

Legislative  
Assembly  
of Ontario



Assemblée  
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**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

A-26

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

A-26

**Standing Committee on  
Government Agencies**

Intended appointments

1<sup>st</sup> Session  
42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament  
Tuesday 25 February 2020

**Comité permanent des  
organismes gouvernementaux**

Nominations prévues

1<sup>re</sup> session  
42<sup>e</sup> législature  
Mardi 25 février 2020

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Chair: John Vanthof  
Clerk: Jocelyn McCauley

Président : John Vanthof  
Greffière : Jocelyn McCauley

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

## COMITÉ PERMANENT DES ORGANISMES GOUVERNEMENTAUX

Tuesday 25 February 2020

Mardi 25 février 2020

*The committee met at 0900 in committee room 1.*

### SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** I'd like to call this meeting to order. Good morning, everyone. The first item of business is a subcommittee report dated February 20, 2020. We have all seen the report in advance, so could I please have a motion? Ms. Stiles?

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** I move adoption of the subcommittee report on intended appointments dated Thursday, February 20, 2020, on the order-in-council certificate dated February 14, 2020.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Any further discussion? Ms. Stiles.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** I'd like to discuss it. I have before me the list of intended appointees that I think we, as the official opposition, had pulled and had selected to be reviewed. It's really disappointing, I guess. These people will appear, or they won't appear? Can you explain to me what's going to happen with these folks?

**The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Jocelyn McCauley):** The certificate has yet to expire, so at this point, once we request unanimous consent, if we don't have time within the 30-day period to schedule those individuals, that's when we'll ask the committee to see if there is the will.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Right. In the past, we talked a little bit about some of the difficulties in getting people to attend. I know that we've succeeded in having more folks attend, I think, because we're now allowing people to join by phone. If there are any difficulties scheduling any of these folks, can you flag it for us as a committee? Because it would be very unfortunate if these were to expire—

**The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Jocelyn McCauley):** Yes. We can bring that information accordingly, whenever we receive it.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Okay. Thank you very much.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Any further discussion? Seeing none, I would like to call a vote. All those in favour of adoption of the subcommittee report? Opposed? The report carries.

### INTENDED APPOINTMENTS

#### MR. FRANK DAVIS

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Frank Davis, intended appointee as

member, Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario) — board of directors.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Our next order of business is review of intended appointments. First, we have Mr. Frank Davis, nominated as a member of the Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion, Public Health Ontario board of directors.

Mr. Davis, could you come to the table, please? Good morning. 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. 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 be deducted from the time allotted to the government. Welcome, and the floor is yours.

**Mr. Frank Davis:** Good morning. Thank you, Mr. Chair and members of the committee. I very much appreciate this opportunity to be with you today at Queen's Park, in this important element of our democratic process here in Ontario.

I'm honoured to be considered for a position on the board of directors of Public Health Ontario. I believe that health care, and the proper administration of our health care system, sits at the centre of the functioning of a vibrant and just society. We are blessed in Ontario to have one of the most advanced and respected health care systems in the world; however, profound challenges continue to emerge on a global level, which will threaten us here at home. Now, more than ever, Public Health Ontario will be challenged to be a nimble, reactive and focused organization in its response to these new and very complex threats.

Over the coming months, this organization will see its core strengths challenged—on one hand, to remain at the forefront of the management and control of infectious disease in this province, coupled with maintaining focus on its other areas of responsibility, including data analysis, critical laboratory services and emergency preparedness, which are obviously vital to the mandate of this organization.

I've always maintained an interest in health care, with its close interaction with our legal system, as an area in which my skills and experience may be usefully deployed. This was inspired in part by having the benefit of witnessing the experience of my father, who is an engineer and

business executive by trade but, like me, took an interest in serving public life in his province, especially in health care. As a member of the board of Eastern Health in Newfoundland and Labrador, my father assisted in guiding the organization's response to a very challenging breast cancer testing scandal about 10 years ago. I saw first-hand the enormous responsibility bestowed on individuals placed in this position of trust and the value that comes from sharing transparency and proper governance in the organization's activities.

I aim to serve to the best of my ability in helping the board achieve its objective of protecting the health and safety of all Ontarians. A bit about my background: I was raised in St. John's, Newfoundland, and attended Dalhousie law school in Halifax, from where I graduated in 2007. Following law school, I moved here to Toronto, where I commenced legal practice at one of the city's largest law firms. My early legal training and practice was very diverse, ranging from corporate and commercial law to real estate, criminal law, health litigation. One of the more interesting files I had the opportunity to work on in my early years of legal practice was assisting senior lawyers in the Goudge inquiry, which the committee will recall was a 2007 public inquiry into the state of pediatric forensic pathology in Ontario.

In 2011, I took up in-house legal practice with an energy company and helped them develop, build and operate a large portfolio of clean energy projects in Ontario and across Canada. Two years ago, I took on the role of country head for my company in Canada. I'm responsible for our activities in forums such as market development, government relations, community engagement, joint venture partnerships, and relationships with customers. In this capacity, I've had the opportunity to interact with many facets of Ontario's public institutions, including various ministries of the crown and the Environmental Review Tribunal. I've also had the privilege of working closely with local leaders, landowners and small businesses over a broad cross-section of communities in this province, including a number of our First Nations communities.

I sit on and manage a number of the boards of directors within our organization, and I oversee activities like strategic planning, audit and financial reporting, and regulatory compliance for a number of projects in our company's portfolio across Canada.

Currently, I also serve as a board member and member of the Ontario steering committee—and secretary of the board of directors of the Canadian Wind Energy Association, which is the national association for wind energy in Canada. In this capacity, I provide advice and direction to the management team on the development of strategic objectives. I vote on material and critical decisions affecting the organization. Above all, I help ensure that the board's activities and finances are administered in a transparent fashion.

Closer to home, last year I began acting as pro bono legal counsel for the Harbord Village Residents' Association in Toronto, in which I provide advice and guidance to

residents on private land use issues and public development proposals in the community.

Mr. Chair, in my career I've been uniquely placed to witness first-hand the significant role that Ontario's public institutions play in our daily life. I understand the importance of good governance and accountability in these institutions, which starts at the board of director level.

