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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

A-39

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

A-39

**Standing Committee on
Government Agencies**

Intended appointments

1st Session
42nd Parliament
Tuesday 23 February 2021

**Comité permanent des
organismes gouvernementaux**

Nominations prévues

1^{re} session
42^e législature
Mardi 23 février 2021

Chair: Gilles Bisson
Clerk: Julia Douglas

Président : Gilles Bisson
Greffière : Julia Douglas

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CONTENTS

Tuesday 23 February 2021

Election of Chair.....	A-347
Election of Vice-Chair.....	A-347
Appointment of subcommittee	A-348
Intended appointments.....	A-349
Mr. Michael Bateman.....	A-349
Mr. Alfonso Teshuba	A-354

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENT AGENCIESCOMITÉ PERMANENT DES
ORGANISMES GOUVERNEMENTAUX

Tuesday 23 February 2021

Mardi 23 février 2021

The committee met at 0900 in committee room 2 and by video conference.

ELECTION OF CHAIR

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Julia Douglas): Good morning, everyone. It is my duty to call on you to elect a Chair of the committee. Are there any nominations?

Mr. Wayne Gates: I nominate my good friend Gilles Bisson.

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Julia Douglas): Does the member accept the nomination?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I do, I do.

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Julia Douglas): Are there any further nominations? There being no further nominations, I declare the nominations closed and Mr. Bisson elected Chair of the committee.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Thank you very much, committee members. I appreciate the work that you do at this committee. We all know this committee does important and interesting work, at the outset.

The next thing we have to do, I take it, is elect a Vice-Chair.

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Julia Douglas): We're doing an attendance check.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Oh, yes. We need to do that little thing here. Thank you.

Thank you, members, for electing me as Chair of the committee.

Before we move on to the next item of business, I will do an attendance check. I will ask participant members the following question: if they are present and confirm that they are in fact honourable members—to confirm they are here in Ontario.

So that everyone is aware, we also have the following members in the room: Mr. Wayne Gates, the member for Niagara Falls, and Mr. Bouma, the member for Brantford-Brant.

Why don't we start with the top of the screen? Mr. Coe.

Mr. Lorne Coe: Good morning, Chair. I'm here at Queen's Park, in my office.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Very good. Madam Martin.

Mrs. Robin Martin: Good morning, Chair. It's Robin Martin, MPP for Eglinton-Lawrence, here in Eglinton-Lawrence.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Okay. Mr. Babikian.

Mr. Aris Babikian: Good morning, Chair. I'm Aris Babikian, member for Scarborough-Agincourt, and I'm in Scarborough-Agincourt, in my constituency office.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Lucky you.

Mr. Miller.

Mr. Norman Miller: Hi, Chair. Norm Miller, in my office at Queen's Park.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Okay. Mr. Nicholls.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: Good morning, Chair. Congratulations on your appointment. I am present, in my Queen's Park office.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Madam Stiles.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Good morning, Mr. Chair. Congratulations. I am here at my Queen's Park office. I'm the MPP for Davenport, Marit Stiles.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Mr. Pang.

Mr. Billy Pang: Good morning, Mr. Chair. I am MPP Billy Pang for Markham-Unionville, and I'm here in my riding of Markham-Unionville.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): It's now time to elect a Vice-Chair. I'm looking for nominations for Vice-Chair. Madam Stiles.

Ms. Marit Stiles: I move that Mr. Wayne Gates be appointed Vice-Chair of the committee.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Mr. Gates, do you accept the nomination?

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Is there any debate in regard to this particular nomination?

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Yes. That's where I was going to next.

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Julia Douglas): It's a motion. That's a motion on the floor. We have to address it first.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Yes.

Mr. Will Bouma: As a motion, I would suggest that we defeat this and—

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): There's a motion right now on the floor.

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Julia Douglas): We have to deal with that motion first.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): This motion is the nomination of Mr. Gates. Are there any further nominations?

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Okay. Does anybody want to say anything in regard to the nomination of Mr. Gates?

Mr. Wayne Gates: Can I accept the nomination with thanks?

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Julia Douglas): You can.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Thanks to my nominator, and I accept.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Very good. No debate. We'll move to the vote.

All those in favour of Mr. Gates being the Vice-Chair, signify by lifting your hand. All those opposed? Wow, that's interesting. The motion is defeated.

Further nominations? Mr. Bouma.

Mr. Will Bouma: I move that Mr. Babikian be appointed Vice-Chair of the committee.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Any debate? Does anybody want to say anything? Ms. Martin.

Mrs. Robin Martin: I want to say that I think MPP Babikian would make an excellent Vice-Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Okay. Mr. Babikian, do you accept the nomination?

Mr. Aris Babikian: I accept.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): We now have a Vice-Chair—

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): All those in favour of Mr. Babikian? All those opposed? Very good, noted.

Moving on to—

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Carried.

Boy, this is a tough job, eh?

APPOINTMENT OF SUBCOMMITTEE

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Now we need to move a motion for subcommittee. Any nominations for subcommittee? Madam Stiles.

Ms. Marit Stiles: I would like to nominate Wayne Gates for subcommittee chair, please.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Any debate on Mr. Gates being nominated? None?

Do you accept, Mr. Gates?

Mr. Wayne Gates: I accept.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Consider Mr. Gates on the subcommittee.

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): All right. All those in favour of Mr. Gates being on the subcommittee, raise your hand. All those opposed? Hang on, how can—

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): I was about to do that, but thank you very much, Clerk. It's much appreciated.

This is an opposition position, so I'm not sure what the government members are doing here. First of all, they denied Mr. Gates being the Vice-Chair, which is normally when the opposition—on a committee such as this, you have Chair and Vice-Chair, although that's not in the rules, as far as the Vice-Chair.

So are you clear that you're voting on denying Mr. Gates to be on the subcommittee? Any discussion? Should I try the vote again? Were we clear what we were voting on?

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Madam Stiles.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Yes, this is definitely a shift and a rather unfortunate one. In the past, we've either had the Vice-Chair or the subcommittee chair. It's a really important committee, and I think it would look not great for the government to be trying to seem to have any appearance of unduly influencing in any way this process, which, of course, is so important to the government's reputation. The public watches these things. It's all about transparency and accountability.

