HOUSE OF COMMONS
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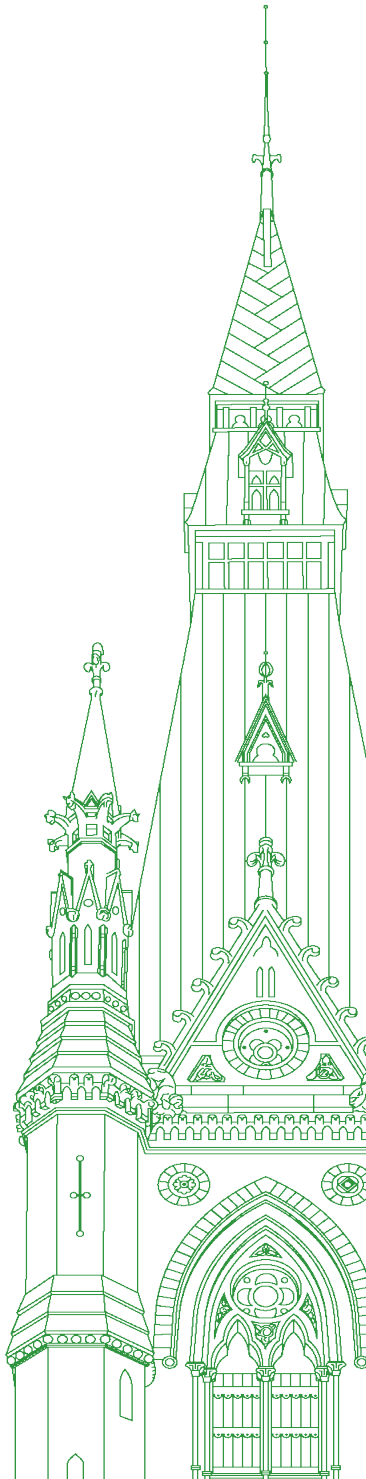
45th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

# Legislative Committee on Bill C-39

EVIDENCE

**NUMBER 001**

Friday, October 9, 2026



Chair: James Maloney

# Legislative Committee on Bill C-39

**Friday, October 9, 2026**

● (0850)

[*English*]

**The Chair (James Maloney (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.)):** Good morning, everybody. Happy Friday morning. I want to call this meeting to order.

First, I want to say thank you to all of you for being here on a Friday. I've had the honour—I think, although that remains to be seen, depending on how things go—to be asked to be the chair of this committee, and I truly am honoured to do that. I look forward to working with each and every one of you to discuss this very important bill.

I'll start by apologizing for the Friday morning meeting on the day before the Thanksgiving weekend. However, the alternative was next week, which is a break week, and I figured this was the least hazardous for my health. I appreciate everybody's being here today.

Welcome to meeting number one of the House of Commons Legislative Committee on Bill C-39. The committee is meeting today pursuant to the order of reference of Thursday, October 8, 2026. Today's meeting is taking place in a hybrid format, pursuant to the Standing Orders. Members are attending in person in the room and remotely using the Zoom application.

Before we continue, I would ask all in-person participants to consult the guidelines written on the 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; it links to a short awareness video.

I would like to make a few comments for the benefit of the members. I will remind you that all comments should be addressed through the chair. If you wish to speak, please raise your hand. The clerk and I will manage the speaking order as best we can, and we appreciate your patience and understanding.

As per the notice of meeting, the purpose of today's meeting is to discuss committee business. Members of the committee have received a copy of the draft routine motions. The committee can now proceed to those motions.

I should start by saying thank you to our clerk too. We look forward to working with you as well. We know this is going to be a big task, so we're very grateful.

Let's move into routine motions.

Oh, I'm sorry, Mr. Albas. You have your hand up.

**Dan Albas (Okanagan Lake West—South Kelowna, CPC):** Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair.

Congratulations. I offer my condolences on your receiving the honour of serving as the chair of this wonderful group.

I would simply say that we Conservatives have reviewed the routine motions. We find everything that was circulated to be in order, and we would just table that.

**The Chair:** Okay. I appreciate that.

Go ahead, Mr. Ste-Marie.

[*Translation*]

**Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette—Manawan, BQ):** The same goes for the Bloc Québécois. We are fine with the routine motions.

