, and then, as we do our work and we hear from citizens who want to present to the committee, we identify who else we need to invite to fill in some of the gaps.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I’m going to recognize Mrs. McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you for your comments. In listening to all sides, I still go back to the mandate that was suggested in the House: “The committee may seek the advice of experts and those with experience of sexual violence and harassment for the purpose of developing recommendations.”

One of the thoughts I had was the issue of continuity. This, again, is a very unique committee. There’s a lot of sensitivities around it. My thought was that six would help represent all the voices we’re supposed to be hearing from. Again, our mandate is “to include diverse voices, including those of young people, aboriginal people, visible minorities, LGBTQ, seniors and people with disabilities.” My thought is that the continuity of the same experts to be able to let us address after would be helpful. I didn’t foresee them sitting here all the time, but it would be the same experts that you could go back to with questions and to help us write the report later.

Even in the issue of fairness, we pick two, you pick two, all parties pick two. That would give us the

continuity and the same people to be able to go back to in efficiency, not only to discuss it with but to assist us in the report writing.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Mr. Hillier.

Mr. Randy Hillier: First off, I’ll just start by suggesting that the regular process is that each party and/or each member selects people to come through. There is no requirement for others to approve or to vet that request. Generally speaking, on all of these committees, once it’s advertised and known, and in a proactive approach by all members of the committee, we get a good broad-section of people coming before the committee to provide expert witnesses and testimony.

My view on this: First off, I believe the amendment substantially alters the mandate of the committee. Second—and I don’t think this was intended—when you read the amendment, one of the unintended consequences that I see happening on this is turning and moving a non-partisan select committee to a more partisan role, because now we’re requiring consent in order to bring witnesses. That is a fundamental shift in process for a select committee.

I’m confident in saying that that is not the intention of this amendment, but it certainly would be a consequence that witnesses we may want now require the approval of others. We don’t have equal representation on the committee. Whether we like it or not, the three caucuses are not equal in voting weight, and I believe this would really jeopardize the integrity of the non-partisan aspect of the committee.

I would just add one other thing: Once the committee designates somebody as an expert witness, assuredly we’re going to put more weight of influence on their comments and on their advice as compared to other highly skilled professional deputants who might also appear at this committee.

Like I said, I find this amendment to fundamentally alter the structure and mandate of this committee. Again, I’m sure it’s not intended in that light, but for people who have been here and seen how these things happen, it causes a lot of concern on my part.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Mr. Natyshak.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Can I get clarification on what “consensus” means, for the sake of the first sentence in the motion: “The committee identify, by consensus, six expert witnesses to act as advisers to the committee”? What does that actually mean?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will ask Ms. McMahon, who moved the motion, to give us some clarity on that.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Actually, I think you weren’t quite finished there. I was just going to let you finish.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: No, that’s fine. Did you understand what I’m looking for?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Could you give me some help?

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Could you explain to me exactly how consensus would function in choosing and

selecting? What are the mechanisms you are going to use to find consensus, and what do you qualify as consensus?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I'm going to take—

Interjection.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Thank you, Madam Chair. Can I respond?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): So, on “consensus”—tell us what you mean by “consensus.”

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I think, and I may get this wrong, that consensus means “as mutually agreed upon.” I think what we're trying to do today is have a conversation about what this might look like as a mechanism to inform us, assist us, help shape the outcome, help guide us in our work as parliamentarians. So we would have a conversation that says, “Why don't we mutually agree upon these folks we would consider as so-called experts?” We would invite all sides to put forward two names, in the spirit of co-operation and consensus, so that, at the end of the day, we could agree upon who is going to advise us and give us some assistance in the course of our work.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: So this was—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Just let me interrupt here and ask: Do you mean that to be unanimous or by majority when it comes to consensus?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I think we would seek unanimity rather than a majority.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Okay. If that is the case, and I'm learning a little bit more in terms of how you see this sort of playing out, two names would be submitted from each caucus, and we would each mutually agree upon our two submissions. That being understood, could I put a motion forward to amend the motion to reflect that the committee identify, by unanimity—

Mr. Randy Hillier: Unanimous consent.

