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Chair: Mrs. Shelby Kramp-Neuman



Standing Committee on the Status of Women

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• (1100)

[English]

The Chair (Mrs. Shelby Kramp-Neuman (Hastings—Lennox and Addington, CPC)): I call the meeting to order.

Welcome to meeting number 119 of the House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women.

Before we begin, I would like to ask all in-person participants to read the guidelines written on the updated cards on the table. These measures are in place to help prevent audio and feedback incidents and to protect the health and safety of all participants, including the interpreters. You will also notice a QR code on the card, which links to a short awareness video.

I'd like to remind all members of the following points.

Please wait until I recognize you by name before speaking. All comments should be addressed through the chair. Members, please raise your hand if you wish to speak, whether participating in person or via Zoom.

I would like to welcome you all back from the summer break.

I'd also like to acknowledge that today, as chair, I will be standing in the House to table the report on the red dress alert. I'm looking forward to doing that right after question period today. I'm glad we were able to get that done.

Moving forward, we have a meeting on committee business. Before we get into more dialogue in relation to committee business, I'd like to raise a couple of points about where we are, where we've come from and where we need to be going, through my lens.

First of all, there is a request for budget approval to cover the costs associated with the meeting of July 31. It was circulated to everyone. The budget is \$5,750. Does the committee approve that budget?

Go ahead, Lisa.

Ms. Lisa Hepfner (Hamilton Mountain, Lib.): I'm concerned about the budget. I'm not saying I won't approve it, but nobody else had an opportunity to bring witnesses to that meeting. Nobody approved that meeting in advance. Here we are, being asked to approve a budget of \$5,000 afterwards.

I know a witness was brought in from California and had a plane ticket, yet other committee members weren't advised about that until an hour before the meeting.

I'd just like to put on the record my concerns about how that all played out. I don't think it's fair to come to the committee and ask us to approve a budget after the fact when nobody knew that the meeting was even going to happen.

The Chair: [Inaudible—Editor] witnesses. It wasn't any of the parties. It was me, as chair.

Ms. Lisa Hepfner: Is that okay? Is that what you are saying?

The Chair: I'm just acknowledging that.

Do we have further discussion before we approve the budget?

[Translation]

Mr. Marc Serré (Nickel Belt, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Normally, we approve the budget before the study begins. You said that you were the one who invited the witnesses. We received a notice and, an hour before the meeting, were informed of a witness's appearance. The expenditures totalled around \$5,000.

Is the budget presented this morning only for the July meeting?

I'm also wondering if you are going to continue to invite witnesses without telling us about it.

• (1105)

[English]

Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC): I have a point of order.

[Translation]

Mr. Marc Serré: I'm just asking.

[English]

The Chair: We have a point of order.

Ms. Michelle Ferreri: I'm sorry. I don't know how to put this on English.

The Chair: I'm actually doing the same thing, and I'm trying to get the most French that I can from him.

[Translation]

Mr. Marc Serré: The interpretation—

[*English*]

The Chair: It's a point of order regarding translation. Are we familiar with how to switch the machines to English?

Mrs. Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC): It's a touch screen. Push it at the top, where it....

The Chair: I'm touching the square.

Mrs. Laila Goodridge: Do you want to sit here? I don't use translation.

The Chair: Marc, can you continue in French for just a minute so I can see if it's working?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marc Serré: I hope everybody had a good summer and enjoyed the lovely sunshine.

[*English*]

The Chair: Perfect.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marc Serré: Is the interpretation working properly?

[*English*]

The Chair: Marc, you can get back to your point.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marc Serré: I just want to understand one thing, Madam Chair.

Usually, witnesses are invited by all parties, a budget is submitted in advance, and it is approved by the committee. In this case, one of the witnesses was added to the list an hour before the meeting.

I note that the cost was quite high. I see that the expenses for the witness from London were reasonable. The expenses for the witness from Los Angeles are \$3,500.

Madam Chair, you told us that you decided on the witnesses, and not the other parties. However, you have not submitted a budget to the committee for approval, which is unusual.

Is that something you intend to do again, or will the committee be inviting the witnesses?

I would like some clarification on that.

[*English*]

The Chair: I think, moving forward, that it's best practice for me to communicate more efficiently with everyone, and I could pass it to the clerk, I guess, to handle if we need further discussion.