I think Mr. Gates would be a great subcommittee chair.

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): The Clerk has pointed out, just to remind members, that the Chair of the committee is on the subcommittee automatically and there's a member from each of the recognized parties.

We were on a vote for Mr. Gates. Do you want to do that again? Or did you guys know that you were voting against it?

Mr. Will Bouma: We'll do it again.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Okay. All those in favour of Mr. Gates being on the subcommittee, raise your hand. All those opposed?

Mr. Gates, you have now been accepted. I take it you accept that position.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Sure.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Okay. Now nomination for the government side's chair of the subcommittee—

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): You guys haven't changed it? All right. I wasn't aware.

0910

Before we move to our next item of business, there is something I would like to mention. You will note that there is no adoption of the subcommittee report on this week's agenda. As you're aware, there was a change in the committee membership last week, which resulted in a vacancy on the subcommittee. This vacancy, which was just filled a few moments ago, meant committee did not have a properly constituted subcommittee for most of last week.

The certificate dated February 12, 2021, had been sent to the subcommittee members prior to that vacancy, with a deadline for selection from that certificate of last Thursday. Clearly, this was not possible—to have a decision or a report of the subcommittee without actually having a properly constituted subcommittee. The deadline for selection from that certificate passed before it would have

been possible to appoint a new subcommittee member. This is why we do not have a subcommittee report to adopt today. Now that we have a full complement of the subcommittee again, the standard practice for selections will resume.

Does anybody have anything to say on what I just talked about in regard to the subcommittee? Mr. Bouma.

Mr. Will Bouma: Not so much the subcommittee, Chair.

I know there were some comments made about moving a government member as Vice-Chair of the committee. I just want to say for the record that standing committees in our federal Parliament have Chairs and Vice-Chairs appointed from opposing parties, and we've seen this model work on several standing committees in our Legislature. The Standing Committees on General Government, Regulations and Private Bills, and Justice Policy, as well as the Select Committee on Emergency Management Oversight, all have government Chairs with NDP or independent Vice-Chairs. These changes would give the opposition more involvement in committee business.

I would just like to point out that last week at the Standing Committee on Finance, there was a move to appoint an opposition member as Vice-Chair, which that member refused because he felt that it would not allow him the ability to hold the government to account. That's why the move today—to allow Mr. Gates to have full ability to hold the government to account.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Anybody else on that? Madam Stiles.

Ms. Marit Stiles: In response to Mr. Bouma's comments, I would just offer that perhaps the opposition can make their own decisions about what to do in terms of how we will be holding the government accountable and the roles that we want to hold. But we appreciate his advice, as always.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Thank you. We do need to move to our first appointee. Does anybody have anything burning they want to say? Seeing none, we will now move to our review of intended appointments.

INTENDED APPOINTMENTS

MR. MICHAEL BATEMAN

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Michael Bateman, intended appointee as member, Ontario Honours Advisory Council.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): First, we have Michael Bateman, nominated as a member of the Ontario Honours Advisory Council.

As you may be aware, you have the opportunity, should you choose to do so, to make an initial statement. Following this, there will be questions from members of the committee, which will start with 15 minutes to the government and then 15 minutes to the opposition. Any time that you take, Mr. Bateman, will come from the government side.

With that, you are on.

Mr. Michael Bateman: Good morning. Yes, I would like to have an opening statement.

I'd like to thank the chairman and members of the committee. I appreciate the privilege of appearing before you. I look forward to the opportunity of my involvement with the Ontario Honours Advisory Council.

Over the years, I have witnessed or read about well-intentioned individuals who have done wonderful things to help their community. An example: For the past 10 years, I have been involved with the Out of the Cold program, which provides meals, warmth, compassion and lodging for the homeless in Toronto during the winter months. In that time, I have witnessed so many acts of kindness and dedicated volunteers of all ages, including youth, who bring a sense of positive energy and life on a very cold evening.

My wife and I moved to Etobicoke with our first child in 1992, where we were able to raise all three of our children in a community that encouraged involvement. Along with coaching my three children, I coached hundreds of boys and girls in soccer, hockey and my tutoring company. I volunteered with the intention of teaching skills to youth, but often walked away learning more from the kids. "You are never too old to learn," my children would always remind me.

As a member of the Etobicoke Dolphins Girls Hockey executive and Humber Valley Old Timers executive, I played a role over many years to ensure that quality measures and policies were enhanced to protect players and coaches, and to ensure that it was a safe, fun environment.

In my involvement as president and CEO of Grade Expectations Learning Systems for 25 years, I was fortunate to work with hundreds of dedicated teachers and wonderful students. As our learning centres grew, it became apparent that staff training, quality controls, policy and a culture of continuous improvement were paramount to providing ongoing quality service. We earned our ISO quality certification, where every employee was able to take ownership for improving our services every day. We created personal-best awards, mentorship programs and a leadership college where employees were recognized and developed. It became clear to me that great effort and results needed to be recognized and promoted, as it encouraged others to do the same.

As an executive board member at Career Colleges Ontario, I helped initiate quality measures to exceed the provincial standards. In addition, we developed and promoted recognition programs, including the CCO Awards for outstanding students, teachers and schools, for their achievements and their community involvement.

In reflecting on the role of the OHAC, it allowed me to think about the thousands of individuals who are doing wonderful things in their communities throughout the province on a daily basis. This year, in particular, has made us all reflect on special moments, memories and acts of kindness.

I'm a hard worker, and you can count on my dedication and involvement and having a positive influence on the Ontario Honours Advisory Council. I would be honoured

to be involved, and I believe I would be an asset to the team.

Thank you very much for your time.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Thank you very much, Mr. Bateman.

Now we'll go to the government side. We have about 12 minutes. Mr. Bouma.

Mr. Will Bouma: Mr. Bateman, thank you so much for joining us today. I've heard before that if you need to get something done, you need to ask a busy person. Obviously, from the information that I have before me, you are a busy person. I really appreciate your opening remarks—talking about how you've worked with youth and everything else, and framing those qualifications.