Thank you, Mr. Chair, and congratulations.

● (0855)

[*English*]

**The Chair:** I'm going to take a moment to hear from my colleagues to our right.

Just so you're aware of what's going on, I'll say that Mr. Albas has proposed that we adopt all the motions at once. I'm suspending for a moment so that everybody has an opportunity to review them and we can decide whether that's the path we choose.

Thank you.

● (0855)

_____(Pause)_____

● (0855)

**The Chair:** All right, we're back in session.

Do we have unanimous consent?

**Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP):** Mr. Chair, I have a point of order.

We don't have a copy of the motions. I understand they haven't been passed yet and, of course, all members of Parliament have the right to come to committee.

Is it possible for us to get a copy of the motions?

**The Chair:** Yes, I think once the motions are passed.... I mean, they're the usual procedural motions that we've all looked at and adopted many times, but I'm happy to do that.

**Don Davies:** I don't know what the motions are. Are these motions that talk about the procedures that are going to be adopted?

**The Chair:** Yes, they're about how much time witnesses have for opening remarks, document distribution, travel, in camera meetings, etc. It's the usual of things that we go through, but I'm happy to get them to you, Mr. Davies.

Okay, do we have unanimous consent to adopt the procedural motions?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Motions agreed to [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

**The Chair:** We'll go on to committee business, then.

Mr. Albas, go ahead. You have your hand up.

**Dan Albas:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'm delighted to be joining you all today. I'm glad to see we had some unanimity around the concept of the routine motions. The Conservatives want to see things built. We've been arguing for the past 11 years that this country has not gotten it right, largely under the direction of the previous government, and now under the current government.

We would like to see some changes made. We know the Liberals seem to be very intent on a very speedy timeline, but we want to make sure that we scrutinize the bill. What I'm suggesting, Mr. Chair, is the following motion to give this committee some guardrails in order to see that we scrutinize the legislation and that we have the opportunity to bring in witnesses and bring forward amendments in a timely way. We hope that the government will be in agreement with this.

I move the following motion:

> That, for the purpose of its consideration of Bill C-39, the committee:
>
> a. Invite the following ministers, accompanied by officials, to appear before the committee, separately, for one hour each:
>
> 1. The Honourable Steven MacKinnon, Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons,
>
> 2. The Honourable Julie Dabrusin, Minister of the Environment, Climate Change and Nature, and
>
> 3. The Honourable Patty Hajdu, Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario;
>
> b. Invite parties represented on the committee to provide preliminary witness lists to the Clerk, ranked in priority order, provided that they are received by the Clerk by no later than 12:00PM on Friday, October 9, 2026;
>
> c. Invite parties represented on the committee to provide final witness lists to the Clerk, ranked in priority order, provided that they are received by the Clerk by no later than 5:00PM on Thursday, October 15, 2026;
>
> d. Instruct the Chair to, wherever possible, schedule three witnesses per panel, except for the witnesses referenced in (a);
>
> e. Set a deadline of 5:00PM on Thursday, October 29, 2026, for amendments to be submitted to the Clerk;
>
> f. Begin clause-by-clause consideration of the bill during the week of November 2, 2026;
>
> g. Notwithstanding the above deadlines and requirements, allow for flexibility respecting the committee's agenda should the occasion arise to justify it; and
>
> h. Issue a press release requesting interested stakeholders to submit briefs to the committee, provided that it advises stakeholders that it is preferred that briefs are submitted in both official languages and that they must be received by the Clerk by no later than 5:00PM on Thursday, October 22, 2026, to be considered by the committee.

Thank you.

● (0900)

[*Translation*]

**Gabriel Ste-Marie:** I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** If I may, Mr. St-Pierre, I'm going to say this, and we can discuss this around the table.

By way of preliminary remarks, this committee has just been struck. Not everybody even had the motion in their hand beforehand. I appreciate the effort to do this. As you know, I was appointed chair under 24 hours ago, but I can tell you this: My goal is to get some of these deadlines confirmed when we leave today.

My only ask of the committee is really that.... We all share your view. We want to get this thing done efficiently. We all really share your view strongly. I know we'll make sure that we do it thoroughly and that everybody who wants and needs to be heard gets to be heard. If we can all work together and be collegial, which I know we can, we can accomplish this.