However, to answer your question, I agree. We could move forward in a different way.

Go ahead, Sonia.

Ms. Sonia Sidhu (Brampton South, Lib.): On the same point, I just want to share my frustration too, Madam Chair.

I've been on the FEWO committee for nine years. It's never happened that the other party didn't get a chance to submit names of witnesses. As a chair, your doing this is not fair to us. It never happened before. Please, next time, don't do this.

Thank you.

The Chair: That's duly noted. Thank you.

Go ahead, Lisa.

Ms. Lisa Hepfner: I just want to clarify, Madam Chair, because you're talking today as though you didn't know that it was inappropriate to call a meeting without informing the witnesses and to call witnesses without informing committee members. Is that your contention—that you didn't know that this is an inappropriate way to handle a committee? Are you just learning this now?

The Chair: No, it was an emergency meeting, and I acted swiftly on a very emergent topic, hence the meeting.

Ms. Sonia Sidhu: Madam Chair, in an emergency meeting, all committee members are present. If it's an emergency meeting, we should say our views too for names of our witnesses. How come we didn't get a chance to submit them? Even though it was an emergency meeting, we had a lot of emergency meetings in COVID time, and all the time, but this never happened in that time.

The Chair: I really appreciate your feedback, and more consensus from different witnesses would only enhance the conversation next time.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marc Serré: Madam Chair, I would like to speak.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Serré.

Mr. Marc Serré: Normally, emergency meetings are requested pursuant to Standing Order 106(4). We're used to that. Such meetings were held over the summer, as well as during the COVID-19 pandemic. As Ms. Larouche mentioned, we held an emergency meeting under Standing Order 106(4) in July 2020, as well as in 2022.

It was reported in the media that the meeting in question was requested pursuant to Standing Order 106(4), but that isn't the case. When a meeting is requested pursuant to the standing order, all parties have the opportunity to invite witnesses, and the chair must convene the meeting within five days of receiving the request. However, in this case, it wasn't a meeting requested by parliamentarians pursuant to Standing Order 106(4). Instead, it seems to be a meeting that you called yourself. Perhaps I understand your approach a little better but, with all due respect, this isn't a meeting requested under Standing Order 106(4) like the ones we're used to having as parliamentarians.

It's important that all parties be involved, so that they have a chance to prepare, propose the names of witnesses and know which witnesses will appear. That allows all political parties to be part of the conversation. By calling an emergency meeting of your own volition rather than making a request under Standing Order 106(4), you made that impossible. I've been here for eight years, a little less than Ms. Sidhu, and I've never seen that happen at this committee either. In fact, the Conservatives have been managing the committee's meetings since 2015.

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for bringing in the budget today. Now we can discuss it at greater length.

• (1110)

[English]

The Chair: I think.... Anna, I know you also have your hand up, but I would like to acknowledge that as chair, it certainly is my prerogative to call the meeting. I did address each steering committee member prior to the meeting. Lastly, this is not unique in all committees.

Nonetheless, Anna, the floor is yours.

Mrs. Anna Roberts: I think what we have to determine here is the issue that we all face, and that is the importance of how, as the status of women committee, we are going to come together and justify the violence that is occurring in our country. It's out of control. We've heard from different police officers and different chiefs of police. I think we need to get back to the business at hand, and that is on how we can work together so that we can improve the safety of all women everywhere.

The Chair: Also, I just want acknowledgement. While I was doing my housekeeping, the initial person on the floor was Michelle Ferreri, but I still have some housekeeping that I want to continue before we.... Is there any further discussion on the budget approval before I move forward on the other items that I want to handle?

Go ahead, Marc.

Mr. Marc Serré: Can you explain what you meant when you said that Michelle was the person?

The Chair: Certainly.

When I first started my remarks at the onset of the meeting, I was going through the explanation of the translation and what have you, and Michelle Ferreri did have her hand up. I acknowledged her, but then I went back to the speaking notes and acknowledged to her that I would go back to her. I've allowed some discretion in talking about the budget, and I just wanted to acknowledge that.

If we can deal with the budget, then I want to explain more about where we are with the coercive control study and witnesses and what have you for Wednesday. That would be great.

Go ahead, Leah.

Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Thank you, Chair.

