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CANADA

## **Board of Internal Economy**

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TRANSCRIPT

**Thursday, February 28, 2019**

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## Board of Internal Economy

Thursday, February 28, 2019

● (1120)

[English]

**Hon. Geoff Regan (Speaker of the House of Commons):** This meeting of the Board of Internal Economy is called to order. It's the first meeting in the renovated West Block, and it's a large room we're in.

Let's start. The minutes of the previous meeting have been distributed. Are there any issues with those minutes? Are the minutes approved? Approved.

Is there any business arising from the previous meeting? Seeing none, we will go on to the West Block update.

[Translation]

Michel Patrice, Deputy Clerk, Administration of the House of Commons, and Mr. Aubé, will speak to us about it.

**Mr. Michel Patrice (Deputy Clerk, Administration, House of Commons):** Mr. Chair, members of the Board of Internal Economy, it's a pleasure to be here to review our transition to the West Block, which I must admit was a major operation.

I won't hide from you that, at some point, we thought we were on the edge of a cliff and had to take a step forward. That being said, we are satisfied: we believe that, under the circumstance, the transition was a success, both from our perspective and yours.

[English]

As you are aware, on November 1 the building was officially handed over to the House of Commons, and we frantically engaged in the operationalization of the building and the integration of the technology. Following the recess for the Christmas break, we started the office moves, and they were completed on January 25, again, with the support of everyone and the full engagement of all.

The first sitting of the House of Commons in the interim chamber occurred on January 28. I'm happy that we have all noticed that it went well. It was a fully functional chamber, and the proceedings were uninterrupted.

We had some issues the following day in terms of a leak following a burst pipe, and I must say that we addressed it. Everybody was "all hands on deck" and basically ready to address any issues that would arise. In the span of three days, we were able to address and repair the damages and make the areas affected fully operational again on the Monday following. I was impressed by the way we all collaborated to achieve this success.

Obviously, the familiarization of the new building is going on. People still need to find their way in the building. As part of the orientation activities, a map of the West Block and an occupancy manual were provided to MPs and their staff to assist in navigating the building and its services.

As you saw, we also deployed Source team members at different strategic locations in West Block for a couple of weeks following the return of Parliament, to be able to assist members, visitors and staff in the building.

As we mentioned when we appeared in October to discuss the project and the operationalization of the building and all of that, we were aware that

● (1125)

[Translation]

modifications and deficiencies were to be expected in a renovation project of this size. We are currently working closely with our partners to resolve the issues during this period.

[English]

We've been trying to be very proactive and get feedback and address any issues or questions that may arise in terms of the functioning of this building.

I'm going to address some main issues. On chamber lighting in the main chamber, I think you've been noticing that we've been making adjustments while the House is not sitting, after you adjourn, to try to modulate the lighting and so on, and this is an ongoing exercise. For example, during the constituency weeks that are coming, we're going to try to do some testing to more aggressively address some issues with the lighting, so our staff will be working on that.

We've noticed other issues, given Mother Nature in this city, like heating in different offices, for example. Adjustment in terms of the heating system had to be made and had to be addressed. That's why it's important that we receive feedback, because, if we're not told about it, we can't act on it. We're trying, as I said, to be very proactive.

There are a number of deficiency corrections that we believe will take at least a year, such as things in terms of nicks in the paint, the carpet and some door issues. We had issues with the west door and the south door in terms of opening properly. I can now report that this has been fixed. That's good news, because these are the two main points of access for members and their staff. We're going to continue to look at your offices in terms of layout and seeing that you have the tools and equipment you need to function properly.

I would now like to say a few words on the Centre Block project. We've been quite focused on the West Block, obviously, because that was a big project to undertake, but we have not lost perspective of the next step of the project, which is actually quite significant—the rehabilitation of the parliamentary campus and the precinct.

Scoping and investigative work continues in Centre Block to assess the existing condition of the building. We are talking about the structural and mechanical state of the building. It will continue through the winter, and it will help better inform us in terms of the required structural design and the requirement for its rehabilitation. As information emerges, we're going to be able to report to the board a bit more about the scope and timelines of the project. Obviously, we'll continue to work hand in hand with PSPC on this project, as we have for this building.

Talking a bit about the governance structure, obviously, on the administrative side, I can report to you that we have an integrated, multi-level governance within the administration of Public Works and the various parliamentary partners to oversee the project. We are also working with all those partners to execute the restoration and modernization of the parliamentary process.

That's just one component, I would suggest, in terms of this project. I would like to receive direction from the board in terms of the ongoing governance, as well as governance looking forward. Obviously, it's quite clear that this body, the Board of Internal Economy, is the final decision-maker in terms of requirements for the design and rehabilitation of Centre Block or any building in the parliamentary precinct. However, learning from the experience of West Block, I personally felt that parliamentarians were not sufficiently engaged in what I'll call the granularity of the details in terms of the requirements.

Learning from this project, I would like to obtain your direction in terms of how you want to go forward as parliamentarians, because this is your workplace. I understand it's a historic landmark and the seat of our parliamentary democracy, but it's fundamentally your workplace, where you do your work on behalf of Canadians. I suggest you will need to be heavily engaged in terms of what I call the details and the granularity. Your direction is welcome in terms of how you want to proceed.

There are obviously stakeholders who need to be taken into account—for example, the media and public visitors—in terms of their perspective on the rehabilitation, but at the end of the day, as I said, my view is that it is your workplace and it's for you to really be engaged in this exercise. I would welcome any suggestion on your part.

I'll close by saying that I want to really thank members and their staff over the transition period, because they've been exceptional in terms of their support and adaptability to this new environment. We really felt like we were one team working towards the same goal, which is having a House of Commons that is fully functional.

Thank you very much.

● (1130)

[*Translation*]

We are ready to answer your questions and respond to your comments.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Thank you very much.

[*English*]

Before I go to Ms. Bergen, which I'll do momentarily, perhaps, after we have this discussion, if there are options that you have in mind in terms of suggestions about how the board, or the procedure and House affairs committee, or members of Parliament generally can be involved in that process, I'm interested in hearing those. Like you, I want to hear from members of the board.

Ms. Bergen.

