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(Hansard)**

A-8

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des débats
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**Standing Committee on
Government Agencies**

Intended appointments

**Comité permanent des
organismes gouvernementaux**

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2nd Session
42nd Parliament

Tuesday 22 February 2022

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Mardi 22 février 2022

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111, rue Wellesley ouest, Queen's Park
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CONTENTS

Tuesday 22 February 2022

Subcommittee reports	A-75
Intended appointments.....	A-76
Mr. Bruce Stanton	A-76

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Tuesday 22 February 2022

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

COMITÉ PERMANENT DES
ORGANISMES GOUVERNEMENTAUX

Mardi 22 février 2022

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

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): The meeting will come to order. I want to welcome everybody back for this, our first meeting since we last rose before Christmas. It's always nice to see all of you and I'm sure we're going to have a productive, I guess, eight-week session before we go into that thing called the general election.

Just a couple of things very quickly: We all know that members can either be here and present or be on Zoom. I'm just asking those people who are on Zoom or on the phone to make sure to speak clearly. If you have any problems with your technology, you can get a hold of Andrew Kleiman. You would have received an email on how to get a hold of him in order to be able to fix your problems with technology.

Another thing: We have MPP Simard with us today. I just want to remind members that the way the standing orders are written, if there is any time left by either of the two caucuses, the government caucus or the opposition caucus, we can give some of that time to the independent member, Madame Simard, but if all of the time is used, unfortunately, the rules are the rules. I just wanted to put that out there.

I also just want to bring to your attention—and you would have got an email yesterday—that Wendy Noble was supposed to be appointed to I believe it was the parole board. We got a notification from both the Attorney General's office and the Public Appointments Secretariat saying that they no longer want to go forward with that particular appointment. The Clerk has distributed this correspondence from the ministry and the Public Appointments Secretariat to all committee members. The revision is made on the reports, and it's pretty straightforward.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): With no further ado, we can go into dealing with all of our reports. Why don't we start with Mr. Yakabuski, who is going to start with the first one.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Yes, thank you, Chair. I have a number of motions from the subcommittee report.

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

Mr. John Yakabuski: I move adoption of the subcommittee report on intended appointments dated Thursday,

December 9, 2021, on the order-in-council certificate dated December 3, 2021.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Any debate on that particular motion? Seeing no debate, all those in favour?

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Can you make sure all your cameras are on? There we go. There are a few members that don't have their cameras on on Zoom. All those opposed? Carried.

Mr. Yakabuski—I'm going to get it right one of these days.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Don't worry about it. I love you, Gilles.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): I love you too, John.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Don't put that on the record. Oh, my God, it's on the record.

I move adoption of the subcommittee report on intended appointments dated Thursday, December 16, 2021, on the order-in-council certificate dated December 10, 2021.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Any debate on this subcommittee report? Seeing none, all those in favour? All those opposed? Carried.

Next subcommittee report: Mr. Yakabuski.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I move adoption of the subcommittee report on intended appointments dated Thursday, December 23, 2021, on the order-in-council certificate dated December 17, 2021.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): December 17? This must be a misprint on mine.

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Oh, I'm going by those dates up here. Okay. Any debate? All those in favour, please signify. All those opposed? Carried.

Mr. Yakabuski—I got close that time. You have a further—

Mr. John Yakabuski: I do, sir. Thank you. I move adoption of the subcommittee report on intended appointments dated Thursday, January 27, 2022, on the order-in-council certificate dated January 17, 2022.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Any debate? Seeing no debate, we're going to move to the vote. All those in favour, please signify. All those opposed? Carried.

Mr. Yakabuski.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I move adoption of the subcommittee report on intended appointments dated

Thursday, February 3, 2022, on the order-in-council certificate dated January 28, 2022.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Any debate on this particular subcommittee report? Seeing none, all those in favour? All those opposed? Carried.

All right, and last but not least—

Mr. John Yakubuski: That's correct, Chair. I move adoption of the subcommittee report on intended appointments dated Thursday, February 10, 2022, on the order-in-council certificate dated February 4, 2022.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Any debate on the last report? Seeing no debate, all those in favour? All those opposed? Carried.

INTENDED APPOINTMENTS

MR. BRUCE STANTON

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Bruce Stanton, intended appointee as member, Licence Appeal Tribunal.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): That is going to bring us to our first and only review that we have this morning: Bruce Stanton, who's being put forward as a member of the Licence Appeal Tribunal. Where is—oh, there you are. I had to look at the monitor to find you.