1700

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Okay—by unanimous consent, six expert witnesses to act as advisers to the committee; and that two submissions—

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Recommendations.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: —two recommendations from each caucus be submitted for that. I'll write it out a little bit clearer, of course. It's happening as it rolls off my tongue.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): The Chair recognizes Ms. McMahon.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I want to thank the member opposite for his contribution. I think we'd all appreciate that in written form, Madam Chair, and then have a few moments to consider it, if I could ask the committee for that.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ms. Lalonde.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: I just want to make sure that when we think about our experts and how wide our mandate is towards all the communities, we have to also look at—when we collectively agree on our experts, it would be nice if our experts are representing those communities, so that we don't have, let's say, four out of

the six in the same category of experts, I would like to think.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Mr. Hillier.

Mr. Randy Hillier: The amendment, as you're getting that clarification of the difference between “consent” and “unanimity,” raises the need for further clarification. That amendment deals with the identification of the witnesses or the selection of that expert panel. The second part that requires clarification is: How are those expert witnesses called? Are they called by consensus or are they called by unanimous consent? The member from Essex I'll ask to further clarify his amendment to the amendment, that it also requires unanimous consent for the calling of those expert witnesses.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I do have a number of people who are lined up who want to speak. But we're very quickly going to get an answer to that question from Mr. Natyshak. If you can just answer that question.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I apologize, Chair. I'm going to have to get Mr. Hillier to repeat the question. I missed the bulk of it.

Mr. Randy Hillier: I'll condense it. To amend your amendment in this fashion: Your amendment seeks unanimous consent on the selection of the expert witnesses; I'm suggesting that we also require unanimous consent on the calling of those expert witnesses to the committee, and not be left to majority votes.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Oh, in terms of who gets—sorry.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Do you want a moment to think about that?

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I'd love a recess to think about this.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): All right. May I just get comments from the people who have been waiting for a while, and then we'll call a recess? Mr. Dong.

Mr. Han Dong: I just want to clarify something: My understanding, after reading this again, is that these six experts, whoever they might be, will play an assistance role to this committee. We're not limited to these six experts only, right? We're still calling a whole bunch of other witnesses to come forward.

I think it's beneficial when we—I'll give a scenario. If we happen to call a witness to speak on visible minorities, the information this committee is getting is only from that witness that we call. Now we have an option of consulting with the experts that we recognized previously, to say, “These views: Do you agree?”—something that we are not certain about, so we feel that we have some advice we can go to. I just want to clarify that that is the intention, my understanding, of the amendment.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Next we are going to hear from Ms. Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I have some concerns about how we decide who these six expert witnesses are going to represent. Marie-France had pointed to the mandate, which talks about young people, aboriginal people, visible minorities etc. So on the one hand, you could say

we want an expert who has expertise dealing with each of those groups, but on the other hand you could say, well, maybe we need an expert in sexual harassment, an expert in domestic violence, an expert in violence in the workplace. How you're going to decide who is representing—you could say it's either a representative of the type of violence that's experienced, and perhaps that expert would then have knowledge of the impact on diverse communities, or do you want an expert who deals exclusively with one of these communities?

I think that it's going to be very difficult to decide who these six people are. Particularly now, when we're talking about a process where each party identifies two, ensuring that you've got all the bases covered is also going to be challenging.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): The Chair recognizes Ms. McMahon, before we take our recess.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Wait a minute; I've been on the list for a while.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Sorry, I did not see you.

Interjection.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We're going to hear from Ms. McMahon first.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I'm going to offer some remarks. Maybe by way of clarification, we're not trying to dictate who can come before the committee and who can't. So this isn't about choosing witnesses, to comments that have been raised by folks around the room. This is about, through unanimous discussion and agreement, choosing people who we all agree can assist us in our work as we move forward. This is not about choosing who can and who can't appear before us.

This isn't meant as a mechanism to change the mandate of the committee; this isn't meant to limit our work. On the contrary, this is meant to give us as wide a scope as possible by way of guiding us. It's meant to be a very good thing, actually, to try to help and advise us and to help us to shape our work, because as varied as our experience is and as pure in intent as we are—I certainly don't have the expertise that's required, and I would welcome the opportunity to be able to call on, or to call, or to discuss with or to talk to somebody who has expertise in this arena.