**Hon. Candice Bergen (House Leader of the Official Opposition):** Thank you very much, Chair.

Mr. Patrice, I want to begin by thanking you and congratulating you, and all of the people who I know have worked incredibly hard to make sure that this place is ready and then move us in.

I'll be honest; I was one of those people who had doubts. I wondered how you were going to move us all in just a couple of weeks, but you did. As you said, there were some hiccups, but really, it has been a very smooth move and transition. You certainly need to be congratulated. I know we're very appreciative of everything and the way it's kind of starting to feel like home, which is nice. I thought about it the other day. I thought I was starting to feel a little routine in where I'm going and how I'm getting where I'm supposed to go. That's really good.

I have a couple of specific items about things as they currently are, and then I want to speak briefly about Centre Block and how we could maybe have some input in that.

One item I know we're still struggling with in terms of practicality is the number of washrooms that are available. There may not be an easy solution. We obviously don't want to cause any issues. If it's only our caucus that has this, that's fine. We know there are some kitchen areas in our offices that are aren't even being used. There may be some opportunities at some point for them to be changed into washroom facilities. That's just a suggestion.

The other issue I've thought about is that I really miss that MP entrance we had at Centre Block. There was a sense, if you went through the MP entrance, that the general public wasn't there, and there wasn't media necessarily standing right outside. Right now it seems like we don't quite have that. I'm not sure if other caucuses are feeling that, but maybe there could be further discussion in terms of security. You become accustomed to something. I think that's probably what I'm feeling; we were accustomed to that dedicated entrance. If that's something that could possibly be discussed and maybe some solutions for it brought forward, we would appreciate that.

In terms of having input for Centre Block, I'm glad that's something you've thought about. I thought that the way the restoration work was done around West Block kind of felt like we were told as MPs that we were getting a new home, but no one was going to ask us what we needed in our new home or what we would like to see in our new home. We weren't even really going to know what was in our new home, and when we got there, we were just going to need to adjust. That's okay. I think we can do that, but I think it would be beneficial if we had a method to bring some input. I know we've had some offline discussions. Ms. Chagger, Ms. Brosseau and I have had some discussions about this.

What we don't want to see is kind of a political or bureaucratic bog-down process. We would like to have a process whereby each of our caucuses could have one point of contact in their caucus whereby suggestions.... Some of those suggestions could be small—as a member of Parliament, I want to be able to have a certain amount of legroom, if I need it, at my chair, if that's possible—all the way to needing to ensure that we have certain access for MPs.

There are a lot of suggestions. I don't think we'd anticipate that we would get everything we want, but I think we would like to have an ability to get input from our caucus and then bring it to you in a way that we know will be addressed—with a “Yes, we can do this” or “No, we can't and here's why” or “How about we do it this way?” Then there's actually a way, when we move to Centre Block, to be able to say, “No, it ended up that we couldn't have this feature, and here's why, but we knew that there was some discussion, and it was recognized that the whole discussion could have happened.”

We would like to see a working group—not bureaucratic, not political, but just where we can have feedback and be able to make sure that our issues are at least being heard. I'll let the others weigh in, but those were the two things I wanted to bring up.

Thank you.

• (1135)

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Ms. Chagger.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons):** I would like to go to some of Candice's comments.

Michel, you and your team have been a delight to work with. I know that we've had some challenging times. I think that any time we have a move, it's exciting, but there are growing pains. It's true that it's been quite pleasant to see everyone working together to ensure that we are able to satisfy the needs of members. What I appreciated the most out of your comments was that you recognize that they're buildings that belong to all Canadians but they are workplaces for parliamentarians, so it's important that we are part of the processes.

I'm not sure how many MPs here have had the opportunity to actually weigh in. Yes, public input is necessary, but I think MP input is also necessary. I think that the procedure and House affairs committee, PROC, is also looking a little bit at this work, and they should continue to do so. I think the other avenue should be this table right here.

What I would like for myself is to have caucus be able to provide me with input, whether there's a person we have as a point person

and so forth, and then we would bring it to this table so that we can have this discourse. We can also discuss amongst ourselves. It's similar to some of the things that we've had to do to this new building. Sometimes it's repetitive because we're all experiencing the exact same thing, and we've been able to have some of those conversations with the Clerk and actually have them dealt with sooner, now that we've created a system.

I don't think there's a need for another entity to be created. I think that between PROC and this table we have the opportunities to do that. I think it's important that we do have MPs' voices heard, to make sure that it is smooth.

The last thing I will say is that I think Centre Block needs to be kept as similar to Centre Block as possible. As much as I know restorations are important—it's important that we bring the building to the 21st century—I really do hope that the look and feel of it is what the plans are. I hope we are documenting. I know there were some visions for this building, in the restaurant and so forth, that have not come to fruition for one reason or another, so I would also raise that on the public record.

The last point I would raise is that I think we've learned heavily that there are two processes to a move. We know the building is going to be built by the department, and Public Works will have to do that, but then the House administration has an essential role, and enough time has to be provided. As we provide timelines moving forward, I would like to ensure that the time that the House administration needs is always taken into account and that we actually provide you with the time that's needed so that if we do have to change doors and whatever else, it's possible.

You know that we see some doors that need to be replaced, and I know we're finding solutions. It's just a matter of how we ensure that we have as smooth a transition as possible for when members do move back to Centre Block.

• (1140)

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Thank you very much.

I'm going to go to Mr. Strahl next.

As we go on, I'd be interested in hearing if members like the idea of a working group that works on a continuing basis with the House of Commons and Public Services and Procurement architects. Maybe they meet quarterly or whatever it needs to be. This would be a dedicated group, as opposed to the procedure and House affairs committee or the Board of Internal Economy, which have other things they're doing and other things they will study. Is that something that is attractive?

Mr. Strahl.

**Mr. Mark Strahl (Chief Opposition Whip):** Thank you very much.

Obviously, understanding that what we've experienced in terms of deficiencies is very normal for a move of this size, we continue to have some concerns with the gremlins in the system that, for whatever reason, are preventing the bells from ringing in every building. It seems that for every vote there's a new building where the members are not notified. We've made our own adjustments on the fly to deal with that.