I believe I've reached the point in my career where I have the practical skills and experience necessary to positively contribute to public life in our province. I have a strong desire to deploy these skills in my community. I do not propose to have all the answers, but I have a desire and a capability to learn and to lend my hand and expertise to the fostering of good governance and transparency on the board of Public Health Ontario.

Once again, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to be here today, and I welcome any questions or comments that the committee may have.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Thank you very much for your presentation. The first round of questioning will go to the official opposition. Ms. Stiles.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Good morning. Thank you for being here.

**Mr. Frank Davis:** Good morning.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Always nice to see a fellow Newfoundlander.

**Mr. Frank Davis:** Oh.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Indeed. Where did you go to school?

**Mr. Frank Davis:** I went to Brother Rice for high school—

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Oh, my goodness. I'm sorry, I can't support this.

**Mr. Frank Davis:** Holy Heart, I assume?

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** No, I went to Bishops.

**Mr. Frank Davis:** Oh. Excellent. Okay. We'll leave the rivalries for the hallway, perhaps.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Yes. Thank you very much for being here. I appreciated some of the background and history that you provided.

We've seen—and I'm sure you'll appreciate this—quite a history here in this committee and in this government of some rather concerning partisan political appointments. Some of them have made the news; some haven't.

In this committee, our responsibility is to review appointees, to put things out on the public record, and to ask some tough questions. Having said that, we all really do appreciate the role of everyone and the interest that people have in participating in, and often volunteering their time for, agencies and boards and such. But you'll appreciate that we do have to ask some questions about your political or potential political partisan connections.

**0910**

The first question I have for you is whether or not you've actually donated to the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario.

**Mr. Frank Davis:** I have in the past donated to the party, yes.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Do you have a sense of how much you've donated in the past?

**Mr. Frank Davis:** I believe I've donated \$900.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Was that just recently?

**Mr. Frank Davis:** That was within the past, I believe, 12 to 18 months.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Do you mind me asking why you decided to make a donation in the last little while?

**Mr. Frank Davis:** The principal reason for the donation was to attend a fundraiser that was held by Minister Greg Rickford, the Minister of Energy, who early in his tenure held a fundraiser event where he was to speak on his intentions for energy policy in the province. Like for lots of other members of the energy industry, it was of tremendous interest to learn about the ministry's new objectives and maybe get an opportunity to meet the new minister. Obviously, that opportunity is afforded on the basis of providing donations to Minister Rickford, so I took that opportunity.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** There is quite a history, as well, of—I don't know—\$1,000-a-plate dinners or \$900-a-plate dinners to allow access to a minister. It seems like we should have a slightly different—it would be nice if we didn't have to pay and donate to the Conservative Party to have access to those ministers.

Anyway, I must say, I appreciate some of the background you gave in your own personal history, but it is a particular kind of agency that we're talking about that has very specific responsibilities. I want to delve into that a little bit more, because really the purpose of Public Health Ontario is to be the technical and scientific adviser to government around public health issues. So it did seem, when I first looked at your resumé, an odd choice for a lawyer coming from the energy sector. Can you explain a little bit more about why you applied for this? Also, can you go through a little bit about what other agencies or boards you may have applied for as well?

**Mr. Frank Davis:** Sure. Above all else, within the past year or so, as I said, I feel I've reached a point in my career where I have some real practical skills to be able to give back. It's something that I've become quite passionate about: getting involved in community life and becoming as useful as I can to the community here in the province.

I went on the public appointments website and I completed my profile. I indicated interest across a really broad spectrum of our society, everything from the arts to law enforcement. Health, again, is something I was always very interested in. Underpinning all of this is the notion that all of these agencies, institutions and organizations, what they have a need for—in addition to the scientific and technical skills which are relevant to the mandate of each organization, there's a notion of, certainly, good governance, oversight, accountability, financial responsibility and experience in the process of strategic planning.

I find that these types of skills, when they're developed in one area, can be transported to different types of organizations. I think it's actually important for the agencies and institutions in this province to draw on a broad spectrum of backgrounds, perspectives and input as these challenges are dealt with.

Certainly, as I said, I tend to come to this appointment with, first of all, the benefit of being relatively agnostic

with respect to the policies that are being put forward by the management of Public Health Ontario. I don't intend to come in and start directing this management what to do in the discharge of their duties. My focus will be on the proper administration of this board, that the procedures are properly in place, that the accountability is in place and that the reporting that's done to Ontarians with respect to this institution is properly managed and maintained. I think over time there will certainly be an opportunity to develop expertise and experience in these issues, but I think it's important for boards in Ontario to draw on that broad spectrum of skills.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** I'll go back to some more in-depth questions. But did anyone approach you to apply for this position?

**Mr. Frank Davis:** Again, I think I indicated—

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Have you had questions from somebody, say, in the Premier's office, or somebody else in the Conservative government?

**Mr. Frank Davis:** No, not in particular. I recall I went on the website and I indicated this as being one of the institutions I was interested in. Then I believe I received a phone call from an individual within the ministry appointments desk who had, I guess, pulled my profile and inquired if I was interested.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** I asked about donations, but have you ever actually been a member of the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario or the Conservative Party of Canada?

**Mr. Frank Davis:** No, I have not.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Okay. You've probably, I assume, been following some of the news around public health, and the impact of the government's cuts, and then reversal of cuts, and then chaos created around the future of funding for public health in Ontario. I wondered what you would be doing, how you would ensure that funding for Public Health Ontario is maintained as stable, and that Public Health Ontario stays public.

**Mr. Frank Davis:** Yes, it's a good question, a valid question. Again, I would want to approach this position on this board, and this appointment, from a position of impartiality, from a political standpoint.