Please, sir, just so that you know, you can make a statement. Whatever time you take, a we'll take it from the government time. Go ahead.

Mr. Bruce Stanton: Thank you, Mr. Chair and honourable members. It's a great opportunity to join you this morning regarding my intended appointment to the Licence Appeal Tribunal.

My name is Bruce Stanton. I live in the central part of Ontario, near Orillia. It's where I spent most of my career, in my family's tourism business, Bayview Wildwood Resort on Sparrow Lake. I studied at Ryerson here in Toronto in the late 1970s and then joined my parents and siblings at the family business, spending time in all aspects of the resort, from pot washer to cook, and eventually general manager in the late 1980s. It's where I learned most of the things that have helped me throughout my career, working with a staff and a team, developing and marketing new products, serving customers, working with lenders, suppliers and government officials, all of them on the basis of improving our business over the years.

Along the way, in my resort years from 1978 to 2005, I was involved in advocating for my community on two fronts, really: One, with regard to the industry that I was in, in tourism, through tourism association advocacy, and then secondly, through local community work—Rotary International, community futures development—and I was a councillor in the township of Severn for four years, from 1999 to 2003.

From 1990 to 1993, I was a member of the board of the then Ontario Workplace Health and Safety Agency. That was the province's principal authority for workplace safety education programs and the organizations that delivered those programs. This had been brought into

force under Premier Peterson's government in the late 1980s and then carried on through Premier Rae's government through to 1995.

My work at the leadership of a provincial agency and as an elected official in municipal government built upon my business experience by really giving me some great insights into the administration of provincial law, its lines of jurisdiction and the importance that these institutions had to Ontarians.

In 2006, I was elected as member of Parliament for the riding of Simcoe North, where I served until last fall, actually. I didn't offer as a candidate in last fall's general election. During my years as an MP, the focus of my work was, just as I'm sure it is with the honourable members present, the constituents of my riding: being their voice regardless of political affiliation, learning, listening from them, helping resolve their issues, answering questions on federal matters, and communicating in a way that helped constituents understand the ins and outs of political issues of the day and events. Our office had a culture of thinking of constituents as our customers. That's the way that we worked every day, and we were there to serve them.

Of course, in our role as parliamentarians, we're also called upon to serve the Legislature, in your case, and in mine, Parliament. In that sense, I served on standing committees for the status of women; information, privacy and ethics; industry, science and technology; and I chaired the standing committee on what was then called Aboriginal affairs and northern development in the 40th Parliament, from 2008 to 2011.

From 2011 on, my service to Parliament was as a presiding officer in the House of Commons, first as an Assistant Deputy Speaker, and then from 2015 on as the Deputy Speaker, where I continued until last fall.

I must say, the highlight of my parliamentary service really was the work in the House of Commons. As you will all know, that's the place where our audience, the public—our customers, if you will—were the members themselves: being the guardian of their privileges, ensuring that the rules were followed, and above all, helping them in the execution of their duties as parliamentarians as best we could. Here, the importance of listening, being fair and impartial in decisions, and more importantly, being seen as even-handed and fair was really paramount.

0910

The culmination of my years working in and leading a competitive private sector business, advocating for my industry and community, and serving in the administration of provincial laws—municipal and in health and safety—and as a presiding officer in a highly partisan, high-profile arena have helped me gain some of the tools I think I would need to be a good adjudicator in the administration of justice in Ontario.

In preparation for my application and, ultimately, interview—I was honoured to have the opportunity to be interviewed as part of that process—I reviewed the database of decisions taken by the LAT over the last few years. That's available on the Canadian Legal Information Institute website, and it's there where I reviewed many of

the LAT adjudicators' results, their decisions, their comments, how they dealt with applicants and respondents, those points of view, how they applied the law and the steps they took to ensure that the process of that was procedurally fair, especially in the case where applicants were not represented by counsel. I think that's an important part of this work. These are adjudicators and tribunals that are there to serve Ontarians whether they have counsel representing them or not.

I do think Ontarians deserve these means of appeal and inquiry. They have to be fair, accessible, equitable and timely. If I'm appointed, I would work to be an adjudicator that put those qualities right at the centre of my work and service. I look forward to serving Ontarians in this way.