I don't want to turn this into a list of things that are wrong, but I want to touch a bit on Ms. Chagger's comments. We should agree at this table—or at PROC, I'm not sure which—on some first principles for this. I agree 100%. I've said that if I'm lucky enough to still be elected or if I come back as a visitor, I hope I can walk back into Centre Block and say they haven't changed a thing. Obviously there is the lighting—it's a building that was built before computers were invented—and there are the internal components that need to be upgraded, but I would be devastated if I went in and I didn't recognize the building we left.

There's a common belief that with a building of that nature, we want to maintain as much as possible of the way it was, while upgrading the critical components. In addition to a working group, maybe we could agree on some baseline framework within which we would like you to proceed. I think that would be important and would probably give some good direction.

Obviously, there was some concern, even when we moved into this building, with the allocation of the space—that perhaps parliamentarians were not given the primacy they should have been given. People staked their claim to the limited real estate here early on, and we were takers on that side of it as well. Obviously, having come from Centre Block and having operated there, there's some knowledge of where the opposition leader's office is, where the Prime Minister's suite is and where the cabinet wing is. That is all, I hope, going to be maintained.

I would just put that out there, that even where the offices are and all of that.... It seemed that we were just presented with “This is what you're going to take, and this is the way it's going to be.” Looking at it now, there probably should have been some adjustments. Maybe they can be made when the writ is dropped or between the Parliaments in the upcoming election. That would be my thought on it.

Also, we're not.... We have some engineers in our caucus, and there are some architects, perhaps, who will be elected. We want to be careful with the working group, to ensure that it doesn't cause delays. We absolutely need to be a part of the process, but we need to understand the scope of our involvement. We shouldn't have people.... Not every idea is a good idea, and not every idea can be implemented, so I would just put that out as a bit of caution.

I will express some concern. When we see things like the dome—the glass ceiling that cannot be opened when we sit in the building because of broadcasting considerations—that's a really expensive mistake. I don't know where parliamentarians get to be inserted into that process, where there are really good ideas and architectural marvels that don't work for what we do. As protectors of taxpayers' dollars, we need to make sure that this sort of thing does not happen again.

I'll leave it there.

• (1145)

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Madame Brasseur.

**Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau (House Leader of the New Democratic Party):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to thank Mr. Patrice and Mr. Aubé for their hard work. I think this is a time when we're all kind of singing with the

same voice. I think we're all in agreement that the transition, the move here, went very well. There were some growing pains, and it took us all a while to figure out where to go, where the bathrooms were and where the committees were. Sometimes I don't get lost, but I have to make sure that I'm heading in the right direction.

I just want to thank you for all your hard work and the fact that we were able to get back here fast after the break. I think we all really appreciated it. Also, on the pace with which you moved to resolve some of the concerns we did have, I want to say thank you for that, too.

I agree that there needs to be a working group that works with MPs, because who knows who's going to be here after October. I think it's important, because this is our workplace, that it does fit and it does work for us, and obviously for Canadians and people who come from around the world to see our Parliament.

One concern that I do have—and I think there was a story in the CBC—is about the interpreters and the sound acoustic shocks that some of the people working on the Hill have suffered. I think we're all very thankful for and very aware of the important work that our interpreters do, so we have to make sure, on Parliament Hill and in committees, that when there are phone conferences, our interpreters are protected and have the proper equipment to make sure the acoustic shocks are being limited.

I don't know if this is the place to do it, but I think we need to have some information about that, about what kind of work progress has been done. I don't know if this is the forum for it or not, but I think it's important that we get an update to make sure that these people are being protected.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Before I go to Michel Patrice.... I don't want to be quoted in your election pamphlets, but I thought the advice about the working group not directing everything—being involved, having a say and giving feedback, but accepting the fact that the architects have to make some decisions with their knowledge—was wise counsel, but don't quote me.

**Mr. Mark Strahl:** It's public now.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Monsieur Patrice.

**Mr. Michel Patrice:** I want to thank you for all your good work for the team, because it's basically the team that responded to the different issues or assisted in terms of the transition. I'm going to say that we would welcome the working group suggestion of a representative from each caucus working for the duration of this project. I think this group would be a good forum to gather the views of your membership and also probably elaborate on the basic principle that Mr. Strahl mentioned and present to the board basic principles in relation to Centre Block.

I want to touch on the allocation of space, because I've been personally involved in the issue of allocating space. We've definitely learned from it, and we're going to do it better next time.

In terms of direction, delays and so on, obviously we'll engage in fruitful discussions. I believe that we or the working group could report to the board from time to time in terms of our level of representation to both this committee and PROC, should they express the desire to have an update on the project.

If that's the wish of the board in terms of the working group, we thank you, and we'd welcome working with the group.

I'm going to ask Stéphan to address the issues of the interpreters, because it's something that we are keenly aware of, and he can provide you with information in relation to that situation.

•(1150)

**Mr. Stéphan Aubé (Chief Information Officer, House of Commons):** Mr. Speaker and Madam Brousseau, we are aware of the case.

One incident happened with the interpreters department of PSPC. We are taking this issue very seriously, and we've been working with the department very closely. We've done an assessment of the equipment, and we've assessed equipment that could replace the equipment we have, based on international standards, to ensure that this does not happen. We are proceeding this summer with replacement of the stations for the interpreters in this facility to ensure that any potential issues in the future would be remediated by ensuring that the equipment we have meets the international standards that the interpreters are looking for to deal with this.

**Mr. Michel Patrice:** We're aware of one incident within our setting in Parliament. Obviously, I think it's something that is a risk for interpretation all around. In terms of the House of Commons, whether in committees or in the chamber, we are aware of one incident. At that time, we provided an interim measure, a piece of equipment that would attenuate the risk, but we're looking at a more permanent solution.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Madam Brousseau.

**Ms. Ruth Ellen Brousseau:** As I understand it, the equipment that we have right now in West Block, in the new committee rooms and the House of Commons, will all have to be replaced.

**Mr. Stéphan Aubé:** No, just the stations.... In the interpretation booth, there's a station. Right now we've added a device to ensure this does not happen, and we're looking at replacing the interpretation stations in the interpretation booths. All the audio systems will remain the same.