Can you share with the committee why you believe you are well suited to meet the expectations of the Ontario Honours Advisory Council, citizenship division?

Mr. Michael Bateman: I've spent my working life working in collaboration with others and building consensus. It appears that the citizenship division would be a collaborative effort, where open discussion and dialogue among the group will lead to the best recipients.

Secondly, I've always worked to develop and follow criteria when making decisions. That will be important. It's critical that criteria are followed when we're making recipient decisions.

Mr. Will Bouma: I'll pass it over to MPP Pang.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): MPP Pang.

Mr. Billy Pang: Your résumé is very impressive to me.

I started serving the community as a volunteer, so I needed guidance, like you, when I was young, which was not very long ago.

Can you offer your career path—I'm curious how an economics major starts a company that offers a full suite of educational programming.

Mr. Michael Bateman: I graduated from the University of Waterloo in 1982, and I spent seven years working in market research for a company called A.C. Nielsen. You probably know of the Nielsen ratings. They also did market research with companies. Research taught me that the understanding of the importance of quality information and statistics in making good decisions—it taught me not to be afraid of charts and statistics, which is often hard when you're working in business.

I spent a fair bit of my research time working with Loblaw groups, where I worked with a gentleman named Dave Nichol. I don't know if anybody remembers him—but it was the starting of President's Choice. Working with him, I became very astute about marketing opportunities within the packaged-goods company. We were often asked to look at what was happening in the US, and, in my research, I learned about what are called learning centres. Learning centres were growing in the US, but they didn't really exist very strongly in Canada, so I saw the opportunity. That's when I asked my wife, "Is it okay if I try entrepreneurship?" She said, "Now is the time. Give it a try." That's how it started, and it has worked out very well for me.

0920

Mr. Billy Pang: Wow, that is so impressive. The wife is always the better half—"You need to move forward."

I want to pass to the Vice-Chair, MPP Babikian.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Mr. Babikian.

Mr. Aris Babikian: Welcome, Mr. Bateman. It is always a great pleasure to see someone who has been volunteering in the community for a long time. As someone like me—coming from community volunteerism for 40 years, I know how fulfilling it is to give your time, especially to the youth, such as coaching soccer, as I did, Boy Scout leader etc. etc.

I am very aware of the Out of the Cold program that was founded in the late 1980s—in 1988, exactly—and the great work that it does within our communities.

Can you share with the committee how your 10-plus years volunteering with Out of the Cold may have prepared you to serve as a member of the Ontario Honours Advisory Council?

Mr. Michael Bateman: The Out of the Cold program is a wonderful program. I saw so many caring people from all walks of life doing great deeds. Not just the acts of feeding and clothing individuals—we call them our clients—but also the compassionate side, of listening and speaking with the men and women, I think, made a big difference. It gave them dignity, because often people don't look them in the eyes and speak with them and have a conversation with them. I went in there thinking it was about feeding them and clothing them and giving them warmth, but really, it became more about the difference we made in our conversations and getting to know them as human beings. That's the big difference. I think the biggest difference we made is that, versus just the aspect of feeding and so on. So it was more the conversations and getting to know the people.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Any other questions, Mr. Babikian?

Mr. Aris Babikian: No, thank you. I will pass the questioning to Mr. Nicholls.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Mr. Nicholls, you have about six minutes left.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: Good morning, Mr. Bateman. It's nice to see you—unfortunately, not live, but in person anyway.

Mr. Michael Bateman: It's the new reality for now.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: That's right—live, it's Tuesday morning.

I appreciate your entrepreneurial spirit for 25 years.

I was in training and development, travelling across Canada and the US, and did a lot of work for J.D. Power, and a lot of those automotive companies and so on that I'm sure you're very aware of.

You talked about your children's sports and so on. What father hasn't been involved in their children's sports, either as a spectator or as a coach? You're right: When you are the coach, you're very aware that "favouritism" should not be a word in your vocabulary; that's for sure.

Mr. Michael Bateman: It's true.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: Along a similar line, I'd say you were also active in your children's sports activities and as a coach for 10 years. Can you share with the committee what that experience was like and how it may have prepared you for the Ontario Honours Advisory Council role?

Mr. Michael Bateman: There were two areas. The first was the coaching area. It was a joy to coach both boys and girls. I learned that you had to approach each player uniquely. They each had different learning styles, skill sets and backgrounds. What I learned very quickly was that it was not about learning the game but rather about how they enjoyed playing as a team and had fun. That was key.

In my executive role, that was a little more complex, as we needed to sometimes look at things from outside of the norm and look at the what-if situations. What I mean by that is, back when I was on the executive, which was a fair number of years ago, there weren't things like mandatory police checks for coaches. So we put mandatory police checks in place, and we created a policy where players and coaches felt safe and comfortable.

Another big example we did with the Etobicoke Dolphins Girls Hockey is we created what was called a team mom. For each team, there was a team mom in all of the dressing rooms. So a coach, who often was a male but not always, was not allowed to enter the dressing room without the team mom present and without the team mom giving permission for the coach to come in. That meant players are properly dressed, and so on. This created a safe and comfortable environment for the players and for the coaches. I think those were big things that are now commonplace today that at that point were kind of the beginning of creating safety for all.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: I will now turn it over to Mr. Coe.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Mr. Coe, you have approximately three minutes.

Mr. Lorne Coe: The Ontario Honours Advisory Council seeks candidates who have a good working knowledge of non-profit and community organizations and demonstrated active community involvement, particularly with a focus on civic engagement. Can you share with the committee members how you fit that role definition, please?

Mr. Michael Bateman: Ontarians are a diverse group, and civic engagement can come in so many ways that are considered positive. I think the key is to look across the entire province and all walks of life to see where the opportunities lie in terms of civic engagement. It's not always going to come in the traditional ways. I think it's important to be able to look outside the norm and see all the wonderful things that are happening in more than one sort of segment, in one way.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): One and a half minutes left.

Mr. Lorne Coe: To MPP Martin, please.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Mrs. Martin, I saw your hand.

Mrs. Robin Martin: Yes, I was going to ask another question, if we have a minute left.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): A minute and a half.