They're going to come and they're going to appear before us, but they're also going to be available to us to guide our work. That's what we're trying to do here. We're not trying to be narrow in our approach. So if that's the impression that we've given, Madam Chair, that's the wrong impression here. We're trying to really choose people who have expertise in arenas that are important to guide our work. That's what we're trying to do.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. I recognize Ms. Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Can I just speak for a second, here? I appreciate what you're trying to say, but what you're actually doing is creating a two-tier advisory panel. Who are we—any of us—to pick out two expert advisory

panels? What background do we have to pick out two? We do not. That is why we have whatever experts we'd like to, come.

I don't want to diminish the scope of that at all. They come as deputants. If we want them to come back, let them come back. You're making this into a partisan political committee, which is why I had fought for equal representation.

The motion was for staff to help support you; that's fine. You outvoted us because we do not have the majority. We're trying to do stuff by consensus, but it doesn't matter: You'd still have more votes whichever way it came.

Interjection.

Ms. Laurie Scott: It's a recorded vote; don't worry. But I'm just saying, you're creating two tiers. You're asking us, with our limited backgrounds—we don't have the knowledge yet because we haven't even been able to hear anybody.

We're asking those people to come forward to be our expert witnesses. You're asking us to choose an elite group of six people, who we do not have the background to choose from. We'll just be picking here and there—

Interjection.

Ms. Laurie Scott: We will be because we don't know. So why are we doing that when the way that it normally occurs seems to have worked in other committees and has been very fair?

You can call people back if you want. We all want this to work and to produce a report that's actually going to be helpful. But the advisory panel of six members isn't needed nor is it actually fair to occur, because you're creating two tiers. You're giving people—why do we choose six people for expert advisers? What knowledge base do we have to do that? We're listening to people, and we can all invite deputants to come here.

You're asking us to choose six people that we don't have the background to really choose—

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Advisers.

Interjections.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ms. Scott has the floor.

I'll let you finish.

Ms. Laurie Scott: We have explained with great patience in subcommittee and in full committee how it works, the resources that we have, the select committees that have occurred before, how they've worked and how they've been good quality. Now you're adding this extra layer of special advisers that I don't think is necessary. I think the fair process is to have them appear as deputants, and if you need them to come back for questions and clarifications by consensus, that is fine.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Mr. Natyshak.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I had previously put forward a motion. I'd like to remove that motion and immediately call for a recess.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): The motion is withdrawn. Are you open to a five-minute recess?

Mr. Randy Hillier: Seven and a half minutes.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Six point two—no. *Interjections.*

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We'll go seven minutes. How's that? Are we agreed to seven minutes? Okay.

The committee recessed from 1712 to 1719.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Members, I would ask that you take your seats, as we are resuming. What we have on the floor is Ms. McMahon's amendment. We are also looking at points 4 and 5 being struck out and being replaced with the text.

Do we have any further debate?

Mr. Randy Hillier: Yes.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Yes, Mr. Hillier?

Mr. Randy Hillier: I thought we were going to have the amendment to be voted on. I will propose an amendment that is consistent with the ideas expressed to me by Liberal members of the committee: that we strike out the word "by consensus" and include the words "by unanimous consent." Then, in the second paragraph—

Interjection.

Mr. Randy Hillier: The second sentence would be amended: "That the expert witnesses may be called by unanimous consent by the committee."

Then the final one, the third sentence: "That the expert witnesses may be invited by unanimous consent."

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I would ask if all the members are clear with Mr. Hillier's suggestions.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Where did Eleanor go to?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Do we have clarity?

Interjections.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Maybe you should repeat it.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Are all members clear on Mr. Hillier's suggestions?

Interjections.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): All right. We're going to ask you, if you will, Mr. Hillier, to repeat, and just if you can go slowly and line by line.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Make sure you have the right piece of paper.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Yes.

Ms. Laurie Scott: It's on Eleanor's—the motion she submitted.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Her amendment to the subcommittee report. I think the language that I'm going to propose is more consistent and more accurate with the desired intentions of the mover of this amendment.

The amendment to the amendment would be, "The committee identify by unanimous consent six expert witnesses...." That's in the first sentence.

In the second sentence, "That the expert witnesses may be called by unanimous consent to the committee...."