I'm a little concerned about the process. For budgets, in my experience on committees, we've always worked in a really collegial way to do these things in advance. When it's done after the fact, sitting around the room, I'm constrained to approve something that I wasn't involved in in the first place.

I'm not saying that I have a problem with this budget, but maybe there will be a time when I do have problems with a budget, and I don't want to be put in the position that if I don't approve a budget that's using taxpayer dollars, I look like I'm against an issue. I'm not saying that I'm against this budget; I'm saying that I'm against the process.

I also didn't know that we were at a point in the meeting, when it was called to order, that people were raising hands. Again, I have a concern with the process. We have certainly worked really well as a committee under Karen Vecchio. She always made sure that the committee proceeded in a really respectful manner. Part of it was that she was fierce about process, including with me. I didn't always benefit from process.

I just want to get back to process. You brought up the coercive control study. We're talking about a crisis of violence against women. That's part of that violence. Every time we stall—and going into an election, I'm particularly concerned about process—for folks in my riding, where we have record rates of violence, it means somebody is going to die, and nobody in the House is going to fight for them.

I want make sure that we are good on process, that we follow rules, that we rise above partisan games and that we lift up the human rights and safety of women and diverse-gendered folks in this country, without question, qualification or motive.

That is what I am hoping: that we can get back to the committee process in a good way, because lives are on the line.

Thank you, Chair.

• (1115)

The Chair: Laila is next.

Mrs. Laila Goodridge: Thank you, Chair.

I want to thank you for having me here as a guest today.

With that and the conversation we've had, I'd like to move a motion to approve the budget as presented by the chair.

The Chair: Okay.

Do you want to speak to that motion, Marc?

Mr. Marc Serré: I want to clarify, following up on what Leah said.

You said that you acknowledged Ms. Ferreri. Is there anybody else on the list? I just want to clarify before we move on, because the last time there was a lot of confusion on that part, so I just want to make sure that other people are acknowledged.

The Chair: I have Laila, Anna and Andréanne.

Ms. Lisa Hefner: Wait. I had my hand up at the same time as Michelle. You're not even looking at this side of the room.

Mr. Marc Serré: You've acknowledged those three—

The Chair: That's duly noted. I will ensure that it is there.

Mr. Marc Serré: Can you repeat that, please?

The Chair: I have Laila, Anna and Andréanne.

I'm sorry, Lisa. Where did you...?

Ms. Lisa Hefner: I had my hand up at the same time as Michelle. I was sitting here when you opened the meeting, and we both had our hands up at the same time, but you did not even look at this side of the room.

The Chair: I will add you, at this point, after Andréanne.

Mrs. Laila Goodridge: I have a point of order.

The Chair: Go ahead on a point of order.

Mrs. Laila Goodridge: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I did put forward a motion, so I would ask that we have a conversation on the motion at hand and have a vote on it, then we can, from there, go back to any kind of conversation on other pieces.

The Chair: We have a motion to approve the budget.

All those in favour of approving the budget?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Thank you.

The budget approval has been circulated and approved for \$5,750.

Ms. Sonia Sidhu: Madam Chair, I want to say something.

The Chair: If we're going to be following the list—

Ms. Sonia Sidhu: It's a point of order, Madam Chair. Michelle had her hand up. It's the same thing Lisa did. Then after that, how come...? Can you repeat the order for speaking, please?

The Chair: At this point, we have Laila, who has just finished, and Anna, Andréanne and Lisa. I'll add you, if you'd like, as well.

Ms. Sonia Sidhu: When you started the meeting, Michelle and Lisa had their hands up at the same time.

The Chair: I missed Lisa. I'm mindful of that now. I will be sure to take the full scope of the room.

At this point, with regard to the coercive behaviour study, I'd like to acknowledge where we're at.

We have had two and a half meetings of witness testimony so far. The study motion adopted by the committee on November 27, 2023, notes that the committee would hold "at least six meetings" for the study. Therefore, at this point we have three and a half meetings to sit in the schedule moving forward, and before the study wraps up, the committee will need to decide which study it wants to pursue this fall.

Currently, we have the study on sexual violence against women and girls as a weapon of war. There was a motion that called for four meetings. As well, we have a study on breast cancer screening

for women aged 40. The motion calls for a maximum of four meetings.

Go ahead, Lisa.

Ms. Lisa Hefner: Thank you.

