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**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

JP-2

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

JP-2

**Standing Committee on  
Justice Policy**

Selection of estimates

1<sup>st</sup> Session  
44<sup>th</sup> Parliament

Wednesday 22 October 2025

**Comité permanent  
de la justice**

Sélection des budgets  
des dépenses

1<sup>re</sup> session  
44<sup>e</sup> législature

Mercredi 22 octobre 2025

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Chair: Lorne Coe  
Clerk: Isaiah Thorning

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
JUSTICE POLICYCOMITÉ PERMANENT  
DE LA JUSTICE

Wednesday 22 October 2025

Mercredi 22 octobre 2025

*The committee met at 0900 in committee room 2.*

## SELECTION OF ESTIMATES

**The Chair (Mr. Lorne Coe):** Good morning, everyone. The Standing Committee on Justice Policy will now come to order. On our agenda this morning is the selection of estimates for consideration.

Pursuant to standing order 62(b), the 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. Did you all receive that material? Okay.

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

- the Ministry of the Attorney General;
- the Ministry of Francophone Affairs;
- the Ministry of Indigenous Affairs and First Nations Economic Reconciliation;
- the Ministry of Emergency Preparedness and Response;
- the Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement; and
- the Ministry of the Solicitor General.

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 selection. Each of the recognized parties on this 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 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 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 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, I would also like to add that if members could please look at the list of ministries as they're listed in the estimates book and give the correct names of the ministries when they select them for consideration. The Clerk to my left has displayed these correct names on the screens in front of you and has provided at your place a hard copy which should be in front of you. Does everyone have that? Thank you.

Do members have any questions before you begin? N'est-ce pas? Okay.

I'll start with the official opposition, please, for the first selection. MPP Fife.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** The official opposition selects the Ministry of the Solicitor General as our first choice.

**The Chair (Mr. Lorne Coe):** Thank you very much—duly noted.

The representative from the third party is not here at the present time for their first selection.

I would go then, next, to the government for their first selection. MPP Ciriello, please, when you're ready.

**MPP Monica Ciriello:** The government picks the Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement.

**The Chair (Mr. Lorne Coe):** MPP Fife, please, for the next selection.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** The official opposition chooses the Ministry of the Attorney General.

**The Chair (Mr. Lorne Coe):** Back to the government, please: MPP Ciriello.

**MPP Monica Ciriello:** The government picks the Ministry of Emergency Preparedness and Response.

**The Chair (Mr. Lorne Coe):** Back to MPP Fife, please.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** The official opposition selects the Ministry of Indigenous Affairs and First Nations Economic Reconciliation.

**The Chair (Mr. Lorne Coe):** MPP Ciriello, please, for the next selection.

**MPP Monica Ciriello:** The government picks the Ministry of Francophone Affairs.

**The Chair (Mr. Lorne Coe):** That concludes our selections. Thank you for your selections, everyone, and thank you for attending this morning's meeting.

As Chair, I'll be reporting back the committee's selections at 1 o'clock today in the Legislature. We'll resume our meeting when I get back, which should be, probably, about 1:15, or earlier. I'll try to be quick.

MPP Fife, please.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Chair, is there anything prohibiting us from moving forward with the scheduling of estimates this morning?

**The Chair (Mr. Lorne Coe):** We'll have to discuss that in the afternoon.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Because there's no motion?

**The Chair (Mr. Lorne Coe):** Yes.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Thank you.

**The Chair (Mr. Lorne Coe):** There's no further business for the committee at the present time. This committee is adjourned until approximately 1:15.

*The committee recessed from 0907 to 1300.*

#### COMMITTEE BUSINESS

**The Chair (Mr. Lorne Coe):** The Standing Committee on Justice Policy is reconvened. Is there any business which members wish to raise? MPP Allsopp.

**Mr. Tyler Allsopp:** I have a motion today. 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 the Solicitor General for two hours; and
- the Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement for two hours; and
- the Ministry of the Attorney General for two hours; and
- the Ministry of Emergency Preparedness and Response for two hours; and
- the Minister of Indigenous Affairs and First Nations Economic Reconciliation for two hours; and
- the Ministry of Francophone 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, 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 the Solicitor General on Wednesday, October 29, 2025, from 3 p.m. until 5 p.m.; and
- the Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement on Thursday, October 30, 2025, from 1 p.m. until 3 p.m.; and

—the Ministry of the Attorney General on Thursday, October 30, 2025, from 3:30 p.m. until 5:30 p.m.; and

—the Ministry of Emergency Preparedness and Response on Wednesday, November 5, 2025, from 3 p.m. until 5 p.m.; and

—the Ministry of Indigenous Affairs and First Nations Economic Reconciliation on Thursday, November 6, 2025, from 1 p.m. until 3 p.m.; and

—the Ministry of Francophone Affairs on Thursday, November 6, 2025, from 3:30 p.m. until 5:30 p.m.; and

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

**The Chair (Mr. Lorne Coe):** MPP Allsopp has moved a motion regarding the times and dates when the Standing Committee on Justice Policy can meet to consider the estimates of the selected ministries from this morning. Is there any debate or discussion on the motion? MPP Wong-Tam.

**MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam:** Thank you to the honourable member for tabling his motion.

I will be tabling a different motion—one that expands the opportunity for discussion from the two-hour allocation which you're proposing to five hours.

Obviously, these ministries are significant. Some of them are in the hundreds of millions of dollars—some of them exceeding billions, by the time we add the capital expenditures. From experience, having sat in the House for almost three years now, there is simply not enough time, especially by the time we break down the allocations into 20-minute truncated formats.

I think we can all recognize that we are here to do the people's work. There are residents from across Ontario who sent us here to ensure that this government and the opposition members are given the opportunity to think through what good policies, programs and services are. We certainly do recognize—I do, as a member who is held accountable by the taxpayers in my community on how we are spending money and how the government is spending and investing money in the different programs and services, to make sure that those public services are delivered in a timely fashion when Ontarians need them.

So I really would urge folks to consider allowing for an expansion of time. If we don't use the full five hours for the ministries that I'm proposing, that's okay. But what we need to do is make sure that we have enough time to really flesh out the budgetary considerations in front of us—it's the few opportunities that we have in this Legislature, as part of our role, to actually delve into the numbers, where we get to have conversations with the folks in charge of the different ministries and also the staff who support them.

I think that we have a responsibility—and I know I certainly do—to ensure that financial accountability is there. When services don't work or they're deficient, or there are extensive backlogs in the courts and it takes a very long time for us to get a case to trial and we start running into the Jordan limits, or we hear about the corrections facilities being overcrowded to the point that now general populations are going into specialized re-

habilitation facilities—we all have a responsibility here to make sure that the investments and the money that we're responsible for are going to be carried out in a most efficient and responsible way. Two hours for an entire ministry review is simply not enough.

My motion will be for five hours for the respective ministries that have been called up, and we will break that time up in allocated ways that we can all agree upon. That's what I'm proposing. I know I don't necessarily have all the votes here. However, I'm just asking and appealing to the members to think about how we can allocate more time for ourselves. And if we end up using two hours, then so be it; we leave three hours on the table. But it is impossible for us to ask more questions, to dive deeper, if we're restricting ourselves to only a two-hour allocation.

I think that we all recognize that two hours is simply not enough to review ministries that are as important as the Solicitor General's spending, ministries around public business service delivery spending. Two hours for an entire ministry, two hours for the Attorney General, emergency preparedness—my goodness, we're heading into extreme climate change. We're heading into terrorist threats. We need more time than to invite our guests here to ask them one or two questions and then let them leave the room when we have so many questions that are unanswered.

I implore you to consider giving yourselves more time to do your job on behalf of the voters who sent you here to ensure that we are fiscally responsible on their behalf and investing in the services that they expect us to invest in. Thank you very much.

**The Chair (Mr. Lorne Coe):** Thank you, MPP Wong-Tam. Members of the committee, is there a will to amend the motion presently on the floor?

**The Clerk pro tem (Ms. Thushitha Kobikrishna):** Ask that to MPP Wong-Tam.

**The Chair (Mr. Lorne Coe):** I'm sorry. MPP Wong-Tam?

**MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam:** Am I able to table my motion now?

**The Chair (Mr. Lorne Coe):** Just hold on. Go ahead.  
*Interjection.*

**The Chair (Mr. Lorne Coe):** Okay, sure. I'd like to recess for five minutes, please.

*The committee recessed from 1308 to 1317.*

**The Chair (Mr. Lorne Coe):** We're back in session.

MPP Wong-Tam, do you want to talk to your motion that's up on the screen, please?

**MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam:** Yes. Thank you very much, Chair, and thank you, everyone, for your patience.

This is the motion I'd like to move:

I move that the motion be amended by striking out "two hours" wherever it appears in paragraph 1 and replacing it with "five hours"; and

That paragraph 4 be struck and replaced with the following:

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

"—Ministry of the Solicitor General on Wednesday, October 29, 2025, from 1 p.m. until 6 p.m.; and

"—Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement on Thursday, October 30, 2025, from 1 p.m. until 6 p.m.; and

"—Ministry of the Attorney General on Wednesday, November 5, 2025, from 1 p.m. until 6 p.m.; and

"—Ministry of Emergency Preparedness and Response on Thursday, November 6, 2025, from 1 p.m. until 6 p.m.; and

"—Ministry of Indigenous Affairs and First Nations Economic Reconciliation on Wednesday, November 12, from 1 p.m. until 6 p.m.; and

"—Ministry of Francophone Affairs on November 13, from 1 p.m. until 6 p.m.; and"

That concludes the amendment.

Chair, I'm happy to speak to the motion when you're ready.

**The Chair (Mr. Lorne Coe):** You can do that now.

**MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam:** Okay. Thank you very much, Chair, and thank you, members, for letting me table this amendment to the motion.

