



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

44th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

Standing Committee on Official Languages

EVIDENCE

NUMBER 032

PUBLIC PART ONLY - PARTIE PUBLIQUE SEULEMENT

Tuesday, October 4, 2022

Chair: Mr. René Arseneault



Standing Committee on Official Languages

Tuesday, October 4, 2022

• (1105)

[*Translation*]

The Chair (Mr. René Arseneault (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.)): Welcome to meeting number 32 of the House Standing Committee on Official Languages.

In accordance with the order of reference of Monday, May 30, 2022, the Committee resumed consideration of Bill C-13, An Act to amend the Official Languages Act, to enact the French Language Use in Federally Regulated Private Sector Undertakings Act, and to make related amendments to other Acts.

Today's meeting is being conducted in a hybrid format, in accordance with the House order of Thursday, June 23, 2022. Members may participate in person or remotely using the Zoom application.

Today, we have convened a single panel, with whom we will spend an hour and a half. After that, we will meet for 30 minutes in camera to discuss committee business.

To ensure that the meeting runs smoothly, I would like to provide some guidelines to witnesses and members.

Before you speak, please wait until I recognize you by name. If you are participating via video conference, click on the microphone icon to activate your microphone. Otherwise, leave your microphone muted when you are not speaking.

For interpretation, participants attending through Zoom have a choice of floor, English or French audio. The icon is at the bottom of their screen. People in the room can use the earpiece and select the desired channel.

I would like to remind everyone that all comments from members and witnesses should be directed to the chair. Members present in the room are asked to raise their hand if they wish to speak. Those using Zoom are asked to use the raised hand icon. The committee clerk and I will do the best we can to maintain a consolidated order of speaking for all members. We thank you for your patience and understanding in this regard.

I would like to inform the committee members that, in accordance with our housekeeping motion, all witnesses have completed the required connection tests in advance of the meeting.

I would now like to welcome our witnesses.

By video conference, we have the Acadian Society of Nouveau-Brunswick, represented by its president, Mr. Alexandre Cédric Doucet, and its executive director, Mr. Ali Chaisson.

[*English*]

We have the India Canada Organization, represented here by Mr. Deepak Awasti.

[*Translation*]

We also have with us the Réseau pour le développement de l'alphabétisme et des compétences, represented by its President, Ms. Mona Audet, and its Executive Director, Mr. Denis Desgagné.

Before we begin the first round of questions, each organization will have five minutes for their opening remarks. They can split their time among their representatives if they wish, but they each have a maximum of five minutes. They can always add to their remarks after, as they answer questions. I will signal to them about 30 seconds before their time is up.

We begin with the Acadian Society of Nouveau-Brunswick.

Mr. Doucet, you have five minutes.

Mr. Alexandre Cédric Doucet (President, Acadian Society of New Brunswick): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Dear Committee members, listeners, good morning. Thank you for inviting me to appear before this committee on the impending modernization of Canada's Official Languages Act, or OLA.

The modernization of the OLA has been eagerly awaited for several years. This is particularly important in the case of francophone minority communities. Indeed, for them, the OLA provides not only a guarantee of public services and a real opportunity to participate in Canadian public affairs, but also a status and recognition of their place in the political and social system.

The situation of Acadians is also exceptional, if only because the vast majority of them live in New Brunswick, the only officially bilingual province in Canada. The Acadian Society of New Brunswick is very supportive of the bill that has been tabled by the federal government and would not want to see its passage delayed in any way because of multiple proposed amendments. In our view, the Bill does not need to be significantly reworked because it pragmatically addresses all of the important elements that have been brought to the government's attention through numerous discussions in House of Commons and Senate committees and through public consultations in all regions of Canada.

As has been pointed out on several occasions, including by the Commissioner of Official Languages, the greatest challenges at the national level are not due to significant deficiencies in the Official Languages Act, but to institutional problems of implementation. We now have a bill that will really advance the cause of bilingualism in Canada. It just needs to be supported by equally progressive regulations to ensure its implementation.

However, our purpose today is to identify the few issues that still require the attention of Parliament and the government and to make some suggestions for addressing them. Some of the issues relate to the fact that no special status is granted to New Brunswick by virtue of it being a bilingual province and having its own Official Languages Act, which guarantees the provision of public services to all residents in all regions, not just where there is evidence of significant or sufficient demand.

As in the case of New Brunswick, the federal system should not, in our view, provide services in the French language that are inferior to those provided by the New Brunswick government. We suggest, therefore, to clarify this in the act through an amendment. It could also be done through a regulation.

With respect to immigration, it is not enough to just state the importance of francophone immigration for the development of francophone minorities. Francophone immigration must be significant enough to ensure that the demographic weight of the francophone minority is sufficient to ensure its sustainability. In our opinion, the act must state clearly that regulatory authority will be granted to establish standards ensuring that a balance is maintained.

With respect to public services, a specific provision should be added for New Brunswick in which the Government of Canada would go beyond the general standard and provide for access to federal services in both official languages throughout New Brunswick. Of course, if services are provided in both official languages, it should also be recognized that the conditions needed to allow French to be used in the workplace generally exist.

In the justice system, we would like to emphasize the importance of recognizing the right to be heard on appeal in French when the trial court has heard the case in that language.

Finally, with respect to the law on the use of French within private enterprises under federal jurisdiction, we would like to propose, as in the case of public services, that the law be enforced throughout New Brunswick, and not only in regions said to have a strong francophone presence. Our intention is to ensure that New Brunswick's bilingual status is recognized in the private domain as well as the public domain.

That said, I reiterate that we must act now and that this important bill must be passed as soon as possible.

Thank you for your time and for this opportunity to speak before your committee. I am now available to answer any questions you may have.

● (1110)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Doucet

[English]

Now we will hear from the India Canada Organization.

Mr. Awasti, the floor is yours for five minutes.

Mr. Deepak Awasti (Member at Large, Legal Researcher, Case and Policy Analyst, India Canada Organization): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Essentially, I am here not to bury Caesar but to praise him.

And who is Caesar? Caesar is the two founding nations thesis. Caesar is the effect of the two founding nations thesis, namely official bilingualism.