I think the organization should be at arm's length from the political machinations in the province. Being a set of fresh eyes coming to these issues and not being ideologically motivated with respect to these issues, I think I can lend that sort of objective guidance to the board, remaining fairly impartial to the extent possible with respect to the issues of funding that are determined by the cabinet and the Legislature.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** I appreciate that, but this is a very critical organization, right? Public health is at the forefront, or has been at the forefront, of some of the biggest scandals in recent Ontario history. I think of Walkerton and SARS. Their responsibility around chronic disease prevention—and we're seeing the outbreak of the coronavirus, and the opioid crisis. This government's focus on "modernization" has been seen by some—and I would

argue that—as really just a move toward increasing de-regulation, and a move toward potentially more privatization of these really important elements of our system.

Have you no concerns about that? Because, to be honest, I want somebody in there who is going to be fighting for public health in this province.

**Mr. Frank Davis:** Absolutely. If appointed to the board, I would obviously be focused on doing everything I can, deploying whatever skills I can bring to the table, to help this organization deploy its mandate, which is an end-user-focused mandate. I don't believe that the mandate of Public Health Ontario is to look back into the halls of Queen's Park and be mired in the politics of the province. That's certainly something that the management team of Public Health Ontario will be charged to manage, to the best of its ability.

I think the board is responsible for ensuring that the management is focused on the end-user, which is of course the individual resident of this province, both in their role of being a proactive manager of emerging issues affecting health care and providing a backbone of analysis and services to the resident.

The issues you raise are valid. I consider them, from my perspective, to be issues that I would aim to approach from a perspective of impartiality.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** How much time do we have left?

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** You have about four and a half minutes, four minutes.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Okay. Again, I appreciate that. I just want to run through some of what the agency's objectives are, though, so that we can refresh our memories a little bit about what the role of this agency is.

It is—and I'm reading this out—"to provide scientific and technical advice and support...; (b) to develop, disseminate and advance ... knowledge, best practices, and research; (c) to inform and contribute to policy development processes...; (d) to develop, collect, use, analyze and disclose data...; (e) to undertake, promote and coordinate public health research...; (f) to provide education and professional development...; (g) to establish, operate and maintain laboratory centres; (h) to serve as a model for bridging the areas of infection control and occupational health and safety; (i) to undertake research related to evaluating the modes of transmission of ... respiratory illnesses and the risk to health workers; (j) as directed by the Chief Medical Officer of Health, to provide scientific and technical advice and operational support in an emergency or outbreak situation having health implications...." These are massive responsibilities. I know you appreciate that.

0920

We've seen in the past, as I mentioned earlier, when previous governments have gotten out of the business of testing and regulating things like water safety, what the impact of that is on public health. People have died.

Right now, especially when we're faced with a worldwide outbreak—to be honest, I have enormous confidence in the professionals who work in this area. But we have seen this government cut back funding for public health

units. Cities have had to fight; communities have had to fight to get that funding back. I really want to know that people who are being appointed to an agency like this are willing to fight for those things—that it's not just a governance role. One of the most important roles that we have in this province is to maintain public health.

I am trying to understand a little bit more about—because the mandate of Public Health Ontario is also very technical and scientific—what your particular skills bring to this.

I'm going to see if my colleague has anything he'd like to ask.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Mr. Mantha.

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** If you know anything about me, my role for the last nine years of being at Queen's Park has been very much involved with infectious disease, particularly the Lyme disease file. I was very interested in your opinion. You just said that you're going to be bringing fresh eyes. There are reports that are out there and there are a lot of—the vector-borne diseases that are out there is an area that is emerging. It's becoming a greater concern.

My question is, what experience are you bringing to those issues and how are you going to be able to move the stakes forward? From the communities of, particularly, the Lyme file, the Lyme communities—people are dying in this province. They are feeling that their representative from the PHO office—it's falling on a brick wall. It's coming there, and it's stopping there, and it's not moving on. What eyes, what opinions, what tools are you going to be bringing in order to move those discussions forward to really make sure that the care is being provided to Ontarians?

**Mr. Frank Davis:** You raise a very important point, and MPP Stiles raised the point. The objectives of this organization are massive, diverse and across a number of different areas of concern.

When something like coronavirus arises, it first of all dominates global discourse, and then naturally it draws the attention and probably resource concern of, certainly, the average person here in this province and then, one can expect, the management team and the professionals who are running this organization.

I think one of the responsibilities of the board of directors is to ensure that, as I said in my opening statement, all of the objectives, all of the areas of concern—as you raise, Lyme disease—none of these should begin to suffer or to experience a lack of focus or a lack of rigour from the professionals and scientists running this organization because of the new, emerging threats which arise. These are experiences and areas of skill that I encounter daily in the administration of the boards of directors that I am currently a part of.

I won't try to draw a parallel between business issues with energy projects to the critical public health objectives of this organization, but from a board management standpoint and an oversight of the management team, these basic truths can emerge, in that the board of directors—

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** I'm going to cut you off, sir.

**Mr. Frank Davis:** I'm sorry.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** But we're going to allow you to continue questioning with the government.

Mr. Nicholls?

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Mr. Davis, good morning.

**Mr. Frank Davis:** Good morning, sir.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Pattern Energy: I'm very familiar with that, especially down in the Chatham area.

**Mr. Frank Davis:** You are indeed, sir. Thank you.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** A good friend of mine, Derek Tupling, is I think part of your team as well.

In listening to you respond to the questions from the opposition, I do appreciate your objectivity. You do bring a fresh point of view to health care, and I'm very happy to hear that.

Our government spent \$776 million on public health units just last year alone, including an operating fund increase of \$60 million, or an increase of about 8.4%.

I might also add that our government has also allocated up to just over \$31 million in funding for up to 21 CTS sites—consumption and treatment services. We take this opioid crisis very seriously. We've also methodically approved and funded 16 consumption and treatment services thus far in need across the province. There may be more to come.

My question to you is very simply this: In your experience, how can good governance and transparency help make the most of the investments that our government is putting forth?

**Mr. Frank Davis:** Absolutely. Thank you, Mr. Nicholls. It's a very good question, and it's one we've seen pan out time and time again, each time we see these unfortunate scandals arise across the country. This is not particular to Ontario. I raised the example of Newfoundland and Labrador, with the breast cancer testing scandal there that other members of this committee are likely familiar with. A large part of that problem and the administration of that problem came from communication and transparency, which was, I will say, probably constrained at the highest levels of that organization.

