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# Standing Committee on Health

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Chair: Mr. Ron McKinnon





## Standing Committee on Health

Friday, March 5, 2021

• (1100)

[*English*]

**The Chair (Mr. Ron McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Lib.)):** I call this meeting to order.

Welcome, everyone, to meeting number 22 of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Health.

The committee is meeting today, as requested by four members of the committee per Standing Order 106(4), to discuss their request to undertake a study of the NACI recommendation on the use of the AstraZeneca vaccine.

I'd like to remind everyone that everyone has the right to participate in these proceedings in the official language of their choice. In the event that there is a difficulty in hearing translation, please bring it to our attention as soon as possible so the matter can be resolved.

Now we will go to Ms. Rempel Garner.

If you wish to, please move your motion.

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Thank you, Chair.

Here we are again—

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ):** Excuse me, Mr. Chair. I was waiting in the hope that there would be interpretation, but nothing of your speech in English was interpreted. Ms. Rempel Garner's first sentence in English was also not interpreted. I don't know if there's anybody in the interpretation booths, but I'm on the right channel and there's no interpretation. Today's discussion may be very technical, so I hope I can get impeccable interpretation service.

**The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Jean-François Pagé):** Mr. Thériault, I'm checking it—

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Monsieur Thériault.

Mr. Clerk, I wonder if we could verify that the translation—

**The Clerk:** I'm told that everything is okay, so maybe you could speak a little bit in English just to make sure.

**The Chair:** Okay. I'll kind of back up and start again.

Welcome to meeting number 22 of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Health. The committee is meeting, as re-

quested by four members of the committee per Standing Order 106(4), to discuss their request to undertake a study of the NACI recommendations on the use of AstraZeneca vaccines.

I would like to remind everyone that everyone has the right to participate in these proceedings in the official language of their choice. In the event that there is difficulty in hearing translation, please bring it to our attention as soon as possible so that the matter can be resolved.

How are we doing?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Thériault seems to be indicating that it's working.

[*English*]

Ms. Rempel Garner, please go ahead.

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner:** Thank you, Chair.

Just to clarify, am I coming through loud and clear on the French translation line? We're good? Okay. Awesome.

Here we are again. I want to thank colleagues for coming to this meeting again during a parliamentary recess week. I will move a motion, but prior to doing so I want to put forward my rationale.

Early in the week we found out reports that the national advisory committee on immunization, or NACI, has recommended against giving the AstraZeneca vaccine to Canadians aged 65 and older, citing a lack of evidence that the vaccine is effective among this age group. NACI has put forward concerns saying that the vaccine might not be effective in preventing severe effects of COVID-19. Then, after this recommendation came out, we found out that Health Canada, the department that's formally in charge of the final decision on who to recommend to give vaccines to, decided to put that advice aside and recommended that the AstraZeneca vaccine be given to seniors anyway.

For me as a parliamentarian, and then watching the subsequent fallout from provincial governments trying to decide whether they would administer this vaccine to seniors or not... I'm an economist, I'm not an epidemiologist or a vaccine expert. I would really like to know why there is a discrepancy in these two recommendations. I think it's really incumbent upon us to do that quickly.

The reason we put forward a Standing Order 106(4) motion is that we know that the AstraZeneca vaccine has, I believe, begun to arrive in Canada. Provinces will have to be making decisions on who to administer the vaccine to. Since we know that seniors are among the most vulnerable to COVID, efficacy, and the decision on whether or not to administer a vaccine based on efficacy, should be a fairly relevant point of clarification for this committee.

I want to point out a couple of things in terms of the rationale for wanting to have a meeting to have experts before our committee to explain the process one way or another. First of all, I really think it's important that all Canadians decide to take a vaccine for COVID-19. I think this will be the number one public health tool. I know that even just from the reports in the media, given this conflicting information, some seniors have said, "Should I be taking this vaccine or not? Is it actually going to protect me?" I think that is a relevant question for this committee to very quickly get answers on from experts.

The second reason I think this meeting would be so important is that perhaps it would provide some clarity for provincial colleagues or other health authorities. If other vaccines are proven to be effective at a higher level of efficacy in that age group, should the recommendation be to prioritize those vaccines for that age group so that we're seeing maximum efficacy?

Chair, I did pull an analysis off the government's website. Table 11 is entitled "Estimates of vaccine efficacy against the first occurrence of confirmed COVID-19 beginning =15 days after Dose 2" for the AstraZeneca vaccine. I can send this to you and to the clerk, if need be. This is the government's data on the efficacy of the AstraZeneca vaccine in seniors aged 65 plus. What I see here is 43.2%. The World Health Organization's guideline for vaccine efficacy is 50%. I believe for the Food and Drug Administration in the U.S. it's the same. I couldn't find our guidelines. This is something I'd like experts to explain to our committee.

So this is less about having a political position and more about sussing this out with the experts in a vehicle that's not news articles that are conflicting. I was reading news articles as this story progressed this week, and I noticed that health experts were saying that the messaging has been quite muddled.

- (1105)

I think we need to get to the bottom of this, and we need to do it very quickly. I think this meeting would give an opportunity for both NACI and Health Canada to provide clear information and direction on whether or not seniors should be administered this vaccine or if they should be prioritized to have other vaccines that have that very high proven efficacy in their age group.

I'd like that to happen as soon as possible, and that's the reason for this meeting today.

I know it's come up that "oh, we're having another 106(4) meeting". Yes, we are, but there are two things.

First of all, it was a recess week. This news broke on a recess week and, unfortunately, developments with the pandemic don't just occur in parliamentary sitting weeks. The urgency, given the potential administration of the AstraZeneca vaccine, is happening now.

As you are well aware, Chair, with all of the—dare I say it?—drama that we've had in this committee, especially pertaining to getting meetings where we have adequate translation, I felt that we needed to do this and we needed to do it now. We haven't been successful in having subcommittee meetings because of—quote, unquote—resources, so here we are today.

I hope this can be perceived as a non-partisan type of motion. We just need some information. It just needs to be clear. I think this will actually help all of our constituents and everybody we represent across the country.