Official bilingualism and the two founding nations thesis are our founding principles, but in light of demographic change in our society over the past 40, 50, 60 years, we are now coming to a point where in fact diversity and greater diversity is challenging the two founding nations thesis. No longer, for example, in Montreal, Toronto or Vancouver are the old English and French language nations dominant. They are no longer dominant. They are no longer the host societies. They are no longer the societies that actually integrate people into Canadian society.

I do believe that what we should be talking about now is not official languages or official culture or official communities, because that is exclusionary. That is against the idea of greater accessibility and greater justice. What we should be talking about now is distinguishing between the language of officialdom versus the public language and the public need.

And what is the public need?

The public interest is far greater than just the interests of the English and French nations of Canada. We need greater access to services in languages other than English and French because people who come here or people who are raised here might not in fact be fluent or have mastered one of the official languages.

Our public institutions are obliged to ensure that these people can in fact have access to these services. The francophone community argues for the same thing for its nation. Other nations also deserve the same accessibility and the same equality. We don't get that, and I do believe that the reforms that are being proposed to the Official Languages Act are in fact contrary to the idea of administrative justice. They are contrary to the idea of greater accessibility. Again, with respect to indigenous languages, we have not integrated the Indigenous Languages Act into the Official Languages Act. We have not given proper place to various nations and various needs.

As I said before, the official languages or official culture is very narrow. It is exclusionary. It limits accessibility to our public institutions. We have to talk about the public need and the public voice, which is large and expansive and diverse, and our public institutions must actually serve those needs locally. It means saying that if you need services in a language other than English or French, we will try to offer you those services. If you need services to integrate into our economy, we'll do that for you.

Right now we're not doing that. Our institutions are not supporting multiculturalism, multilingualism; they are continuing to support this old idea of official languages and official bilingualism. It's no longer working, so I would call upon the government again to distinguish between the language of officialdom, which is internal, the internal expression of government, versus the public language and what the public need is and how the government communicates with the public. Those are very different ideas. Let's not stay stuck with this idea that we are a society founded by two founding nations. We're not. We're no longer there any more. That happened 150 to 200 years ago. We're no longer there, and I think we should reflect that in our legislation.

Thank you very much.

• (1115)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Awasti. That was four minutes 20 seconds.

[*Translation*]

Let's move on to the folks from the Réseau pour le développement de l'alphabétisme et des compétences.

I don't know which of the two will be speaking, but you have five minutes, as well.

Ms. Mona Audet (President, Réseau pour le développement de l'alphabétisme et des compétences): Mr. Chair, ladies and gentlemen of the Committee on Official Languages, thank you for having us. We're here today to talk about Bill C-13.

We're right at the cusp of a historic turning point for linguistic duality in Canada. The members of the Réseau pour le développement de l'alphabétisme et des compétences, or RESDAC, are glad to be able to be a part of it.

You've received our brief. Essentially, we're proposing to amend subsection 41(3) that the bill seeks to add to the Official Languages Act. The provision sets out the federal government's commitment to:

—advancing opportunities for members of English and French linguistic minority communities to pursue quality learning in their own language throughout their lives, including from early childhood to postsecondary education.

We agree with that.

The current wording seems to refer to the education continuum, specifically the institutions that provide training as well as official acknowledgement by issuing certificates and diplomas. Beyond that formal context, however, there is a sector that provides non-formal learning opportunities and structured activities that aren't necessarily officially acknowledged through certificates and diplomas. Non-formal learning is integrated into planned activities that aren't clearly identified as learning activities. People can sign up just as they would in college or university. Non-formal learning is important.

Just think of the leadership training that francophone organizations provide to our youth. Think of the training sessions provided by the Association canadienne d'éducation de langue française, or ACELF, to identity-building teachers. Think of the training opportunities organizations provide their employees. Think of the French literacy or francization training activities provided by members of our network. Think of the thousands of training sessions on digital

platforms such as Coursera and YouTube. Roughly a billion people use YouTube and other digital platforms. Think of the digital technology training sessions provided to teachers, learners, seniors and professionals. Many professionals had to undergo technology training because of the pandemic.

We could also talk about a whole range of informal activities, such as reading, meetings, observations and practices, all of which are avenues of learning, although not officially recognized. They're the daily activities related to work, family and leisure.

Allow me to explain why these distinctions are important. Internationally, organizations like UNESCO advocate for the right to education for all, including learning in institutional settings, corporate settings, community organizations, digital platforms, and many more. In today's world, lifelong learning is critical. We're all learners.

Within Canada, serious consideration, led by the Royal Bank of Canada, the Conference Board of Canada, the Council of Ministers of Education, or CMEC, and the federal government, has led to the conclusion that skills development needs to be supported. Canada supports skills development in order to multiply its means of success.

Our own network, RESDAC, that works in adult education, literacy and family literacy, is often called upon to support adults in need of skills development in order to fulfill their family, professional, civic and community obligations. In the Canadian francophonie, we've long relied on the education continuum, and today, we're proud to witness the emerging consensus around the need to expand the lifelong learning continuum, which occurs in formal, non-formal and informal settings alike.

As you can see, we have an opportunity to have today's reality reflected in this bill; let's not pass it up. We're hoping for your support. The bill illustrates that we have a decent understanding of how to support learning institutions in a formal setting: funding envelopes are created. As far as non-formal settings are involved, we also need to ensure that organizations are available to meet people's training needs, as they relate to francophone minority communities in particular, so they can develop the skills they need to succeed. We can't simply be content with translating everything from English to French.

• (1120)

The Chair: Ms. Audet, you have 10 seconds left.

Ms. Mona Audet: We're asking the federal government to commit to advancing opportunities for members of English and French linguistic minority communities to pursue quality learning, in formal, non-formal and informal settings, in their own language, throughout their lives, from early childhood to post-secondary education. Those three words are very important for Canadians.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Audet.

Let's start with a first round of questions. Members from each political party will have six minutes each.

We'll begin with Mr. Godin, first vice-chair of the Standing Committee on Official Languages.

Mr. Godin, you have six minutes.

Mr. Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to the witnesses for joining us today, in person or virtually.

My first questions are for the Acadian Society of New Brunswick.

I want to express my disagreement with Mr. Doucet about the need to pass the bill quickly and about the bill being satisfactory. We'll be looking for things to improve in the bill this fall, because this will be the law of the land for the next 50 years. We have the same goals, Mr. Doucet, but we're taking different roads to reach them.