The public's trust in the health care system and the feeling of confidence that Ontarians can wake every day and know that they have an accountable, reliable health care system, I think, comes from communication and transparency. That starts at values and procedures and accountabilities that are set forth right at the board of director level.

Investment in new initiatives: Financial backing is obviously of critical importance to ensure that that is deployed in a way that is useful to Canadians and Ontarians. Ensuring that these organizations are run in a transparent manner is of vital importance.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** I appreciate your response to that. We are making changes to health care, and as we go along, we'll be developing even greater best practices. Thank you very much for your time.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Mr. Pang.

**Mr. Billy Pang:** Mr. Davis, thank you for putting your name forward. To start, you may have noticed that this

appointment is a non-partisan one. No matter which political party you are affiliated with, no matter where you donate your money, it doesn't matter. What matters is your skill and your experience. So I'd like to reinforce the previous question asked by the opposition, which is about your experience.

Public Health Ontario has played a very key role in co-ordinating the response to—it's in the news—the coronavirus. Public Health Ontario laboratories have tested numerous examples to determine presumptive positives and negatives, which are then confirmed by Health Canada's lab.

In your previous governance experience—I think you started on that a little bit already but your time was up, so I'll give you more time on that—how have you helped to manage complex projects and co-operation with other organizations and stakeholders?

From your previous experience, project into what the current situation is.

**Mr. Frank Davis:** In my career, I've had the benefit of being involved in a diversity of really challenging scenarios. Mr. Nicholls is well aware that I'm involved in the development of wind energy projects in this province.

My most recent initiative was completing the construction of a wind energy facility on a First Nation reserve. During the construction of that project, the local First Nation community of about 200 or so members needed to be evacuated for upwards of a month due to forest fires, which had emerged in nearby areas. This presented a massive challenge both for our project and for our First Nation partner, who owns half of this initiative. It was very much a deployment of almost an emergency response on the ground level.

**0930**

Again, this provided an opportunity for me to demonstrate my skills in project management in the face of an emergency. In an emergency, there are certainly experts who will emerge and have, obviously, key areas of responsibility. Those will be respected and segregated, and those people very clearly have a job to do. But above that, project management, oversight and allocation of resources from an objective standpoint are of absolutely critical importance. If a sense of panic sets in within an organization in response to a challenge like that, the system begins to suffer, and eventually the emergency will overtake you.

Again, I don't intend to draw a direct analogy between project issues like that, community issues of that scale, with something that could be of major national importance; but the basic kernel of truth behind it, as I started saying before, was that oversight and project management, from an objective, impartial standpoint, were of extreme value in that instance.

That's why, in addition to doctors, nurses and scientific experts on this committee, having individuals who are experienced in corporate governance, corporate oversight, audit and financial reporting are of great use to an organization like this.

**Mr. Billy Pang:** I just want to follow up a little bit.

**Mr. Frank Davis:** Sure.

**Mr. Billy Pang:** When you are at the front line, sometimes you deal with experts with different opinions.

**Mr. Frank Davis:** Absolutely.

**Mr. Billy Pang:** How are you going to deal with that? What's your past experience on that?

**Mr. Frank Davis:** Well, experts across different areas will have their opinions. I've been dealing with differing expert opinions in my line of work for the better part of 10 years.

What I think is important is ensuring that the voices of various constituencies in these issues are given a platform. What's important is that one voice, one opinion, one standpoint doesn't become the only path forward. It is important to remain open, to remain nimble and to remain flexible as an institution like this, to respond to these challenges.

Differences of opinion, in fact, can be very healthy in the face of problems like this. I think it's a good functioning institution and a good democracy that can really take account of differing opinions and ensure that they're given their weight in challenging these issues.

**Mr. Billy Pang:** But at the end of the day, you have to make one decision that may favour one direction or favour the other direction. How do you make that decision?

**Mr. Frank Davis:** I think it varies case by case, but generally, you rely on taking an objective look at the strengths and weaknesses of various opinions put forth, weighing the risks associated with various opinions put forth, relying on the various opinions of the board of directors, which is going to be charged with the enormous responsibility, in some cases, of making these decisions, and working together, communicating and, to the extent possible, achieving consensus in the face of a challenge like that.

**Mr. Billy Pang:** Okay.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Thank you. Mr. Coe, you have 50 seconds.

**Mr. Lorne Coe:** Very good. Thank you very much for your delegation. You made two points in your delegation. You talked about and identified some of the public health challenges, but you also, within the context of that, stressed the importance of public engagement. Can you speak to that specifically, the public engagement part? Because we do have public consultation under way on the modernization of public health.

**Mr. Frank Davis:** Yes.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Ten seconds—or a little bit longer.

**Mr. Frank Davis:** It underlies everything that I have done in my career in the energy space. The initiatives that we've undertaken can only proceed, and will only proceed, with the consultation and buy-in by the community. That's something I believe really underpins every business objective that I've ever undertaken and, certainly, every objective that this institution is expected to undertake as well.

**Mr. Lorne Coe:** Thank you, Chair.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Thank you very much. That concludes our time. You may step down.

**Mr. Frank Davis:** Thank you very much.

MR. CURTIS ALLEN

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Curtis Allen, intended appointee as member, Human Resources Professionals Association — board of directors.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Next we have Mr. Curtis Allen, nominated as a member of the Human Resources Professionals Association board of directors.

Please step forward, Mr. Allen. 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. With that questioning, we will start with the government, followed by the official opposition, with 15 minutes allocated to each recognized party. Any time you take in your statement will be deducted from the time allotted to the government. Welcome, and the floor is yours.

**Mr. Curtis Allen:** Thank you very much, Chair and members of the committee. I'm going to read a summary of some of my life experience that I think bears on the possibility of this appointment. In doing that, I will read from a statement that I have put together.

It's an honour to be here today. I would like to tell you a little bit about myself. I was born in a relatively remote community in Nova Scotia, close to Newfoundland, but not Newfoundland. At the age of 20, I began a year in the RCMP. During my 36 years with the RCMP, I was very fortunate to work in all Canadian provinces and to work internationally. I have lived in five provinces and had the wonderful opportunity of spending about 12 years in various human resources areas that I will talk about a bit. Firstly, I worked in the professional standards policy centre; secondly, I worked in the compensation and classification policy centre; and then I became the Chief Human Resources Officer for the province of Quebec, la belle province.