Mrs. Robin Martin: Thank you, Mr. Bateman, for being here. Thank you for all the work you've been doing in our community, for which I'm very grateful.

The volunteer awards are always my favourite part of my year as an MPP. I love to learn about all the wonderful things happening, and you've been certainly doing some wonderful

I just wonder how you feel your volunteer roles—in Out of the Cold and working with youth—will help you with this particular position.

Mr. Michael Bateman: I believe the key is, the recipients will be seen as role models among the communities to which they belong. What this means is, the youth recipients' actions must be aspirational and motivating to the youth, so the type of youth who are award winners or earn the position must be seen as role models among the youth, not amongst adults—and same with the adults. The adults need to be seen amongst their peers. I think it's important. Good citizenship awards should attempt to impact as many adults as possible so that people want to emulate and look up to these individuals, because they are aspirational. I think it's a wonderful thing.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): You have about 10 seconds left.

Mr. Michael Bateman: Yes. I think it's a wonderful thing. It's only going to bring positiveness to Ontarians.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): That concludes our time for this particular segment. Now you can step down. Thank you very much for being here.

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Oh, I'm sorry. Whoa, whoa, don't run away. My mistake.

All right. I saw Ms. Stiles put her hand up.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Thank you, Mr. Bateman, for appearing here today. We have a government that has been making many, many appointments over the last couple of years, and we've seen a smattering of people appear before us. Oftentimes, we run out of time and we don't get a chance to hear from as many of the people as we'd like to, so this is a rather unique opportunity, but a welcome one.

This is a very important role, as you've mentioned. Certainly, your volunteer experience in Out of the Cold and others is very valuable—and I think those of us in public service have a history of that as well, because that's what we all are: community-minded people. We really appreciate that.

The Ontario Honours Advisory Council, just by the very nature of the fact that it is giving out these very important and prestigious awards—really, there can be no hint, I would argue, or any appearance of partisanship, political interference, political influence. It's absolutely crucial. We have unfortunately seen, I believe, in the government's appointments to date—to be frank, I have rarely had anybody appear here who hasn't donated to the Conservative Party of Ontario or been involved with the Conservative Party somehow. I'm sure that the Liberals, in power for many years, probably did much of the same,

but it's certainly not something we all should be aspiring to.

0930

So you will understand why I'm going to ask you some of these questions. They're very important, and this is really the only opportunity that the people of Ontario have to hear from these appointees and to have any kind of transparency and accountability in this process.

Mr. Bateman, can you share with us whether you've donated to the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario, please?

Mr. Michael Bateman: Yes. I've donated to the Ontario PC Party over the years, the federal PC—

Ms. Marit Stiles: Okay.

Mr. Michael Bateman: Sorry; the federal PC Party and even some small donations to the Liberal Party of Ontario.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Do you know how much you have donated in the last couple of years to the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario?

Mr. Michael Bateman: Of Ontario? I'm going to say maybe \$1,500. I don't have the exact number. The PC Party is probably about the same—and I think \$300 or so to the Liberal Party a few years back.

Ms. Marit Stiles: So you wouldn't be surprised to hear that you've given—actually, election finances show that you've given \$3,623 to the PC Party of Ontario since 2014. That wouldn't surprise you?

Mr. Michael Bateman: No, no.

Ms. Marit Stiles: I noticed in your CV, you did mention that you have been involved over the last, what—I guess for five years or so, you were very involved with your local Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario EDA. Would you care to elaborate on that? Did you attend any Progressive Conservative Party conventions?

Mr. Michael Bateman: I've been to one convention over the five years. I joined the riding about five years ago when my wife and I wanted to start moving away from working all the time and start to get more involved. A couple of my neighbours ran, and they asked me if I wanted to get involved, and it was nice. It's a good riding. At the time, we didn't have a candidate at all, so it was more about finding the candidate and so on. Then, as time went on, the PCs actually won the election, and then Christine Hogarth became our leader.

Ms. Marit Stiles: So you know MPP Christine Hogarth, the PC MPP?

Mr. Michael Bateman: Yes. When I first joined the Etobicoke-Lakeshore group, she was not involved. About a year and a half later, two years, she came in—yes.

Ms. Marit Stiles: How did you come to seek this appointment? Were you contacted by anybody to ask you to apply for this position?

Mr. Michael Bateman: Well, I applied to the appointments council, where you put your name in. I did that a couple of years ago and really didn't hear anything. Then, I'd say about three months ago, a gentleman named Gary Stones contacted me and asked if I'd be interested in being involved with this council, and I said—

Ms. Marit Stiles: Is this the only body that you applied to, or did you—I know that they give you options. Did you—

Mr. Michael Bateman: I put in for roles in education because I thought that would be a good background for me. It was mostly education that I put in for, and I didn't hear anything. This is the first time I've had any contact with—

Ms. Marit Stiles: Did you actually apply for the honours advisory council?

Mr. Michael Bateman: I did not apply for it, no. Gary Stones contacted me based on—he said that he was looking up my CV on the group.

Ms. Marit Stiles: So it was the government staffer or whatever who contacted you to suggest that this would be the right fit for you. Is that right?

Mr. Michael Bateman: He just asked if it would be the right fit, and then I read up on it and I contacted him back and said yes, this should be perfectly suited for me. So it was—

Ms. Marit Stiles: So the government sort of sought that out. That's interesting. Okay.

I'll just ask you, since you mentioned the education piece—and I appreciate that: The company that you run is called Grade Expectations?

Mr. Michael Bateman: Actually, it's called Grade Learning.

Ms. Marit Stiles: So this is tutoring. But have you, in the past, provided high school credits?

Mr. Michael Bateman: We don't provide credits anymore. We did for a while and we just found it wasn't really that strong a part of our business.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Have you met with the current Minister of Education, Minister Lecce, or the past Minister of Education, Ms. Thompson, at any point?

Mr. Michael Bateman: No.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Have you met with the parliamentary secretary, Sam Oosterhoff?

Mr. Michael Bateman: No.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Have you had any meetings with the Ministry of Education in the time that you've been—you've been in business for quite a while, right?

Mr. Michael Bateman: Yes. No.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Not Liberal or Conservative ministers?