And the final change would be in the third sentence, "That the expert witnesses may be invited by unanimous consent to appear as a group...."

I think that more accurately reflects what the mover of the amendment was trying to accomplish with this amendment.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Is everyone clear on Mr. Hillier's amendment? Are the members prepared to vote on this amendment?

All right. Let me start by asking those who are in favour of Mr. Hillier's amendment, please raise your hands. And those who are opposed? We need to see a show of hands of those who are opposed.

The amendment is lost.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Madam Chair, I'd like to move an amendment to the subcommittee report.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Yes, Mr. Hillier?

Mr. Randy Hillier: That all committees be live-streamed except those that are held in camera.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We have an amendment on the floor right now, Mr. Hillier. We will come to you—

Mr. Randy Hillier: Oh, okay. I thought we'd just voted.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We have the other amendment on which to vote.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Oh, okay.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We have Ms. McMahon's amendment now. Are we prepared to vote on Ms. McMahon's amendment?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Madam Chair, actually, I have a change. I have an amendment to the motion as earlier proposed.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): An amendment to your amendment?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Yes. I believe the Clerk has copies.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): The Clerk needs just a moment.

Ms. McMahon, could you please read your amendment?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I move that the motion be amended as follows:

The words "by consensus" be struck, and the following paragraph be added:

"At the next regularly scheduled meeting of the select committee, members of the advisory panel shall be selected in rounds in the following order: PC, NDP, Liberal, PC, NDP, Liberal."

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We're just recording this information.

Thank you for the submission, Ms. McMahon. Do we have any debate on this new amendment? Ms. Jones.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: In the strongest words that I can use, I strongly, strongly encourage you to drop this two-tier concept of having a group of six people who have a more important value to the role of this committee than every other deputant who appears. You are sending a message to everyone who wishes to bring forward their lived experience, their professional expertise, that their importance and role in this committee's work is less than

six people we choose at the very beginning of the process.

By the nature of how we're going to choose those six, there is no appreciation or expectation that you are going to have proper coverage across the spectrum of this issue. If we all choose people from the justice side, then we have no expert to call from on the education side, in the same way that if we choose everyone from a particular side of the issue, we are doing a terrible disservice to every other person who wishes to appear at this committee.

In the strongest way possible, I say don't go down this road, because you will hurt the perception of how the public will understand the work of this committee.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): As Chair, I'd like to know if I can ask a question of Ms. McMahon on your amendment. You heard the comment made that it may be your desire to assign more important value to these advisory panel experts. Can you speak to that? Is it indeed your intent to add more important value to these people?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Thank you, Madam Chair. I want to honour the comments of the member opposite by saying that the concerns she has expressed are ones that we share in terms of not wanting to give more value to one voice versus the other. I think what we have here is a difference in appearances and what this looks like.

I, with greatest respect for you, want to honour your comments, because I think what you are trying to express is important, which is that we shouldn't give more importance. We're not trying to say, because someone has expertise in a certain area, that they're more important. What we're trying to say is that they are people who have expertise that has been garnered through years of experience and learned study etc.

1730

If that helps to provide clarification—also, having worked a little bit in this arena, both as a volunteer at a sexual assault centre and again at the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, I think that you will find that the advisers that we will all choose will be highly sensitive in their own work such as not to give the appearance of superiority, but yet of generosity in trying to guide us in our work. They will be providing advice to us. Their submissions will not be weighed more heavily.

If that helps to clarify, Madam Chair, what our intent is here, I just want to close by saying again that I respect the comments of the member opposite and agree that that is not what we are trying to do here.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Would it be accurate to say that they will act as a stable of experts in the background that you would only turn to if you needed some sage advice, but they would not have more important value?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: That is precisely—I'm going to wait.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): The Chair recognizes Mr. Hillier.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you, Chair. Let me again say, in as proper and thoughtful language as I can: The words that this committee votes on are the instructions to the committee. It's how we will operate. It matters not what someone's intent is if the words are different.

The words in the proposed motion and the amendment to the motion betray the intent that was expressed. It betrays it completely. We're going from a non-partisan select committee where everybody has equal ability to call people to the committee; now we're requiring others to consent. That takes us into the partisan arena. You can shake your head, but the words are not consistent with the expressed intent. If, indeed, we want this to operate in the way that you speak, then it needs to be done by unanimous consent.