Your organization has stated in the past that, in recognition of its particular status, New Brunswick should be exempt from the standard that is "significant demand" for services, which determines where the federal government has to provide bilingual services under the Official Languages Act.

Bill C-13 maintains the "significant demand" standard.

Am I wrong?

Mr. Alexandre Cédric Doucet: As I mentioned in my presentation, according to the legal advice we've received, we sincerely believe that such corrections can be made through regulation.

Mr. Joël Godin: So you're saying it isn't necessary to include official regulations in Bill C-13.

Those in charge may be acting in good faith now, but if we think of the legislation's impacts over the next 50 years, I think it's important that we spell things out in the bill.

I gather, however, that you'd be satisfied with regulations. Is that right?

Mr. Alexandre Cédric Doucet: I would hope that, if the federal government has the political will to modernize the act, it'll also have the political will to implement it through regulation, for example. We'll also have to see what's in the action plan for official languages.

• (1125)

Mr. Joël Godin: The Commissioner of Official Languages believes that the obligations under part IV of the act remain unclear.

In your opinion, should the obligation relating to active offer of services be clarified, as the commissioner has called for?

Mr. Alexandre Cédric Doucet: As I've just said, I believe this can easily be addressed through regulation. There should be a provision specifying New Brunswick's linguistic specificity, in terms of "significant demand" not applying to New Brunswick.

Mr. Joël Godin: You just mentioned that this can be addressed through regulation, but I'm talking about the commissioner's recommendation to clarify the obligation relating to active offer.

Mr. Alexandre Cédric Doucet: I'm not the official languages commissioner. Mr. Théberge should be the one to answer that question.

Mr. Joël Godin: I'm sure you understand, Mr. Doucet, that we're all working together to improve this legislation.

The commissioner spends his days protecting both official languages. I think we can all heed his recommendations.

I understand that you're not the official languages commissioner, but the commissioner makes recommendations for us. You seem evasive in your position, however. That's my interpretation.

Mr. Alexandre Cédric Doucet: I understand completely. I'll try to be clearer.

We all get different advice from experts in constitutional law and language rights. The advice we've received clearly indicates that the current flaws in Bill C-13 can be addressed through regulation.

Mr. Joël Godin: The FCFA suggested an amendment that would add language clauses and consultations in order to fix the accountability issues around provincial transfers. Mr. Michel Doucet has stated that he supports the amendment.

Do you?

Mr. Alexandre Cédric Doucet: Absolutely.

We're a part of the FCFA. That said, this isn't a priority for the Acadian Society of New Brunswick at the moment.

Mr. Joël Godin: I understand that you're a part of the FCFA, but the federation has made several recommendations. You, on the other hand, have stated right from the outset that you're satisfied with the bill and that you'd like it to pass quickly. There's some inconsistencies in your position.

Mr. Alexandre Cédric Doucet: My initial position remains unchanged. We believe that Bill C-13 represents a real step forward for institutional bilingualism in Canada. If the bill were to be adopted tomorrow, for instance, I believe it would allow us to make headway. Besides, the bill's implementation would require a lot of work.

Mr. Joël Godin: I understand that the bill could allow us to make headway, but as legislators, we want to ensure the legislation remains appropriate over the long term. I'm not satisfied to quickly review the bill for the sake of expediency. I want to be thorough.

Don't you think that we should actively follow up on these specific recommendations so that, in the future, if the provisions of the Official Languages Act were to be strengthened, we might stop the decline of the French language, in New Brunswick and elsewhere?

Mr. Alexandre Cédric Doucet: It all comes down to the political will to implement the legislation. Even if we have the best possible wording, we won't make any progress without political will.

Mr. Joël Godin: That's precisely why we need a bill that has teeth and why we need to take our time. Sure, we need to act fast to prevent the decline of French, but we also need to take clear and precise measures and not rely on the goodwill of those in power to make recommendations.

The Chair: You have 15 seconds left, Mr. Godin.

Mr. Joël Godin: Thank you, Mr. Doucet.

The Chair: Ms. Arielle Kayabaga will now have six minutes to ask questions.

You have the floor, Ms. Kayabaga.

Ms. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'd like to start by thanking the witnesses that are here today to help us move forward this very important piece of legislation for communities like mine. I'm a Franco-Ontarian from London, Ontario, where we're a minority francophone community, which is why it's very important to listen to what you have to say on the issue.

I'll start with you, Mr. Doucet. Someone mentioned earlier that the Official Languages Act wouldn't be reviewed for another 50 years. Bill C-13 clearly specifies, however, that the bill can be reviewed every 10 years.

Could you tell us what it means for you to hear that the act can be reviewed every 10 years? What are the impacts this can have on your community?

• (1130)

Mr. Alexandre Cédric Doucet: We're very much in favour of the proposed amendment that would force the government to do a legislative review every 10 years. In fact, this is modelled on New Brunswick's legislative model. Obviously we're happy with this because the government will be forced to start a process every 10 years. It also allows for some predictability.

I should add that, even if the bill says 10 years, nothing would prevent the federal government from modernizing the act in four or five years. The provision would force the government to launch a review process within 10 years.

Ms. Arielle Kayabaga: I think we all agree that we want a law that will support every francophone in Canada. We also want francophone communities to continue to grow all across Canada, not only in Quebec.

You mentioned earlier the urgent need to pass this bill. Could you elaborate on the urgent need to pass the bill? In other words, what are the issues that have brought you to take that position, as a member of a francophone minority community?

Mr. Alexandre Cédric Doucet: As you must know, the 2021 census shows that the decline of French is proportionately greater in New Brunswick. Compared to the rest of Canada, New Brunswick has experienced the greatest decline in French.

The last time the act was modernized, I wasn't even born. The act's implementation took more than six years. I don't think that the federal government of a bilingual state can afford to wait any longer to modernize the act.

Our organization's stakeholders work very hard, as they do in every organization. They've invested a lot of money, time and resources into this bill since 2016.

I wouldn't go so far as to say we're impatient, but let's say we're very eager to start implementing this legislation.

Ms. Arielle Kayabaga: Bill C-13 provides for the government of Canada's commitment to advancing opportunities for members of English and French linguistic minority communities to pursue quality learning in their own language, throughout their lives, from early childhood to post-secondary education.