Having said that, because we have just started and because it was so quick, my concern is that if we set hard deadlines on all of these things today, we're going to box ourselves in and we're going to regret it. I can tell you now that the three lead ministers on this on this piece of legislation have confirmed their availability to attend on October 19 to start off our first meeting, which will be on the Monday following the Thanksgiving break week. I think that's important to get us started.

In terms of witness panels and deadlines, what I'm proposing—and I'm just throwing this out there in the context of the motion—is that we agree on a preliminary list of witnesses by the end of today, or sometime today—perhaps even immediately after this meeting is over—with another option to submit further witness lists by next week. This gives everybody a bit more time to absorb what we're doing and give it some thought.

In terms of the panels and whatnot, it's always a good idea...but in my experience, good intentions fall by the wayside very quickly, because you send out invitations to witnesses and some are not available and some cannot or do not want to attend, and you end up being unable to stick to that rigid process.

Those are some preliminary thoughts of mine. I appreciate the spirit. I don't want to get wedded to too much today, because when we come back—once we have a better idea—we can sort it out.

I'll give you the floor, Mr. Albas, and then I'll go to Mr. St-Pierre.

[*Translation*]

**Gabriel Ste-Marie:** I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Okay.

Go ahead, Mr. St-Pierre.

[*Translation*]

**Gabriel Ste-Marie:** My last name is Ste-Marie, not St-Pierre.

When there's a motion, it's customary to get a paper copy in both official languages, so I'd like to have a hard copy of the motion that was just proposed in both official languages, please. When the motion is read, it's also customary to provide the interpreters with a copy.

That's the reason for my point of order.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** That's a very fair point of order. I didn't have a copy in front of me until after Mr. Albas started speaking, and it's in only one language. I agree with you, so why don't we suspend for a moment to see if we can remedy that, and then we'll come back?

● (0900)

_____(Pause)_____

● (0905)

● (0910)

**The Chair:** I call this meeting back to order.

Did everybody get a copy of the motion? They did. Okay, so we're all good.

Everybody has the up-to-date motion in both languages. I believe there were two versions circulating around. There have been spelling errors corrected, too, I understand.

I had a speaking list with Mr. St-Pierre, and then I had Mr. Lake—

**Some hon. members:** Ste-Marie.

**The Chair:** What did I say?

**Some hon. members:** St-Pierre.

**The Chair:** I'm sorry. It's the lack of coffee and an early morning.

I'm sorry, Mr. Ste-Marie.

I then have Mr. Albas, Mr. Lake and Ms. Desrochers.

[*Translation*]

**Gabriel Ste-Marie:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'd like to thank the member for his motion. We have it in both official languages. Obviously, it's customary to share the motion ahead of time with the members of each party when possible and to make sure the interpreters have a copy.

This is a very complex bill we're going to study. It's 250 pages plus, it affects a number of departments, and it makes changes that are going to have a profound impact on society. It is in everyone's interest and in the interest of democracy that we make sure every group, every organization affected by the bill has enough time to review it, analyze it and reach out to the committee. That's why I find the motion very helpful.

However, as far as the last few paragraphs of the motion are concerned, I think the deadlines in paragraphs (e), (f) and (h) are too soon. We're already into October, and this is just our first meeting.

I propose amending the deadlines for submitting amendments, submitting briefs and beginning clause-by-clause consideration. I propose postponing each of those three deadlines by a week. Therefore, I propose that the motion be amended by replacing the words “Thursday, October 29” with the words “Thursday, November 5”, replacing the words “November 2” with the words “November 9”, and replacing the words “Thursday, October 22” with the words “Thursday, October 29”.

I was on the finance committee for a good few years. Whenever we had a very lengthy and complex budget implementation bill and we rushed through it too quickly, as happened during the pandemic, civic society found out about the problems when it was too late. Issues arose because the study had already been done.

I really want to make sure that those affected by the bill have another week to go through what's in it and reach out to the committee, if necessary, so they can make the bill better. That is why I propose postponing each of those three deadlines by a week.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Ste-Marie.

The speaking list I have—we'll deal with the amendments—is Mr. Albas, Mr. Lake, Mr. Leslie and then Ms. Desrochers and Mr. Gourde.