The amendment to the amendment also only speaks to the selection of the advisory panel. How the advisory panel will actually interact and conduct itself with the committee is left silent and therefore it's left up to majority decisions, not unanimity. So if your intent is to have full agreement, this amendment does not achieve it; it actually betrays it.

I'm going to say this: I see no value in an advisory panel. I see no benefit and I see no merit to it. However, I can live with it if it is not subject to a majority vote by one party in this committee. Right at the present time, with everything—

Interjections.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Mr. Hillier has the floor.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Everything that you've got in front of us puts the Liberal Party in the driver's seat of everything on this committee, because for us to be able to bring our expert witnesses will require your consent.

Mr. Han Dong: No, that's not true.

Mr. Randy Hillier: That's the way it's written.

Interjections.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): If you want to speak, put up your hand, please.

Mr. Randy Hillier: You tell me that that is not the intent, but your words achieve exactly that. I would suggest, Madam Chair, that this amendment, as written, is diametrically opposed to the mandate of this committee and either must be modified in its entirety with that unanimous consent provision or be struck. It is unfortunately taking this committee down a partisan path that I don't believe anybody wants to go on, but that's where you're heading.

What is written, what is passed, is how this committee will operate, not on, "Oh, I thought that should have been this way and that wasn't my intent." The words have meaning. They have powerful meaning. Let's not play loose with these words and have them confused with intent; have the words actually, accurately express the intent.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): The Chair recognizes Mrs. McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: I certainly appreciate all comments from all members today.

I just want to clarify that these witnesses that we're talking about are different from the expert panel, and I refer again to our mandate that says, "The committee may seek the advice of experts and those with experience of sexual violence and harassment for the purpose of developing recommendations."

So the way I see it is that this is an expert panel that we can call or ask to come in front of this committee from time to time, as we see fit, to be able to advise us, to provide either sensitivity training or expert advice about things that we see. This has nothing to do with the process of calling public hearings. These expert panel folks that we're looking at bringing are different than the folks in the public process that we're going to be bringing. That's the way I see it.

That's why we thought continuity of the same experts that we could call from time to time—it does not necessarily mean that we as a committee should take their advice, but they're there as an advisory panel, an advisory to council, if you want, to be able to do that—

Mr. Randy Hillier: That's what the deputants do.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Mr. Hillier, Mrs. McGarry has the floor.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: —but that is very different from the process of calling public witnesses.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We're going to hear now from Ms. Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I had concerns about the original motion and I have even more concerns about this amendment to the motion.

By removing "consensus," we're now saying that the committee identifies six expert witnesses, and that they be selected as—they are now going to be a PC expert, an NDP expert, a Liberal expert, a PC expert. We're completely losing the whole concept of impartial expert. That's one issue, and I think that Mr. Hillier was very eloquent when he talked about the danger of making this a partisan committee and it's not supposed to be. By inserting party identification in here as to the selection of the panel members, I think that that is problematic.

The other issue that causes me concern is that Ms. McMahon talked about these experts having a wealth of experience and familiarity with the field. I'm sure that we're going to have a mix of people who have lived experience as well as experts who have a wealth of experience and familiarity with the field.

So now we're going to be receiving the input from experts, but we have to confer with these other experts. I think that the whole notion of having two tiers of experts—there are the experts who give us input, and then we have to sort of run that testimony past these other experts who we had decided at the beginning—I have real concerns about this.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): The Chair recognizes Mr. Natyshak.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I continue to have very strong reservations about the direction of this amendment and where it's leading us.

The fact remains that the subcommittee presented us with a report that I think was quite reasonable and made sense, given the normal function, the requirements and the need of this committee.

The portion that's being cleaved out and replaced by the government is the previous number 4, "That each member of the subcommittee provide the Clerk of the Committee with name and contact information of an expert witness that they would like to invite to appear before the committee."