**Ms. Ruth Ellen Brousseau:** So all the stations have this new technology that limits—

**Mr. Stéphan Aubé:** Yes, it's built in, versus adding the new device.

**Ms. Ruth Ellen Brousseau:** Okay. Sometimes it does happen to us when we're in the House. Somebody gets up for a question or a speech, and I think they put their—

**Hon. Candice Bergen:** It's feedback.

**Ms. Ruth Ellen Brousseau:** It's the feedback, and that kind of hits us. I know there's one case that you guys are aware of, and I think that was made public, but I think there might be possibilities of other cases where people who have been working in this type of environment for 10, 15 or 20 years have come to deal with certain health issues over the years.

Would it be of importance that, if interpreters have concerns, they do come forward and raise them?

**Mr. Stéphan Aubé:** Absolutely.

**Ms. Ruth Ellen Brousseau:** Okay. Perfect.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** The earpiece is a speaker, right? Normally that's what causes feedback, when a speaker is too close to a microphone. Does this kind of interrupt that?

**Mr. Stéphan Aubé:** Well, the mechanism that we have, sir, is to ensure that there isn't any major high-pitched noise to their ears.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Ah, okay.

**Mr. Stéphan Aubé:** We weren't able to identify what created the issue—

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** It's like a limit on the volume.

**Mr. Stéphan Aubé:** Exactly.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Good.

Mr. Strahl.

**Mr. Mark Strahl:** Just before we close off this topic, I'm sure that, when the West Block rehabilitation was being undertaken, the Board of Internal Economy and the procedure and House affairs committee also proposed to have.... Maybe I'm wrong. I guess I would look for your guidance as to what the board and the committee proposed at that time in terms of their involvement. If we're proposing the same thing they did, and it didn't work, I'd like to know that. Perhaps you've done that research and can share that with the board.

Dominic probably was there, but the rest of us....

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Intergovernmental and Northern Affairs and Internal Trade):** Ralph Goodale, actually, was here when it was built the first time.

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Michel Patrice:** What you're proposing is quite different. In terms of West Block, the board was basically the body that was informed, but I would suggest sometimes not at the level of granularity that would have been necessary to address the requirements in terms of your workplace.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** I'll say the same thing here that I've said more than once at the procedure and House affairs committee, PROC, which is that it's important, I think, on an ongoing basis that members of the Board of Internal Economy and PROC insist on being informed and, to use the deputy clerk's words, in sufficient granularity of detail to avoid some of these problems.

•(1155)

[Translation]

Thank you very much.

We will now move on to the next point on the agenda, namely, additional resources for the provision of human resources advisory services to MPs as employers.

To speak on this subject, Pierre Parent is with us. He is the chief human resources officer of the House of Commons,

[English]

and also Ms. Robyn Daigle, director of members human resources services.

[Translation]

**Mr. Pierre Parent (Chief Human Resources Officer, House of Commons):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

[English]

I am here today in my capacity as chief human resources officer for the House of Commons to request additional resources to meet the increased demand of HR services to support members and House officers in their role as employers.

I am joined today by Robyn Daigle, director of members HR services.

In recent years, changes have been introduced related to the policy framework and legislative landscape in which members must manage their workplaces. The introduction in 2015 of the House of Commons policy on preventing and addressing harassment and the recent adoption of Bill C-65 will place even greater demands on members' offices to meet the new requirements with respect to health and safety and harassment prevention in the workplace.

As with all employers, members are under increasing pressure to create a positive work environment that responds to evolving social expectations.

[Translation]

The House Administration is seeing an increase in the number of requests from MPs and employees supporting them in the management of their offices for advice, guidance and resources to help them resolve human resources issues. We respond to these requests on an ad hoc basis using existing resources, programs and services.

However, current support is limited and more resources are needed to meet the growing demand. We are also aware that these services must continue to be personalized and take into account the unique nature of the work environment of MPs.

I'll turn things over to Ms. Daigle.

[English]

**Ms. Robyn Daigle (Director, Members HR Services, House of Commons):** The additional resources being sought will be used to stabilize the current services offered, including those related to training, the respectful workplace program and occupational health and safety, as well as to enhance our orientation services to support members and their staff through the election process and on an ongoing basis.

HR advisory services would also be centralized and offer dedicated HR advice to members. Members would be able to access these services based on their requirements and as they deem necessary.

I should emphasize that the advice and support that our HR team provides will in no way change the fact that members are the sole employers of their staff. The services take into account that each party has its own internal structure and processes when it comes to managing their resources. Our senior HR advisers would continue to

work within this infrastructure and with the whips' offices to ensure that the existing service delivery model and the enhancements to it provide complementary enhanced services to members and also to those who assist them in managing their offices.

By ensuring that adequate tools and programs continue to be available, we will be better able to support members in navigating difficult situations and help them to address issues as they arise.

Adequate resources would also assist new members who seek such assistance in establishing their parliamentary and constituency offices and who must balance the various administrative obligations involved in doing so.

Confirming sufficient resources will ensure that members receive responsive, non-partisan, confidential services that enable their decision-making as employers. Ultimately, we believe it will contribute to supporting a positive and successful workplace for members and their staff.

We are happy to answer questions at this time.

[Translation]

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Mr. LeBlanc, you have the floor.

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The fundamental issue of the employer function that MPs also perform, in addition to their role as MPs, has long been discussed at Board of Internal Economy meetings. In fact, both Ms. Daigle and Mr. Parent raised it. Especially in recent years, some unfortunate events have occurred, and everyone has tried to improve processes. In my opinion, Mr. Parent and his team have succeeded in doing extraordinary work in an often difficult context due to the public nature of our duties.

These additional resources would be perfectly appropriate and would improve the services offered to members of all political parties in the House of Commons, professional and confidential services that would help to avoid all kinds of situations that would be less than ideal.

They would also better support MPs in their role as employers. Indeed, with the exception of some MPs who have already managed a business or staff before their election to the House of Commons, few new MPs have experience as employers. However, as soon as they are elected, they are expected to set up a constituency office, hire staff in Ottawa and therefore act as an employer in several respects. Everyone wants to do it properly. In my opinion, these services are truly an ideal way to help MPs, not only those who are already in office, but also those who will one day succeed us in Parliament.

I am therefore fully in favour of these additional resources.

I also wanted to congratulate Mr. Parent and his great team. In recent years, we have all benefited as MPs from their very professional and accessible work. It's a way to take this work even further.

● (1200)

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Thank you very much.



Are there any other comments?

