

Legislative
Assembly
of Ontario



Assemblée
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de l'Ontario

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

F-2

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

F-2

**Standing Committee on
Finance and Economic Affairs**

Committee business

2nd Session
42nd Parliament

Friday 19 November 2021

**Comité permanent
des finances
et des affaires économiques**

Travaux de comité

2^e session
42^e législature

Vendredi 19 novembre 2021

Chair: Ernie Hardeman
Clerk: Michael Bushara

Président : Ernie Hardeman
Greffier : Michael Bushara

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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON
FINANCE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS**

Friday 19 November 2021

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

**COMITÉ PERMANENT DES FINANCES
ET DES AFFAIRES ÉCONOMIQUES**

Vendredi 19 novembre 2021

The committee met at 1004 in committee room 151 and by video conference.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): I call this meeting of the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs to order. Before we begin, we have the following members in the room—I think we went through all the members. We don't have to go through them again; they have all been identified. Are there any members present that were not present at the pre-meeting?

With that, 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 to make sure that the recordings work properly. Since it could take a little 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 today we have consideration of committee business. Are there any motions? MPP Harris.

Mr. Mike Harris: I move that the committee enter closed session for the purpose of organizing committee business and that broadcasting staff be permitted to remain in the closed session meeting for the purpose of operating the electronic meeting technology.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): You've heard the motion. Is there any debate on that? MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Good morning, Chair, and thank you very much. This is a pattern. The government continues to pull us into in camera when we should just be having a public, open conversation about the planning around Bill 43, in this instance.

There is a true calling from the people of this province for the government to be more open and more transparent, particularly on a budget bill. I would just like to put it on the record that this is a practice that does not serve our democracy. Obviously, the committee has a majority of members and can override the official opposition and the independent members, but there really is no reason for this committee to go in camera.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Hunter.

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: I do want to support the member from the NDP for really reminding the government that we do want to have open discussion in our committees. And one of the things that we potentially will be planning is the number of days for hearings on this very important bill that involves the budget and the fall economic statement.

I have been hearing from francophone members that a very important bill that affects French language in the province is being considered. Consultations did not happen prior to that being done, and it's going to be a very important aspect for francophones in Ontario, that they are heard when we are considering this bill.

I would support the need to stay open, to stay transparent, so that the people of the province can really hear directly from this committee in terms of how we are treating this bill and, in particular, the consultations that are required so that people have their say and can input into the decisions.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Any further debate? MPP—Mamakwa. I'll get it yet.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Meegwetch, Chair. I think over the last three and a half years or so, we've been having these committee meetings. I know that it's important for Ontarians to be able to understand what happens when we do business on this committee. And I know that Ontario is a place of democracy.

Sometimes I feel like I'm in a different Ontario, the way we are treated in First Nation communities. I'm not sure, when we're here in the corridors of this building, when we try to exercise the power and also pass legislation, and the institution tends to ignore the minority. It's important that we have these rules and procedures that pass as if it's governance. I know they will come back and say, "They don't need to hear this," or whatever.

I think I began to understand that this place, this Parliament is nothing but partisan survival. It's a place where a party, a government is greater than the people. I just wanted to say those comments. Meegwetch.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? Hearing no further debate, are members ready to vote? If so, all those in favour, raise your hands. All those opposed, raise your hands. The motion is carried.

We will now move into closed session. We're going to take a two-minute break to do that.

The committee recessed at 1012 and later continued in closed session.

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