1740

This provides the outlet for members to identify people within the realm of the scope of this committee. It also gives us the flexibility that we require to seek out a broad swath of information and expertise. It doesn't preclude us from calling back these experts time and time again. It does not preclude us during the course of the committee to simply ask these experts if they would be willing and able and ready to provide consultation with us—and, my goodness, fellow committee members, I would argue that any expert who has dedicated their life to the study in the field would be more than happy to give us as much information, attention, resources and support as we request without the need to be qualified or boxed or vetted or segregated into a different category than the seventh expert that we call.

There's a respect that we should give each and every person that we call before this committee. Just the fact that we call them to provide information to us is such that we know they have something to provide to us. We are requesting their information.

What you're doing with the group of six in this motion that you are qualifying is, you are eliminating, you're segregating, all those others who have worked within this industry and dedicated their lives to it—or not industry, but rather—

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Sector.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Sector, universe, issue. I do not think that it's appropriate for a committee to do that. Our mandate is simply to seek out the best, the brightest, the most passionate and compassionate minds to provide us with the information that we need, not to judge who are the best six out of those we may call on. We should be indeed calling on the best and the brightest minds that we can find without exclusivity and without any type of limitations.

Please allow us to get back onto that track that was within the provisions of the subcommittee report. Pull your amendment off the table. Let's get back to work here and get this committee going where we can start to work on identifying who we want to call. Do not limit them to six. Please do not do that.

Thank you, Chair.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Before we continue, I've been directed to ask for some clarity from Ms. McMahon on your amendment. Where you say "selected in rounds in the following order: PC, NDP, Liberal, PC, NDP, Liberal," what are the consequences or how do we proceed if there is no selection? What happens?

Ms. Sylvia Jones: So if one of the parties doesn't submit a name?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): If you have a party or parties which wish not to submit names, what is going to be the protocol?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Can I confer, Madam Chair?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Do you need some time to reflect on that?

Interjections.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Do we agree to a five-minute recess?

Mr. Randy Hillier: No.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Really? We agreed on yours.

Mr. Randy Hillier: I think these are the things that—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I have not recognized you, Mr. Hillier.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Oh, I thought—okay.

Interjection.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Hold on. I'll put you both down, though. Yes, Ms. McMahon?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Thank you. Sorry, Madam Chair. I think we're all trying to choose our words carefully so that it doesn't add to the confusion.

I'd like to propose something to my colleagues in the committee: that we suspend this conversation, that we have time to confer and that we come back and we discuss this next week. It's clear that there has been a good amount of confusion, and there has also been, I think, some very good discussion, some passionate points of view shared. I think that, in the interests of clarity, we step away from this conversation and come back to it next week and discuss it then as a committee.

Mr. Randy Hillier: So withdraw the amendment—

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I'm not withdrawing the amendment, nor am I withdrawing the motion. I'm saying that we continue this discussion next week; we're just going to press the pause button here; defer consideration of the motion.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): So this is a dilatory motion, and the Clerk will speak to this now.

The Clerk pro tem (Mr. Trevor Day): Of the three types of dilatory motion, one is to defer consideration of an item of business before the committee. There is no debate; it is votable right away. The only condition is that there are no conditions on it.

If I'm understanding correctly, Ms. McMahon is saying, "We are going to defer consideration of this item"—this item being the subcommittee report in its entirety—"and move to other business." It will be taken up at a future date with this committee, but if that is in fact what you're moving, it's something that the committee now votes on, and should a majority agree that this item be shelved, then we move on to other committee business.

Is that your motion, Ms. McMahon?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Agreed.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): All right. Those in favour? May I see a show of hands? Any opposed?

Did you have a comment you wish to make?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: No.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Okay.

Mr. Hillier, I know you had your hand up for a while. Are you going to speak to us on—

Mr. Randy Hillier: No. We just had our vote, and that motion has been deferred for consideration till next week.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Okay.

Mr. Randy Hillier: I would request to put a motion on the table under new business.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will recognize you at the end because we have numerous other motions that precede your motion.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Okay.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Members, I have an important question for you.

Interjections.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will keep you here all night if I have to, and that's what we're here to talk about.

I want to ask you if you want to continue sitting past 6 p.m. or if you would like to stop at 6 p.m. I'm asking you: Shall we retire at 6 p.m.?