Mr. Chair, that concludes my remarks.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): I see Mr. Yakabuski is ready to ask you some questions.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Thank you very much, Mr. Stanton, for joining us today and putting your name forward to serve in this very, very important way on behalf of the people of the province of Ontario.

I can tell by your background that you certainly have the qualifications and have had the experience of dealing with caseloads, but this is nevertheless one question that I have to ask you. The Licence Appeal Tribunal does have very high caseloads. Can you give us a little more on your experience in managing heavy caseloads and ensuring that you can stay on top of that workload and deliver your decisions within targeted processing times?

Mr. Bruce Stanton: That's a great question, MPP Yakabuski. Certainly, in the course of work as an MP or MPP, you will know that the range of demands that come upon you, sometimes in a very short period of time, requires the utmost in managing those. You've got a lot of information coming inbound. It has to be managed, usually all electronically. So this is something that I'm very familiar with. But I do agree: This is a very busy tribunal.

I note that I am applying as a part-time member of the tribunal. I recognize that about a third of all adjudicators are in that part-time group, the other two thirds being full time. That said, I realize the demands upon this tribunal to deal with a high number of applications that are coming in. It's one of the reasons why I would look forward to lending a hand in that work, because I do think it's important. I'm prepared, even though it's part time, to commit time towards the work of getting proper processes in place for these applicants.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I believe MPP Anand has a question for you as well.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Please go ahead.

Mr. Deepak Anand: Thank you, Chair. I was not able to unmute myself.

Mr. Stanton, first of all, I want to say thank you for putting your name in, and I want to congratulate you. You have such lengthy experience in serving the community. By the way, I have been to Sparrow Lake and the Bayview, the resort you talked about. It's a beautiful place.

One thing I wanted to ask you is, what do you believe it takes to be an effective member of the Licence Appeal Tribunal?

Mr. Bruce Stanton: Thank you, MPP Anand, and I know that your community in Mississauga–Malton is one that continues to grow, as well. I come from a more rural part of the province. But honestly, thank you for your comments about the business I was in many, many years ago.

Look, I do think that this is a role as an adjudicator that demands some of those key qualities that I mentioned: listening well, communicating well, being fair and impartial, and being timely in decisions as well. A busy tribunal like this can sometimes get pressure upon it to make sure it rises to that occasion, and looking at the annual report for the Licence Appeal Tribunal—I think the last one available, March 2021—some of those issues were commented upon.

So making sure that the process is procedurally fair, that it's accessible and that applicants get a timely review of the inquiry and the application that they're making are important things—and that the adjudicator provides and demonstrates their work in a way that leaves confidence with the applicant that the process is being managed properly.

Mr. Deepak Anand: Thank you, sir.

Chair, I think MPP Martin would like to ask the next question.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): You have the floor.

Mrs. Robin Martin: Thank you, Chair, and thank you, Mr. Stanton. You talked a lot about your background in politics and everything else, and I'm just wondering what other kinds of community engagement you've been involved in; how you think you've learned from your community engagement, which is extensive; and how you can bring that to the Licence Appeal Tribunal.

Mr. Bruce Stanton: It's fair, I would say, MPP Martin, that much of the work that I did in the community was prior to my becoming an MP, and then it changes gears to a degree. It's still important community work. But prior to that, I was a volunteer with the Community Futures Development Corp. in my region; you'll be familiar with that. They're a federal agency that helps small business and in many ways is a facilitator for small business development and investment.

Rotary International was always something that I followed through my years, even as a student. I always liked to work in Rotary for the good work that it did in the local community, but also with vocational and international exchange and international goodwill topics as well.

Then, ultimately, as a councillor: I've got to say, working in municipal office as an elected official in a municipal government was a real eye-opener for me, coming from private-sector business, to know and understand just how critical municipalities were to the implementation of provincial law in our communities. I've got to say, that was a real learning experience for me, and it helped me immensely in my work as an MP.

Mrs. Robin Martin: Thank you very much. I think my colleague MPP Pang now has a question for you.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): MPP Pang, you have the floor and you have about two minutes left.

Mr. Billy Pang: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, Mr. Stanton, for your experience and putting your name forward.

COVID presents some significant challenges for operating the Licence Appeal Tribunal, in particular with in-person hearings. How do you think the LAT can adapt? Do you have any concerns about not being able to conduct in-person hearings?

