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Standing Committee on the Interior

Selection of estimates

1st Session
44th Parliament

Tuesday 21 October 2025

Comité permanent des affaires intérieures

Sélection des budgets
des dépenses

1^{re} session
44^e législature

Mardi 21 octobre 2025

Chair: Aris Babikian
Clerk: Stefan Uguen-Csenge

Président : Aris Babikian
Greffier : Stefan Uguen-Csenge

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

**STANDING COMMITTEE
ON THE INTERIOR****COMITÉ PERMANENT
DES AFFAIRES INTÉRIEURES**

Tuesday 21 October 2025

Mardi 21 octobre 2025

*The committee met at 0900 in committee room 1.***SELECTION OF ESTIMATES**

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Good morning, everyone. The Standing Committee on the Interior will now come to order.

On our agenda this morning is the selection of estimates for consideration. Pursuant to standing 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 order 113(b).

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

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

- Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness;
- Ministry of Energy and Mines;
- Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks;
- Ministry of Natural Resources;
- Ministry of Northern Economic Development and Growth;
- Ministry of Rural Affairs.

The objective of this morning's meeting is to select the estimates of certain ministries for review by the committee. 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 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 available to select or if all recognized parties decline to make any, or any further, selections.

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

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

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, I would also like to add that—if members could please look at the list of the ministries as they are listed in the estimates book and give the correct names of the ministries when they select them for consideration. The Clerk has displayed these correct names on the screens in front of you and has provided a hard copy which should be in front of you.

Do members have any questions before we begin? I see no questions.

We'll start the selection round. I will start with the official opposition for their first selection. MPP Bourgouin, go ahead.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: Ministry of Energy and Mines.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Next is the third party. MPP Tsao.

Mr. Jonathan Tsao: Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Next is the government side. MPP Cuzzetto.

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): We go back to the official opposition. MPP Bourgouin.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: Ministry of Natural Resources.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Third party? MPP Tsao.

Mr. Jonathan Tsao: Ministry of Northern Economic Development and Growth.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Government side? MPP Cuzzetto.

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: Ministry of Rural Affairs.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Okay, we did our selection for this morning.

Are there any comments or questions? I see none.

We will recess until 3 o'clock this afternoon.

The committee recessed from 0906 to 1500.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Good afternoon, everyone. Is there any business that members wish to raise? MPP Cuzzetto.

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: I move that, pursuant to standing order 63(d), the following time be allotted to the consideration of the estimates of the ministries selected by the committee:

- the Ministry of Energy and Mines for two hours;
- the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks for two hours;
- the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness for two hours;
- the Ministry of Natural Resources for two hours;
- the Ministry of Northern Economic Development and Growth for two hours; and
- the Ministry of Rural Affairs for two hours; and

That the ministers responsible for those respective ministries 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 and 15 minutes for the Liberal members 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 at the following times:

- the Ministry of Energy and Mines on Monday, October 27, 2025, from 1 p.m. until 3 p.m.; and
- the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks on Monday, October 27, 2025, from 3:30 p.m. until 5:30 p.m.; and
- the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness on Monday, November 3, 2025, from 1 p.m. until 3 p.m.; and
- the Ministry of Natural Resources on Monday, November 3, 2025, from 3:30 p.m. until 5:30 p.m.; and
- the Ministry of Northern Economic Development and Growth on Tuesday, November 4, 2025, from 3 p.m. until 5 p.m.; and
- the Ministry of Rural Affairs on Wednesday, November 12, 2025, from 10 a.m. until 12 p.m. and

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

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Is there any debate or discussion on the motion? MPP Bourgouin.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: Two hours is very short. To be able to have access to the ministers and to ask questions and get some clarification and get to some of the points we want to discuss, there should be more—four hours, at minimum. Right now, all it says is 15 minutes. Fifteen minutes is short. It should be a lot more. So, definitely, I have a problem with this motion. It should be amended to reflect four instead of two and give us the opportunity to ask the questions to the ministers that we ask to have a chance—because this gives us, finally, an opportunity to ask the questions to the ministers that we want answers for.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? MPP Tsao.

Mr. Jonathan Tsao: I think my colleague raises a very valid point. I'm new to the committee work, but from my understanding, the point of the estimates is to be able to ask thorough questions of the minister, of the staff, to actually get an understanding of where this money is going, so if we don't have proper time to do so, it probably, I would suggest, defeats the whole purpose of the exercise we're conducting here.

So I would strongly urge the committee to consider the suggestion being put forward by my colleague to my right.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? No? Okay.

Are the members ready to vote? All those in favour, please raise your hand. All in opposition, please raise your hand. The motion is carried.

Are there any other motions or business for discussion? I see no issues to discuss.

Thank you very much for attending today's meeting. This concludes our business of the day until 1 p.m. on Monday, October 27. Thank you very much for your kind co-operation. Have a nice day.

The committee adjourned at 1506.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE INTERIOR

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