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Point of clarification, Chair: I don't believe that you can sit past when the House sits without—

Interjection.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Say that again?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): This committee meets at the call of the Chair. We could be here around the clock if we wanted to, but I want to be very considerate of your schedules and your patience and tolerance. So I'm asking you: Would you like to retire at 6 p.m.? May I see a show of hands?

Ms. Sylvia Jones: For what it's worth, if you're actually having deputations, I would suggest to you that sitting past 6 is a great idea. If you're just going around in circles, you're not going to accomplish anything more after 6 than you do before.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Let me see if you would like to stop at 6 p.m. Can I see a show of hands?

Okay, thank you. We will continue for the next 10 minutes. We have quite a few other items on our list, and we'll see how many of these we tackle.

Committee members, the next issue that we wish to speak to you about is Amanda Dale. You all have these in front of you. Amanda is an expert who is going to speak to us about sensitivity training. Ms. Scott, you would like to speak about this?

Ms. Laurie Scott: I would, because then I have to go. In the bio that you provided, I just don't see anywhere about sensitivity training. I know she's got a large background. I'm seeing this, but I thought we were trying to get someone actually speak to us to instruct us how to speak to people who have been in difficult situations—like sensitivity training. So I don't mean to make it sound bad. I'm just wondering—the biography that's presented wasn't pertaining to the topic that I thought she might be

coming to speak to us on. I don't know the lady; I'm not saying anything bad. Where's the background?

1750

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Do we have anyone who would like to speak to this? Ms. McMahon?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I think that Amanda was chosen because, as a front-line worker, her day-to-day job is advising, speaking, counselling victims of violence. As a consequence, I think her expertise lies in the ability to give us advice on how we should accordingly speak to the very kind of people that she deals with on a day-to-day basis. So while her CV might not specifically deal with sensitivity training, I think she is appropriately chosen in the context of her ability to advise us in dealing with the kinds of people that she has clearly many years of experience dealing with and that she deals with every single day.

I hope that's helpful. It's meant as a clarification.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our Clerk?

The Clerk pro tem (Mr. Trevor Day): Just for the committee's information, I did speak to Ms. Dale. She wants to make a couple of things very, very clear before coming.

One is that this is something she's very happy to do, and she's happy to come, but with the notice that we've given her, she said it will be an informal conversation. She has a presentation, opening remarks, and then she will take questions from committee members back and forth. But she wanted that stressed: that there won't be a formal presentation; there won't be a slide deck.

Proper sensitivity training takes a very long time, and she is coming at the request of the Chair and me to do some introductory remarks and then to have a conversation with the committee. But she did want that stressed to the committee members before she came.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Do we have—Ms. Scott?

Ms. Laurie Scott: I have to go to the House. That's all I was going to say. I'm not being rude, but I have to run up. Is that okay?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Mr. Hillier?

Mr. Randy Hillier: Just to follow up on my colleague's comments, in your discussions with this individual—and I think that would be appropriate; we don't want to have a formal committee structure for that. But you've spoken with her. Has she participated in coaching people on sensitivity language and training? Because it's absent in the bio provided. Has she significant experience in that regard?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Just for clarity, Mr. Hillier, I did not speak with her personally but the Clerk's office did.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Oh, the Clerk. Well, maybe that should be directed to—

The Clerk pro tem (Mr. Trevor Day): I don't know if she has training in that background whatsoever. We were provided the name.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Any further discussion? Yes, Mr. Natyshak?

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Is Ms. Dale aware of why we're asking her to come in terms of the specific need for us to seek advice on sensitivity? I hesitate to call it sensitivity training, because of course we would need to be thoroughly trained. But she's aware of why we're asking her to come?

The Clerk pro tem (Mr. Trevor Day): Yes.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Okay.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Any further comments? Okay, let us move on. Yes, did you have something else you wanted to say, Mr. Hillier?

Mr. Randy Hillier: I just didn't know if I was going to hear anything back today from anybody else who suggested that this person would be good, if they had any other insights as to their experiences, or first-hand knowledge of that skill set and that experience.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Yes, Mrs. McGarry?

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you, Chair. Through you to the member, I'm quite satisfied with the work that she does day to day to provide some sensitivity training to us. I certainly understand—just with her comments here, I think that she's probably just fine to be able to assist us in knowing what language to use and what's current. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Yes, Mr. Natyshak.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I just want to open this up to the committee, that I'm looking forward to hearing from Ms. Dale. Her biography looks quite extensive and I'm sure she could add to our knowledge base during the normal proceedings of the committee.