Go ahead, Mr. Strahl.

[English]

**Mr. Mark Strahl:** I have just a couple of quick questions, I guess, on the financial side.

For the 22 full-time equivalents, the biggest list doesn't really list the position. It says, "Stabilization of existing HR programs and services". There is "occupational health and safety", "nurse counsellor", etc. What are those folks going to do going forward? Maybe just give us a breakdown of what that actually looks like. I'm also interested in the "financial advisors" part of this. What service to members would they be providing?

Also, it looks like your funding request is flat for the next three fiscal years. What metrics will you use to determine whether there is a requirement to increase that? Perhaps, once all members are more aware of their obligations under Bill C-65, more aware of workplaces that are modern and respectful.... All of this work is happening right now. There's a big push for it. Is there any mechanism to say that this will continue to be a requirement at \$2.5 million going forward? If so, how will you determine whether you need more or whether you actually don't need as much as has been allocated?

**Ms. Robyn Daigle:** Yes, certainly. Thank you for the question.

In terms of the question on stabilization of resources, currently a lot of services are provided on an ad hoc basis—access to the nurse counsellor through the harassment prevention program, through the respectful workplace program—and also in terms of the renewal of the members' orientation program as well. These are things that we're already having to do, so it's stabilizing those resources, because currently we don't actually have those resources in place. We've been doing it with the existing capacity that we've had. That's where a big piece of that comes from.

There's another piece of that, which is on the HR advisory side. It's not even necessarily that this is something completely new. Again, they are ad hoc resources or requests that have come in through the pay and benefits mechanism. For example, right now, a primary point of entry for the members and those administering their offices is through pay and benefits, but it's supposed to be a transactional.... It's supposed to be moving through some of these employment transactions that are coming in, but because that's one of the few places for members and the staff in those offices to go to, they often get a variety of questions that wouldn't or shouldn't necessarily be fielded by pay advisers.

This is where some of our team are already starting to get involved in these files to help resolve them from a more holistic HR perspective. That's also a stabilization piece. As well, we also know the office of the CHRO has seen a number of requests. That's why we talk about stabilization and enhancement when we talk about these resources.

From a financial adviser perspective, it's not necessarily in the context of providing financial advisory services to members. It's in the context of how most services have that financial management capacity built into their teams from a financial planning perspective

and forecasting and budget management. That's where these two resources come into effect.

We would also be hiring a legal adviser for this team to ensure that all the HR advice we are providing to members and to those who are helping to manage their offices is also done in the context of that angle—from an employment law perspective. We just want to make sure that it is a comprehensive service that's being provided.

In terms of the longer term in what we've forecasted, we do recognize that we are going to have to continue to track the volume and the types of inquiries that are coming in. From that perspective, it's something that's done in any type of team environment where you need to track the volume, the types of inquiries and the case management that's being done. We know that we'll have to report up to ask if this is sufficient, if it is ongoing or if we need to reduce or increase.

I can confidently say that I think we have been very realistic in what we've proposed; we haven't stretched far from that perspective. If we ever came back to the board to either reduce or increase those resources, it would be with quite a rationale associated with it.

• (1205)

**Mr. Mark Strahl:** Thank you.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Mr. Holland.

**Hon. Mark Holland (Chief Government Whip):** I'll just say thank you for the work that's done on an ongoing basis and for what's proposed here.

My reflection is that caucuses use these services differently, depending on what internal policies they actualize. My anticipation is that we'll use these additional resources a lot, not because I necessarily anticipate a lot of HR problems—although I do think these things arise—but it's more because good HR policy is about being proactive, about creating environments where there is a network of support to be able to catch and remediate issues early, before they advance.

I've expressed concern in the past, but I won't belabour the point now. There probably will be more needed as we modernize our HR practices overall, but certainly this is a step in the right direction and I am favourable.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Is there anyone else?

Is it the will of the board to approve this request?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

[Translation]

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Thank you very much.

[English]

Now we're on modernization of policies related to communicating with constituents. We have Benoit Giroux, chief operations officer; Daniel Paquette, chief financial officer; and Philippe Dufresne, law clerk and parliamentary counsel.

Mr. Giroux.

[Translation]

**Mr. Benoit Giroux (Chief Operations Officer, Parliamentary Precinct Operations, House of Commons):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The communications that MPs send to their constituents represent an important part of their duties. This is why several services for this purpose are chargeable to central funds. MPs may also charge external printing costs to their office budget.

[English]

In order to ensure that members' needs continue to be met, the House administration proposes changes to modernize the ten percenter regime.

[Translation]

In addition, other policy changes are proposed regarding external printing and advertising services.

[English]

Let's start with the modernization of ten percenters. In line with the 2018 changes to the householder program, our consultation revealed that members wanted colour and simplified processes. We propose to replace the current ten percenter program with what would be named constituency mail. It consists of eight formats, which include four new formats. All formats are available in black, two-colour and full colour. The formats are available for your viewing in the sample kit prepared by the printing and mailing services group. It consists mainly of flyers, reply cards and postcards.

Of importance is the proposal to simplify the overall planning and submission process by eliminating the 50% content difference rule and introducing a limit consisting of a maximum of six times the number of households in the member's constituency per calendar year. As for shipping, the member can continue to mail through unaddressed Admail or use the new option provided for addressed Admail.

Finally, it is proposed to allow for the display of third party community resources and not-for-profit website addresses.

● (1210)

[Translation]

In conclusion, the proposed changes provide additional benefits to members while removing rules that were no longer in compliance.

I will now turn things over to Mr. Paquette, who will explain changes related to certain policies.

**Mr. Daniel G. Paquette (Chief Financial Officer, House of Commons):** Thank you, Mr. Giroux.

[English]

The next recommendations relate to external printing services. Recognizing the needs of having greater flexibility when members communicate with their constituents, members may rely on external providers for printing services. The current limit for external printing is set at 4,500 copies, but feedback received indicates that the amount is not aligned with economies of scale in the industry and it is generally recognized in increments of thousands. Therefore, it is proposed to modify the policy regarding external printing services

by increasing the limit to 5,000 copies when using an external printing service. This increase will be more advantageous for members, reducing their cost per copy.