How will this provision improve the learning experience of francophone students in minority language communities?

Ms. Audet, you may answer the question as well, if you wish.

Ms. Mona Audet: It'll be a pleasure.

Formal education refers to universities, including the new university in Ontario.

The issue we're hoping emphasize in these proceedings is that of non-formal or informal learning, which involves the skills and abilities acquired in settings other than colleges and universities. The NCF tool, for instance, allows people to discover who they are, what their strengths and skills are, etc.

Organizations such as ours that work in the field of community employment could recognize on a case-by-case basis the skills and knowledge of those people looking for work by attaching digital badges and certificates to their work applications. This adds a great deal of value to the applications, in the eyes of the employers. People can claim to have skills in certain areas, but having the supporting certificates would simplify things for employers.

The same goes for colleges and universities. Imagine a young person that graduated from high school and took a number of courses with various organizations. If they can show evidence of this, then gaining admission to a college or university should be easier.

I hope my explanations were clear.

Ms. Arielle Kayabaga: Yes.

In your opinion, what role can the provincial and territorial governments play in furtherance of this objective?

Ms. Mona Audet: We understand that there are agreements with the provinces and territories. I believe there should be language clauses that would allow each province and territory to interact with its francophone communities and determine their specific needs. That isn't happening at the current time, so I think we should take closer look at these language clauses.

The federal government could also work in collaboration with francophone communities. Our organization makes reports for financial backers. There should be some accountability to the federal government under certain language clauses.

Have I adequately answered your question?

● (1135)

Ms. Arielle Kayabaga: Yes.

The Chair: You have roughly 10 seconds left.

Ms. Arielle Kayabaga: Okay.

What would you consider to be positive results?

Ms. Mona Audet: Are you talking about positive measures?

Ms. Arielle Kayabaga: Yes.

The Chair: That's all the time you have. I'm sorry, but you'll have the opportunity to return to the question later.

Mr. Mario Beaulieu, second vice-chair of the committee, now has six minutes to ask the next series of questions.

Mr. Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Good day. Thank you to the witnesses for being here.

Mr. Doucet, you mentioned the political will of the federal government, the same government that appointed a lieutenant governor to New Brunswick that doesn't speak French, a move that was challenged in court. We have many such examples, including instances of non-compliance with the Official Languages Act.

Do you still believe we ought to trust the government, not include the desired changes in the act and wait for regulatory changes to occur instead?

Mr. Alexandre Cédric Doucet: I'm not here to talk about politics. The proposed legislative framework certainly features important and worthwhile advances. We wouldn't hesitate to implement the provisions of the bill tomorrow morning if it were to pass in its current form.

On the issue of the lieutenant governor, the case will be heard by the court of appeal in 2023. We will have the opportunity to address the issue in due course.

Mr. Mario Beaulieu: I believe everyone here has a strong desire to support francophones outside Quebec, and I believe that Bill C-13 is a real opportunity to move things forward and reinforce the act.

You can think on it, but as the saying goes, a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. I think there are situations where it's better to incorporate the desired changes in the act itself. You mentioned, for instance, the notion of "significant demand", which goes back to the old principle of "where numbers warrant". Wouldn't it be advisable to incorporate certain provisions in the act now to ensure the desired changes will occur?

Mr. Alexandre Cédric Doucet: It is indeed possible to include provisions in the act. However, legal experts have advised us that we can achieve the same aims through regulation, whether on this particular issue or on that of federally regulated businesses.

Mr. Mario Beaulieu: What you're saying, essentially, is that you have no requests with regards to Bill C-13. Do I have that right?

Mr. Alexandre Cédric Doucet: We currently have no specific requests since we'll be able to address these issues through regulation.

Mr. Mario Beaulieu: Do you think that Bill C-13 has the necessary provisions to reverse the assimilation rate in New Brunswick as well as the decline of French?

Mr. Alexandre Cédric Doucet: The fact remains that an act is just an act. They're just words on paper. Whether there is the political will to implement it is another question. Nevertheless, Bill C-13 provides for some very worthwhile mechanisms that may have an impact on the ground in New Brunswick.

Mr. Mario Beaulieu: You spoke of francophone immigration to New Brunswick and of setting related targets through regulation. What would these targets be?

Mr. Alexandre Cédric Doucet: The objectives should be set through regulation; you'll understand our position on the subject, Mr. Beaulieu.

New Brunswick is the only province other than Quebec that has linguistic specificity. Our position on immigration has always been very clear. It's not just a question of targets or standards, it's also a question of autonomy.

We believe the government of New Brunswick should have greater autonomy to choose its immigrants, which would allow it to restore balance in the demographic weights of its two official language communities. That would be an excellent way to combat the decline of French in New Brunswick.

Mr. Mario Beaulieu: My next question is for the Réseau pour le développement de l'alphabétisme et des compétences.

You spoke at length about non-formal learning and about how it can improve literacy. I'm trying to imagine how that might be structured. How would we go about assessing these kinds of learning, in practical terms? Are you thinking of informal training sessions with tailored exams?

● (1140)

Ms. Mona Audet: It is certain that the Réseau has done some work and has come up with something that is really well thought out. We're going to have to develop ways of thinking, as well as tools for evaluating skills that can be discovered in non-formal and informal training, such as reading.

Certainly, the Réseau will set up evaluations, for which the centre of expertise that we want to establish will be responsible. Our aim is to be able to correctly assess, but above all to target, what people learn in a given context. The issue of non-formal, formal and informal learning concerns all the community organizations that offer non-formal learning, such as institutions, legal organizations or organizations that support women, for example.

The Réseau could have decided to talk only about literacy, but we decided to show that non-formal learning was more important for the citizens of Canada. That's what we based ourselves on, and we really want to recognize all the non-formal training of citizens.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Ms. Audet and Mr. Beaulieu. We'll move on to the next round of questions.

Ms. Ashton, you have six minutes.

Ms. Niki Ashton: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to all the witnesses who are here today.

We would like to see this study of Bill C-13 move forward as quickly as possible. However, we feel that this is a historic moment and that we must not miss this opportunity to improve the bill for the benefit of all communities in the country. We hope that the government will accept the main amendments that we have been proposing for months, to finally improve the lives of communities on the ground.