Go ahead, Mr. Albas.

**Dan Albas:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I certainly appreciate the advice of my colleague from the Bloc Québécois. Mr. Ste-Marie is 100% correct. From this point on, we will always try to distribute things in both French and English ahead of time to make sure that the interpreters, who do an able job, have them. We appreciate his raising that.

I would simply say that most of these timelines, from my understanding, are discussions that have happened with the Liberals in terms of their desire to have a timely study. Certainly, the Conservatives believe this can be accomplished if this committee is given the proper scrutiny of ministers.

I would note for my colleague Mr. Ste-Marie that it reads, “g. Notwithstanding the above deadlines and requirements, allow for flexibility respecting the committee’s agenda should the occasion arise to justify it”. This allows you, Mr. Chair, if a cog has been thrown into the committee machinery, to ably respond to it as well.

I always appreciate this member's interventions. Mr. Ste-Marie, thank you for suggesting the week, but I believe the current timeline is justified in its current state and there's sufficient flexibility bestowed to the chair that we would not be interested in supporting this at this time. It's my hope that the government will see these three ministers and the reasonable ask to have each of the ministers who will eventually, if this bill passes in both the House and the Senate, have direct responsibility for administering these changes. The Conservatives believe this committee would be served best by having the Minister of the Environment, the Minister of Transport and the Minister of Jobs and Families, who will have ultimate carriage of the amendments proposed in Bill C-39.

Mr. Chair, when it comes to environmental processes, transportation projects and changes to the Canada Labour Code...that's why the Conservatives want to have them as soon as possible. It's my hope that the government will see the wisdom in that and agree to support the main motion.

I'll leave it to my friends on the other side to decide whether they want to support Mr. Ste-Marie's motion, but I don't believe the Conservatives will.

● (0915)

**The Chair:** Thanks.

I should point out, Mr. Ste-Marie, that the week of November 9 is a non-sitting week, so we couldn't begin clause-by-clause on that day.

I think I said this earlier, but the three ministers confirmed for the 19th are Minister Hajdu, Minister MacKinnon and Minister LeBlanc.

I have Mr. Lake next.

**Dan Albas:** To that point, Mr. Chair—

**The Chair:** Well, Mr. Lake has the floor.

**Hon. Mike Lake (Leduc—Wetaskiwin, CPC):** That's a surprise. I assumed that the three ministers you were talking about were the same three ministers. It would be odd not to have the environment minister on this piece of legislation, given the clear impact in her area.

**The Chair:** One person's version of odd is different from another's, in my experience, but okay, go ahead.

**Hon. Mike Lake:** Okay. I assumed, when you were talking about the three ministers, that it was the three ministers responsible for the key areas of the legislation.

This was part of the questions I was going to ask. To clarify, it sounds as though you've had conversations that we aren't part of yet. How long would each of those ministers...? What's being proposed to you? I assume it's an hour each in a three-hour meeting.

**The Chair:** Well, there would definitely be an hour's meeting. I suspect they're going to appear together, as I understand they did in the Senate earlier this week.

Anyway, finish your submissions, and we'll—

**Hon. Mike Lake:** I was assuming, because this is an unusual process, a special committee.... Because of the scale and scope of the legislation, it would be highly unusual for something of this importance to have three ministers appear together for one hour if we're trying to give proper scrutiny to legislation that the government itself declares to be as important as it does.

Presumably, these ministers were all involved in the generation of this bill to start with, and it is pretty important for Canadians to hear from them individually in terms of their own roles, their own departments and the impacts that we would see in each of those areas. Therefore, I would make the argument that Canadians would expect their government to ensure that these ministers take the time to appear for one hour each on this legislation.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Go ahead, Mr. Leslie.

**Branden Leslie (Portage—Lisgar, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I appreciate the clarity regarding the ministers.

I have many questions. I sit on the environment committee, so I have had the opportunity, although infrequent, to have Minister Dabrusin appear before that committee.

I've reviewed the legislation, Bill C-39, which we're here to discuss, and it has some of the most consequential amendments to environmental legislation to have happened in years. Everyone in this committee is aware of the views held by environmental organizations regarding the bill. The fact that Minister Dabrusin is not one of the opening three ministers.... She, I might add, is receiving incredible new powers under division 5 to grant permits, powers that are currently held under other ministerial powers. It sounds as though—and I would seek clarification after, Mr. Chair—you are going to have three ministers appear collectively for one hour and call that ministerial accountability.