Mr. Michael Bateman: Not the Ministry of Education. When I was on the Career Colleges Ontario board—I was an executive there—we often met with MTCU, but not the minister; mostly just bureaucrats in the system. So that's the extent of, I guess, government involvement.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Just by way of expanding a little bit on my earlier points—last week, we had an appointee appear before us who was being appointed to vice-chair of TFO, and this person has actually since withdrawn their application. I hope that the experience last week went some way to at least convince the government, and maybe the individual, that that was not a good fit. He was not a francophone. It was not a good fit. Also, he was very connected politically.

In this kind of role—and it's a delicate balance. This is actually honouring people, and it's [*inaudible*] MPP. I hope that the people in my community—I'm an opposition MPP—have as much of a shot at getting honoured for their incredible accomplishments or volunteer roles or whatever as anybody. I do want to flag that—that this is an area where we really do try to avoid any sense of partisanship.

What's your current involvement in the Etobicoke–Lakeshore Progressive Conservative EDA?

Mr. Michael Bateman: I was just a member for a couple of years, and now I'm in charge of membership retention, to make sure that we maintain our memberships. That's the extent of my role there.

Ms. Marit Stiles: So you're actively working to try to expand the Conservative Party membership for the next election—to win that seat back, probably.

Mr. Michael Bateman: A lot of it is just to maintain members, I think is probably the bigger role—

Ms. Marit Stiles: So that's something you spend—and in terms of ongoing current volunteer activity, that looks like your main one, in addition to your involvement in Out of the Cold. Is that correct?

Mr. Michael Bateman: Yes. And with Etobicoke–Lakeshore, I've gone to a few community events where we've helped out—Santa Claus parades. We've helped a women's shelter. So there are some things I just do. I don't know if they're really related so much to the party; they're just things that our group has done, and I've just helped to do that.

Ms. Marit Stiles: I understand that. My EDA does a lot of those things too, and I [*inaudible*]. But an EDA, an electoral district association, is really a political body, and so it would be—you're, I'm assuming, heading into an election. This is an election year coming up. You'll probably be working to help Christine Hogarth be re-elected?
0940

Mr. Michael Bateman: Well, I think our group will. Last time, I was not involved in helping, and I don't know yet whether I will. But a lot of people from outside the party executive get involved, and sometimes the executives aren't involved; I wasn't last year, or last time.

Ms. Marit Stiles: But the membership is certainly—holding [*inaudible*] the membership, other donations, as well. Membership, I think, costs something in the Conservative Party. How much does it cost to become a member of the Conservative Party of Ontario?

Mr. Michael Bateman: I think it's \$10.

Ms. Marit Stiles: So when you're having a conversation about renewing membership, there will be some conversation about potentially increasing contributions to the Conservative Party of Ontario?

Mr. Michael Bateman: That's not my area. My area is just, if their membership has expired, to ask them to renew it. That's where my job is, really. It's how many people are members. That's what I believe my role is in.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Party membership and that kind of work—I did it for many years, before I was elected—really is about increasing the number of people who are going to be active and potential donors and, of course,

people who will come out and help out on campaigns. In the end, the purpose of an electoral district association is to elect a Conservative Party member in your community. So you would be very involved in that partisan work but also sitting on this Ontario Honours Advisory Council—

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): There's a point of order. Mr. Bouma?

Mr. Will Bouma: Through you, Chair: I'm just wondering what relevance—

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Sorry, that is not a point of order.

Continue, Ms. Stiles.

Ms. Marit Stiles: As I said, you appreciate, Mr. Bateman, that this is the kind of question we have to ask here, because it is very important that there be no appearance of undue political influence in this process, particularly on a board like the Ontario Honours Advisory Council.

So I just have to ask you: Do you think that's something that you could continue to do? You could understand why people might be concerned about those two different kinds of roles and the potential for an appearance of undue influence of the political side in these award recipients.

Mr. Michael Bateman: I try to be an active person in the community, and I guess “active” comes in a lot of ways. I just think being involved with the Etobicoke–Lakeshore riding association is a positive thing. I don't see it as a slant in how I would look at finding good deeds. Good deeds are good deeds. The youth who show great volunteerism and those great things, where they come from—that's really what it's all about. It's not where they come from; it's just the deeds that are so important. So I don't see that as being an issue.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Well, it really shouldn't be an issue—

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): You have about 10 seconds.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Okay. Thank you very much, Mr. Bateman, for appearing here today.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): That concludes the time allotted. Thank you very much. You may step down. Next, we will have—

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): We have lost him?

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Julia Douglas): Yes.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Oh. Well, okay.

Next, we have Mr. Alfonso Teshuba, who is trying to be nominated as member of the St. Clair College of Applied Arts and Technology board of governors. We're trying to reconnect. So the committee will have to recess for a couple of minutes as we try to reconnect with Mr. Teshuba.

The committee recessed from 0944 to 0948.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): The committee is back in order.

I'm in your hands, committee—if you want to deal with the first concurrence now because we are not going to have time to do it at the end of this committee. Does anybody

want to deal with the particular concurrence for our first nominee, which was—yes, go ahead, Mr. Bouma.

Mr. Will Bouma: I move concurrence in the intended appointment of Michael Bateman, nominated as member of the Ontario Honours Advisory Council.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Any discussion? Seeing no discussion, all those in favour of the motion, signify. All those opposed? Noted. All right. We have done the concurrence and that will be automatically ordered to the House.

Are we ready for our next presenter?

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): He has now rejoined. Okay.

Oh, there you are. We see you there. You're back.

MR. ALFONSO TESHUBA

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Alfonso Teshuba, intended appointee as member, St. Clair College of Applied Arts and Technology—board of governors.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Next we have Alfonso Teshuba, nominated as a member of the St. Clair College of Applied Arts and Technology board of governors.

As you may be aware, you have the opportunity, should you choose to do so, to make an initial statement. Following this, there will be questions from the members of the committee. With that questioning, we will start with the official opposition, followed by the government, with 15 minutes allocated to each recognized party. Any time you take in your statement will come from the government side.

Without any further ado, did you want to say anything?

Mr. Alfonso Teshuba: Yes, please. I do have an opening statement.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Go ahead.