Ms. Audet, we have often talked about the importance of protecting the education continuum, from early childhood to post-secondary education. In my opinion, the observation you made is relevant: this education must also include adult education. This is something that the committee has acknowledged, but that the act does not yet recognize.

You propose to remedy this situation with a fairly simple but important amendment. Can you further explain the importance of using the language you suggest, rather than the language recommended by the committee in 2018, which emphasizes the integration of the education continuum?

Ms. Mona Audet: When we talk about learning from early childhood to post-secondary education, we always forget about non-formal and informal training, which nevertheless helps complete the education continuum.

We are part of the Table nationale sur l'éducation with various partners, such as the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne and various organizations representing schools and universities. We looked at this area of learning and came to a consensus: we need to change today's education so that it will be more inclusive in the future. We need to think about our grandchildren.

For example, it should be recognized that during judo training, children acquire skills and knowledge that will serve them throughout their lives. We therefore propose that the three types of training—formal, informal and non-formal—are an integral part of learning in Canada. This is being done elsewhere. South Africa, New Zealand, UNESCO and the OECD, among others, have already considered this principle, as has the Council of Ministers of Education.

In conclusion, we want lifelong learning to become an integral part of learning for all citizens.

I hope that I have answered the question correctly, but my colleague Mr. Desgagné could certainly give you a better answer, since he sits on the Table nationale sur l'éducation.

• (1145)

Ms. Niki Ashton: That won't be necessary. I think your message was clear. Thank you.

Mr. Doucet, we know how important the issue of immigration is. Yet Bill C-13 does not contain targets for catching up demographi-

cally, an issue that we know is important for francophone minority communities.

You have pointed out in the past that the 4.4% target for francophone immigration from outside Quebec would be detrimental to New Brunswick if it were applied consistently. However, we know that even this target has never been met. We believe that Bill C-13 does not go far enough and that it must contain a demographic catch-up clause.

Do you agree with that and do you believe that these province-specific details should also be included in the Official Languages Act?

Mr. Alexandre Cédric Doucet: I have a mandate to speak on behalf of the Acadian and francophone community. I can tell you that Bill C-13 may not go far enough in this regard, generally speaking.

As you may know, immigration is a shared jurisdiction under section 95 of the Constitution Act, 1867. In the late 1970s, Quebec signed an agreement with the federal government to have greater powers in immigration, and we believe that New Brunswick should sign a similar agreement.

For the Acadians of New Brunswick, the issue of immigration is somewhat beyond the scope of Bill C-13, as we believe it is incumbent upon the province of New Brunswick to play a greater role in federal-provincial negotiations.

Ms. Niki Ashton: Thank you, Mr. Doucet.

Mr. Chaisson, do you think we should amend the act to give more power to Treasury Board to really manage the implementation of the act and to protect and promote the rights of francophones across the country?

Mr. Ali Chaisson (Executive Director, Acadian Society of New Brunswick): I find that my opinion on this provision remains constant: I am ambivalent about who should ultimately be responsible. As well, I think there has been a long-standing lack of imagination. I don't think it's necessarily the way the law is written that prevents people from doing things differently.

The Chair: Thank you.

We will now proceed to another round of questions.

Mr. Gourde, you have the floor for five minutes.

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I also thank the witnesses for being here.

Mr. Doucet, the Commissioner of Official Languages insists on the importance of a central agency. Could you clarify your position on this issue?

Mr. Alexandre Cédric Doucet: From a legislative standpoint, this is probably the best proposal there is at this time.

I myself am not a public administration expert. However, when we consult such experts, particularly those who have previously worked for the Treasury Board, they say that this organization does not really deal with these issues and that it is more like a soccer goalie when it comes to programs.

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Thank you, Mr. Doucet.

Ms. Audet, Quebec is asking that we amend Bill C-13 to recognize its specificity. Indeed, the linguistic context in Quebec is particular, because the province is francophone.

Are you in favour of such an amendment?

• (1150)

Ms. Mona Audet: Mr. Desgagné, I would ask for your help to answer that question.

Mr. Denis Desgagné (Executive Director, Réseau pour le développement de l'alphabétisme et des compétences): RESDAC works with the FCFA and Quebec on these issues. We really specialize in the Canadian francophonie. We have a vested interest in the francophonie in Quebec, in its vitality.

I think that Quebecers are in the best position to talk about their destiny, and it is in our interest to be associated with them. We have been involved in the whole process undertaken by the FCFA over the last five or six years. So we are fully supportive of the FCFA's positions.

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Can you tell me about the francophone immigration targets that the government has put in place outside Quebec and in Quebec?

What help can you provide in that regard?

When immigrants arrive in Canada, they may not speak English or French. An integration process is necessary. It might be beneficial for Quebec to get help.

Mr. Denis Desgagné: I absolutely agree with that.

RESDAC works in the immigration network. As our president mentioned, we work in the field of skills. We try to collaborate with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, or IRCC, given our areas of expertise. Ms. Audet works directly with several newcomers to Manitoba. I could give you many examples of that.

Again, the FCFA has done its work and RESDAC has been involved in immigration initiatives. We need to play catch-up, we need to review the targets, and we really need to be able to achieve our goals together. It certainly is a collaborative effort. We are part of this process and we have an important role to play in terms of skills to ensure our success.

Mr. Jacques Gourde: There is a unique situation in Canada right now. There is a major labour shortage in Quebec. There are 250,000 jobs available and they are good jobs. However, English Canada seems to shun Quebec. Yet, Quebec has made a lot of effort to recruit people from the new generation of 40 and under. Many citizens from other provinces speak French. They are francophiles, not francophones. It was quite an experience for them, because the unemployment rate is much higher in the western provinces than in Quebec.

We would be willing to recruit English-speaking Canadians to come and work in Quebec. The search for labour is going on all over the world. It seems to me that there would be a small effort to make in this area.

The Chair: Mr. Gourde, you have one minute left.

Mr. Denis Desgagné: I will answer very quickly.

The labour shortage has taken hold throughout Canada. The Canadian francophonie is also suffering from these shortages. We may be shunned by our provinces. If there were language clauses that would make this fine mechanism work, the Canadian francophonie could work with its governments to welcome people. We often welcome immigrants who arrive in Quebec and then move to our regions. In one way or another, our destiny is linked, Mr. Gourde.