I recognize that the estimates process is really an opportunity for each and every single one of us to ask ministers as well as their deputies and supporting senior ministerial staff about how they're spending the money on behalf of taxpayers in Ontario. Oftentimes, we are given long answers from the ministry and ministerial staff. Sometimes you have enough time to get one to maybe two questions in, which isn't a heck of a lot to unpack a ministry as complicated as the Solicitor General, which, of course, is in charge of public safety, corrections, as well as funding for the OPP. This is a \$3.9-billion portfolio, and we know that public safety is top of mind for everyone in Ontario. We recognize that in order for us to rely on our first responders, we need to know whether or not they're properly equipped with the resources that they need to do the job that's before them. Oftentimes, this is a great opportunity for us to bring questions in on behalf of stakeholders that are working within the different portfolios and be able to bring those questions directly to the minister and hopefully get an answer.

I know that the ministers do the very best that they can to provide answers, but sometimes those answers are quite loquacious. When they are long answers, the clock is run and we don't have enough time to get to even a second and third question.

I think we can all recognize that not all ministries, perhaps, may need the full five hours, but let's make sure it's there in case they do, because we have heard about the importance of public safety to everyone's mindset. I heard the Premier talk about how he is personally invested in public safety. But we won't be able to enable that work unless we do our job here at committee. You can't have a functional corrections system working without a functional court system because you can't be tough on crime if

we're not smart on crime. Being smart on crime means that we have to run the most efficient court system in Canada. That's not where we are right now.

Chair, you'll recognize that we have the longest wait times when it comes to getting a case to trial in the country. We have the largest court system and justice system across Canada. We also are running into very frustrating situations where I'm sure even the members across will have to answer to their own constituents on why we are seeing, in a one-year period, 333,000 highway traffic charges being dropped by crown prosecutors. Despite the fact that the charges were laid, the police did their job, they filed an investigation, there was enough for the crowns at that time to determine that they could go and proceed to trial, and then nothing happens.

The Ministry of the Attorney General has 13 tribunals that they are in charge of. We have heard about some of the challenges in some of those tribunals. They're not all performing poorly by any stretch, but some of them need to have an additional microscope under them. That includes the Landlord and Tenant Board. We can't have tenants or landlords be stuck in the queue waiting for justice because we all know, here in the Standing Committee on Justice Policy, that justice delayed is justice denied.

The Attorney General is responsible for a whole whack—just a remarkable number—of important services that Ontarians desperately need and rely upon, and that includes court services, vulnerable persons and victim services, Legal Aid Ontario, the AGCO.

We have to have more than a round of 20 minutes to ask questions of a \$2.5-billion budget. This is really the only opportunity we have to ask those questions. I know, sometimes, when I submit written questions in the House, I'm supposed to get a response in about 10 sessional days. But I have written questions that have been sitting there for a year and they haven't been replied upon. If we don't get the answer during question period, this is really the only time we have.

So we know that auto theft is up in Ontario, even if the numbers are tracking up and down. Overall, the trends are not going the way we need to. Domestic violence is now the number one 911 call in many of the jurisdictions that we represent. What are we doing about it, through the Ministry of the Solicitor General? Human trafficking is a blight on so many of our communities. I know we care so deeply about protecting victims and survivors. We won't be able to get to ask a question in a 20-minute cycle. Guns and gangs; the war on drugs—this is all still before us. These are really important issues that I think that we all have a responsibility to address here, and none of that is going to be addressed if we continue to truncate our responsibility and time when it comes to asking those critical questions during the estimates period.

When I was at the city of Toronto, Chair, the budget process would be very broad and comprehensive. It would be a three-month process where the public would come in and ask questions. Every department would have a chance to deliver their presentation, then there was a full day of questions until every single question was asked. If you didn't get the questions you need, you can also go off and try to get it another way. This is the only channel, as I see it, unless there's another one that I'm not aware of. But this is the only one that's open, public and transparent. And it's really the work of Ontarians that I am wanting to do, and I can't do that when we're allocating two hours to discuss a ministerial portfolio that is worth \$4 billion, under the Solicitor General portfolio, or \$3 billion, with the Attorney General.

We need more time. I'm hoping that you will want to use your time wisely—and if you don't, concede it; you can always let it go. We'll be out of here faster if you have no questions. But I would like to have the right and be given the right, so I can do my job and ask the questions I need to, on behalf of the constituents and stakeholders who I am working with and who I represent.

**The Chair (Mr. Lorne Coe):** Is there any further debate on the motion before us from MPP Wong-Tam? None.

**MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam:** Recorded vote, sir.

**The Chair (Mr. Lorne Coe):** Recorded vote.

Are the members ready to vote on the motion presented by MPP Wong-Tam?

**Ayes**

Wong-Tam.

**Nays**

Allsopp, Darouze, Gallagher, Murphy, Gualtieri, Sarrazin.

**The Chair (Mr. Lorne Coe):** The motion is lost.

Now we're going back to the original motion that was tabled earlier today by MPP Allsopp. Is there any debate or discussion on that motion? Are the members ready to vote? Shall the motion carry? All those in favour, please raise your hand. All those opposed, please raise your hand. The motion is accordingly carried.

Are there any other motions or business for discussion?

Thank you, everyone, for attending today's meeting. That concludes our business for today. The committee is now adjourned until October 29, 2025, from 3 o'clock to 5 p.m., and you'll get a notice about what committee room we're meeting in.

*The committee adjourned at 1328.*









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