

Legislative
Assembly
of Ontario



Assemblée
législative
de l'Ontario

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

SP-2

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

SP-2

**Standing Committee on
Social Policy**

Committee business

**Comité permanent de
la politique sociale**

Travaux du comité

2nd Session
42nd Parliament

Monday 8 November 2021

2^e session
42^e législature

Lundi 8 novembre 2021

Chair: Natalia Kusendova
Clerk: Tanzima Khan

Présidente : Natalia Kusendova
Greffière : Tanzima Khan

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House Publications and Language Services
Room 500, West Wing, Legislative Building
111 Wellesley Street West, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Telephone 416-325-7400; fax 416-325-7430
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Service linguistique et des publications parlementaires
Salle 500, aile ouest, Édifice du Parlement
111, rue Wellesley ouest, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Téléphone, 416-325-7400; télécopieur, 416-325-7430
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

ISSN 1710-9477

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL POLICY

COMITÉ PERMANENT DE LA POLITIQUE SOCIALE

Monday 8 November 2021

Lundi 8 novembre 2021

The committee met at 1202 in room 151 and by video conference.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

The Chair (Ms. Natalia Kusendova): Good afternoon. The Standing Committee on Social Policy will now come to order.

We have the following member present in the room: MPP Robin Martin. We already did our attendance check via Zoom. We are also joined by staff from legislative research, Hansard, and broadcast and recording.

Please speak slowly and clearly and wait until I recognize you before starting to speak. Since it could take a little bit of time for your audio and video to come up after I recognize you, please take a brief pause before beginning. As always, all comments should go through the Chair.

Are there any questions before we begin? Seeing none, on the agenda is committee business. Are there any motions? MPP Martin.

Mrs. Robin Martin: I move that the committee enter closed session for the purposes of organizing committee business and that broadcasting staff be permitted to remain in the closed session meeting for the purposes of operating the electronic meeting technology.

The Chair (Ms. Natalia Kusendova): Is there any debate on MPP Martin's motion? Ms. Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I'm opposed to this motion. I think that the purpose of organizing committee business should be discussed in public session. This is a bill that has a lot of interest across the province, and I think people deserve to hear what the committee's plans are to enable input on this bill.

The Chair (Ms. Natalia Kusendova): Any further debate? MPP Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I certainly agree with my colleague. I'm opposed to it going into secrecy.

In the last couple of weeks, I've talked to—particularly around schedule 6. I'll let other people talk to it, but the one that I'm really going to talk about is schedule 6. I held a conference with the widows of people who have died of workplace cancers right across the province of Ontario, including in many Conservative MPP ridings, whether it's Peterborough, Sarnia, Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Niagara—and the list goes on and on. These people

deserve the opportunity, in open session, to tell their stories, so there's no way that we should be going into closed session. You're supposed to be open. You're supposed to be transparent. It actually reminds me a little bit of my committee hearings that I have on Tuesday mornings, where it's not recorded and it's secretive.

I think Peggy hit it on the nail. There's a lot of interest in this bill from a lot of workers, and a lot of workers want to be able to hear what's going on here. It should be open and transparent, when you look at how you're giving \$3 billion back to employers out of the WSIB instead of giving it to people who have been deemed, people who are living in poverty because they got hurt on the job.

I certainly won't be supporting this motion, and I'm hoping my colleagues don't support it as well.

The Chair (Ms. Natalia Kusendova): Any further debate? Ms. Begum.

Ms. Doly Begum: I just wanted to echo my colleagues as well. Over the last weekend, we have seen a tremendous amount of interest in this bill, and there are a lot of people who would like to see what's going on and how many of us are deliberating and the way we are making sure that public voice is heard. This is such an important process. I'm really glad the government was making sure that there are committee hearings, so I think making it public is the most important way we can make sure that people are able to hear their concerns and we're hearing those concerns.

Once again, I will be voting against it, and I just wanted to echo my colleagues as well.

The Chair (Ms. Natalia Kusendova): Any further debate? Ms. Martin.

Mrs. Robin Martin: I would just like to say that, of course, what we're doing is organizing the business of the committee. This is always done this way, and we've been doing it this way for two years at least. All of the public hearings, of course, will be open. There will be plenty of opportunity for people to speak to the bill.

The Chair (Ms. Natalia Kusendova): Mr. Fraser.

Mr. John Fraser: I agree with my colleagues. I think it's important that the public understands how we come to the conclusions that we do in terms of how we have a bill go before the public, essentially. I'm taking it we are going to do hearings, which I'm very happy about, but I think it's important for them to see that. I'll be voting with them.

The Chair (Ms. Natalia Kusendova): Any further debate? Seeing none, are members ready to vote? Shall the motion carry?

Okay, sorry. MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Can we have a recorded vote, please?

Ayes

Babikian, Coe, Fee, Harris, Martin, Yurek.

Nays

Begum, Fraser, Gates, Sattler.

The Chair (Ms. Natalia Kusendova): The motion is carried.

We will just take a moment.

The committee continued in closed session at 1209.

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