However, should we go through this process with Ms. Dale, if we feel as though we may want to seek additional expertise on specifically the sensitivity aspect, I don't want to—should we limit ourselves to simply, “We spoke with Ms. Dale; that should be enough,” or, if we feel as though we may be looking for more, can we leave that open, at least?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Yes, Ms. Lalonde?

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: I think our discussion, when we agree, is to initiate and bring someone forward so we can at least have someone who has that expertise in a very sensitive subject. Having said that, I don't see that if we feel down the road that she needs—but I think at the beginning, looking at her background—my background is in social work. I look at her expertise as to where she worked, her counselling and her legal aspect. Certainly, looking at words like “safety,” “dignity,” “equality” and all aspects of this person, I feel very strongly that she would be a very valuable asset to me to move forward, at least in starting my process on this committee.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I would like to ask the committee: Are we in agreement to have Ms. Amanda Dale come forward next week to speak to us?

Interjections.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Agreed. Thank you.

Our final item—and we only have three and a half minutes left. Perhaps it might be just worthwhile having you look at the budget, reflect on it and be prepared to come back next week and let us know what your thoughts are on this.

Do you have anything to add to this, Clerk?

The Clerk pro tem (Mr. Trevor Day): Only that the budget, as prepared, was prior to an amendment to the subcommittee report, adding potentially three individuals over seven days' travel, which would be 21 people days. We have another version that would take that into account, should that subcommittee report pass, and we'd have a different version of the budget come forward. But other than that, that's what we've got.

Lastly, I am not your normal Clerk. William Short will return next week and he will be taking over the committee. He's more than capable.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Han, can you just hold on? One last thing before we head off. In our last two minutes that we have together, can you please go over with our committee members what we are going to be talking about next time that we did not tackle today? Just make note of this for next week.

The Clerk pro tem (Mr. Trevor Day): Okay. What you have next week is that you have Ms. Amanda Dale who will be coming to the committee to speak to you in a conversation. Again, she wanted to stress that it's not formal. You have a subcommittee report that is outstanding. Actually, you're on an amendment to the subcommittee report, but that's where you are there. And

you have to adopt a budget that we'll work all the way through.

Advertising: We have a draft ad that is before you. I'd like you to take a look at the language and see if it does what the committee thinks it should do, and once that's approved, where, down the road, that ad is going to go and who's going to see it.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We'll have clarity for you on the amendments to the amendments. We'll put a document in front of you that will be—

The Clerk pro tem (Mr. Trevor Day): That has them all.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): —the final product, because it may have been a little bit confusing with all the different amendments that came and went.

Yes, Ms. Lalonde?

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: I'm very sorry. I know we all want to leave. But I just need to ask: I see at the bottom it says, "French on demand." What that means is that it would only be available—

The Clerk pro tem (Mr. Trevor Day): No.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: No. Okay.

The Clerk pro tem (Mr. Trevor Day): Sorry. For the initial drafting we just did it in English. It will be translated.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Okay. Perfect. But it would be in both official languages?

The Clerk pro tem (Mr. Trevor Day): It will be both every time.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you, committee. We will see you next week.

The committee adjourned at 1759.

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SELECT COMMITTEE ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

Chair / Présidente

Ms. Daiene Vernile (Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre L)

Vice-Chair / Vice-Présidente

Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock PC)

Mr. Han Dong (Trinity–Spadina L)
Mr. Randy Hillier (Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington PC)
Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde (Ottawa–Orléans L)
Ms. Harinder Malhi (Brampton–Springdale L)
Mrs. Kathryn McGarry (Cambridge L)
Ms. Eleanor McMahon (Burlington L)
Mr. Taras Natyshak (Essex ND)
Ms. Peggy Sattler (London West ND)
Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock PC)
Ms. Daiene Vernile (Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre L)

Also taking part / Autres participants et participantes

Ms. Sylvia Jones (Dufferin–Caledon PC)

Clerk pro tem / Greffier par intérim

Mr. Trevor Day

Staff / Personnel

Ms. Erin Fowler, research officer,
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