Mr. Alfonso Teshuba: Good morning. I'm Alfonso Teshuba. I was born in Windsor almost 53 years ago. I'm married to my wonderful wife, Simha, now a retired school teacher for 26 years. We have two awesome sons, Adam and Austin, both studying to be engineers. I have multiple degrees and accreditations, and decades of various business experience and success, as well as decades of Windsor-Essex community involvement and advocacy in many areas, which I will detail more in my opening and throughout our interview time today.

First, I do want to sincerely thank you for the opportunity to be before your committee and for your consideration for me to join the board of governors at St. Clair College. I am most honoured to be here, and if I am granted this position, I want to assure everyone that I will always do my best to serve with the highest level of passion and distinction, and certainly give all my skills and efforts to advance St. Clair College in achieving excellence in education, programs, community engagement, leading technology and co-operative relationships with business, the public and government. I will commit to advance St. Clair

College's unique achievements and success as a top post-secondary institution and community venue in the Windsor-Essex area and in Canada as a whole.

I love our region of Windsor-Essex. For decades, I have helped to be a champion and an advocate for all our treasured industries, advancements and our unique regional amenities.

Whether through community activism and coordination or through political channels, I'm known as a community Conservative, and I am friends with many local politicians and affiliates of all colours, stripes and political backgrounds.

Whether I'm co-hosting on my radio show or podcast, Windsor's Inside Pulse, or as a member of community organizations or by participating at rallies or events, or if I'm speaking in front of city council as a delegate on issues over the decades, or the dozens of submitted letters to the editors, I always support advancing our beloved regional issues, and I try to positively advance important items for our greater prosperity.

My first experience with St. Clair College—this is a true story—was actually in the early 1980s, when my grade-school friend and neighbour, Scott Vickers, and I took a computer programming course on a weekend.

Through the decades, I've been to the St. Clair College campus many times for swimming lessons and badges for my sons, educational award presentations, using their gym facilities, and other special events. I've always marvelled at St. Clair College's growth and its importance to our community.

My family and I are strong believers in education. My wife was an elementary school teacher for over 30 years. I taught Sunday school and after-school programs for 25 years in our religious community. I've been an occasional high school teacher with the Greater Essex County District School Board for 12 years. I've likely taught many of the St. Clair College public school enrollees at least once.

I have a bachelor of commerce business degree with honours and a bachelor of education degree with senior mathematics qualification. I also achieved my Securities and Exchange Series 7 and Series 63 certification in 2001-02. I've been a licensed realtor since 2006.

Again, my sons are studying to be engineers. My oldest son, Adam, is already following in his dad's footsteps with his own bachelor of commerce honours degree from University of Windsor. Education is certainly a very integral part of the Teshuba household.

I believe my knowledge, experience and passion for education would be an excellent addition to the St. Clair College board of governors, along with my passion and community advocacy for our region. It is important to have good business and education relationships to ensure that graduates find jobs in our community and meet employers' needs and demands.

My main business, especially in the past year, is in real estate. I've recently been a top producer with my brokerage—over 50% monthly. I've served over hundreds of different clients, many with multiple transactions, and my investor clients have collectively profited many millions of dollars, with stellar results and reputation, never

with any concern or RECO filings. I have really done a strong focus, I know Windsor-Essex real estate inside and out, and I've also owned a property management company since 2003. My real estate business harmoniously interacts with my property management business. I've also renovated several properties in the past five years with my partners, with very nice results.

Again, I would like to bring forward all my wealth of business experience and skills. What I hope to do is further bring to the table—to join my fellow board of governors and find ways to strongly advance St. Clair College at the board level, at the educational level, at the program level, and really advance one of our treasures here in Windsor-Essex. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Thank you very much. That's about five minutes that will be taken off the government's time.

Mr. Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Good morning, sir. How are you?

Mr. Alfonso Teshuba: Very good, sir. Thank you.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I'm going to start by saying how disappointed I am for you being late to our meeting this morning. My time is valuable, just like everybody else's around the table. I'm sure you knew about this for a long time. So I wanted to be very clear that I'm disappointed that you chose not to be here on time.

Mr. Will Bouma: Point of order, Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Point of order?

Mr. Will Bouma: Yes. I just have to say, Mr. Teshuba was on time, but he lost his Internet and got back on by being innovative and by getting his phone Internet working.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): We'll call that a point of clarification, which is not in order.

Mr. Gates, continue.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Thank you. I'm going to ask you a question. This isn't my first time on this committee; I was on this committee for quite awhile. This is supposed to be a non-partisan committee. As we saw already this morning, that's not completely accurate. The person who was before you obviously had a lot of ties to the PC Party—something that, in my understanding, has gone on on this particular committee for a number of years. It certainly has had that same effect in my own area, as well. It seems that to get an appointment, you have to be a failed candidate or support the PC Party.

My question to you, sir: Do you have any ties at all to the PC Party?

Mr. Alfonso Teshuba: Yes, I do, sir.

I do want to add that I was 100% on time. I was on well before the 15-minute requirement. I'm always on time. My Cogeco connection died. I am actually tapping in right now using a hot spot on my cellphone.

I am a member of the PC Party and also the Conservative Party of Canada. I actually had a chance to listen to some of Mr. Bateman's questions, and I understand that that concern—or at the least questioning—is party affiliation. I would not be putting my name forward for this position or any other appointee position if I didn't feel

that I could best serve my community and best serve the institution based upon my own credentials, aside from any political party affiliations.

Mr. Wayne Gates: So we're clear, how long have you been affiliated with the PC Party?

Mr. Alfonso Teshuba: I started getting involved with Conservative politics back in 2003—when it first formed. I was campaign manager for Jordan Katz. I was actually the candidate of record in 2005 for the federal election. I was harmoniously part of the PC Party. I was mostly federal, but naturally, all the Conservatives in the local Windsor area—and there aren't that many in Windsor West—we're all friends. We all have our meetings coinciding together, so there is a lot of overlap there.

As I mentioned in my opening, I'm a fiscal conservative. I'm right of centre. I'm friends with many people of different party associations. In Windsor-Essex, it's not like that—it's more like, "You're in this position, you're in this party. That's okay. We're all trying to advance Windsor-Essex."