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Gourde.

Mr. Drouin, you have the floor for five minutes.

Mr. Francis Drouin (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I want to thank all the witnesses who are with us today.

Mr. Doucet, you said that we need to ensure that the act protects French-language services in New Brunswick to the same extent as the province of New Brunswick's own official languages act.

What amendment would be necessary to ensure this protection?

Mr. Alexandre Cédric Doucet: A grandfather clause should be inserted in the act to ensure an exception in New Brunswick, that is, where there is sufficient demand for services in French. You have to understand that, according to the criteria currently set out in the act, the only places where there is sufficient demand are in the northern part of the province and in a few regions where francophone communities are in a minority situation.

I will just give you an example.

In the Saint John region, Acadians form a very small minority. Proportionally, there are more Acadians in Saint John than in Caraquet, in the north of the province. However, French language services and communications are not available everywhere in the Saint John area.

To halt the decline of French, it is important to harmonize with the act the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which recognizes the linguistic specificity of New Brunswick.

We also believe that it is possible to solve this problem by adding regulations.

Mr. Francis Drouin: The act must reflect the current reality of families and people who want to live in different places. As a Franco-Ontarian, I can tell you that all Franco-Ontarians used to live in eastern Ottawa. Now they are scattered all over the city, which is problematic for service providers. I somewhat understand what you mean. Obviously, we're going to have to address that.

Ms. Audet, you talked about—and I think my colleagues did as well—training, informal learning and certificates to recognize them.

In terms of certificates, are the skills recognized by the provinces or by the service providers?

• (1155)

Ms. Mona Audet: I wanted to say earlier that this is part of the work that RESDAC does. However, RESDAC is going to work with its education partners to do compliant assessments. Indeed, we want to make sure that our evaluations of the knowledge acquired by these people during non-formal and informal training are good.

We will work with researchers, adult educators and teachers. We want to make sure that the skills and knowledge that people have acquired in order to obtain a diploma, a certification or a digital badge are very well highlighted.

Mr. Francis Drouin: I often work with the employment service, at the local level, and I see that skills recognition matters to employers. However, employers also need to know that it is a recognition and that you are doing all you can to make them aware of it.

Ms. Mona Audet: I absolutely agree with that.

You have to work with the employers, because they're the ones who hire people. In Manitoba, as well as across Canada, no one is doing prior learning assessment. We see doctors, pediatricians, dentists, and other people with great skills, which are not, however, recognized by professional bodies. These people take the positions they are able to get. This is a loss, a waste of knowledge for Canada.

We need doctors, nurses, teachers and pediatricians. We need these people, especially in the health sector. So we need to recognize prior learning.

Mr. Francis Drouin: I love everything you say. You're singing the song that I love to sing. However, how do we relate this to Bill C-13?

What amendments could we make to include what you're talking about?

Ms. Mona Audet: Mr. Drouin, if the Government of Canada recognized both informal and formal training, we would all benefit, whether it's your constituents, my children, my grandchildren, or citizens across Canada.

There are credentials for formal training, but now we need to ensure that non-formal and informal training opens up opportunities. Not everybody will get a degree, but the people who do get one will be able to use it. No matter what the field is, they will get recognition.

At the moment, this kind of training is not recognized. That's why we're asking that it be included in the act.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Ms. Audet and Mr. Drouin.

I will now give the floor to Mr. Beaulieu for two and a half minutes.

Mr. Mario Beaulieu: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Ms. Audet, according to what you are saying, the people who provide informal and non-formal training do not necessarily have diplomas. Their knowledge is not necessarily recognized.

Under these conditions, how can we choose competent people?

Ms. Mona Audet: I'm not sure I understood the question. My device didn't work.

Mr. Mario Beaulieu: According to what you said earlier, the skills of people who offer informal and non-formal training are not necessarily recognized.

Is that correct?

Ms. Mona Audet: No, I was saying that the skills of people who take training courses are not recognized. However, literacy trainers are often retired teachers. They help us give literacy courses. This includes digital and technological literacy, and so on. They are good trainers.

One of our partners in Ontario is setting up a program with a university to provide courses for literacy trainers and some prior learning assessment.

At Pluri-elles, in Manitoba, I'm fortunate to have retired teachers working for me. They are willing to do this work for a small salary, because they really believe in the development of their community and the people who live there.

I would like to clarify that I was talking earlier about the recognition of prior learning for people who are going to take the training. Perhaps I misspoke.

I wanted to clarify that point. Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu, for allowing me to do so.

Mr. Mario Beaulieu: People must have this recognition. In my experience, we sometimes try to promote francization programs, but they become literacy programs. I worked in an organization where we provided recognition to the people we were training, but it was not official.

In the context of the Official Languages Act, as amended, what you want is that by recognizing the importance of the formal, non-formal and informal context, the government can financially support your organization or others to develop services.

Is that correct?

• (1200)

Ms. Mona Audet: You have to accept that people get recognition. I don't think we're talking about funding right now.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Beaulieu.

Ms. Ashton, you have the floor for two and a half minutes.

Ms. Niki Ashton: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Ms. Audet, I'd like to ask you a question about the work that you and your organization do. I want to go back to statistics released this summer, which say that the number of people who speak French at home is declining across Canada.

Can you tell us about that? Can your team members tell us about the challenges you face in this context?

As a committee, we need to know what challenges you're facing so we can support you.

Ms. Mona Audet: If I may, I'm going to talk about Manitoba. We're from the same province, Ms. Ashton.

French is indeed declining. If we don't all work together, the French language will continue to decline. Take Manitoba, for example. The organization Pluri-elles opened 10 literacy centres throughout Manitoba. There are 12 homework centres. We're trying to help kids with learning disabilities at school so they don't end up in our classes later on.

We receive minimal funding from the province. We don't know how much money the province gets, basically. Does Manitoba receive lots of money for francophones, literacy programs and training programs? I have no idea. We're not part of the process. They don't hold consultations. We certainly could offer more programs. Unfortunately, you know how funding works.

What we're trying to do is help immigrants. We offer various programs to help women and immigrants learn French or improve their French. Many individuals speak French very well. However, in the case of refugees, they often don't have the opportunity to be educated in their country. For them, we have to start with basic literacy, which takes a lot more time.