Mr. Bruce Stanton: Well, it's hard to say at this point. I'm new to this process, of course, and I look forward to the work to getting more knowledgeable in how this is done.

Clearly it has been a challenge for any tribunals—or courts, for that matter—to make sure that the judicial system can still function, even when we are conducting proceedings in a virtual type of environment. Some of that has some advantages, as well, in terms of the timeliness, but I think the critical thing is making sure that you can still communicate well with the applicants and respondents in each of these cases. This is where I think case conferences can be very important. It's a little bit less formal than a hearing and it's a way to have both parties engaged in a process, to see if they can come at a resolution.

There's no doubt that it takes some considerable communication skills and good preparation, just as we do in in-person, but as things change, as the province opens up, the opportunity to get out to more in-person proceedings will probably be upon us, and, in that sense, I'm certainly prepared to travel and do what is necessary to meet applicants in person as the restrictions are lifted and the circumstances allow.

0920

Mr. Billy Pang: Thank you, Mr. Stanton.

May I pass the floor to MPP Miller?

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Mr. Miller, you have a grand total of 14 seconds.

Mr. Norman Miller: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and good to see you.

Mr. Stanton—or Bruce, if I may call you that—

Mr. Bruce Stanton: Yes, absolutely.

Mr. Norman Miller: I may not get the time to get this out. It's good to see you, and I'm sure you're going to do a great job in this role. Your experience speaks for itself. Thank you for coming and putting your name forward.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Thank you, Mr. Miller. We allowed you a little bit of extra time so that you could at least get that in.

We'll go to the opposition. The official opposition has 15 minutes. I think we're going to start with Mr. Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Good morning, and welcome back, everybody.

Good morning, Mr. Stanton. Just a couple of observations: First of all, you mentioned the fact that you were a city councillor, which I also believe is a very, very important role in the province of Ontario. Unfortunately, some of the decision-making processes at city councils

now—or town councils, whatever they are—are kind of being taken away from them. I think that's a big mistake.

You also mentioned you were in tourism. I'm sure tourism in that area has been hit hard. It was hit first and will be the last to recover. Hopefully, as we open up a bit, all tourism comes back. I'm from a community that lost 40,000 jobs overnight in tourism. We haven't got back to where we were. We still have our casinos not operating at full strength. We still have 50% of the workers laid off with no financial aid to them. It's a tough time. I just wanted to make a couple of those observations.

I will say that I'm not going to agree with you on when you're an MP—I certainly appreciate the fact you're an MP. Anybody who puts their name forward, and ends up having their families and everybody else not seeing them as much as you like, I think is good, but I don't look at the constituents I've served for the last years as customers. I guess maybe it's a different way of thinking, but they're certainly not customers in my eyes. I do thank you for your service.

But, as we do this almost every Tuesday, a lot of the people who are chosen are tied to the PC Party, and it's gone on for a long time. I'm just going to ask you a few questions about that, and then I'll get into some of the other questions.

I already said I thank you for being here. I'd like to begin by discussing your previous affiliation with the Conservative Party. Could you confirm that you are a current or previous member of the Conservative Party?

Mr. Bruce Stanton: Thank you, MPP Gates—I think it is? Do I have that right?

Mr. Wayne Gates: Yes, you do. No relation to Bill, though.

Mr. Bruce Stanton: Okay, thanks for that clarification.

Yes, I'm a member of the Conservative Party federally at the moment. I have been a member of the Ontario PC Party in the past. I'm not current with the provincial party at this time. I should point out, of course, that in the course of this work, if I am appointed, that membership will cease, as would all other political activities.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I appreciate your answer. You were asked to appear before the committee because the government has a habit of appointing their friends—I've already said that—and donors to positions in the government. Have you ever donated to the PC Party or been a member of the PC Party that you donated to when you donated, and how much?

Mr. Bruce Stanton: I have donated to the provincial party, some years ago. Last look—I had reviewed some of the transcripts of your committee's meetings over the years and I know that this question does come up. So I went back and had a look and I did make a last donation—I think one was to Minister Elliott's leadership campaign back in 2015 or 2016, thereabouts, and there was one donation to the PC Party around the same time of around \$100.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Do you have any idea how much it was, sir?

Mr. Bruce Stanton: It was \$100 to the party and \$200 to Minister Elliott's leadership campaign.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Okay. I appreciate that answer. Did anyone approach you about seeking this appointment, or was this something you wanted do? We know that there's a significant backlog at LAT, so people are needed.