With that, I move:

That the committee invite the following representatives from the Public Health Agency of Canada to give a joint presentation of no more than 15 minutes:

Roman Szumski, Senior Vice-President of the Vaccine Acquisition Branch

Gina Charos and/or Stephen Bent, Director General level officials for the Centre for Immunization and Respiratory Infectious Diseases

Kim Elmslie, Vice-President of the Immunization Branch;

and that Dr. Caroline Quach-Thanh, Chair of the National Advisory Committee on Immunization be invited to give a presentation of no more than 10 minutes;

That the above witnesses be asked to present on:

...NACI's recommendation against using the AstraZeneca vaccine for Canadians 65-and-older

...Reports that Health Canada will advise against following the advice from NACI

...Evidence of the AstraZeneca vaccine's effectiveness in the [age] 65-and-older cohort,

...Potential ramifications of administering/not administering the AstraZeneca vaccine to persons aged 65-and-older in Canada

That the witnesses present concurrently on one single panel and remain available for question rounds after their presentations, that the meeting be no less than two hours duration, and that it be held no later than March 8, 2021.

I realize March 8 is quickly setting upon us, Chair.

What I'm thinking here is that we have technical-level experts from PHAC, the people who are actually doing the work of the recommendations, not just people who are out in the media every day. I want to hear from technical experts, and I'd like to have these two organizations side by side so that we can direct questions to them concurrently. I think that's going to be very important. I think we have to do this as soon as possible.

I hope that all members will agree and that we can move on with life and we can get some information.

Thank you, Chair.

• (1110)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Rempel Garner.

Mr. Davies, you have your hand up. Go ahead.

**Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

In general, I support the substance of this motion. I think Michelle has made some important points.

AstraZeneca has just been approved. We know that doses are going to be arriving imminently for Canadians. We also know that provinces, almost uniformly, have prioritized vaccinations by age. I think an extremely important question to this committee and to Canadians is whether AstraZeneca is or is not effective in Canadians over the age of 65.

I think we know that concern about vaccines—vaccine hesitancy and vaccine confidence—is really important. We have a major contradiction at the federal level, with one area of government saying that AstraZeneca is appropriate for people over 65 and another area saying that it doesn't do any good. I think it's very important that we look into this. I don't think it is an urgent concern, but I would say it is a pressing concern.

One thing I want to make clear—I'm sure Michelle didn't mean anything by this—is that I've always been a very strong supporter of constituency weeks. This is not a recess week, to me. It's not a break week. It is a constituency week. Constituency work, I think, is every bit as important for parliamentarians as the work we do in the House. In fact, in some ways, I think it's more important, frankly, to many of the people in our ridings. I just want to put that on the record, because I don't want to leave the impression that if we're not meeting in a constituency week, that in any way suggests we're not working or actively engaged.

My only concern about this is the timing of it. We're meeting on a Friday. The authors of this had the opportunity to choose the dates. They chose March 8, which is Monday. We have a meeting on Monday. My understanding is that the witnesses who will be present on Monday have already been bumped once. These are witnesses we have already selected, each of us. I think they are higher up in the queue and have evidence every bit as important.... One of them is from Pfizer, for example. I would like to hear from Pfizer. I have a boatload of questions that predate last week, which are extremely important to people. I don't mean to single them out as being more important than any of the other witnesses; they're all important. I'm concerned about the timing of this.

I will only support this motion if the meeting is held on March 9, 10 or 11, and I'll tell you why. We also have the minister coming next Friday. We have two extremely important meetings already scheduled for next week, and I will not support a motion that bumps either of those two. We will have to find another meeting slot.

I also think it's not fair to the witnesses we are going to call, who, as of right now, don't even know they're set to be called for Monday. It's a Friday. If we want these witnesses to come prepared to give solid information to this committee, and frankly if all of us want to have time to prepare appropriate questions and do the re-

search necessary to make the most out of that meeting, I don't think we should agree to a meeting on a Friday for Monday. I don't see how having a meeting Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday next week derogates in any way from the importance of this. I think that we can find a time slot.

To conclude, we perennially run up against the issue of whether or not we have slots. I don't know how that works. I'm not sure if we are able to come up with a different meeting time. I'd like to hear from the clerk and, perhaps, from Mr. Chair on that. I don't want to just have a knee-jerk reflex answer of, no, we can't, because I think we can. I think certainly there must be some capacity in the entire House of Commons to schedule an extraordinary meeting outside of normal time slots. I think that will play a role in terms of my position on supporting the motion.

• (1115)

Once again, I'll conclude by saying it's very important. I want to thank my colleague for bringing it forward, because I think it's something that we need to look into. It's just a question of scheduling it in at an appropriate time.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Davies.

I will advise that we have considered this matter at some length.

I will ask the clerk to please respond regarding the possibility of a meeting next week.

**The Clerk:** Adding a meeting during the week will be very hard without a time slot, because all the committees are sitting.

It might be easier to do on Friday, after our meeting with the minister. If not, we'll need someone to be bumped from their regular committee time, so that we can have an additional meeting on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Thériault, please go ahead.

**Mr. Luc Thériault:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I could suggest a compromise. I agree with Mr. Davies, particularly with regard to the work we do in our ridings, especially since the Standing Committee on Health meets twice a week. It leaves us very little time in our ridings, the weeks we sit.

That said, what we must avoid and what I've been trying to avoid since the beginning, for the past year, in terms of managing the pandemic is reactions based strictly on current events. I'm not an expert either, but I try to rely as much as possible on scientific advice. When I hear a news story, I do some research and try to figure out what it is based on. This race for the vaccine, which everyone has entered head-on, has resulted in a bidding war.

I agree that we need to know whether we should give this vaccine to people 65 years of age and older. However, on Tuesday, in Quebec, the media reported, in connection with the 500,000 doses we will be receiving, 300,000 of which have an expiry date, that the Conservatives requested an emergency meeting because of an inconsistency between the National Advisory Committee on Immunization's opinion and that of Health Canada regarding approval of the vaccine. This may create uncertainty, whereas the motion seeks to have the opposite effect. I would like us to be careful and responsible in how we approach these issues. I support the intent behind the motion, but we must not create the opposite effect.

In addition, since the National Advisory Committee on Immunization's warning, which was issued at least two weeks before the vaccine was approved, much water has flowed under the bridge. We didn't have a vaccine a year ago, and now we're getting ready to receive a whole bunch. So things are moving quickly. Now we're learning that studies have been done on these age groups, including the AstraZeneca vaccine, which show that after two weeks, the efficacy of Pfizer's vaccine and AstraZeneca's vaccine is equivalent. Today, it was reported in the newspapers that the efficacy rate was close to 80% in people 70 years of age and older.