Is that correct, if I could just ask you while speaking?

● (0920)

**The Chair:** Finish your submissions, and we'll move on.

**Branden Leslie:** Okay, I am prepared to speak for a very long time as to why it is vital that Minister Dabrusin, who has the most to gain as a minister—the ministerial position itself does, I should say.... The fact that this minister isn't intended to appear before this committee, as outlined here—

**The Chair:** Hold on. Let's be clear. This is why I said at the outset that we shouldn't get pigeonholed. The outcome of today, in my opinion, should be some parameters on timelines. We have these three ministers. We'll figure out how long they're going to attend, and then we can put in our witness lists.

All of you have made it—

**Hon. Mike Lake:** I have a point of order.

**The Chair:** Wait one moment.

All of you have made it very clear that you want Minister Dabrusin here. That's fine. Put her on the witness list, and we can deal with it in due course. I don't know that we need to belabour the notion that you want her here. It's very clear.

Mr. Lake, you have a point of order.

**Hon. Mike Lake:** When you say, “We have these three ministers”, what does that even mean? We're starting the process. We don't have anything yet. We haven't agreed on anything. Which three ministers are you referring to when you say, “We have these three ministers”?

**The Chair:** Okay, Mr. Lake, I can say it one more time. We have the three ministers that I mentioned earlier, and then we can submit our witness lists. If you have other witnesses you want on the list, including other ministers—

**Hon. Mike Lake:** The point of order is that nothing has been—

**The Chair:** It's a point of order. It's not debate, Mr. Lake. Make your point and we'll move on.

**Hon. Mike Lake:** The point of order is that we don't have anything, because we, as a committee, haven't decided on anything yet.

**The Chair:** All right. Thank you.

Mr. Leslie, you still have the floor.

**Branden Leslie:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I don't want to misquote you, but I believe you said the words “ministers responsible” when talking about those three ministers. Minister Dabrusin is responsible for roughly one-third of the clauses in Bill C-39, so not to have her....

I understand that we are putting forward a programming motion to make sure that the appropriate ministerial authorities are questioned for accountability for Canadians in an expedited timeline. As my colleague said, we are trying to work collaboratively with the government. In fact, we voted at second reading in principle to send us here for a deliberate study.

The idea that we would have the chair declare that there are three so-called ministers responsible set to appear, without allowing us the opportunity to at least discuss and, most importantly, solidify that the minister responsible for one-third of Bill C-39 is going to appear here and not just have hope that in a relatively expedited timeline in which we want to work collaboratively with.... We have no guarantee that such a vital minister is going to appear. I am unwilling to accept this. I'm happy to sit here all day and explain why.

**The Chair:** I don't think that's necessary.

The committee is the master of its own domain. I have put it out there. We can discuss. We can invite ministers, which we will.

Scheduling ministers is always subject to the ministers' availability, etc. I have simply identified those three ministers as being willing to attend on the 19th. I don't think we need to get hung up on this today. This will work itself out.

Go ahead, Ms. Desrochers.

[*Translation*]

**Caroline Desrochers (Trois-Rivières, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I just want to say that I agree with what you suggested in terms of next steps. I don't think it's necessary to give ourselves rigid deadlines that could actually constrain us further. I agree with what Mr. Ste-Marie said.

The important thing today, I think, is to agree on the preliminary witness list—which can include Minister Dabrusin—by noon, so we can invite witnesses and meet with them on October 19, and to agree on the timeline for the final witness list. It could be October 15, next week. Then I think it's imperative that we come to an agreement today on the press release we're going to issue to tell people they can submit briefs.

Mr. Albas, you suggested October 29. I think that's a good date. We have to do it as quickly as possible so that people—

**Gabriel Ste-Marie:** I suggested October 22.

**Caroline Desrochers:** I think October 22 would work because we're going to get a lot of submissions. We consulted extensively over the summer. We got 26,000 briefs, and we met with 300 indigenous communities, I believe. A lot of work has already been done. Communities are engaged. The bill came out last week, so people know about it. We just need to give the analysts time to go through the reports and submissions, and ourselves a bit of time to read them as well. I think October 22 is probably a good date if we stick with that. I am ready and we are ready to see what the committee wants to do.