Mr. Bruce Stanton: I actually went to the public appointments website. Even though I was retiring as an MP, I still have the gumption for public service and really wanted to take on something I was qualified to do, but perhaps not with the same intensity as that of being an MP. I looked on the public appointments website, and at that time the LAT was advertising for several different positions and that's why I chose the part-time position. I felt that what was advertised lined up quite well with what I had done, so I gave it a try.

Mr. Wayne Gates: And that's why you're here this morning.

Mr. Bruce Stanton: That's it.

Mr. Wayne Gates: As noted, the Licence Appeal Tribunal is facing a massive backlog in cases. This government has appointed numerous representatives to the tribunal with little evidence of subject matter expertise or experience. Could you discuss your subject matter expertise for this tribunal?

Mr. Bruce Stanton: Look, I'm not a lawyer. My work has been in public service and in being impartial, being a good arbiter on decisions when there are sometimes strong opinions on both sides of a question. We do that work with our constituents at the riding level but also in Parliament, in the Legislature.

I know there is a very thorough onboarding process with the Licence Appeal Tribunal based on the information that I've read. It occurs to me that there is a great process in place for training and bringing new adjudicators up to a level where they can practise that appropriate knowledge of the law to be able to do their work well. So I look forward to that.

As I say, I'm not a lawyer per se, but I do think in a case like this an adjudicator needs to bring some of those fundamental understandings about how to work well and be fair in the way that they deal with the questions that come before them.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Two things: One, we have something in common already, and it's not the colour of our tie; I'm not a lawyer either. Just to let you know that. I'm not.

Why don't you explain to me when you say that you're impartial while you're an MP? Why don't you explain that?

Mr. Bruce Stanton: One of the things is that, as a deputy Speaker, as a presiding officer in the House, in the last 10 years of my work, I always had to be very careful about even the way that I talked about issues that were part of the political conversation at the riding level. So, for example, I wouldn't be out communicating to my constituents about advocating for a particular position because I didn't want to show that I was in any way siding with one party or the other.

At the same time, I certainly ran under a party banner. That's a normal thing; we all do that. But after the election is over, you have to be a representative for all constituents.

It doesn't matter what partisan stripe they are; if they're on the phone or in your office or sending you an email, you owe it to them to give them a proper hearing of that question, so I did that.

And then in my communications to the riding, on some of these sometimes very high-profile questions or difficult issues that Parliament was dealing with, in my householder, my quarterly newsletter, I would say, "Here's what the government is saying"—I was in opposition at this time—"and here's what the official opposition is saying," framing it in a way that the reader could, in fact, draw their own conclusions from that. I must say, MPP Gates, my constituents were very pleased with that approach. I wasn't trying to dictate to them what the position should be; I let them draw their own conclusions.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Well, it's interesting that you're saying that because it's probably a little bit what I do. I work with all parties, all the time, including in my riding.

Could you discuss with the committee what you did before you were elected to public office? You did a little bit of that in your eight or nine minutes that you talked. Maybe discuss how this will assist in your duties on LAT.

Mr. Bruce Stanton: One of the things I worked on—certainly, I think the work in municipal government, the work in private-sector business opens your eyes to how you work with a team and how you make sure that your organization is functioning well.

One of the insights that I think would be helpful, albeit it was some time ago—my work on a provincial agency was really good for being immersed in the operations of not only the organizational sides of workplace health and safety, but making sure that the whole apparatus that was there to serve in that role at that time was functioning well and serving Ontarians the way it should. That, as a board member in that agency, was a great learning experience. I think it's relevant because it's all about the application of Ontario law, ultimately serving, in that case, workers.

0930

In the case of the LAT, it's really around consumer protection, making sure that consumer claims, whether it's new home warranties or whether it's to do with some of the other work that comes on the general service side of LAT—that those processes are handled well. So I think that was entirely relevant to the work that I would be seeing in the Licence Appeal Tribunal.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Yes, you spent a lot of time in health and safety. I can tell you that in the province of Ontario—and, quite frankly, right around the country—health and safety is still a really big issue in workplaces everywhere. We continue to see the deaths in Ontario go up every year. We've got to find a way to get them down to zero. We're going the wrong way if they're going up instead of going down.