We need to know the facts about this, yes, but the urgency, in my opinion, is mainly linked to the fact that we must avoid sticking to the news to such an extent that we finally create emergencies based on outdated data. This is a methodological concern. I think we have a responsibility to be careful about that.

There are witnesses whose dates we've postponed twice. They are experts in epidemiology, microbiology, infectious disease and immunology, which we are not. I thought this was a good opportunity to ask all these questions of the witnesses we are going to hear from on Monday. I would like to know what they think about the points raised in the Conservative motion, among other things.

• (1120)

At this point, I would tend to say that we must move our studies forward. I think a good compromise would be to add an hour to Monday's meeting to hear from the witnesses scheduled for the first and second hours. We are bringing in experts, but they also have other things to do in life than coming to us, particularly when they're working in immunology and infectious disease and they're on the front lines.

Postponing their appearance again would be disrespectful to them. We need to have them in the first two hours, and I suggest we hear from Dr. Caroline Quach and the Health Canada officials in the third hour. That way, we'll have had an opportunity to ask our questions in the first two hours, and in the third hour, we'll have the information we need to ask relevant questions on the given topic, based on people's reactions.

I propose this compromise because there aren't many meetings left, and the committee still has a lot of work to do. Also, you never know what can happen. We're not immune to another emergency or other situations that may arise while we manage this pandemic.

I'd like to take this opportunity to propose that we hear the witnesses who were scheduled for Monday and whose appearance has already been postponed twice. Their opinion will be extremely relevant, even in the context of the subject we wanted to discuss for two hours. Since a number of things will have been clarified during those first two hours, the third hour will be sufficient for us to ask the questions we want to ask these people.

So that's the compromise I'm proposing, and I'm making an amendment to add this third hour. Since we know the subject fairly well, I would make the first amendment as follows:

That the committee invite the following representatives from the Public Health Agency of Canada to give a joint presentation of no more than ten (10) minutes:

Roman Szumski, Senior Vice President of the Vaccine Acquisition Branch

Gina Charos and Stephen Bent, Director General level official for the Centre of Immunization and Respiratory Infectious Diseases

Kim Elmslie, Vice President of the Immunization Branch;

and that Dr. Caroline Quach-Thanh, Chair of the National Advisory Committee on Immunization be invited to give a presentation of no more than seven (7) minutes;

That the above witnesses be asked to present on ...

I'll skip over points A, B, C and D, which aren't changing. I'll continue:

That the meeting of March 8, 2021, be held for a period of three (3) consecutive hours, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

That the witnesses previously named appear, in one single one-hour panel and remain available during the first hour of the meeting, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., for question rounds following their presentations.

That the witnesses already scheduled for the meeting of March 8, 2021, be present from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m., for a second and third panel of one hour each, to provide a presentation of approximately five (5) minutes each and remain available for question rounds following their presentations.

They have already been contacted and are ready. Dr. Quach was already scheduled to appear on March 8, and we have already met with her. I think she was on hold. I don't see how Health Canada officials couldn't be available. It's impossible. I don't think it's disrespectful to invite them to appear for an hour. That way, we will take everyone's interests into account and clarify things quickly. In addition, we will benefit from the opinions of other experts in infectious disease and epidemiology in one session.

I have taken care to send the amendment to the clerk so that it can be reread correctly with the additions.

• (1125)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Thériault.

[English]

The discussion at this point is on the amendment of Monsieur Thériault.

I see, Mr. Fisher, that you have your hand up. Please go ahead.

**Mr. Darren Fisher (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I was going to speak to the main motion, but I will speak to the amendment and then I'll put my hand back up to speak to the main motion.

I want to take a moment to thank Luc for that really thoughtful intervention. Don also touched on this, showing the respect to the people who are already lined up and who have been, to the best of my recollection, bumped at least once, maybe twice already for Monday, and also speaking to the importance of these witnesses and not just the respect we need to show them to make sure they are there Monday and that they get a chance to present their witness testimony.

By the same token, with regard to the amendment, it is only fair that we show that same level of respect to the people we would be inviting for that one hour on Monday afternoon after Monday's meeting.

These are very busy public servants. I can tell you that I rarely ever, on the next business day, have openings in my calendar, so they will need to move their schedules, and perhaps they can do that.

Perhaps we can get them the headsets. Perhaps we can get the sound checks. Perhaps it can be done on Monday, but with regard to the amendment, if we are showing the same level of respect to Monday's witnesses for the two hours, or for the first part of the meeting, we should show the same respect to people we would be inviting to that meeting for that one-hour period of time. I'm looking for a nod from Luc. I guess that is prior to question period on Monday.

That is not to veer off the amendment to speak on the motion itself—I will come back on that, but that would be my concern with the amendment on Monday.

Don said—and I don't want to put words in his mouth—that this perhaps isn't an emergency but it is urgent. I have the clarity. I watched enough of the newscast to get the clarity between the NACI comments and the Health Canada comments, but it is important not only that we as a committee get that clarity but also that we get that for Canadians as well so that, as has been said already, we make sure that we don't contribute, through calling an emergency motion, to the concern that Canadians may have. It's important that Canadians know that these vaccines are safe.

With regard to the amendment, I will listen to the debate on the amendment, and I want to thank Luc for those very thoughtful comments about making sure that we show a high level of respect to the witnesses.

Don spoke about wanting to make sure he gets a chance to question the president of Pfizer Canada. That's important. I always enjoy hearing Don's questions and hearing the testimony that comes out of those questions, so I want to make sure we have that on Monday, cogizant again of the clerk's comments about there being no open slots on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays because of the committees all sitting.

I'll certainly listen to the comments we have on Monsieur Thériault's amendment.

Thanks, folks.

● (1130)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Fisher.

We will now go back to Ms. Rempel Garner.

Go ahead, please.

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner:** Thanks, Chair.

I'll respond to a few comments. With regard to the timing, the reason we put March 8 as the target date for this meeting was that we submitted the letter with the request for this meeting on March 2. Since there were no parliamentary committees scheduled this week—or I think there is one other 106(4) motion—it was our assumption that the meeting happening today could have happened much earlier in the week and that, by some miracle, maybe we could have had those officials before our committee today.

