

Legislative
Assembly
of Ontario



Assemblée
législative
de l'Ontario

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

F-4

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

F-4

**Standing Committee on
Finance and Economic Affairs**

Selection of estimates

1st Session
44th Parliament

Tuesday 21 October 2025

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

Sélection des budgets
des dépenses

1^{re} session
44^e législature

Mardi 21 octobre 2025

Chair: Hon. Ernie Hardeman
Clerk: Lesley Flores

Président : L'hon. Ernie Hardeman
Greffière : Lesley Flores

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



Journal des débats et services linguistiques
Salle 500, aile ouest, Édifice du Parlement
111, rue Wellesley ouest, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Téléphone, 416-325-7400
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

ISSN 1180-4386

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON
FINANCE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

Tuesday 21 October 2025

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

COMITÉ PERMANENT DES FINANCES
ET DES AFFAIRES ÉCONOMIQUES

Mardi 21 octobre 2025

The committee met at 0902 in room 151.

SELECTION OF ESTIMATES

The Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Good morning. The Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs will now come to order.

Our agenda this morning is the selection of estimates for consideration.

On June 4, 2025, the Lieutenant Governor transmitted to the Legislative Assembly the estimates of certain sums required for the services of the province for the year ending March 31, 2026. Pursuant to standing order 62(b), these estimates, upon tabling, are deemed to be referred to the standing committees to which the respective ministries and offices were assigned pursuant to standing 113(b).

The estimates for the following ministries have been referred to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs for selection and consideration:

- Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade;
- Ministry of Finance;
- Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development;
- Cabinet Office;
- Office of the Premier; and
- Treasury Board Secretariat.

The objective of this morning's meeting is to select the estimates of certain ministries or offices for review by the committee.

All committee members should have received an electronic copy of the 2025-26 estimates and the corresponding briefing books from the Clerk.

Standing order 63 sets out the process by which the committee makes its selections. Each of the recognized parties on the committee shall select the estimates of up to one ministry or office in each turn. The official opposition selects first, followed by the third party and then the government. If members of one party decline to make a selection, the selection then passes to the next party in the rotation. The process concludes when either there are no further ministries or offices available to select or if all recognized parties decline to make any further selections.

Pursuant to standing order 63(b)(ii.1), the estimates of the Office of the Premier and estimates of the Cabinet Office will constitute as one selection and represent a single turn.

Pursuant to standing order 63(c), these selections are to be reviewed in the order that they were chosen. This order may be altered by unanimous agreement of the sub-committee on committee business or by order of the House.

Pursuant to standing order 63(d), the time for the consideration of estimates of each ministry or office shall be determined by the respective committee.

The estimates of those ministries not selected for consideration will be deemed to have been passed by the committee. As Chair, I will report those unselected estimates back to the House, and they will be deemed to be adopted and concurred in by the House.

When making your selections, please look at the list of ministries and offices as they are listed in the estimates book or as displayed on the screen in front of you and provide the correct names when selecting a ministry or office for consideration.

The Clerk has displayed these corrected names on the screens in front of you and has provided a hard copy which should be in front of you.

Do the members have any questions before we begin? Oh my, I must have read that well. Then we will start with the selections.

We'll start with the official opposition, for their first selection. MPP Shaw.

Ms. Sandy Shaw: We select the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development. How could we not pick that one?

The Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): MPP Cerjanec.

Mr. Rob Cerjanec: The Ministry of Finance, please.

The Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): The government. *Interjection.*

The Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Oh, I was supposed to say "MPP Smith" first. Now let's hear what your pick is.

Mr. Dave Smith: The Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade.

The Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): In the next round, we go to MPP Shaw again.

Ms. Sandy Shaw: The Office of the Premier.

The Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): MPP Cerjanec.

Mr. Rob Cerjanec: Treasury Board Secretariat.

The Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): MPP Smith.

Mr. Dave Smith: I'll take the exciting Ministry of Red Tape Reduction, please.

The Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): It's not on the list.

Mr. Dave Smith: They haven't submitted their estimates?

The Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): It's not in volume 1.

Mr. Dave Smith: Thank you. I guess we're done.

The Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Make another pick.

Mr. Dave Smith: There are no other picks.

The Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Oh, there are no other picks? That's it? Well, thank you.

Mr. Rob Cerjanec: Chair?

The Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): MPP Cerjanec.

Mr. Rob Cerjanec: I believe, under standing order 113(b), the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs has said that the Ministry of Red Tape Reduction is to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs.

The Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): They're not on the list. We are making the choices on the list that was presented, and they're not on the list.

Mr. Rob Cerjanec: I understand it might not be on the list in front—

The Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): No, we can't add and take away from a list. This is the list that is up for debate.

Mr. Rob Cerjanec: Okay.

The Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): MPP Shaw.