Typically in this committee we've handled all this organization in the subcommittee. I understand that this was the plan for today: a subcommittee meeting where everybody, in camera, would go over the studies, finish coercive control and decide what we're going to study next.

At the last minute again—

The Chair: What is your point of order, Lisa?

Ms. Lisa Hefner: It's about procedure.

The procedure is that people all around this table had decided that we were going to have a subcommittee meeting today, and you unilaterally decided that we were going to be in public and debate things around the table. Instead of a conversation that was supposed to be in camera in a subcommittee, we're having this conversation in public among all of us. I don't think it's the right process. This is not how we've done this in this committee.

The Chair: I found it important to have a conversation of this scope in public, and I thought we would have consensus and opinions from all of us. That was my thought.

Go ahead, Leah, to that point of order.

• (1120)

Ms. Leah Gazan: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I think, Chair, that we've done a lot of good work together. I think usually... I mean, certainly making assumptions that you thought we would...

I think it goes back to process. What is the process? We've had a process, and in it we have discussed studies very collegially in subcommittees. Especially as somebody who only has one seat at this table—I don't have a lot of power on this table and I'm not delusional—I think that part of the reason was to make sure that we weren't playing partisan games and that we were putting forward the best studies we could.

I know that because of the subcommittee, I was able to work with all the parties with support of and in solidarity with women and with diverse-gendered people, knowing that this is the only place in the House of Commons that actually focuses on women's issues. I got the red dress study and I also got the study connecting increased violence against indigenous women and girls and resource extraction. That was agreed on across all party lines.

We have always done that. We don't have vicious debates in subcommittee. We look at the issues of the day and we discuss them. Part of the reason that it's worked is the process. Clearly, going forward with different processes doesn't seem to be working. I know who suffers for that, and they are the people we're fighting for, so this is very much on a point of order.

I question if our priority is shifting. I don't want to make assumptions. I do know what we're going into: It's from fighting for women and diverse-gendered people across party lines in a non-partisan way to getting ready for an upcoming election.

I think that in this committee, out of all the committees, we could actually get something done. We completed nine studies. Those studies have saved lives. I'm speaking to you as a human being, because I know that you're a good human being and that your role is critical in the process to make sure that we can ensure those things keep happening.

Thank you, Chair.

The Chair: On that point of order, go ahead, Laila.

Mrs. Laila Goodridge: Madam Chair, perhaps we could consult the clerk on this. It's my understanding, from the green book that guides where the process is, that having these kinds of conversations is allowable in both a closed in camera meeting or an open meeting, as this space is. Perhaps the clerk can clarify that this is an allowable way of having these conversations.

The Chair: Sonia, is this on that same point of order?

Ms. Sonia Sidhu: Yes, it's on the same point of order.

Madam Chair, the subcommittee was scheduled. You consulted all the vice-chairs. The members expressed that this was their preference. Can you explain why it was changed at the last minute when you had consulted the vice-chairs and the subcommittee meeting was scheduled?

The Chair: I know that we're assuming that we're speaking on the point of order, but we have to make sure that we keep our points of order as structured as possible.

To answer your question, I'll—

Ms. Sonia Sidhu: On the same point of order, I would like an explanation. In the past we were doing our procedure in camera, in the subcommittee. You consulted with the vice-chairs and we scheduled a subcommittee, and then it was cancelled without consultation with anyone. I would like the rationale for that.

The Chair: Yes. Thank you.

With that, every style of every chair will do things a bit differently. I'm hearing every single thing that all of you are saying, but I thought it was prudent of us to have a couple more motions and topics and ideas on the table before we went to a steering committee with just a few of us.

I know I changed from Thursday to Friday with my dialogue with all of you, but then, as soon as I did that, I reached out to all the vice-chairs to give them a heads-up that this was my intention. There was no malicious intent here.

Nonetheless, I think it's healthy that as a community around the table we can solve and talk about the issues at hand and get motions on the table that will allow this committee to have a productive fall.

Ms. Lisa Hepfner: Madam Chair, this is to the same point of order.

The Chair: Go ahead, Lisa.

• (1125)

Ms. Lisa Hepfner: I appreciate my friend Laila Goodridge's input, but I don't think it's necessary to consult the clerk. The point is not whether it's allowed; the point is committee practice. I think you've heard around this table how well this committee has worked over the past eight or nine years, and we're seeing that collapse.