Yes, the number of francophones is declining, but I believe that if we work together we can turn things around.

To improve the situation, we suggest including formal, non-formal and informal education in the act. That may help us target even more people. As a result, more people will be able to complete programs and enrich our beautiful French language, which is also my language.

I hope I've answered your question to your satisfaction.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Audet.

Mr. Lehoux, you have the floor for five minutes.

Mr. Richard Lehoux (Beauce, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'd like to thank the witnesses for being with us today.

Ms. Audet, the Fédération des francophones de la Colombie-Britannique fought for the language clauses.

Do you support requests to include language clauses in the bill?

Ms. Mona Audet: Yes, I support them.

Mr. Richard Lehoux: So it's important to you that they really be included in the act, as amended?

Is that correct?

Ms. Mona Audet: Yes, absolutely.

I just gave an example about the federal government transferring funds to the provinces. The education people negotiate with the provinces and the federal government, but the other groups don't, to my knowledge.

We certainly support including well-defined language clauses in the modernized act. We also want francophones to be consulted about their needs.

Mr. Richard Lehoux: I'd like to ask you a more specific question about workers.

We know that a significant problem exists with respect to the francophonie outside Quebec, and that is a labour shortage.

To what extent is the labour shortage also hurting French outside Quebec?

• (1205)

Ms. Mona Audet: The labour shortage is certainly being felt everywhere. I will let Mr. Desgagné answer the question.

Mr. Richard Lehoux: How does it hurt francophones?

Mr. Denis Desgagné: The labour shortage is having a dramatic effect on the social development of communities and economic development of businesses in the francophonie.

If we want francophone companies, we also need a workforce. That's why we work a great deal with the economic sector. We want to make sure that the skills are in place, both among newcomers, as Ms. Audet mentioned, and among those already in the workforce who need to upgrade their skills so they can apply for better jobs.

Mr. Richard Lehoux: Ms. Audet, in your opening remarks, you said that continuous learning is a necessity of life, but you didn't say anything more about it.

I also feel that continuous learning is important. Do you have any suggestions or proposals about lifelong learning? They could be part of certain amendments to include in the bill.

Ms. Mona Audet: You want to talk about lifelong learning?

Mr. Richard Lehoux: Yes.

Ms. Mona Audet: Okay.

Do you want me to propose amendments that would—

Mr. Richard Lehoux: I'm talking about amendments we could include in the bill to strengthen that.

Ms. Mona Audet: Including the three concepts we proposed—"formal", "non-formal" and "informal"—in the bill would be a winner and you would be doing great things for Canadians. We also agree with the proposals from the FCFA, with which we have worked, actually.

Mr. Richard Lehoux: Would it help move things forward?

Ms. Mona Audet: Absolutely.

Mr. Richard Lehoux: You say that you support language clauses. Could you give us some concrete examples?

Mr. Denis Desgagné: I have several examples. Among other things, I'm thinking of Employment and Social Development Canada and the case we've all heard about involving British Columbia.

Right now, \$300 million has been invested under skills agreements. Very significant amounts are being sent directly to the provinces. Even if the francophones in the provinces take steps to try to be consulted, they make up too low a percentage of the population to be a priority.

I could have talked about immigration, daycare...and I could go on.

Mr. Richard Lehoux: Now I'd like to come back to immigration.

In Bill C-13, does the section dealing with immigration need to specifically link immigration to training, targets and economic development?

Mr. Denis Desgagné: In my opinion, if you take into account the language clause targets and the amendments proposed by the FCFA and the Réseau, as well as the ones on immigration and the other aspects we're asking you to improve, the bill holds together well and it's going to have a significant impact.

The small amendment we're proposing to include the concepts of "formal", "non-formal" and "informal" in the bill would help create a much more holistic education continuum. As Ms. Audet mentioned, we need to work together on the continuum to get some credits recognized.

Quebec does it very well, and so do the United States and a number of other countries. There's a methodology behind it that recognizes the continuum and the labour market.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Desgagné.

Mr. Iacono, you have the floor for five minutes.

Mr. Angelo Iacono (Alfred-Pellan, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Greetings to our guests and thank you for being here this morning.

Ms. Audet, in your brief, you suggest rewording section 41(3) of the act to include quality education in formal, non-formal and informal settings. Don't you think that government involvement to enhance informal learning opportunities might be an excessive invasion of people's privacy?

Ms. Mona Audet: No, I don't think so, but I'm not sure I understand what your question means. How would that constitute an invasion of privacy?

Mr. Angelo Iacono: You referred to learning in informal settings. Can you explain to us what an informal setting is?

Ms. Mona Audet: When I talked about the informal aspect, I was referring to people reading documents and doing research. I can read you UNESCO's definition if you like.

• (1210)

Mr. Angelo Iacono: Okay.

Ms. Mona Audet: I don't need to tell you what formal education is, do I?

According to UNESCO, non-formal education corresponds to additional, alternative knowledge to—

Mr. Angelo Iacono: I'm sorry to interrupt you, but I don't have a lot of time.

I read that definition. That's why I'm asking what effect it could have on people's privacy in this context.

Ms. Mona Audet: I don't understand the question, I'm sorry.

Mr. Desgagné, can you answer it?

Mr. Denis Desgagné: In learning situations across the education continuum, informal learning refers to what a person doing an internship as a lawyer on a study learns informally, or what a welder learns informally when working together with a colleague.

It helps us implement strategies that are part of a process, a continuum, to help people in minority language situations acquire skills. So this learning dynamic helps us establish much more effective strategies for lifelong learning.

Mr. Angelo Iacono: Perfect.

In a situation where unilingualism is taking over in formal and non-formal education, do you see a threat to language minority rights?

Mr. Denis Desgagné: Yes, you're absolutely right. There is a sense of threat, which the statistics prove, as my colleagues were saying.

International studies tell us that 52% of francophones in Canada live below Level 3, the level at which people can thrive socially and economically. What's more, 80% of respondents asked to complete the survey in English.

So the Réseau has a huge amount of work to do in that respect.

Mr. Angelo Iacono: Okay.

In your opinion, how can the federal government counterbalance that to protect language minorities?

Mr. Denis Desgagné: I feel what we're looking to do with this amendment is to be able to build a much more synergistic continuum and work together on this lifelong learning process.