In the early 1990s, if that wasn't bad enough, I became the chief human resources officer for the entire RCMP. That was a very exciting career opportunity. At the time, the RCMP was comprised of about 20,000 uniformed, civilian and public service employees. As the person in charge of the human resource function, I had the pleasure to implement many new programs. All were value- and integrity-based for the betterment of the RCMP's national and international responsibilities and our highly valued staff. In my mandate letter, I was given the responsibility to improve relations with a staff relations program. At that time, uniformed and civilian members were not unionized. Rather, there was a staff relations program that worked with senior management for the overall betterment of the organization and the terms and conditions of employment.

During that time, I had the pleasure to implement the first RCMP Pay Council, which was a tripartite organization, to negotiate pay and benefits directly with the Treasury Board of Canada. This organization developed strategies to establish pay and benefits based on total-compensation methodologies and a comparison universe of major police services. As my career progressed, I was

given the responsibility to champion women and diversity issues on a national basis.

I feel I have a very interesting professional career in human resources, and I believe this experience, together with my education and training, makes me a solid candidate for this opportunity.

I would also like to let you know that I did work with the province of Ontario. I fulfilled the role, as it is called now, of the Chief Information Security Officer—it was not called that at that time. During that time, I had the mandate to renew the information security policy of the government and refreshed the government network security organization.

My final professional endeavour was with Scotiabank, where I became the chief security officer on a global basis. I travelled broadly around the world with those responsibilities. At the time that I joined Scotiabank, it was at the very beginning of the cyber-attack era, and together with a brilliant young—and I emphasize “young”—team, I developed leading-edge strategies to protect the bank and its customers.

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In all of my positions, I have worked closely with the professionals in human resources and always considered the human resources department a critically vital partner. Based on my lifetime of work experience and, in particular, my many years of work in human-resource-related areas, again, I believe that I am a solid candidate for this opportunity.

Lastly, I would like to indicate that I created a profile with the government appointments secretariat many years ago. At the time of creating the profile, I reflected on my experience and I selected a wide variety of areas that I was interested in, including WSIB. For a number of years, I was not contacted about any opportunities. However, in this instance, I was contacted by a ministry official and I was asked if I would be interested in this opportunity. I understood, at that time, that in addition to my human resources experience, my cyber experience was also of interest.

Thank you for listening, and I look forward to our conversation.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Allen. The first round of questioning will go to the government. Mr. Nicholls.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Again, good morning, Mr. Allen. It's a pleasure to have you here, sir. I totally and fully respect your background. At one point in time early in my years, I had considered the RCMP. Looking at the years you were there, our paths may have crossed at some point.

**Mr. Curtis Allen:** I was there for the good years.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Absolutely right, sir.

**Mr. Curtis Allen:** It's tougher now.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Yes.

Sir, I'm just going to cut to the chase on some of the questions that I have for you, since you have quite an exciting background. As you have acquired significant human resources and management experience in your working life, could you please speak to how HR may

perhaps need to rethink the way that the skills and talents of our young people are perceived and acknowledged?

**Mr. Curtis Allen:** That's an interesting question.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Thank you.

**Mr. Curtis Allen:** I do have thoughts. When I worked at Scotiabank, it was dreadfully difficult to get the talent we needed, particularly in the cyber area. It was next to impossible. I was working with my human resources department, but my human resources department couldn't help. So what I did is I had to go make relationships with the directors of the various educational institutions and make a deal with them that I want the top student next year, and for the ensuing years, in this particular specialty. I fear that today we're still behind in those areas.

One of the reasons that I'm really interested in this opportunity is that I wonder the extent to which human resources is looking across the environment and really trying to take stock of what our needs are. Maybe some of my thoughts are dated; I don't know. I believe that in this province we're great at doing some things, and I think we're great at turning out certain professionals, but I think we're woefully slow and late in doing other things. I look at this GTA area. Why aren't we the green energy mecca of North America? Why do we want to send all of the money that we send to Silicon Valley in California? Why aren't we producing a lot of this product here?

I think there are all kinds of industries that we could be doing a lot better at. We do good at some of what we do; I'm not saying we don't. But I think there are all kinds of opportunities to get involved in smart jobs, well-paying jobs. I think we have the resources. I would urge government to move in that direction.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** I would agree with you, sir. Our greatest resource in this province is the people, and we need to look at ways of further developing it. Thank you very much for your time. I appreciate it.

**Mr. Curtis Allen:** Thank you.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Mr. Coe.

**Mr. Lorne Coe:** Thank you, sir, for your delegation and the years of public service that you provided. I appreciate that very much.

I meet fairly regularly with the advocacy committee at the Whitby Chamber of Commerce. They've raised two points recently with me, one of which is—well, a skills mismatch is the way to describe it. More recently, there have been reports from the Ontario Chamber of Commerce that support that particular view. I wonder, through you, if you could speak to what training or learning models the province might want to consider to meet those types of skills mismatches that exist, whether it's in the town of Whitby or other parts of the province.

**Mr. Curtis Allen:** I think we have to sit down with industry. I don't know how we do that; it's a big job. But there are people, I'm sure, in industry—there were people at Scotiabank when I was there who were interested in trying to understand how to protect 20-some-odd million customers around the world in light of the war that's going on in the cybersecurity space—and it is not unlike a war. I think what has to happen is a great deal of consultation with industry leaders.

But I also think that the human resource professionals have a role to play, and I think we're maybe behind the eight ball a little bit. I read the annual report of the association, and it seems to be doing well. Membership is up. It seems to be on a solid financial footing. It has a strategic plan in place from 2019 to 2021. I didn't see the strategic plan, but I would be interested to know in the strategic plan what, if anything, is there about the environmental scan that might have been undertaken, what our needs are going forward and how the human resources departments could play a role in that regard. But I think we need a lot more consultation with the private sector.