The point is not whether it's something that's allowed but whether it's the practice of this committee and what has worked well in this committee. That is what we're speaking out against. You can't expect collaboration without talking to anyone. You can't expect that you're going to have consensus if you haven't bothered to talk to anyone else.

The Chair: Andréanne is next.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Madam Chair, the reason I asked for the floor earlier was precisely to add to what Ms. Gazan said about coercive control. I will come back to that.

We've been back and forth, both on the budget and on the last-minute change. We went from a subcommittee meeting to a public committee meeting. Madam Chair, I think you should consult with the vice-chairs more often. For example, with regard to what happened this summer, we should have been consulted on the budget.

As for the last-minute change, I gave my consent by email for the subcommittee to hold a meeting. I wasn't consulted on the change. Madam Chair, I would remind you that I'm available for issues that are this important to the committee, be it for a summer meeting requiring a budget or for a change like this one. Some people had already agreed by email that we would have a subcommittee meeting first. When it comes to changes like these, I give you my full support, Madam Chair, and I hope to be consulted. I think that's important.

I would like to say a word about coercive control, because I will come back to it. The idea for the study came from a Quebec National Assembly member from Québec solidaire, who worked on the report called "*Rebâtir la confiance*", or "Rebuilding Confidence" in English. I've had discussions with representatives of the Parti Québécois. The former minister of status of women is my riding neighbour. This summer, I met with Liberal MPs who are also aware of the recommendations in the "*Rebâtir la confiance*" report.

I retained two things from my experiences this summer. First, Quebec understood that partisanship had to be separated from the issue of violence against women. I have had discussions with all the political parties. Second, there seems to be unanimity in Quebec that there's an urgent need to address the issue of femicide. Quebec is asking us to take a serious look at the issue of coercive control. This goes beyond partisanship.

For these reasons, when we debate upcoming studies, we'll see what happens. We can talk about it again. Starting on Wednesday, we have an important study to finish. If it had nothing to do with the subject at hand, it might be different. We saw that this summer, and that's why I came here, worked with you, Madam Chair, and prepared my questions for the witnesses. I did not want to be partisan, despite what happened in terms of procedure. I was ready to put my questions to the witnesses, because I recognize that this is an important issue. My study is directly related to the issue of femicide. Actually, it's not just my study, it's the committee's study, and it was requested by the Quebec National Assembly. I suggest we finish the meeting as constructively as possible.

Madam Chair, I would like to remind you that I'm available to speak to you and that I want to work with you. You know how to reach me if you want to talk to me. I respectfully ask you to do so in order to advance this cause, so that the victims no longer lose out because the committee's work isn't moving forward.

[English]

The Chair: We do have three and a half meetings remaining on coercive control. We have witnesses planned for Wednesday.

I do also acknowledge that I have a few more people who have their hands up. We're no longer speaking to the points of order, so I've just been adding peoples' names.

Can I finish my remarks, or do you want to jump into the following comments?

I'm going to finish what I'd like to get in—

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos (Saint-Laurent, Lib.): I'm sorry, Madam Chair. I've had my hand up for quite a while now, and since everybody else got their turn to speak to the point of order, I would like to as well.

The Chair: Is that on the point of order? Okay, we were...

Go ahead.

• (1130)

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos: Okay. Thank you.

I would like to add my voice, first of all, to let you know that I think the way this committee has been run ever since the beginning of the summer has been troubling for sure.

This was a collegial committee. This was a committee where everybody got along and got work done, and we had so many studies completed during the time we were on this committee. It's really unfortunate to see things are being done almost as a dictatorship at this point.

The fact is that a meeting was called in the middle of the summer, and we were all brought back. Unfortunately, I wasn't able to

be there. It was a \$5,000 meeting. Canadian tax dollars are paying for that meeting, which was called in the middle of the summer. Witnesses were flown in from the United States. Unfortunately, we didn't get much out of that meeting. It's very unfortunate.

The fact is that this was supposed to be a subcommittee meeting, which is something we've done in the past. People scheduled their time in order to be there for the subcommittee. We had pre-committee meetings ourselves to make sure that we would be able to put forward studies we wanted to see happen, and the order of things and all of that, and it was completely sidelined at the last minute so that we could have a meeting and discuss this in person all together.