Again, I find myself in a position where I've advocated for many things on different sides of the spectrum, but I'm always issue-oriented. I'm a community Conservative.

Mr. Wayne Gates: So you're from Windsor West? Is that where you live?

Mr. Alfonso Teshuba: I am. I do, yes.

Mr. Wayne Gates: When you ran for the PC Party going back a few years, who did you run against?

Mr. Alfonso Teshuba: Well, it was the federal party. I ran against Brian Masse, and the Liberal candidate at the time was Werner Keller.

Mr. Wayne Gates: How did you make out?

Mr. Alfonso Teshuba: We got about 10,000 votes.

The number one thing that I did, to be straight with you, was—I was the first who started to lay out that we needed \$2 billion for our border infrastructure. I made that a political issue. I actually went on record saying that I would resign if we didn't get it. That's how much I was passionate about it—and I had that on my literature. I said I would guarantee that we would bring it, because people were talking about only \$300 million, which would have done a 12-lane monstrosity cutting through our neighbourhoods—and that's an environmental issue, as well. I consider myself a green Tory.

After that election, I ran for city council and started a group called Choose Tunneling. We actually helped push the Ontario government, certainly, to steer away from E.C. Row, but also look at a \$2-billion plan where we could have green space, we could have tunnelling. I helped organize communities. I worked with the city until they eventually adopted a GreenLink program.

1000

In the end, I don't think we would have had the Herb Gray Parkway right now, with many tunnels and features and below-grade, had community activism not started, by me and others, to push this agenda forward and make sure that Windsor wasn't done on the cheap.

This is what political activism can do. It starts at the grassroots. It starts at the community level.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I'm sure Brian Masse would disagree with you on the role that you played compared to what Brian Masse has done for the last 17 years in that particular riding. But it's always nice to hear that you think you did something good. That's good to hear.

Is it fair to say that somebody would have approached you to apply for this position?

Mr. Alfonso Teshuba: I've been considering applying for appointment positions for many years. My sons are older now, and I have more time. Naturally, I've volunteered for my religious institutions: the Jewish centre and Congregation Beth El—

Mr. Wayne Gates: Sir, I don't mean to cut you off; I just want you to answer the question. Did anybody from the PC Party approach you to run for this position? I don't want to hear a speech. It was a very simple question.

Mr. Alfonso Teshuba: I knew about these positions. It wasn't that it was an approaching—it was that I knew about it. I knew the timing of it. I have applied in the past and considered positions in the past. Again, I put my name forward not just for this position but for other things that were business- or education-related.

Mr. Wayne Gates: And when would you have done that?

Mr. Alfonso Teshuba: I'd say it was over a year ago, for this last round, that I put my name forward. I didn't think anything different of it, and I knew positions were available.

Again, based upon my schedule and my time—and I do want to give back to my community and use my skills and knowledge to help where I can for Windsor-Essex institutions.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I'm sure you have lots of skills, sir. My question to you—

Mr. Alfonso Teshuba: Thank you.

Mr. Wayne Gates: For the record, have you ever donated to the PC Party?

Mr. Alfonso Teshuba: Yes, and the federal Conservative Party—and volunteered my time, which is maybe more than the donations were. I believe in causes and I'm passionate about them. When I'm passionate about things, certainly in Windsor-Essex, I volunteer my time and I go through it.

A perfect example, again, was the border infrastructure project that I knew would be for generations to come. I've had hundreds of hours—and that was bipartisan. The Liberals in our group and the NDP in our group would go back to their leaders or their friends or their affiliates and also continue to advocate for more money for our region and more money to help Windsor-Essex. In Windsor-Essex, you have to understand, we sometimes feel left out. We feel that sometimes Ontario ends at London. So it doesn't matter what political party; we're all striving—at least I am—to help Windsor-Essex issues regardless of what they are, regardless of political affiliation.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I can appreciate the fact that you think parts of the province of Ontario are left out. You're not the only community that feels that way when it comes to the PC Party.

You never answered my question. How much money did you give to the PC Party?

Mr. Alfonso Teshuba: Over the years, whatever the public record is, that's what I gave. It could be hundreds. It could be thousands. I don't have the exact count till I file my taxes. For the federal Conservatives, we usually hit max. I am a proud supporter—

Mr. Wayne Gates: I know you're a supporter. That's probably why you're being appointed, at the end of the day.

Mr. Alfonso Teshuba: No. If I didn't have the credentials, I would withdraw myself, sir.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I appreciate you continue bringing it up, but I believe that the reason you're going to probably get appointed is—and this is the problem with the committee, quite frankly. And it's not just you, sir. I'm picking on you a little bit, but it has been going on for a long time. I just want to make sure people understand that there are other great people in the province of Ontario who would love to get on committees, and they just don't have to be PCs. They could be NDPers. They could be Liberals. They just could be citizens who volunteer their time. That's the problem that I'm seeing here.

I'll get to some of the questions around the college.

Could you discuss how you picture your role on the board of St. Clair College?

Mr. Alfonso Teshuba: I believe that there's a major benefit of having students who take degrees and have them match beautifully with employment and income. Whether this introduction begins at the internship or on their senior year of graduation, as a board of governor, my track record, my legacy, if I'm chosen to be such—I would want it to be that whatever the percentage is of students getting jobs in six months to match their degree, I would like to see that percentage increase. I would like to see the introduction of corporations into internship programs at a greater rate.

People can get degrees, whether university or college or apprentices, but the most important thing is to get the job that matches. If they went into those fields of study with passion, it would be great if, at the end of it, we could match it and they could begin their career sooner rather than later and they could start being a contributing taxpayer in our community. So that would be my main focus.

I believe with my business background and with some ingenuity ideas—I've been on many boards, and I work very well with others of all political stripes—I believe there would be expanded conversation on how we can do that.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): About four minutes left.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Thank you.

We're obviously facing a number of challenges in post-secondary education right now in Ontario, some of which have been made extremely worse by the COVID-19 pandemic.

What strategies do you envision post-secondary institutions using to deal with the increased financial strain they may be feeling because of COVID-19?