Mr. Angelo Iacono: Thank you.

How do you perceive federal government involvement in informal education?

Mr. Denis Desgagné: We hope it will help us work on a more holistic definition of the education continuum, with as shared objectives—formal, informal and non-formal—skills that will have been defined in a framework adapted to our realities in minority language situations.

Mr. Angelo Iacono: Thank you.

In your organization's view, what key impacts does the education continuum have on the vitality of minority language communities?

Mr. Denis Desgagné: We have such a huge amount of work to do on that. I wish I had 10 minutes to answer your question.

We need to socially engineer this through all of our organizations. I'm thinking of the President of the Treasury Board, who comes from our communities and is sensitive to civic action.

We also need to make it possible for francophones in minority situations to acquire the skills they need to thrive in the job market.

Mr. Angelo Iacono: You talk a lot about the difference between “formal”, “non-formal” and “informal”. Can you describe those three terms in plain language so we can better understand them?

The Chair: I'm sorry, Mr. Iacono, but your time is up.

Mr. Beaulieu, you have the floor for two and a half minutes.

Mr. Mario Beaulieu: Mr. Desgagné, I will give you time to answer Mr. Iacono's question.

Mr. Denis Desgagné: We know what “formal” education is. As the president of the Réseau said, it's schooling from kindergarten to grade 12, and then college or university, in other words, learning where recognized credits are given out.

“Non-formal” education is organized. It could be a training session that an organization or an entrepreneur organizes for their employees. As the president mentioned, it's also everything people get on YouTube, or a downloaded training session or tutorial. It's organized, in the sense that people have an appointment at a certain time for the training.

“Informal” education happens day to day and isn't organized. It's the information you share sitting with colleagues, for example. It's what people learn from each other.

All these are therefore organized in a continuum, and when everything comes together you get pretty amazing synergy.

Mr. Mario Beaulieu: You said earlier that there was a special methodology in Quebec. Can you tell us about that?

Mr. Denis Desgagné: There are a number of approaches around the world, including bursaries, digital badges and microfinancing.

On that front, Quebec is likely a good example. We're learning from our colleagues in Quebec what methodology to implement here. We're currently doing a pilot project with the Coalition for Adult Training in Ontario to test out the Quebec approach.

• (1215)

Mr. Mario Beaulieu: Does your organization have a mandate with respect to Quebec?

Mr. Denis Desgagné: We work with Quebec.

Mr. Mario Beaulieu: Okay.

Mr. Denis Desgagné: We're learning from our colleagues and partners in Quebec.

We also work with our partners in other countries. For example, we participated in consultations at the International Conference on Adult Education that UNESCO organized in Morocco.

We're part of an international network, but we're connected to our neighbours from Quebec, to Canada's francophonie.

Mr. Mario Beaulieu: You said earlier that 52% of francophones are functionally illiterate. Is that the case in Quebec as well?

Mr. Denis Desgagné: Quebec has a higher literacy rate than the rest of Canada's francophonie. It's an average.

I want to make it clear that when I say Level 3, I'm talking about the level at which you can thrive in French. Some people are only at Level 2, but they are quite functional.

Mr. Mario Beaulieu: Why is that?

Mr. Denis Desgagné: I feel it's the education continuum. We've worked on methodology and pedagogy for a long time, but we've rarely all worked together to define skills.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Desgagné and Mr. Beaulieu.

Ms. Ashton, you have two and a half minutes.

Ms. Niki Ashton: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Ms. Audet, I'd like to talk about something you mentioned that's part of the feedback I get quite often when I talk to people in francophone communities outside Quebec, including my region here in Manitoba. I'm talking about the need to build a francophone community.

Here in Thompson, other than our French school and our French immersion school, we have no activities or opportunities for families to meet as a group in French outside school hours.

The issue of resources often comes up. As you said, we don't know what resources come from the federal government. In addition, we receive no support in that area from our provincial government. Do you think it's important to have clarity about the resources being sent to organizations?

I believe this also touches on the issue of language clauses in federal-provincial agreements, an amendment the FCFA has actually proposed for the bill.

What are your thoughts on this?

Ms. Mona Audet: I'm trying to organize my thoughts to give you a fairly clear answer.

When you work in the francophone communities for many years, as I have in Manitoba and Ontario, where we have partners, travelling to rural communities is as important as offering programming in the city. However, we often face a lack of resources to do that travelling. Colleges and universities can't open other branches elsewhere.

Language classes must require that francophones' needs are met. For example, if I were going to meet with people in Manitoba, I would tell them about Thompson and all the places where school boards offer programming to support people in educational settings, whether it's the parents or the adults accompanying the kids. These individuals must receive services in French to keep promoting the French language and living in French in our communities. We have so much work to do in that respect.

If the language clauses don't require that francophone communities' needs be taken into account, we'll miss out on many things could be done for our lovely francophonie.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Audet.

This concludes the public portion of our meeting. Before I suspend the meeting, I'd like to thank the witnesses for being here.

Should you have any more relevant information that the committee could use in its report on modernizing the act, please feel free to send it in writing to our clerk, who will forward it to all committee members.

Thank you, everyone.

That being said, the members attending this meeting via the Zoom application will need to disconnect from the public portion and reconnect for the portion in camera.

The meeting is suspended.

[Proceedings continue in camera]

Published under the authority of the Speaker of
the House of Commons

SPEAKER'S PERMISSION

The proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees are hereby made available to provide greater public access. The parliamentary privilege of the House of Commons to control the publication and broadcast of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees is nonetheless reserved. All copyrights therein are also reserved.

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the Copyright Act. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the Copyright Act.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

Also available on the House of Commons website at the following address: <https://www.ourcommons.ca>

Publié en conformité de l'autorité
du Président de la Chambre des communes

PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT

Les délibérations de la Chambre des communes et de ses comités sont mises à la disposition du public pour mieux le renseigner. La Chambre conserve néanmoins son privilège parlementaire de contrôler la publication et la diffusion des délibérations et elle possède tous les droits d'auteur sur celles-ci.

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la Loi sur le droit d'auteur. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre des communes.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la Loi sur le droit d'auteur.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

Aussi disponible sur le site Web de la Chambre des communes à l'adresse suivante :
<https://www.noscommunes.ca>