The Chair: If I may, I—

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos: It's very sad to see that—

The Chair: I'm sorry to interrupt you, but I think I've been more than generous with the—

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos: It's just disappointing, and I'm hoping we can move forward.

The Chair: —reception of the point of order.

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos: I'm hoping we can move in a more positive way going forward.

The Chair: Awesome. Thank you very much.

Wrapping up, what I wanted to say was about the witnesses we have scheduled for Wednesday for the coercive control study. As of right now, we still have three and a half meetings left for that.

At this point, I'm opening up the floor to discussions on motions. We have a running list right now. Anna was on the list, but she acknowledged that she no longer wants to be. We have Michelle and Lisa.

Emmanuella, I have taken you off the list now.

Is there anything...?

[Translation]

Mr. Marc Serré: Madam Chair—

[English]

The Chair: Marc, would you like to be added to the list?

[Translation]

Mr. Marc Serré: No. I wonder, given what the committee members have just said, whether it wouldn't be appropriate to vote to continue the meeting in camera.

[English]

I'm asking the clerk. Can we...?

We just clearly heard here from the majority of the members that we should be going in camera.

Mrs. Laila Goodridge: On a point of order, Madam Chair, I appreciate the sentiment shared by the member opposite. You've just finished laying out our speaking order. We have Michelle and then Lisa. If that is a desire from the Liberal Party, Lisa can move that motion when she has the floor.

The Chair: You can't move motions in a point of order.

Mr. Marc Serré: It's not a point of order.

The Chair: Michelle, you have the floor.

Ms. Michelle Ferreri: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Welcome back, everybody. I hope you all have had an opportunity to get out into your communities to listen to the folks on the ground. I have to remind everyone here that this is our job. It is our job to bring the people's voices here.

I've listened to a lot of what's happened here this morning, and something that really jumps out at me is these words that are being said. I can't imagine how frustrating it is to watch at home, because although the words that are being floated around today are that we're getting a lot of work done, that we need to be collegial, that we need to be non-partisan, I'm sorry—if we're getting a lot of work done, why are more women dying? Why are sexual assaults up by 75%? Why is intimate partner violence an epidemic in 94 municipalities in Ontario? If we're doing such a great job, why is this happening? I don't want to come here and fight, but it's uncomfortable. It's uncomfortable to sit with people we work with every day.

It is certainly my job, and it is all of our jobs, to do the job we were elected to do. The reality is that these stats are not okay. Human trafficking is up by 84%. With sexual assaults, people can't even go downtown in their hometowns, their small communities; nobody feels safe.

We are the status of women committee. If we're going to do this, fine; let's have a healthy discussion. However, don't say that it's non-partisan, because policy is what led us here in the first place. It is the policy that is letting people out on bail, these repeat violent offenders. That's the reality after nine years. That's what's happening. I don't think that there's room for collegiality when people are dying, and let's have an honest conversation.

I'm going to move the following motion, Madam Chair:

Given the unprecedented wave of violence against women and femicides, the committee undertake a study on violence against women for no less than five meetings. All parties are to submit witnesses, but the priority must be give to Megan Walker and Cait Alexander

—who left in tears from this committee because their voices were silenced—

whose testimonies were cut short, and the committee seek additional resources to let these witnesses testify for as long as they need to tell their stories.

I am more than willing to listen to every member on this committee.

You can't go to a shelter right now without having women say that they can't find a space, that they don't have housing, that they are fleeing violence or that they are staying in violence.

I went to a round table in Newfoundland and Labrador. A woman was murdered by her partner, and it was policy put in place by this Liberal-NDP government that led to her murder.

We can do work here, and as the witnesses said to us, they don't want any more studies. The witnesses need to come forward so that they can testify and give us the solutions to change the policy. If we are truly the status of women committee, let's do this.

I'm happy to amend this motion to help everybody to allow these witnesses to come forward and to make this a study so that we are ensuring that women are safe and that these stats go down, not up.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

● (1135)

The Chair: Thank you, Michelle.

We have Lisa and Andréanne on the speaking list at this point.

Ms. Lisa Hepfner: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I would like to move that we move this committee in camera.

The Chair: This is a non-debatable motion, and we need to go to a vote.

(Motion agreed to: yeas 7; nays 3 [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: We will pause for about 10 minutes while we go in camera.

[*Proceedings continue in camera*]

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