Mr. Alfonso Teshuba: This has been a very strange year for all educational institutions, including high schools, where they're off again, on again, and you have to wear masks. I'm hoping that we get out of this as quickly as possible with vaccines and that the pandemic dies down and we can get back to normal. But as far as this year, it's a financial strain on everyone. The students have suffered, obviously. The professors have suffered. Thank goodness for technology such as Zoom, online classes. People have found more adaptive ways to connect and to get their education.

From a financial perspective, I'll be straight with you: My loyalty is going to be to St. Clair College. We're going to be seeking funding from provincial governments, maybe lean on the alumni of St. Clair College a little bit more to donate, maybe look at ways to create more revenue internally with further programs; also, St. Clair College as a community facility, as well, working co-operatively with the city of Windsor. We're going to have to be resourceful, certainly, to meet deficits and to create greater revenue. I don't want to see tuition increase at all. I would like to see other creative ways to do that and still provide a top education for students and a top experience for students.

In my view, we're also very alluring to international students. They love Windsor-Essex, the university and St. Clair College. We have a very high rate of international students—and our affordability in housing, compared to the Toronto area, is also very attractive. So we'd like to get that going, as well.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): You have about two minutes left, Mr. Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I'm glad you brought up the international students. I had a meeting last week with Niagara College, and they're starting new partnerships with—because St. Clair and Niagara College are very similar, although they're different in what their expertise is. They are certainly looking at international students for a number of reasons, because there have been cuts to the colleges and they have to find other revenue streams to survive. International students are one way to do that, as you probably know, because we charge them so much more to come and get an education here in the province of Ontario.

Do you think that the college should be looking at new partnerships and expanding, whether that's into other communities or not, to get the revenue they need to survive in this environment?

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): You have approximately one minute.

Mr. Alfonso Teshuba: I'm open to seeing any new revenue stream, and the board of governors, I'm sure, will be looking at different options. I'm open to anything that's plausible that maintains a high level of education.

With regard to the international students, yes, they need to pay more, because most likely they're not going to continue to pay their taxes and they'll take their degree and move back to their original home. So there's a tax

component. Every international student pays more throughout universities.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Substantially more.

Mr. Alfonso Teshuba: But we also are providing a top-level—

Mr. Wayne Gates: How much time is left?

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): About 30 seconds.

Mr. Wayne Gates: When you go back to Windsor, make sure you say hi to my good friend Brian Masse, who's doing a great job in Windsor of representing Windsor West, as well as everybody else who are NDPers elected there.

Thank you for your time.

1010

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): We will now go to the government side. Just to remind members, we used about five minutes at the very top.

Mr. Bouma, you're first.

Mr. Will Bouma: We'll keep our question just to this one for the sake of time.

Mr. Teshuba, thank you so much for joining our committee this morning. It's great to hear that you put community over any other affiliation.

You said earlier in your testimony that St. Clair College is a gem, and I was wondering if you could briefly, in 30 seconds, give me that elevator pitch as to why St. Clair College is such a gem in your community. What does it do, and why are you thrilled to potentially be a member of the board?

Mr. Alfonso Teshuba: The wide array of vocational education; hands-on apprenticeship, whether it's as a chef, electronics or nursing—the location of St. Clair College in Windsor. I love Windsor. Windsor is fantastic. You can get anywhere to anywhere in 15 minutes. You can go over the border—once that opens up—and you've got access to four top major teams. Also, we have corporate involvement already with the engineering and the manufacturing. We're well known in Windsor-Essex for tool and die and other manufacturing. Our agriculture is growing and world-renowned, in Essex county. We are the place to be.

To be able to get your education here, live here, work here, integrate here with jobs and manufacturing and the corporations that are part of it is just fantastic. I can't imagine a better place to get your studies in the fields that St. Clair College provides.

Mr. Will Bouma: Brilliant. Thank you, sir. That concludes government questions.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): With that, we're going to pause this; you should pause your watch. We're going to be having to resume all of this next week—

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Julia Douglas): We still have time to do the vote.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Oh, you were not asking any more questions?

Mr. Will Bouma: No.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Okay. Sorry, I take—

Mr. Will Bouma: I'm muffled, and I mumble anyway.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): You're very humble.

Well, we are now going to move to the concurrence. We will now consider the intended appointment of Michael Bateman, nominated as—

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Julia Douglas): You did that already.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Phew. We did. Sorry. It's a good thing we have a Clerk here, I'll tell you. It's very, very handy.

Mr. Wayne Gates: You'll get better at it, Gilles.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Oh, yes.

Mr. Wayne Gates: You've been here 35 years or something, and you—

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): It's 31; I've never chaired a committee.

We will now consider the intended appointment of Alfonso Teshuba, nominated as member of the St. Clair College of Applied Arts and Technology board of governors.

Mr. Will Bouma: I move concurrence in the intended appointment of Alfonso Teshuba, nominated as member of the St. Clair College of Applied Arts and Technology board of governors.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Any discussion? Ms. Stiles.

Ms. Marit Stiles: To the members of the government side: We've seen two appointees again this week with strong ties to the Conservative Party of Ontario, who have been significant donors to the Conservative Party of Canada. We've been reassured by this government on

numerous occasions that there is a process for vetting taking place, but I do not see any evidence of that in the appointees who are appearing before us.

I do want to make the point, Mr. Chair, as the new Chair of the committee—and to my colleague Mr. Gates, who is new to the committee this time around—that we have seen a really troubling pattern. As well, we really only see a smattering of the people we request to appear, because the government will not allow us to have additional time—for example, when the House isn't sitting—to hear from appointees. You can see from the two we've heard from this morning why this is so important to the people of Ontario. We must have transparency. We must have accountability. This is really the only means to ensure that accountability. It is deeply concerning.

I will acknowledge, these are not people that I have a personal issue with, but we have a problem, an ongoing—

Mr. Will Bouma: Point of order.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): No, we're in debate right now.

Continue, Ms. Stiles. You have the floor.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Thank you.

We have an ongoing issue here of donors to the PC Party, of very active—

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Okay, we are officially out of time. The vote for this particular concurrence will be next week. Until that time, this committee is adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 1015.

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