Ms. Sandy Shaw: So we've selected all of the ones that are on this list? I'm so sorry; could you—in the order that they're selected, that's the consideration—

The Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): The order that are selected in will be the order that they are heard.

Ms. Sandy Shaw: Okay. And is that something that you report back? Would you be able to repeat the order to me?

Interjection.

Ms. Sandy Shaw: Oh, duh. Thank you. Look at that.

The Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Thank you for your selections. I thank everybody for attending this morning's meeting.

The committee will stand recessed until 3 o'clock this afternoon, as the agenda said, for committee business.

The committee recessed from 0910 to 1503.

The Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Good afternoon, everyone. The Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs will now come to order.

Before we proceed with our scheduled business, I'd like to address a question which was raised during our morning meeting. Members noted that, pursuant to standing orders 113(b) and 62(b), the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs assigns various ministries and offices of this committee and that the estimates of these ministries and offices are deemed referred to this committee upon tabling. Members also noted that the Ministry of Red Tape Reduction was one of the ministries assigned to this committee and that it was not included on the list of ministries and offices displayed onscreen during the selection meeting this morning.

I'm prepared to provide some clarification. The estimates of the Ministry of Red Tape Reduction were tabled

under the 2025-26 estimates for Cabinet Office, under vote 4011. This can be found on page 56 of both the English and French versions of the expenditure estimates book. The Ministry of Red Tape Reduction was not listed as a discrete option for selection since the ministry's estimates were tabled under, and will therefore be considered, during the committee's consideration of the estimates of Cabinet Office and the Office of the Premier, which are considered together, pursuant to standing order 63(b)(ii.1).

I'd like to thank the committee members for their questions this morning.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

The Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): We will now proceed with our agenda item for the afternoon: committee business. Is there any business which members wish to raise? MPP Smith.

Mr. Dave Smith: Seeing that all subcommittee members are present, pursuant to standing order 63(c), I'm seeking unanimous agreement of the subcommittee on committee business to alter the order of the consideration of the estimates of the ministries and offices selected by this committee such that the estimates are considered in the following order: (1) the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade; (2) the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development; (3) the Ministry of Finance; (4) the Ministry of the Office of the Premier/Cabinet Office; and (5) the Treasury Board Secretariat.

The Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Is there unanimous consent for the agreement within the subcommittee on committee business? Okay, it's agreed to.

Pursuant to standing order 63(c), the order of consideration has been changed. Please note that the new order for consideration will be as follows: Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade; Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development; Ministry of Finance; Office of the Premier and Cabinet Office; and Treasury Board Secretariat.

Is there any further business the members wish to raise? MPP Smith.

Mr. Dave Smith: I move that, pursuant to standing order 63(d), the following time be allocated to the consideration of the estimates of the ministries and offices selected by the committee:

—the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade for two hours;

—the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development for two hours;

—the Ministry of Finance for three hours;

—the Ministry of Office of the Premier/Cabinet Office for two hours;

—the Treasury Board Secretariat for two hours; and

That the ministers responsible for those respective ministries and offices be invited to appear before the committee; and

That for the review of the estimates of the Office of the Premier and Cabinet Office, the Minister of Red Tape Reduction be invited to appear before the committee; and

That for each ministry the minister be allotted 20 minutes to make an opening statement followed by question and answer in rotations of 15 minutes for the official opposition members of the committee, 15 minutes for the third-party members of the committee, five minutes for the independent member of the committee, and 15 minutes for the government members of the committee for the remainder of the allotted time; and

That the committee meet for the purpose of considering the estimates of the selected ministries and offices at the following times:

—the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade on Tuesday, October 28, 2025, from 3 p.m. until 5 p.m.; and

—the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development on Wednesday, October 29, 2025, from 3 p.m. until 5 p.m.; and

—the Ministry of Finance on Wednesday, November 12, 2025, from 2 p.m. and 5 p.m.; and

—the Office of the Premier/Cabinet Office on Thursday, November 13, 2025, from 10 a.m. until 12 p.m.; and

—the Treasury Board Secretariat on Thursday, November 13, 2025, from 1 p.m. until 3 p.m.; and

That the subcommittee on committee business be authorized to revise dates and times if necessary.

The Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Just a quick comment—“from 2 p.m. and 5 p.m.”?

Mr. Dave Smith: From 2 p.m. until 5 p.m.

Let me say that line again.

The Ministry of Finance on Wednesday, November 12, 2025, from 2 p.m. until 5 p.m.

The Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Thank you.

Any further discussion on this motion? MPP Brady.

Ms. Bobbi Ann Brady: I’m just pointing out that the 12th and 13th—that’s during constituency week. Am I correct?

Mr. Dave Smith: Yes.

The Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further discussion?

Is the committee ready to vote? All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

Any further business for the committee?

I thank everybody for attending today’s meeting.

This concludes the business for today. The committee now stands adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 1510.

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