Me and you are lucky. At least, I consider myself lucky in the job that I'm doing. I'm probably not going to get killed on the job. But everybody should go to work and be able to come home and come back to their family. We've got to do a little better around health and safety. I see that

you've done a lot of that over your career, so you know what I'm talking about.

Mr. Bruce Stanton: I could not agree more. You're absolutely right.

Mr. Wayne Gates: You've seen a lot of it too, I'm sure—a lot of sad cases.

Mr. Bruce Stanton: Yes.

Mr. Wayne Gates: The delay is one of the effects of COVID-19 on the tribunal. Are there any other issues that you think might come up from the tribunal related to COVID-19, as we hopefully move out of COVID-19—but who knows.

Mr. Bruce Stanton: Not that I'm aware of at the moment. I did speak to that just a little bit earlier around making this transition out of perhaps full-time virtual-conference-type proceedings to boards shifting back towards in-person. But perhaps, even now, post-COVID, using some of that technology effectively to improve the efficiency of the process so that—some cases may lend themselves more or less to that, but I think that's something that we'll see. Ultimately, I'm not inside the Licence Appeal Tribunal yet. I would look forward to doing that training and getting through and understanding more there.

The last annual report was certainly insightful. It spoke to the high demand that that tribunal is experiencing, especially on the Automobile Accident Benefits Service side of the work—again, a critical part of the tribunal being there for Ontarians when they've been involved in automobile accidents and are trying to get the fair and equitable compensation that they should be getting. I think this is an area that we've got to work hard on. I think it's one of the reasons the government is looking at making sure there's enough adjudicator capacity to manage those cases and gradually work down the number of cases that are currently in the queue.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I'll build your confidence up. I know you all like to win, so there is a good chance, with the way the committee is set up, that you will become a member. I'm kind of helping you out a bit here, to bring a smile to your face early in the morning on our first day back after a break.

The LAT has two main divisions that function separately: both the General Service division, LAT-GS, and the Automobile Accident Benefits Service division, which was started in 2016. Of the two divisions, which do you believe is the most pressing right now to get rid of the backlog?

Mr. Bruce Stanton: Well, it's by far weighted on the Automobile Accident Benefits Service side. The General Service side has been working well, but the number of cases that were active, as of March of last year, numbered in the hundreds—I think less than 200—where, at the same time, on the automobile accident benefits side it's over 10,000. That's indicative of the sheer volume of applications that are coming in.

The report, which I think was for the year ending March 2021, noted that they've done a good job in increasing the number of case conferences. They're trying to do their

work more efficiently. There is some work in the tribunals to look at some of these efficiencies, getting more timely decisions and getting the turnaround time. All that work is starting to help that. But when you're getting huge volumes of applications coming in, you've got to try to rise to that level so you can gradually work down that queue. So I think that's really what we see in front of us. I would look forward to learning what I can to help in that process as an adjudicator.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I just want to finish up. I saw that you've been involved with Rotary Club international and they have done incredible work on vaccines around polio and what it's done around the world.

Mr. Bruce Stanton: Yes.

Mr. Wayne Gates: It just shows that vaccines can work when we need them. I know Rotary. I've spent a lot of time at Rotary, speaking to Rotarians and also going to their dinners on the Harris awards. I congratulate you on being involved with the Rotary Club international and what they've done for polio. But my main message there is that vaccines do work.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): With that, thank you very much. That's all the time we have.

For members: At this point, we need somebody to move concurrence on the appointment. Mr. Yakabuski.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Thank you again to Mr. Stanton.

I move concurrence in the intended appointment of Bruce Stanton, nominated as member of the Licence Appeal Tribunal.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Is there any discussion from members in regard to this concurrence? Seeing no comments, all those in favour, please signify by raising your hand. All those opposed? Okay, that is done. So welcome to the Licence Appeal Tribunal. You will be getting notification soon.

With that, I believe we have no other business, Clerk. Does anybody—

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): I didn't see you, sorry. Yes, go ahead, MPP Stiles.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It came to, I know, all of our attention late yesterday, I believe, when we received a memo from the Clerk regarding the withdrawal of the proposed appointment of Wendy Noble to the Ontario Parole Board. I have to say, I was preparing to ask Ms. Noble some questions today. Of course, we knew that Ms. Noble had been a Conservative Party organizer and more. So it was interesting to see that not proceed. I understand that the Ministry of the Attorney General requested that the candidate be withdrawn from consideration by the committee.