**Mr. Lorne Coe:** In my last meeting with the advocacy committee at the Whitby Chamber of Commerce, I took this note down. They suggested that there might be some merit in reorienting learning around formalizing competencies or skill sets. What's your view of that?

**Mr. Curtis Allen:** That sounds like I might have said that, but I don't live in Whitby, so it couldn't have been me. I'm a strong believer in that. I believe we need to understand what businesses' core competencies are, and we need to hire and reward core competency.

**Mr. Lorne Coe:** And that's some of the work that you undertook with the RCMP and in other areas, as well—

**Mr. Curtis Allen:** Absolutely.

**Mr. Lorne Coe:** —and there's demonstrated evidence of the success of that. Is that correct?

**Mr. Curtis Allen:** That is absolutely correct. I was at the RCMP at a time when we were refreshing our classification system—which was a struggle, to tell you the truth, because certain people don't want to see change. But change is needed at times to refresh competencies, because we get into a rut of knowing what we're doing and doing it well, but maybe we're not doing the right thing—but we want to be rewarded highly for what we are doing. So I have some experience in that regard.

**Mr. Lorne Coe:** Very well. Thank you.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Mr. Pang?

**Mr. Billy Pang:** Between 2014 and 2018, 24 young workers in Ontario lost their lives on the job. Minister McNaughton has said on numerous occasions that health and safety is his top priority, and while most businesses in the province have an excellent track record, there are bad apples.

The minister and WSIB worked together to create \$140 million for excellence in occupational health and safety as part of a first-of-its-kind-in-Canada program called Supporting Ontario's Safe Employers, similar to other successful experiences in European and Japanese jurisdictions.

The minister has also increased workplace inspections to 80,000 per year, which works out to 300 per day. When it comes to managing large workplaces, how did your respective employers promote good health and safety practices?

**Mr. Curtis Allen:** My answer in that regard won't be as long as some have been. I haven't worked anywhere where there wasn't a workplace safety committee of representatives within the organization who met regularly

with management and felt very free to bring forward issues, and did bring forward issues, and it worked.

**Mr. Billy Pang:** Okay.

**Mr. Curtis Allen:** Sometimes it might have even been an overreaction. I recall on one occasion where a building was emptied because of a risk. It was an overreaction, but it was totally understood. Workplace safety is important to everybody. As a matter of fact, it's legislated in this province.

**Mr. Billy Pang:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Mr. Bouma?

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**Mr. Will Bouma:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Through you, to the applicant: I'd just like to mention again—I know it has been said already, but I very much appreciate your service, not only to the people of Ontario over the years, but to the people of all of Canada.

**Mr. Curtis Allen:** Thank you.

**Mr. Will Bouma:** I wanted to just get into a little bit about training people. I have a statistic here from the Ontario Chamber of Commerce. They released a survey indicating that 82% of businesses say that they are having difficulty recruiting new, qualified employees. That's really a struggle in my riding of Brantford—Brant also, but especially for small companies that have 10, five or fewer positions. They don't have the resources to really do a lot of that themselves—and they can have a vacancy rate of as high as 5.4%, according to the CFIB, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business.

As these unfilled positions add up—and this is something that's happening across the province—it hurts productivity and, ultimately, the ability for these firms to grow. I have lots of companies that are investing and partnering and working with colleges. But I was wondering if you could give your opinion on what you think is the responsibility of a business to train its own employees, or to train employees to fill those positions, as opposed to the role of government.

**Mr. Curtis Allen:** I think it needs to be a shared responsibility. When I was going to high school in Nova Scotia, down the block was a vocational school. I think Canada has gotten away from vocational schools, but I'm not sure in every case it was the right idea. Corporations big and small, businesses big and small, are struggling to get the right resources. They're struggling, and here we are—we're a democracy. I think we have serious concerns about our ability to grow wealth and to have a healthy society. Corporations and businesses do have a responsibility, but small business that has limited wherewithal to train people—that's a reality. I don't know what the position of any government in this country is, but I think the vocational system, when it was in place, worked very well.

**Mr. Will Bouma:** Thank you.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** I'll have to cut you off there, sir, and we will now switch to the official opposition. Ms. Stiles.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Thank you, Mr. Allen, for being here this morning. We really appreciate your taking the time to

appear before us. It has been interesting to hear a little bit more about your experience and your fit for this appointment, and I appreciate the time you've taken.

As I mentioned earlier when we were questioning the previous applicant, we do like to clarify, just for the public record, partisan connections. You've been very transparent about that in your application, and I appreciate that. Your involvement with the Oakville Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario riding association—it was actually in the document we got from the Clerk here. It says, "According to the Office of the Premier"—and it outlines some of your responsibilities—your "community involvement includes serving as a board member for the Oakville provincial Conservative riding association," which you did put in your application. I noted that. Thank you. I actually applaud anybody who gets involved in the democratic process that way, I really do, for whatever political party.

You have a really impressive resumé which does, definitely, seem to be quite connected, I would say, to this particular role. I'm not going to question that at all. But I did want to ask you, because you did mention you had applied way back when—probably under the previous government, I would assume. Are you retired, if you don't mind me asking?

**Mr. Curtis Allen:** I don't like the word "retirement," but I am retired. I found that—

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** You're not in a full-time position.

**Mr. Curtis Allen:** You actually hit a button there with that. It's very hard. I find that if you love the work, you get up every morning and you go to work with a lot of energy. And all of a sudden you stop? That's really hard.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** I hear you. I know that.

**Mr. Curtis Allen:** I do a part-time thing now, where I'm helping to actually promote a magnificently secure software that's a product that was developed right here west of Toronto and has caught fire in Japan and Europe. They're struggling in Canada, because Canada is not an early adopter.

For 50 years of my working life, I didn't belong to any political party. As a law enforcement officer, I learned early that impartiality and the rule of law was what was important. I had nothing to do with any political party. I've voted—

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Right, until you retired or—

**Mr. Curtis Allen:** When I retire—

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** It's the semi-retired, not really retired—

**Mr. Curtis Allen:** That word that I don't like.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** I hear you.

**Mr. Curtis Allen:** My wife looked at me one day and said, "I know what I'm going to do Monday, but I don't know what you're going to do." Then I started looking for things to do. I met a guy by the name of Stephen Crawford, who I didn't know but I learned about, and I helped him.