The timing we included in the letter was with the hope that we could pass this motion and have the meeting prior to the resumption of the committee on Monday. There was no intent to bump witnesses on Monday. There was an intent to have it done this week, but clearly that didn't happen so now we're in this situation.

To my colleague, Don, my comments around Parliament not sitting this week, to be clear, were not meant to imply that we weren't working. Certainly that has not been the case for me, and I'm sure everyone's nodding here as well. I just meant to say that there were no parliamentary meetings scheduled for this week, so there was no other opportunity to address this matter.

The other thing I want to note is that I believe that AstraZeneca has declined to appear before this committee as well. That was another reason we wanted to have officials in front of this committee on this matter, given that AstraZeneca has declined to appear before the committee on the vaccine portion of the existing study. We've already had NACI and Health Canada appear on this. It would have been nice if those two bodies gave the information to the committee prior to its hitting the media, but such is life.

There's no intent here to bump witnesses. Again, it would have been nice to have this meeting earlier in the week, given that it's been four days since we submitted the letter, but here we are.

With that, I think I can speak on behalf of my colleagues in the Conservative Party. We are fine having this meeting, but it needs to happen next week. It can't happen weeks from now. Regarding Mr. Thériault's amendment, I want to make sure that we have sufficient time to question the witnesses. I don't care when it happens, but I would just like it to happen next week. If the clerk is saying we could do a two-hour meeting after our meeting with the minister on Friday, that is fine.

Mr. Thériault, if you would like to do it on Monday, that is fine.

Then, just to the assertion that it's unreasonable for us to be requesting these officials to appear in a short period of time, I would just point to what Mr. Thériault said. These officials were out in the media this week presenting findings and responding to media inquiries on this issue. I think they would likely say that they are prepared to respond to parliamentarians.

To me at this point, the firm non-negotiable for Conservative members would be that this meeting happen prior to the end of next week. I believe there is precedent for meetings to happen in the evenings, even during a parliamentary sitting week. Certainly, as the clerk has already mentioned, it could happen after the meeting with the minister on Friday of next week.

I just note that every day that we delay on this is a delay.... The AstraZeneca vaccine is potentially being delivered and we don't have clarity on this issue, and Canadian seniors don't have clarity on this issue.

To Mr. Davies' point, I do not want vaccine hesitancy to be an issue in Canada. It is incumbent upon our committee to provide information to Canadians so that they can make positive choices that will lead to the uptake of vaccines.

I hope that provides clarity. I think we can come to a consensus. As long as this meeting happens next week, I'm good and I think Conservatives are good. I just don't want this dragged out longer than that.

• (1135)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Rempel Garner.

I should point out that, for a meeting request received on Tuesday, the earliest the meeting could have happened was yesterday. In any case, to have the meeting with the witnesses requires two days' notice beyond that, so Friday was never possible.

We'll go now to Mr. Davies.

Go ahead, please.

**Mr. Don Davies:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

To speak to Luc's amendment, I think it's worthy of consideration. First of all, I need to know if it's possible for us to have an extended meeting, and, second, we need to consider whether it would be one hour or two. I understand that Luc's amendment is to extend the meeting on Monday—

**The Chair:** I'm sorry, Mr. Davies, but could you move your mike down, please?

**Mr. Don Davies:** I'm so sorry. Let me start again. I said I think Luc's suggestion is something worthy of consideration. I'm unclear

whether or not the committee can be extended on Monday, and if it can, whether that would be for one or two hours. I would prefer two hours, because I'm not sure that one hour is sufficient.

The other point I want to make is that I take Michelle completely at her word when she says that it's not her intent to bump witnesses, but the practical reality is that that's the impact of this motion unless we can find a different spot. I'm going to go back to the very first motion that underpins our COVID study, which is that our COVID study have a process in it that is intended to allow every party to have its turn in addressing the issues of concern to it. Every time we delay this process by having more and more meetings, it means Luc's priority and my priority keep getting pushed into the future. Some of that's unavoidable, and I don't mind that. If there truly is an issue of huge importance, that's fine. Obviously when the minister comes and we have estimates, that's another issue. We're always subject to potential legislation coming, so I understand that can happen.

But when members of this committee put issues forward that in effect require more meetings to be scheduled, that has the effect of delaying when we get to Luc's issue and my issue. I would remind all members as well that there is a process in the motion that we passed, such that if someone believes at the end of their four meetings—and it doesn't have to be four, I realize. In this case, on the Conservatives' priority of vaccine—which was also my first priority, by the way—we agreed to the maximum number of meetings for those witnesses, which is four. There is a process built in for this committee to have additional meetings after that, by unanimous consent.

If at the end of those four meetings we believe there are further witnesses we would like to hear from—and I think this is a classic example of a case in which we would—I would support hearing from witnesses on this issue. I would just remind everyone that the process is available to us. Now, it's fraught with some political risk because it requires unanimous consent. This process of using 106 just requires a majority support, but it has the effect of giving the Conservatives more meetings under their priority, and not following the process that we have in our motion. I just want to make that clear.



I will put on the record here that I'm not supporting any more 106 meetings unless they truly fall under the rubric of urgency or importance. Again, I don't cast any aspersions about this motion. I think it's well intentioned. I think that it's timely and important. The trouble is, where does that end? I mean, on vaccines, we could end up having 13 meetings through 106, because it seems that every week, every day there's an issue of importance on vaccines. I just want to remind us of that process that we have in the committee and remind everybody that other parties are waiting to get to their priority issues as well, and we're only on the second priority of 16 that have been identified. Vaccines happen to be, I think, an extraordinary priority, so I personally would support having extra meetings if that's the way we go.

• (1140)

The last thing I want to say is that I just heard from our whip. I've just been made aware that there are extra slots available for this committee, and for any committee. They occur on Thursday and Tuesday nights. I understand that the Thursday night slots are booked for next week. Tuesday night I couldn't do, but what I'm going to suggest as well after we deal with Luc's issue is—I think it's important to put this on now so that we understand what our full options are—that this committee could reserve one of the night slots the following week on either the Tuesday or the Thursday. Now, I heard Michelle say that her request is that the meeting be held this week. If it can't be scheduled without bumping anybody, then I would support having this meeting the following week in one of those open slots that are available.