In addition, over the years, the board has approved various policy changes relating to external printing services. These were in response to various individual specific issues relating to communications with their constituents and stakeholders. These changes created policy application challenges and confusion for members on how to apply these rules for external printing, so we would like to bring together these various rules a little better within our policy manual.

Therefore, we are recommending that the board reiterate that the documents printed externally are subject to the same conditions and restrictions as documents printed within the House printing and mailing services; require that the originating member's name and status as a member of Parliament appear clearly and distinctively in the printed correspondence; maintain the current policy whereby expenses for printing materials used at third party events and/or activities be charged to the advertising expenses, to be in compliance with the advertising policy; and maintain the current policy and limits to allow members to distribute mailing, correspondence and other printed materials to stakeholders outside of their own constituencies in the discharge of their parliamentary functions.

Finally, the last point is related to members' advertising at third party events and activities. Currently, members may advertise a third party event at up to \$500 for printed advertising materials. Within that limit, there is a \$250-per-advertisement charge for event signage or banners. This sublimit of \$250 we recognize does not add value. It has been creating some confusion for members, and it has really added an administrative burden for them to manage these payments. Therefore, we propose to remove this sublimit of \$250 per event advertising with signage and banners, and only maintain the single limit that members cannot exceed for their advertising at third party events and parties.

Mr. Speaker, this concludes our presentation. We're pleased to answer any questions the board members may have.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Thank you very much.

Mr. Holland.

**Hon. Mark Holland:** I'll say very quickly, Mr. Speaker, that I very much support these changes. Dealing with ten percenters since I was elected in 2004— with an involuntary break—has been a major challenge. You're constantly trying to MacGyver a solution to get correspondence to your constituents and, as a result, they were abused in all kinds of bizarre and strange ways.

Creating a uniform process for that makes a great deal of sense to me, so that, on the one hand, people don't get too frustrated to use it, and, on the other hand, people don't use it excessively in a way it wasn't intended to be used. I'm very supportive.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Thank you.

Mr. Strahl.

**Mr. Mark Strahl:** Obviously, a major change is the maximum of six times that a member can put out one of these new constituency mailers. What is the rationale for that? What are the projected savings by limiting members to that number?

• (1215)

**Mr. Benoit Giroux:** Well, we've looked at the volumes that the members were sending as ten percenters for the last two fiscal years, which we believe were good baseline years. With respect to the limit of six times and the number of households in your constituencies, 92% of all members are actually within that limit, sending within that limit. We have 8% who are high flyers and would be outside that limit, so we believe we've covered the vast majority of members sufficiently. The other consideration is that we are confident that with those limits we would still be operating within the current budget, which was looked at as well.

**Mr. Mark Strahl:** Right, so the question is.... There will be some push-back. What was the impetus for the 8% who are doing more than six times a year? What are you trying to prevent here? I guess that's the question. Why have that limit? I can tell you that for some members it will be like waving a red flag in front of a bull: "You're telling me that I can't communicate with my constituents."

I guess I'm trying to understand the rationale. If 92% of MPs are not going to go over six, why are you limiting it to six?

**Mr. Benoit Giroux:** The other thing we looked at is our production capacity. By introducing full-colour products for this new constituency mail, we also had to make sure that we're sufficiently able to produce on an efficient basis. That was also part of looking at establishing the limit at six. It's to make sure that we can continue to support members in their communications in an efficient way within the production limits and production timelines that we currently have established.

If we augment that limit, then we're putting ourselves into a situation where we could go overbudget or where we would have way too much demand that is going to extend the production time for those constituency mailings.

**Mr. Mark Strahl:** I have another question. Right at the beginning of the presentation here, in the "Background" in our internal document, you say, "Communicating with constituents is an important element of Members' parliamentary functions", and the bylaw says that we can talk about things such as "duties and activities that relate to the position of Member, wherever performed and whether or not performed in a partisan manner", etc.

If I may provide feedback from our members, there is an increasing frustration that there is an unaccountable bureaucrat or bureaucrats increasingly determining that materials produced and authorized by members of Parliament be rejected for being somehow outside the bounds of that. To me, that's a very broad bylaw, and I think it's being increasingly narrowly interpreted.

If I can get up in the House of Commons and in a question call for the resignation of a minister, or if I can talk about the carbon tax in an S.O. 31 and say that a Conservative government will do things differently, and if Liberals can get up and talk about the lost decade under Stephen Harper, blah, blah—

**An hon. member:** That never happens.

**Mr. Mark Strahl:** No, it rarely happens that there are politics or partisanship in the House, but on those rare occasions....

In all seriousness, if we are able to say things in the House, we should be able to say those same things in the mailers, the materials that we produce for our constituents. It is up to our constituents to judge whether or not they are overtly partisan or are a good use of public resources. I would offer that as feedback in general. We have seen members who've had their radio spots that they pay for out of their MOBs questioned due to the content.

We all know that we cannot solicit funds, that we cannot solicit memberships and that we cannot solicit votes for ourselves, but other than that, I think we have to err on the side of caution in giving members of Parliament wide latitude to communicate with their constituents in the way they see as appropriate. That might not be the same in every riding in Canada, and it's up to the member of Parliament, not a member of the House administration, to make that determination. I think there have been increasing occurrences of that happening, and I think we need to kind of lay down our line in the sand at this board that we are going to assert the rights of members to make those determinations. I will say that.

I know this is all set to take place after the next election, and certainly I would like to take this proposal to my caucus so that there can be some suggestions on how we move forward. I think it would be ill-advised for me to sign off on this without doing that. Let me put it that way.

• (1220)

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** We won't have consensus on this today. I'll keep that in mind as we go on. Members can decide whether they want to be briefed because of that or not.

Ms. Bergen.

**Hon. Candice Bergen:** Thank you.

I won't add a lot to what Mark said. I agree fully with everything he articulated.

On the issue of changing ten percenters to a maximum number of mail-outs, I think we should err on the side of making sure that those 8% can still do what they've been doing. If 92% are going to do fewer than six a year, then why wouldn't we say you can do 10 a year, with the knowledge that that probably won't happen? Budgets are increasing, and there's more and more. All of a sudden now, to go back to our caucus and say that their ability to communicate with their constituents is going to be scaled back, when the only argument we can give is that we might not have the ability to pay for it, first of all, I think that probably wouldn't be the case, so I think we should rather look at this and expand that.