I have contributed federally a little bit. I have gone to a couple of breakfasts over the years if there's a speaker that I think is highly interesting. I've done that. I went to a dinner. Strangely enough, it was Minister Rickford. I have

a keen interest in energy and green energy, because I don't like the idea of taxation being the response to green energy issues and a clean environment. I think technology is the response. So I did pay to go to a dinner to meet Minister Rickford. I'm very open about all of that.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Minister Rickford is doing well on those dinners by looks of these appointees.

**Mr. Curtis Allen:** Well, it was a good dinner, by the way, but the conversation was better.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Good. So you've been a PC donor and an active member of the riding association. Actually, what I wanted to ask you was—because you said in the years prior, you put yourself out there as a potential appointee, and you mentioned a number of boards, and you never got called.

**Mr. Curtis Allen:** No.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Sometimes I wonder if it is that connection you have to that, whether it was under the previous party or this party, that somehow you've got to have that additional little qualification that gets you in the door; that is, "I donated," or, "I am an active volunteer with." It's kind of heartbreaking, actually, because as you said, your experience is significant.

**Mr. Will Bouma:** Point of order.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Mr. Bouma.

**Mr. Will Bouma:** I don't think we're here to have due conjecture and to theorize. I think we're just dealing with the facts of the appointment.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** I think the member was asking a question regarding the appointment process.

**Mr. Will Bouma:** Then I would appreciate if she could get to a question, Mr. Chair.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** So, as I was saying—because I thought it was an interesting point, right? What is it that the previous government didn't see in your qualifications? You obviously have significant qualifications. Maybe it's more of a comment at this point, but I think that you seem like somebody who could have been appointed to any one of these boards previously. Then, now, you are and that seems well-suited—

**Mr. Curtis Allen:** I thought there was a waiting period, maybe. I don't know.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Yes, it's strange.

I also wanted to specifically ask you something about a comment you made around—two comments you made. One was about the green energy opportunities, because I thought it was very interesting. This government has actually cancelled quite a lot of contracts, which has reduced, one could argue, opportunities for many people in this province, particularly in the area of green energy. I just wondered if you wanted to comment on that.

**Mr. Curtis Allen:** I think what you're talking about is some of the windmills and maybe some of those—I'm not sure that I would have supported the extent to which the previous government went down some of those roads. I think if we're investing in green energy as a waste mechanism, as a mechanism to give it to somebody else while we charge our own people a lot of money for electricity—I'm shocked in my house because I pay more

for electricity now than I do for heat. It was never that way as I grew up.

I'm talking more about other forms of green energy. There are actually green nuclear reactors now. I shouldn't say "green," but they don't have the same radioactive elements to them. I just think there are all kinds of technological responses to green energy that don't have to involve some form of taxation, but yet are going to improve the economy and improve our overall footprint.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** And what we need is the political will to get there, right?

**Mr. Curtis Allen:** Well, we probably do. We probably need all parties to want to pull together.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Yes. It would be great if we could work together on some things. I completely agree.

I thought because of your background in human resources and, of course, the position you're being appointed to, one of the things you talked about, vocational schools—I don't know; I guess I have mixed feelings. I was a school board trustee prior to this and saw how some school boards had adjusted. Some of it, I think, is positive, and there are definitely some areas where we could do a lot better.

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One of the things that I found alarming over the last year is that a lot of courses are being lost, particularly in areas that you might consider around the vocational line, things like some of those courses that would lead you into the skilled trades. When you start cutting back on schools and course options and classrooms, then actually the first things to go are those classes, which is really unfortunate. We've seen it happen repeatedly.

So when you talk about that, what would your vision be? Would it be to increase access to those sorts of courses in our high schools? Do you think that is one of the ways that students perhaps connect with those other potential vocations that we really aren't seeing enough young people attracted to these days?

**Mr. Curtis Allen:** I moved to the GTA in 2001. I had to wait a year to have a house built. It's a tract house, an ordinary house in northeast Oakville. Part of the delay in all of that was labour shortage. It was trying to get qualified people. There are a lot of people coming to this country, but I think in some ways we need to have a little better target, a better funnel on some of that, so that our immigration responds a little bit more closely to our need, whether it's in some of the other areas I've talked about, whether it's in human resources or whatever it is. It's a broad question.

I'm a bit of a handy guy when it comes to doing things and I look at plumbing as a trade. I've done a lot of plumbing work, but I don't hold a licence for it. I don't think some of this stuff is qualified, but I just find it seems right now that the time it takes to apprentice to become a plumber is unusually long—but I don't know what the answer is. I just know when I grew up in Nova Scotia that vocational school turned out a lot of people who found work.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Yes. All right. Thank you very much.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** That concludes your questioning?

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Yes.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Thank you. Your questioning is concluded. You may step down, sir.

**Mr. Curtis Allen:** Thank you, everybody.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** We will now consider the intended appointment of Frank Davis, member of the Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario) board of directors.

Mr. Coe.

**Mr. Lorne Coe:** I move concurrence in the intended appointment of Frank Davis, nominated as member of the Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario) board of directors.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Concurrence in the appointment has been moved by Mr. Coe. Any further discussion? Seeing none, I would like to call a vote. All those in favour? Opposed? That carries.

We will now consider the intended appointment of Curtis Allen, member of the Human Resources Professionals Association board of directors.

Mr. Coe.

**Mr. Lorne Coe:** I move concurrence in the intended appointment of Curtis Allen, nominated as member of the Human Resources Professionals Association board of directors.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Concurrence in the appointment has been moved by Mr. Coe. Is there any further discussion? Seeing none, I'd like to call a vote. All those in favour? Opposed? That also carries.

#### COMMITTEE BUSINESS

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Our next order of business is extensions:

(1) The deadline to review the intended appointment of David Sandor, selected from the January 31, 2020, certificate, is March 2020. Do we have unanimous agreement to extend the deadline to consider the intended appointment of David Sandor to March 31, 2020? I heard a no, so we don't.