Perhaps the clerk can advise us right now. My whip seems to know when those slots are or aren't available. Perhaps the clerk can advise this committee on what extra slots might be available the following week. It might help us to know when we can best schedule this meeting, once we know what all our options are.

If I may, Clerk, is a one-hour or two-hour meeting after the meeting on Monday possible?

**The Clerk:** Yes, it is. From 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. on Monday it's possible. As well, the week after is a break week. We have a lot of options there, because the House is not sitting.

**The Chair:** Let's just call it a constituency week.

**The Clerk:** Yes.

**Mr. Don Davies:** If I may, Clerk, that would be just one hour available on Monday, not two?

**The Clerk:** QP is at two o'clock.

**Mr. Don Davies:** Yes, of course.

**The Clerk:** We'd have to end there so that members would be available to attend QP.

**Mr. Don Davies:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** I would like to jump in here and comment, Mr. Davies.

The Standing Order 106(4) process does not give the committee any extra powers. We're still bound by the motions we pass. We're still bound by the House motions and so forth. Standing Order 106(4) is only about getting a meeting called. When we're in that

meeting, what we do in that meeting is bound by our routine motions and any other motions we pass.

After that clarification, we'll go to Mike.

Mr. Kelloway, please go ahead.

**Mr. Mike Kelloway (Cape Breton—Canso, Lib.):** Thanks, Chair. I appreciate it.

This is a really good discussion. I thank MP Davies for his comments, and MP Thériault. I would also like to thank Michelle Rempel Garner for some clarification as well.

For me, on Monday an hour... I would rather have two hours for this particular topic. I think it's really important. I also don't want to bump anyone in the process. We have some consensus among my colleagues, or at least I think we do, that we don't want to bump people. That's really encouraging.

If we could look at a time that's two hours, whether after the minister on Friday or during break week or after the break week, I think that would be really important. I think we could do a deeper dive in two hours. When you look at it, usually by the time we get some things checked, it's about five to 10 minutes—10 minutes may be pushing it, but it's at least five to eight—before you get the sound checks in, or if somebody arrives late or whatever the case may be.

It is an urgent issue in the sense of ensuring that people like my mother, for example, understand the backstory here, what is real or what is maybe hyperbole or whatever the case may be. I really like what I'm hearing from MP Davies and MP Thériault. Again, I think it would be great to look at two hours. As the clerk just said, the next offering is an evening, or after the minister next Friday. I think two hours would be an important piece for us to look at it, given the urgency, to ensure that we get the answers that parliamentarians and Canadians, people like my mom, want.

I really appreciate that.

• (1145)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Kelloway.

Dr. Powlowski, please go ahead.

**Mr. Marcus Powlowski (Thunder Bay—Rainy River, Lib.):** I'm trying to do something constructive here rather than just making a comment, in that I'm trying to put together an alternate motion.

I don't know if anyone else has seen this news. I texted my colleagues. News has just come out that Johnson & Johnson has been approved. I think this materially alters the need for the initial proposal, which I totally agree with. It was a good proposal and does address a very important question. Certainly, the numbers regarding AstraZeneca are all over the place, because there are a whole bunch of studies looking at whole bunch of end-points.

For me, the most crucial and I think the most conclusive study has come out of Scotland, where they've vaccinated over a million people. Over 400,000 got AstraZeneca. My understanding is that most of those people were over 80. After having received the AstraZeneca vaccination, they showed—I think after one month—a 94% reduction in hospitalization, which was actually better than Pfizer, which was somewhere in the eighties.

I think the fact is that AstraZeneca will be approved for an older population, but now Johnson & Johnson is out there as well. For the sake of Canadians, we're going to want some clarity, and hopefully at the national level, because as Michelle has said, and I think quite rightly, what all the provinces do could be different. Why not find out from NACI and from Health Canada what the recommendations are? As I say, now that Johnson & Johnson is out there, is that going to be a separate meeting?

I know that I'm speaking to Luc's amendment. I'm agnostic about the amendment, but I think there's a bigger issue on what exactly we're going to talk about. I was trying to come up with some kind of alternate proposal, which would be to put two hours aside sometime next week to discuss the newly authorized vaccines and the plan as to which populations would get which of those vaccines and based on what evidence.

Maybe I'm jumping the gun on that, but I thought I should point out the Johnson & Johnson approval. With Johnson & Johnson, too, that brings up other issues, because it too isn't as efficacious in preventing disease; however, the studies that came out show that it was 100% effective, at least in the limited population they had, at preventing hospitalization and death.

There is a big question: Who is going to get which of these vaccines? I absolutely agree with what everyone has said so far: I think that needs to be clarified.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Dr. Powlowski.

I'll suggest to Mr. Davies that he check with his whip again on slots for Tuesday and Thursday. In the background, I've checked with my sources, and it's confirmed that there are no slots available on those days. Could you please check on that, Mr. Davies?

Mr. Fisher, go ahead.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Thanks, Mr. Chair.

I put my hand up thinking that the amendment might be dealt with by this point.

I'll take my hand down, and I won't put it back up again until the amendment is dealt with.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Is there anyone who wishes to speak on the amendment, or do we wish to go to a vote on the amendment?

Mr. Van Bynen, please go ahead.

**Mr. Tony Van Bynen (Newmarket—Aurora, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I think it's important that the public be informed. If we're taking a look at the sense of urgency, there are matters that are urgent and important, and there are matters that are important. I'd like to remind the committee that the decision to administer the vaccine to any specific group is made by medical professionals.

In this case, in my community, it's made by the medical officer of health for the Regional Municipality of York. There seems to be a bit of a tendency for us to micromanage this situation and not give the medical professionals the credentials and the credit they deserve. I'm sure that the medical officers of health have already been in discussion with Health Canada and the advisory committee on immunization.

I think it's important, and it's important enough to give it the time it deserves, and therefore I would want us to make sure that we have the two hours available, but let's not forget that the decision to administer the vaccine is in the hands of medical professionals.

• (1150)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Van Bynen.

Mr. Maguire, please go ahead.

**Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC):** Thanks, Mr. Chair.

I think there is an urgency to this. Mr. Van Bynen may be right, but those professionals need to know what information they're basing the decision on, and that's what this motion is about. There's a conflict in facts here between NACI and Health Canada in regard to just AstraZeneca. We have a number of vaccines that have been licensed in Canada, and that's great, but we also have a situation where there has been some conflicting information as well. I think we need to deal with the situation that's before us.