I was wondering if we could please make a request, either to the Clerk, if the Clerk has more background information on this, or to the Attorney General to understand why—for an explanation about why that candidate has been withdrawn.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): So I take it this is a form of a motion that you're bringing forward, because—

Ms. Marit Stiles: Yes, I think I will move a motion.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Okay, then that's in order.

Ms. Marit Stiles: I'll move a motion to request that the Attorney General provide an explanation for the withdrawal of Wendy Noble as a candidate for the Ontario Parole Board.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): If you can give the Clerk a few minutes to write it out. I was allowing you to say what you were saying, and I was going to give other members the same courtesy, but we had dealt with this at the beginning of the meeting. So I just warn people, when you're here at the beginning of the meeting and something comes up, let's deal with it then and not bring it out later.

The Clerk is drafting the motion, which is perfectly in order. Once she's drafted it, we will read it and we will take it from there. So you want exactly what from the Ministry of the Attorney General? You want a rationale as to why it was withdrawn? Is that what you're getting at?

Ms. Marit Stiles: I would like an explanation as to why the candidate was withdrawn—if it was the candidate's choice, or if the Attorney General made a decision, and on what basis.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Okay. The Clerk is working at it. She's very busy; I see her fingers doing it. I'll let you read it once you have it. The Clerk is just checking a few things, so if you can give her a few minutes.

In the meantime, I think we can render into song, my good friend Mr. Yakabuski. We can bring back the "Oh where, oh where, has so-and-so gone?"

Mr. John Yakabuski: We can't do that today.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Oh, my God. Do you still remember the words?

Mr. John Yakabuski: I remember most of the words.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): There we go. What people may not know is that Mr. Yakabuski is a good singer and he writes a lot of music.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Hold on, Gilles.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): You're a good singer.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Better than good.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Now, look, I try to give you a compliment, and now he's reaching for more.

0940

Okay. The Clerk has done her research, and she's written a motion. She's about to read it and post it at the same time. It reads, "I move that the committee request"—

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Oh, excuse me.

Madame Stiles, if you can please read that motion into the record.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Certainly. I move that the committee request to receive an explanation from the Ministry of the Attorney General regarding the withdrawal of the intended appointment of Ms. Wendy Noble to the Ontario Parole Board.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): With that, any debate? Anybody want to—Madame Simard, followed by Mr. Gates.

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to say that I—

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Debate on that.

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: Yes. I support this motion because—we might all know why this was withdrawn. We can suspect and guess. I know that she was an organizer and maybe the Minister of the Attorney General wanted to block that, make sure and do the right thing, but I don't think the public knows that and we want to confirm it. I do think it would look good for everyone and is the right thing to do to get an explanation. So I support this motion.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Mr. Gates, followed by Mr. Yakabuski.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I just want to say that we only get a chance to meet here once a week. We just did a whole list of appointments that we didn't have the opportunity to interview. I think two people here on a Tuesday is not a lot, and when somebody doesn't come, we lose an opportunity to interview somebody else too. I think it's important to know the reason why they're pulled that late. We had already—I know Marit and myself had already done our research and our questions, so we were already prepared to interview. I think it's important to make sure that we have a full slate when we're here on Tuesdays.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Okay. I don't see any further debate. With that, all those in favour of the motion by Mrs. Stiles, please signify by raising—

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): I take it you want a recorded vote, right? Yes, I see that. Okay, a recorded vote.

Ayes

Gates, Simard, Stiles.

Nays

Anand, Babikian, Kusendova, Martin, Norman Miller, Pang, Yakabuski.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): I consider the motion lost.

Is there anything else?

Interjection: Ms. Stiles.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Oh, I'm sorry. For some reason I don't see when your hand is up. I got you; there we go.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have to say, I was really surprised. Even given some of the experience that people had on this committee over the last few years, I'm still surprised that the members of the government who are sitting here would not agree to some degree of transparency around this decision. It seems like an obvious one. Why shouldn't we know? If it's as simple as Ms. Noble has something else going on, great, let's find out what the reason is. I'm really quite shocked and appalled that they would not support that very simple and straightforward motion.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): So the motion has been voted on and defeated and the issue is closed to this committee.

Anything else? If not, we are at the end of the committee. The meeting is adjourned.
The committee adjourned at 0945.

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