I would add to what Mark talked about. I agree. When I get up every day, the work I do is to do two things: to move out what I believe is a government that is not good for Canadians, which is what my constituents elected me to do, and to put in a government that I believe is good for Canadians, which means I'm going to ask them to support me. I'm going to ask them to listen to my arguments. I think the measurement should be that if we can say it in the House of Commons, we should be able to say it in our communication with our constituents. If it is slanderous or defamatory, then we will be held accountable for that, and we will be held accountable by our electorate, in whether they vote for us again.

I wrote a letter, and I said, "That's why, in 2019, Conservatives...", and I was told I wasn't allowed to say that. It became unbelievable. We are partisan; that is what we do. We are political, and we're having more and more restrictions from people when we don't even know who they are and who they're accountable to. I think it's something that has to be looked at. That way we would all have the same freedom and ability to communicate in the way we believe we should.

Thank you.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Ms. Brosseau.

**Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to thank Mr. Giroux and Mr. Paquette for their presentation.

I would like to say that the comments that I have gotten back from my constituents, after we went to colour, have been very positive. I think people appreciate getting news from their members of Parliament, and I think the way we're doing it is a lot more interesting to them.

Given the concerns raised by Candice and Mark, I don't know if there's an appetite from other members of the committee to see what it would be like to review some of the ten percenters or householders that have been refused, or ads that have been refused. I don't know if that is a possibility. I don't know what a review would look like. I don't know if there's an appetite from other members to look into this. I think this happens frequently. It hasn't been a big concern for our caucus. I don't know if there's an appetite from members of the board to look at this. I would like some more information, maybe some feedback, if a review is requested, on what that could look like.

•(1225)

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Philippe.

**Mr. Philippe Dufresne (Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel, House of Commons):** If I may jump in, I think that if there is a lack of consensus at this time to approve this recommendation, and there are some questions about the criteria that are being applied in approving or not—and ultimately, the approval can always be brought to the board—we could put these examples, and these issues could be looked at and some examples given, in the revised note that would come back for your consideration at our next board meeting. That would be part of the discussion about whether there are concerns about the criteria being used, whether these criteria flow from the bylaw, whether there is a need for a change in the bylaw, and whether the bylaw is being interpreted too strictly.

Those things could be brought back for your consideration and direction.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Mr. Holland.

**Hon. Mark Holland:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I have two items. One is that perhaps we can divide the two matters that are here. I'm hearing that there are two separate matters: one is relating to the number of mailings that can be sent out, which is a more scoped issue; and then there's a broader conversation that I'm hearing around what sort of material can be sent out or what the boundaries are on that.

I would hate to entangle those two items. I think one can move forward separate from the other, and one is a more detailed conversation that we have to have. That would be my first suggestion.

On the volume, I hear what members are saying, and I think that communication is incredibly important. However, I would point out that 10 times a year is an extraordinary number of mailings. There is a point at which perhaps people need to work on their brevity or how succinct they are. There are serious costs involved in mailing, and if you want to mail more than 10 times a year to your constituents, to me that starts crossing the line of being relatively excessive.

This was exactly the problem with the ten percenter program. There were no rules or boundaries on how it was used, so theoretically you could be putting out ten percenters every single day. I think it's moving to some kind of uniformity and giving some kind of clarity to members.

Again, we can have that conversation. If there's a slight upwards adjustment, for example, if 92% of people are covered by 10, and we can get up to 98% by doing 11, then let's do 11 and move on with it. That's the one point.

On the second point, I just have to put it on as a matter of record that I think there's a material difference between the debates we have in the House and the materials that we send out to constituents. I say this as somebody who has spent nearly six years in opposition as well and agrees with the general thrust of what's being said. However, we don't want to be in a situation where we're effectively funding partisan undertakings.

If you get to a point where you're unable to distinguish between a campaign flyer and a householder, that's a serious problem. I think that matters of debate around policy, around issues, are of course fair game. If we're talking about keeping that line between a difference of opinion and policy, I think that's a fair boundary, but I get concerned if we're drawing in the use of House resources to fund essentially partisan propaganda. We all have it; we all have a particular partisan message that we're disseminating, but I think that line, that wall, is important. It's a judicious line, and it's one that I would defend rather vociferously.

If we're going to have a conversation on that, I would want to extricate it from this particular matter. I think if the two are entwined, it could lead us to a circumstance where we don't change this, and then if we don't change it, we're left with the continuance of something that has been in long need of overhaul.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Mr. Strahl.

**Mr. Mark Strahl:** To Mr. Holland's point, though, I think that's exactly what I'm trying to raise: who is making those determinations. Who determines if something is too partisan? Who determines if something crosses over from a member's role to a partisan role, and if that is being done, where is the direction coming from? Who is monitoring that to ensure it is consistent?

That is an increasing frustration. We have members who.... I sent out a particular ten percenter; another colleague tried to submit the same ten percenter, and it was rejected. This is what I am concerned about. There are people who are making these determinations. I don't know who they are. I don't know who is giving them direction. I don't know where the feedback mechanism is for that, and I think it's incredibly inconsistent. That's why I would err on the side of allowing more products to go out and allowing our constituents, who pay for them and receive them, to make the determination as to whether or not they are acceptable.

That is my concern. When the deciders are not known and we don't have control over that process, I would suggest that it becomes extremely arbitrary. I don't want that to be the case. I would like us to have broad interpretations as to what is fair comment, and I think we have strayed away from that into where there is now an arbitrary determination. One member to the next can submit the same item for printing; one gets printed and sent, and the other one gets held up for weeks.

On matters that are currently before the House especially, something may be before us only for a matter of days or weeks, and if we are going through a cumbersome appeal process to try to get something out, and whether it meets the requirements, no one will do it. It won't be timely, and we won't get that feedback in a timely fashion.

I appreciate what Mark is saying, that we don't want to turn this into printing houses for our parties. At the same time, we want it to be broadly interpreted, from our side anyway, based on certain principles that allow us to make those determinations as much as possible.

• (1230)

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Thank you.

**Mr. Mark Strahl:** To his other point, about getting certain things passed or not, other than recommendation number 2 in this list, we can talk about going through 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6 if you want to separate this out.