If this vaccine is going out to be used by sources in Canada—and I believe there are areas where it could be, but perhaps just not in those aged over 65—if we wait until the week after next, then that's really putting 10 to 12 days of vaccines in people's arms when we don't know what the efficacy of doing that would be. That's the nuts and bolts of having this meeting: to try to clarify this for the public. I think one of the things called for here is to make sure we reduce vaccine hesitancy as much as we can. We want everybody to know that they can be secure when they're getting a vaccine in their arms.

That's why I think it's very important that this meeting be at least next week sometime. Early in the morning, late at night or after another meeting, I'm fine with whenever it is. I do think that for the public's interest, the sooner it is, the better.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Maguire.

Ms. Sidhu, please go ahead.

**Ms. Sonia Sidhu (Brampton South, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I agree with Don, Mr. Chair, that we should be mindful of the fact that we are already in the middle of the study on the topic of vaccines. There are other important topics that the committee wants to study, as Don said, but this is what we were saying during the last 106(4), in a polite way. We were cognizant of these consequences.

On Luc's motion, I agree that we want a full two hours, and there may be more witnesses we also want to hear from on this subject. One additional hour on Monday does not sound sufficient, as we want to hear from everyone.

Also, as MP Luc Thériault said, we want to hear proper translation. Technical matters should be clear so that we can understand. We also want to hear from Health Canada, which approves the vaccines. There are many other experts, and we need to make sure that proper headsets are available for these witnesses to allow for proper translation.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Sidhu.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Thériault, you have the floor.

**Mr. Luc Thériault:** I don't want to prolong the debate, but after this last intervention, I'll say that it's quite obvious that this issue, if it were considered urgent, could have been dealt with for three hours instead of two. The experts on the first panel can be asked about our concerns, and as Ms. Sidhu just said, we should invite not only Dr. Quach and officials from Health Canada, but also other experts. We could have had them on Monday.

That said, I understand that there's a consensus among my colleagues to hold a two-hour meeting. So, I understand from what's emerging that the amendment will be defeated. I think this was a good opportunity to avoid changing the order of things with respect to the motion that was passed in the House and to take the necessary time on Monday to focus our questions on the motion presented by the Conservatives. We could have set the record straight.

I also want to reiterate what Mr. Van Bynen said, because it's important. The public should not be led to believe that when decisions are made about the immunization of people 65 years of age and older, based on this or that vaccine, they'll be based strictly on conflicting facts. The National Advisory Committee on Immunization, NACI, and Health Canada, which has approved the vaccine without constraint, have done their work at different times on the schedule.

As I speak, the Quebec immunization committee is doing its job. Based on the data provided by the NACI in a completely transparent manner and on the Health Canada study, it will decide on the vaccination strategy in Quebec, as has Ontario and elsewhere.

So there's no problem in updating conflicting facts. These people will use the most recent information available to them to decide on the most effective strategy. Now, it's up to us—and we're always a bit behind and out of step in our studies—to reassure everyone, including our mayors, without any problem.

I thought it was important to reiterate what Mr. Van Bynen said. In other words, what we are going to do at this meeting will proba-

bly not determine the decision of the Quebec immunization committee. I think it's going to make its decision before our meeting. That's why I thought that by adding an hour to the meeting, after hearing from experts and questioning them for two hours, we would have had the best compromise.

I'm obviously going to vote for my amendment, and I'll understand it if it's defeated.

● (1155)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

[*English*]

We'll go back to Mr. Davies.

Go ahead, Mr. Davies.

**Mr. Don Davies:** Thank you.

What would be helpful for me would be to lay before the committee what all the options are, and then we could select the best option. The trouble with doing it one at a time is that we're not quite sure what the alternatives are. What I'm hearing now is that these are the alternatives: We can have an extra hour on Monday after our meeting, we could have two hours after the minister appears on Friday, or we could schedule a two-hour meeting the following break week virtually any time, say Monday.

I really think the best way to approach this is for us to take a straw poll as to which of those options is the best. I know Michelle was quite passionate about having it next week for sure. If we're okay with it being on Friday, I don't think it does a great deal of violence to the concept to have it the following Monday. I'm okay with either Friday or Monday. I kind of prefer having it on the break week, slightly, because it saves us a four-hour meeting at the end of a very busy week next week, if it's tacked on to a meeting. It gives us a bit of breathing space.

The other thing... I don't want to muddy the waters too much, but I'm interested in Marcus's comments about Johnson & Johnson. I'm wondering if there may even be some consideration to folding them in and having them appear as well. If we had this meeting the following Monday—I don't want to get too far afield here and maybe it's unhelpful to complicate it—that would give us a little bit of time to invite them. But maybe we'd better not do that. It will just complicate things.

Basically, to me it's either Friday for two hours or Monday. I think we should try to find out from our colleagues as to the will of the majority.

● (1200)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Davies.

We will go back to Mr. Fisher.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thanks, Don.

Can I be so bold as to ask the clerk whether it would be more convenient to do it for two hours Friday evening afterwards? Is a slot available on Monday? This is just to help get some clarity on some of the questions Don has posed. My apologies that we're not specifically speaking to Mr. Thériault's amendment, but others are.... I think we're having a good conversation on how we can move forward on this and how we can, hopefully, keep the whole committee happy.

I would ask the clerk if he could chime in.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Mr. Clerk, please go ahead.

**The Clerk:** For Monday, March 8, we have one hour extra, so we could go until two o'clock. Friday, after the minister, we could go from 3:00 to 5:00.

I was informed a few minutes ago—and I didn't have that information when I intervened earlier—that we could have a spot Thursday night, 6:30 to 8:30. This is Thursday of next week. The week after is a break week, so it would be easy to have a meeting then. But on Thursday night there's a time slot available for two hours, 6:30 to 8:30.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk.

Mr. Fisher, I see your hand up again. Go ahead.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Thanks to the clerk for that clarity.

I'm not sure what others think, but I think that Thursday next week is difficult. If the committee decides on Thursday, so be it, but I know that I'm very booked on Thursday and on Thursday evening. I could do the extra two hours on Friday. Again, I don't mean this to sound as if it has anything to do with it being about me. I'm just suggesting that perhaps, based on Don's intervention... I believe that Monday sometime, if the clerk says it's amenable, is also a possibility. Thursday is a little bit problematic, but again, it's not about me.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Fisher.

