

Legislative
Assembly
of Ontario



Assemblée
législative
de l'Ontario

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

M-30

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

M-30

**Standing Committee on
the Legislative Assembly**

Committee business

**Comité permanent de
l'Assemblée législative**

Travaux du comité

1st Session
42nd Parliament
Thursday 24 June 2021

1^{re} session
42^e législature
Jeudi 24 juin 2021

Chair: Kaleed Rasheed
Clerk: Tonia Grannum

Président : Kaleed Rasheed
Greffière : Tonia Grannum

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ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON
THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**COMITÉ PERMANENT DE
L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Thursday 24 June 2021

Jeudi 24 juin 2021

The committee met at 1306 in committee room 1 and by video conference.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam): Good afternoon, everyone. I will call this meeting to order. We are meeting pursuant to standing order 121, for the purpose of considering a motion under this standing order.

Pursuant to standing order 121, 30 minutes shall be allotted to debate the motion, at the end of which time the Chair shall put the question. I propose to allot 12 and a half minutes to the government members, 12 and a half minutes to the official opposition, and five minutes to the independent members for debate on this motion. Are there any questions before we begin? I see none.

Is there a mover of this motion? MPP Mitas.

Miss Christina Maria Mitas: I move that the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly meet immediately for the purposes of considering committee business pursuant to the order of the House dated June 1, 2021, respecting a comprehensive review of the Lobbyists Registration Act.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam): Is there any debate? Seeing none, are members ready to vote?

Interjection.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam): MPP Skelly?

Ms. Donna Skelly: Is it possible to remove the motion from the screen so that we can see the entire screen of participants?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam): Absolutely.

All those in favour? The motion is carried.

Is there any further business? MPP Mitas.

Miss Christina Maria Mitas: I move that, pursuant to the order of the House dated June 1, 2021, the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly begin a comprehensive review of the Lobbyists Registration Act, 1998, S.O. 1998, c. 27, sched., pursuant to section 18.1 of the act; and

That the Chair convene a meeting of the committee in September for the purpose of further organizing business related to this comprehensive review.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam): Is there any debate on the motion? MPP Natyshak.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: This committee has the ability, pursuant to the order, to convene at any time. Am I correct?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam): That is correct.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: A question to the mover of the motion: Why are we waiting until September? It seems as though we've now initiated the committee. Is there a way to get the ball rolling, so to speak? If we can sit any time, can we sit throughout the summer and start the process?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam): MPP Mitas.

Miss Christina Maria Mitas: Thank you to my colleague for the question.

We want to ensure that we are satisfying the requirement under the act that the committee begin the study before July 1, but we believe the members of the committee should have the summer to consider how the study should proceed, and the committee can continue its work come September. I can note that last summer there were significant sittings of the House and our committees, and this will allow all of our members of the committee to focus on work in our ridings over the next two months, and then come in, in September, having taken time to fulsomely review.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: At what point will we convene a subcommittee to determine the parameters of the review?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam): MPP Mitas.

Miss Christina Maria Mitas: I would say, come September, we'll be able to hash all of that out specifically. The committee will have all of the fall and spring. We have 12 months to report our recommendations to the House after this initial motion, so that will all be taken care of in the fall.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam): MPP Natyshak.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Again, just specifically to convening a subcommittee: Is the member suggesting that a subcommittee won't be convened until September to determine the parameters?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam): MPP Mitas.

Miss Christina Maria Mitas: I am. We are ensuring that all members have the next two months to do very important work in their ridings, and then, come September,

we will absolutely begin to tackle this. All members will have the summer to, again, fulsomely review and be prepared to come to the table with all of the necessary information, and then we'll be able to do everything that is necessary in order to move forward on this successfully.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam): Any further debate? MPP Natyshak.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Respectfully, I would suggest and state that this is one of the most important issues that our constituents are concerned about. Our work throughout the summer in our constituencies definitely involves work on reviewing the lobbyist registry. There's no reason to kick the can down the road, so to speak, until September. We should be endeavouring immediately to get on this work and schedule a subcommittee to be able to develop the parameters, and then allow the committee and the Clerks to initiate invitations to deliver deputations to the committee. That takes a lot of work, and kicking the can down the road until September just further prolongs the process, whereby the order requires the committee, of course, to get to work on it by July 1. Saying, "Yes, we're working on it today, and we're going to work on it again in September" leaves a gigantic void throughout the summer.

I would like to put on the record, certainly, that New Democrats would like to work on this immediately.

I don't know if an amendment to the motion—a friendly amendment, whereby we would initiate at least a subcommittee in the first week of July to develop the parameters of the committee. That work can happen. That's real natural work that should be done during the summer, when we're not in session. I don't see why it can't be done.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam): Is there any further debate?

MPP Natyshak, are you proposing an amendment?

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I may, but I see my colleague MPP Coteau—I'd like to hear what he has to say.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam): MPP Coteau, please go ahead.

Mr. Michael Coteau: I agree with the previous speaker and would be willing to support the amendment.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Chair, in that light, I understand the government doesn't want to hold the formal committee until September, but if an amendment whereby the motion states that the subcommittee will start immediately, convene as soon as possible to develop the parameters of the committee—that would be something that I think would be a good saw-off.

Interjection.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam): Can you please repeat that, MPP Natyshak, one more time? The Clerk is writing it down.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Okay, I'll try to formulate an amendment—and that the subcommittee will meet as soon as possible to work to develop the parameters of the committee when it reconvenes in September.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam): The Clerk needs some time to type it out. Shall we take a five-minute recess?

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Sure.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam): Perfect. We'll resume this meeting in five minutes.

The committee recessed from 1317 to 1322.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam): We'll resume the meeting now. We'll have MPP Natyshak's amendment on the screen so that you can all take a look, and we will go into voting.

MPP Natyshak, do you want to read it out, if you don't mind?

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I move that the motion be amended by adding the following paragraph after "comprehensive review":

"That the subcommittee meet as soon as possible to work to develop the parameters for the committee's review of the Lobbyists Registration Act, 1998, S.O. 1998, c. 27, sched., when it meets in September."

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam): Is there any debate? Shall we move on to the voting? I will turn it over to Tonia to take the vote. The amendment has been lost.

Shall we vote on the main motion? I'll ask the Clerk to get the votes. The motion has carried.

I would like to point out that the Clerk has distributed to members of the committee a memo and the draft committee report pursuant to standing order 114(b), which states: "At the beginning of each Parliament and, if necessary, during the course of a Parliament, the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly shall prescribe the ministries and offices assigned to the standing committees for the purposes of this standing order and shall make a report thereon to the House, which report shall be deemed to be adopted." This committee will review this draft report at its first meeting in September.

Is there any other business? Seeing none, that concludes our business for today.

Thank you, everyone. This committee is now adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 1327.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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Vice-Chair / Vice-Président

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