(2) The deadline to review the intended appointment of Fred Barkhouse, selected from the January 31, 2020 certificate—

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Chair, may I ask a question or comment on this?

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Ms. Stiles.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Could we be given a reason why the appointees were not able to appear within the requested period or the intended period?

**The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Jocelyn McCauley):** Because the previous certificate for January 17 was extended, we've gone back and begun scheduling for that specific certificate since it's extended into March. Because of that, the possible dates for these individuals have also been pushed back. So in order to accommodate them, we would need unanimous consent in order to do so.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** It's unfortunate that the members opposite won't agree to extend this. We've seen this again and again and again. I think this was a really useful opportunity to speak and to hear from some potential appointees to boards, commissions and agencies. My goodness, the least we can do as members of provincial Parliament, surely, is to provide an opportunity for some transparency and accountability in this process, especially given this government's record thus far.

I think it's shameful, Chair, that the members opposite wouldn't just allow for the extension by a couple of weeks so that we could hear from these people. It does them a disservice as well, because it creates this cloud of uncertainty around all of those appointees. It's not doing them any service.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Further discussion on that issue? Seeing none—

*Interjection.*

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Mr. Nicholls.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Thank you. I'll be brief. We have so many appointments that have to be made in this province. To ask every one of them to come to this committee, I think, is a bit rich. There are those that—and we have to get these appointments made. To respond to the member from Davenport and the opposition, there isn't enough time to be able to have all of these people. We have to get these appointments made and expedited.

I appreciate the fact that we are able to have at least a couple of people at our weekly committee meeting, to review and discuss their qualifications and to make decisions as to their appointments.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Ms. Stiles.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Mr. Chair, with due respect to the member opposite, we only make a handful of selections each time. We pick a handful of people. We pick them very carefully. We consider very carefully who we want to hear from, and I would hope that you would do the same. I would hope that the members of the government would want to select some people that we could actually hear from here.

Mr. Chair, we have made repeated attempts to meet to discuss with the government members opportunities—extending the number of mornings or days that we could actually meet, even between. This is one of the few committees that can meet when the Legislature is not in session, right? We are not given that opportunity, because these members refuse to agree.

I can't understand it. I can't understand it. There's no good reason that has ever been given. To say that we don't have enough time—I'm sorry, that is indeed rich. That is rich. There is plenty of time. It's a matter of making the time and having the will to actually sit and participate in this important process. It's very disappointing, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Further discussion? Seeing none:

(2) The deadline to review the intended appointment of Fred Barkhouse, selected from the January 31, 2020, certificate, is March 1, 2020. Do we have unanimous agreement to extend the deadline to consider the intended

appointment of Fred Barkhouse to March 31, 2020? I heard a no. We do not have unanimous consent.

(3) The deadline to review the intended appointment of Robert Nicholson, selected from the January 31, 2020, certificate, is March 1, 2020. Do we have unanimous agreement to extend the deadline to consider the intended appointment of Robert Nicholson to March 31, 2020? I heard a no.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Mr. Chair?

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Ms. Stiles.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** If I may: I would wonder if maybe the members opposite would like to explain why they don't want that person to appear here at committee—if anybody from the government side would like to comment on why they do not want to allow that particular person who is being selected by this committee to appear, why they do not want that person to appear.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Any further discussion?

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** For the record, Mr. Chair, I'd like it to be noted that nobody on the government side would respond to that question.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Thank you.

(4) The deadline to review the intended appointment of Robert Swaita, selected from the January 31, 2020, certificate, is March 1, 2020. Do we have unanimous agreement to extend the deadline to consider the intended appointment of Robert Swaita to March 31, 2020? I heard a no, so we have no unanimous consent.

Ms. Stiles.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Mr. Chair, I wonder if the members opposite on the government side would mind commenting on why they refuse to allow Mr. Robert Swaita to appear before this committee.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Any further discussion? Seeing none—Ms. Stiles.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Mr. Chair, I would like it to be recorded and noted that these members opposite refuse to explain why they were objecting to allowing Mr. Robert Swaita to appear before this committee.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Thank you, Ms. Stiles. Number (5)—Mr. Bouma.

**Mr. Will Bouma:** If I could, if this is going to be the pattern for the rest of these, could we do them all at once, Mr. Chair, or is that out of order?

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Will Bouma:** Thank you.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** (5): The deadline to review the intended appointment of Kenneth Geoff Topping, selected from the January 31, 2020, certificate, is March 1, 2020. Do we have unanimous agreement to extend the deadline to consider the intended appointment of Kenneth Geoff Topping to March 31, 2020? I don't have unanimous consent.

Ms. Stiles.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** You're going to be shocked by this, Mr. Chair: I'm wondering if the members opposite on the government side would care to comment on why they do

not want us to review the application of—is it Kenneth? I don't seem to have list here in front of me.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Kenneth Geoff Topping.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Kenneth Geoff Topping, yes. Could we get some comment, please, from the other side?

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Any further discussion? Seeing none—Ms. Stiles.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Can we please have it noted that they did not want to respond to that question again and they

can't give any reason why they don't want to hear from Kenneth Geoff Topping?

**Mr. Billy Pang:** Point of order.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Mr. Pang.

**Mr. Billy Pang:** “Didn't respond” doesn't mean “doesn't want to respond,” okay?

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Fair enough. Fair enough.

**The Chair (Mr. John Vanthof):** Noted.

That concludes our meeting for this morning. Thank you.

*The committee adjourned at 1011.*







## **STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES**

### **Chair / Président**

Mr. John Vanthof (Timiskaming–Cochrane ND)

### **Vice-Chair / Vice-Président**

Mr. Taras Natyshak (Essex ND)

Mr. Will Bouma (Brantford–Brant PC)

Mr. Lorne Coe (Whitby PC)

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto (Mississauga–Lakeshore PC)

Mr. Taras Natyshak (Essex ND)

Mr. Rick Nicholls (Chatham-Kent–Leamington PC)

Mr. Billy Pang (Markham–Unionville PC)

Ms. Marit Stiles (Davenport ND)

Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam (Scarborough–Rouge Park PC)

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Research Services