Mr. Davies, go ahead.

**Mr. Don Davies:** I had put my hand up before I heard Darren's comment about Thursday being difficult.

My initial reaction was to grab the Thursday slot. It seems as if it satisfies everybody. It satisfies Michelle's desire to have the meeting next week. It avoids having to move any of our meetings. It gets us out of a four-hour marathon meeting on Friday. To me, it's perfect.

I understand that we're never going to get everybody's schedule to be perfect on this, but I'm going to, subject to Luc's.... I know we're still dealing with his motion, so I apologize for that. I don't know if it's proper to make a subamendment or to make a friendly amendment to Mr. Thériault's motion, but I would move that we hold a two-hour meeting to discuss the contents of Michelle's motion in the Thursday slot, from 6:30 to 8:30.

**The Chair:** Perhaps we could get to the vote on Luc's motion, and then maybe consider that later, if it's okay with you. Is that okay, Mr. Davies?

**Mr. Don Davies:** Yes.

**The Chair:** We have Mr. Van Bynen next.

**Mr. Tony Van Bynen:** Mr. Chair, unfortunately, I have House duty on Thursday night.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Van Bynen.

Mr. Barlow, please go ahead.

**Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC):** Thanks, Mr. Chair.

Thursday would work for the Conservative team. We can make that work.

If we can get to some sort of consensus.... We're not going to get to a consensus where every member can make it there, but if we are leaning towards that, perhaps either we could vote on Mr. Thériault's motion now, or Mr. Thériault could withdraw his motion and maybe put in a second amendment to look at Thursday night. That seems to be more amenable to more members. It's just a suggestion, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Barlow.

We'll get to the vote as soon as we have no one wishing to speak to the amendment.

I see no more hands raised. Let us proceed to the vote on Mr. Thériault's amendment.

Mr. Clerk, I would ask you to take the roll call, please.

(Amendment negatived: nays 6; yeas 5)

• (1205)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk.

The amendment does not carry. We now go back to the discussion on the main motion.

I have Mr. Davies.

**Mr. Don Davies:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would move that we hold the meeting called for in the motion on Thursday, at the time slot identified by the clerk, which I believe was from 6:30 to 8:30 eastern time.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Davies.

We'll go forward on discussion of Mr. Davies' amendment.

Mr. Fisher, go ahead.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Once again, Mr. Chair, I put my hand up to speak to the main motion and then Mr. Davies moved another amendment.

Notwithstanding what I said before, Thursday is not perfect for me, but again, it's not about me. I hate to continue to harp on this, but I'll go back to the clerk again. Perhaps I wasn't listening, but I thought he didn't say that Thursday evening was available and now I'm hearing that it is.

I hate to ask for even more clarification, but, Mr. Clerk, are you certain that Thursday evening is available?

**The Clerk:** Yes. I didn't have the information, but I got an email saying that Thursday is free now. That's why it was not mentioned earlier. I'm sorry for the confusion.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** We're getting the information hot off the press as it comes in.

Are you finished with your intervention, Mr. Fisher? Okay.

Mr. Kelloway, please go ahead.

**Mr. Mike Kelloway:** I was just going to bring up what Darren brought up. It seems that we have clarity that Thursday is open. It sounds like that's assured. It's clear that Thursday is open. The basis of my question was to get confirmation that Thursday was open and, through the clerk, it sounds like it is indeed open.

I was going to suggest Friday if Thursday wasn't open, but I don't want to muddy the waters. I'll hang up now.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Kelloway.

I see no more hands raised. We shall proceed to the vote on Mr. Davies' amendment.

(Amendment agreed to: yeas 6; nays 5)

• (1210)

**The Chair:** The discussion now is on the motion as amended by Mr. Davies. The motion as amended by Mr. Davies basically calls for the meeting, the one spoken of in the motion, to take place on Thursday evening.

Ms. Sidhu, on the motion as amended, please go ahead.

**Ms. Sonia Sidhu:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

As I said before, I am curious as to why the members who submitted the motion did not include any representatives from Health Canada who approve the vaccines. I think we all want to listen to Health Canada. It seems like there are questions about the authorization of the vaccines. It's important that Health Canada be in there.

I would like to amend the motion by requesting that Dr. Supriya Sharma, the chief medical adviser, and Dr. Marc Berthiaume, the director of the bureau of medical sciences, be invited to present in this meeting and that they be given the same time as the NACI experts.

Also, I think we should hear from some outside experts as well. I have a list that should be considered. The list includes Dr. Cora from the University of Calgary; Dr. Andrew Morris, medical director, antimicrobial stewardship program; Caroline Colijin, mathematician and modeller at Simon Fraser University; Horacio Bach; Dr. Hassan Masri, ICU physician and associate professor at the

University of Saskatchewan; Dr. Joss Reimer, MB vaccine task force; Dr. Isaac Bogoch, Ontario vaccine task force; Dr. Danuta Skowronski, epidemiology lead on influenza; and Dr. Krishana Sankar, program manager of COVID-19 Resources Canada.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Ms. Sidhu, did you wish to move an amendment?

**Ms. Sonia Sidhu:** Yes, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** I'll ask you to restate your amendment, because it's kind of hard for me to figure out exactly what the motion will be.

You wish to amend the motion as amended already by Mr. Davies.

**Ms. Sonia Sidhu:** Yes.

**The Chair:** You want to add certain witnesses.

**Ms. Sonia Sidhu:** Yes.

**The Chair:** I suggest that it's a very long list of witnesses. Can you please clarify the actual amendment?

**Ms. Sonia Sidhu:** Mr. Chair, do you want me to read it again?

I would like to amend the motion by requesting that Dr. Supriya Sharma, the chief medical adviser, and Dr. Marc Berthiaume, the director of the bureau of medical sciences, be invited to present in this meeting and that they be given the same time as the NACI experts. Also, I think we should hear from outside experts as well. I have a list that should be considered.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Bernard Généreux (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, CPC):** A point of order, Mr. Chair.

Aren't we supposed to receive the amendments in both languages?

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Monsieur Généreux, members are free to move motions from the floor. At that time, we rely on translation services to convey the amendment in the other language.