I would commit to coming back in a timely fashion. I recognize that this needs to be decided prior to the dissolution of this Parliament, but I simply need to go to my caucus with these very specific proposals to ask for their feedback.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Mr. Holland.

**Hon. Mark Holland:** Just very quickly, my suggestion is that it's totally appropriate, and I think that Mr. Strahl should have an opportunity. If we're going to hold this item down so that we can have an opportunity for consultation, maybe we can also get a clarification of whether, if we take that dial a little bit higher, that encapsulates 95%, 96% or whatever the percentage is.

**Mr. Benoit Giroux:** We have all that.

**Hon. Mark Holland:** If we could look at that data, that would be helpful.

The simple point I was making is that it sounds to me like there's a discussion that's worthwhile around ensuring a policy that is consistently applied, transparent and understood by all as to what constitutes fair ball for sending out these constituency mailers or householders. To me, that shouldn't be examined in the same item. That's all I'm saying.

If we could have a separate conversation as a body on that matter as a different agenda item, it would allow this item to move forward expeditiously. I just don't want to hitch that issue to this wagon.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** I will go briefly to Monsieur Dufresne, just to get a response in terms of what the process currently is for examining content and so forth.

Is there, then, agreement to approve recommendations 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6, on page 5 of the note?

Agreed, okay.

Monsieur Dufresne.

**Mr. Philippe Dufresne:** Just briefly, Mr. Strahl, to your point, the process of review for the publications is done by my office in consultation with the parliamentary precinct. They are looked at by a counsel in my team looking at the bylaw, the rule and the idea that certain things may be partisan, but they may not be designed to support re-election of political parties and so on.

We will prepare a briefing on those criteria as we understand them. I'll be following up with you as well to get a sense of whether there are any inconsistencies in the application. That's something that we will look at, and we can bring that back as part of an item if the guidelines are not acceptable to the board. This is something for the board to decide. Individual determinations can also be brought to the board in terms of challenges, but I understand the point in terms of timing. We will be coming back with analysis on that.

• (1235)

**Mr. Mark Strahl:** Thank you.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Thank you very much.

We are moving on to the next agenda item, namely, the use of House premises for soliciting contributions. Speakers on this subject are Mr. Dufresne, law clerk and parliamentary counsel, and Daniel G. Paquette, chief financial officer.

Mr. Dufresne, you have the floor.

[*English*]

**Mr. Philippe Dufresne:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We are presenting this note, dealing with the use of House of Commons premises by a member of Parliament for soliciting contribution, to seek the board's decision and direction on the way forward.

[Translation]

In a video posted on his Facebook page in December 2018, the Prime Minister used his parliamentary office to ask supporters of the Liberal Party of Canada to make donations.

On January 4 and 8, 2019, a representative of the LPC wrote to the Speaker offering to reimburse the amount of \$500 for the use of the space in the video. The representative also indicated that the LPC will offer to reimburse individuals who submitted donations that were linked to the video recording.

[English]

And so, on January 7, the Speaker received the complaint and was asked to address this issue with the board. In terms of the applicable bylaws and rules, the bylaws indicate that funds, goods, resources and services may be used only for carrying out a member's parliamentary functions. Those functions are identified further with regard to activities related to a member's re-election or designed to support or oppose a political party in the context of an election or non-parliamentary functions. There is a provision that talks about support for third parties not being an allowable use and says that House resources cannot be used for the purposes of soliciting contribution.

The bylaws provide that in cases of inconsistency with the bylaw, the board can determine appropriate remedies, asking that certain things be done to remedy the situation and that the amounts of money necessary to rectify it be withheld from budgets or sought.

In this sense, the House administration has looked at this matter and determined, in its assessment, that no additional costs were incurred. However, the CFO of the House administration will talk about an assessment of the market value for these types of uses to assist in your consideration of this matter.

[Translation]

**Mr. Daniel G. Paquette:** Thank you, Mr. Dufresne.

[English]

From a financial perspective, as has already been indicated, there's been no incremental cost for the House administration on this matter. To assist the board members, we've determined the value of the use of our premises. It has been assessed by looking at the costs of renting comparable hotel rooms or conference rooms here in Ottawa. Those would have ranged between \$350 and \$1,000.

The administration today received a cheque in the amount of \$500, but we have not deposited this cheque as we are still waiting for the board's decision to move forward with this matter. If the board finds that these bylaws have been breached, it can set the amount for the payment as an appropriate remedy for non-compliance.

Also, the board may wish to request that the House administration provide periodic reminders to members of these related bylaws.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Colleagues, could I have your comments?

Mr. Strahl.

● (1240)

**Mr. Mark Strahl:** I would agree with both of those things. Cash the cheque. I would simply say—without getting into the details of this case, since I think they have been well aired—that I would anticipate that there would be an escalating penalty should a party or a member decide that this was just the cost of doing business and that they could do this if they wrote a cheque. I would just put on the record that it should not be anticipated that this is simply the cost of doing business, but that there should be recognition that this is unacceptable, and we should leave it at that.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** In the second item of the conclusion, you'll see that the second option proposed was:

That the House Administration provide periodic reminders to Members regarding the By-law requirements not to use House of Commons resources for the benefit of a third party, electoral campaign activities, or for the purpose of soliciting political contributions.

Is it the view of the board that this should also be done?

We have agreement, then. Agreed.

[Translation]

Thank you very much.

[English]

Now we are going to have to go in camera for the—

Mr. Holland.

**Hon. Mark Holland:** Before we go in camera, I'm looking for a quick update on two items that I know were brought to the attention of the board. I believe they were looked at. One dealt with the secondary expenses of then minister Kenney during the period he was saying he was living in his mother's basement, from 2013 to 2015. I'm wondering if there's an update on that. The second was with relation to Charlie Angus. I know there was an issue with his website and solicitation of memberships and also with ads for his federal election nomination being placed, which I believe was done in error.

I'm just looking for an update on those two items.

[Translation]

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Mr. Patrice, you have the floor.

[English]

**Mr. Michel Patrice:** We have received those two requests. The House administration is currently doing the analysis of the file and looking at the records. We'll report back at a subsequent board meeting.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Okay. Thank you.

Now can we go in camera for the subsequent items?

Thank you very much.

We'll take a break for a moment to go in camera.

[Proceedings continue in camera]









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