Ms. Sidhu, your amendment to add members from the Department of Health is good, but then you go on to say "I think", and I'm not sure that's part of your amendment. If you have another list to add, I don't know if you want to add that as a different amendment later on, or...

**Ms. Sonia Sidhu:** Sure, Mr. Chair. That is for consideration. I will send that list to the clerk.

• (1215)

**The Chair:** Okay.

**Mr. Don Davies:** On a point of order, Mr. Chair, I'm not quite clear on that. If Ms. Sidhu is moving a motion to alter the witnesses—by the way, I think the ones from Health Canada are good—I don't think it's appropriate to say that we'll be sent a bunch of other names for consideration. The motion has to be certain. It has to stipulate what it is. I can't vote on two specific names and a list of other people to be considered. We need clarity on exactly what the motion is.

**The Chair:** Mr. Barlow.

**Mr. John Barlow:** On a point of order on that same point, Mr. Chair, I do believe we have a bit of a gentlemen's agreement, or something in the Standing Orders, on how many witnesses we can have per meeting. The witness list that Ms. Sidhu read off is quite significant. If she is going to propose additional meetings on this issue, then that is more than just an amendment.

Like Mr. Davies, I am fine with her first group of additional witnesses at the meeting, but to list off a dozen other doctors goes far beyond what I think we as a committee have agreed to in terms of the number of witnesses we would have per panel.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Barlow.

We're getting into debate here.

Ms. Sidhu, I would recommend that you make your amendment end at the point where you list the Department of Health officials, or if we want to add additional witnesses for some reason, perhaps that could be another amendment. I think that will keep it manageable. We also have to be cognizant that we have only a certain amount of time and having more witnesses makes that problematic.

In my view, the number of witnesses for a meeting on COVID-19 is actually prescribed in the House order of October 26 as being one witness per hour per party. However, our practice in these special meetings, especially those called in this way, has been to set that aside and to go with a list of witnesses as agreed to in that particular motion.

The amendment, as I understand it, by Ms. Sidhu is that we add that the Public Health Agency of Canada officials be given the same amount of time to speak. Ms. Sidhu gave a list of those officials to invite.

Are we all clear on what the amendment is at this point?

Mr. Davies.

**Mr. Don Davies:** Please state who the witnesses are that we seek to add.

**The Chair:** Ms. Sidhu, please read it one more time.

**Ms. Sonia Sidhu:** I would like to amend it by requesting that Dr. Supriya Sharma, chief medical adviser, and Dr. Marc Berthiaume, director of the bureau of medical sciences, be invited to present in this meeting and that they be given the same time as the NACI representatives.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Sidhu.

**Mr. Don Davies:** Mr. Chair, may I just ask for clarification? Would those two people specifically be the ones who could explain the Health Canada rationale? Is that the purpose of having these two?

**The Chair:** Ms. Sidhu, would you like to respond?

**Ms. Sonia Sidhu:** Yes, Mr. Chair.

**Mr. Don Davies:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** I think we can now carry on the discussion on Ms. Sidhu's amendment.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Thériault, do you have any comments on the amendment?

**Mr. Luc Thériault:** Yes, Mr. Chair.

First of all, after the last intervention, I'm not too sure anymore. I understand what's being said about Health Canada, but there was also a list of independent experts.

I would just like to raise the fact that we took an hour to decide whether we were going to question the representatives of the two bodies concerned by the main motion for one hour or two hours. Now we're adding a series of people, and we think we can do that in two hours. According to the Conservative motion, I thought we needed two hours to question representatives from the two bodies.

I have no problem adding Health Canada officials to the list of witnesses, but after that, I don't see why we wouldn't need several more hours to hear from all the other experts. I don't understand that reasoning, and obviously I would like to see the list before I vote.

• (1220)

**The Chair:** Mr. Thériault, I'd like to make a clarification. The other experts aren't included. It's just the experts from the Department of Health.

**Mr. Luc Thériault:** That's great, Mr. Chair.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Chair, I'd like to clarify something. There would be two witnesses from Health Canada, Dr. Supriya Sharma and Dr. Marc Berthiaume.

**Mr. Luc Thériault:** So we're no longer talking about a long list of other experts. We're not trying to muddy the waters anymore.

I'm fine with inviting officials from Health Canada, and I think we have two hours to do that.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Thériault.

[*English*]

Mr. Fisher, please go ahead.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I got my clarity there.

Thank you to both Sonia and Luc for that intervention.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Fisher.

We have no hands up after Mr. Fisher.

We shall proceed to a vote on Ms. Sidhu's amendment.

(Amendment agreed to: yeas 11; nays 0 [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

**The Chair:** We go back to the main motion as amended by Mr. Thériault and further amended by Ms. Sidhu.

On the motion as amended, is there any—

**Mr. Don Davies:** On a point of order, Mr. Chair, it is as amended by me, not by Mr. Thériault.

**The Chair:** My apologies.

We go back to the main motion as amended by Mr. Davies and subsequently amended by Ms. Sidhu. I'm sorry for that error, Mr. Davies.

We are resuming discussion on the motion as amended. Is there any discussion?

Seeing no hands raised, I shall ask the clerk to conduct the vote once again.

(Motion as amended agreed to: yeas 11; nays 0)

**The Chair:** It sounds like we squeaked it in there. Congratulations, the motion is passed.

I'd like to thank everyone for all their work today. It was a good discussion.

Mr. Clerk, please go ahead and lock down that meeting slot for us.

That being the case, I think our business is done here.

**Mr. John Barlow:** Mr. Chair—

**The Chair:** Mr. Barlow, go ahead.

**Mr. John Barlow:** Mr. Chair, I have one quick comment about a bit of business.

We saw that the law clerk sent out his note the other day saying that he does not have the contracts that the Government of Canada signed with the vaccine companies, which we asked for in a motion that was passed a couple of weeks ago. It's my understanding that you, as chair, and the clerk have put together a letter to the government to request that information.

Has that been done, and can the members of this committee get a copy of that letter?

**The Chair:** I've received the letter, signed it, and sent it back to my office. It will be getting back to the clerk ASAP, and we'll send it out imminently.

Once the clerk gets it, he can distribute it to the committee as per our normal process.

• (1225)

**Mr. John Barlow:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you, everybody.

Thanks to the interpreters for dealing with all of the abuse that we put them through.

The meeting is adjourned.

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