I think the three most important things to agree on today are the deadline for the witness list, including a preliminary list today, another date next week and the press release—whether it's October 22. I think we can deal with the rest when we meet on October 19. We can revisit the deadlines then, because we'll know who the witnesses are and the briefs will have started coming in. That's my suggestion.

I appreciate that my opposition colleagues want an hour each, but we have a limited amount of time. We're talking about 20 hours or so of meetings, even though we haven't set specific parameters. There is some flexibility. With about 20 hours, we won't have that much time left to hear from witnesses if we spend four hours with the ministers.

That's what I think.

● (0925)

[*English*]

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

I have Mr. Gourde next.

[*Translation*]

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

I agree with my colleague Gabriel Ste-Marie and Ms. Desrochers that we need more time to provide the witness list. I repeat, we want to co-operate with the government on this very important bill, which will reshape the entire Canadian economy for generations. However, it is also worthwhile to hear from the ministers and question them. At the end of the day, they are the big players in this bill.

If we need to add time at the end, we're available to do that. We have a lot of time to work on this bill. If we need to add a meeting or two, we will. If we have to sit when the House isn't sitting, we will. This is important. We can't rush through the study. Canadians are watching. They deserve the best version of this bill, and we are going to do what's best for Canadians.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Thank you.

I have Mr. Albas, Mr. Lake and then Ms. Desrochers.

**Dan Albas:** Mr. Chair, I would reiterate that, first of all, the Conservatives have been in discussions with the Liberals. The Liberals have indicated that they would like to have a timely study of this, which we totally understand. We believe more needs to be done, because the government's current record on building new infrastructure has been subpar. We would like to see this change, but in order to do that.... It seems that the main issue is the ministers' attendance.

First, all the dates we have, we came to in collaboration with the Liberals. Second, Mr. Chair, we've allowed the flexibility for you to make changes as necessary, as long as they're in line with the overall stated objectives we've laid out. Third, this motion calls on those specific ministers, because we have an intense desire to do that.

If the Liberals want to simply dictate who comes and when they come, and it doesn't matter what the opposition has to say, I take issue with that. I believe we should argue, and we will continue to for as long as it takes, that we're being eminently reasonable by drawing a line in the sand. Having a minister come on a bill the Prime Minister has described as the “most consequential” in decades.... To me, an hour with a minister who will have one-third of the responsibilities for the bill, eventually, if it passes both chambers, is eminently reasonable.

Asking Minister MacKinnon, whom I've seen at the transportation committee along with Mr. Kelloway, to come for a simple hour to discuss about 100 pages is, totally reasonable. Having the minister of employment come and talk about an issue—currently, there seems to be a real issue in the labour world around that particular section—for an hour is eminently reasonable.

I would ask Liberal members to take a look at the motion and see that there is flexibility for the chair. This allows for a timely, orderly study, but it also allows the Conservatives, and I hope, eventually, Bloc members the opportunity to do our jobs, which is to function as a challenge to the government. It's to make sure that the gaps in their thinking and priorities...and get answers for Canadians who want some accountability.

This is not a one-party state. I really hope the government-side members will simply say they are being offered a reasonable timeline. They need to allow their ministers to come and talk about their portfolios.

I've been here for quite a while, Mr. Chair, and I've never seen, when an opposition party lays out reasonable measures.... If I were on the government side, I would jump on it.

I would ask, Mr. Chair, that you be mindful of the fact that you are here to serve the committee, and this is the committee's first foray into asking you how to do the job. If you believe something needs to be amended because you think it is out of order.... As I said, we've already given you the mandate to make changes wherever you need to, as long as they're justified to the committee.

● (0930)

**The Chair:** All right. Thank you, Mr. Albas.

I'm going to suspend for a moment.

I want to say that's a great moment of self-awareness, saying this is the first time you've seen the opposition propose something reasonable in this way, because throughout my entire time, you've been in opposition.

I'm kidding, of course, Mr. Albas.

Thank you. We'll suspend for a moment.

● (0930)

_____(Pause)_____

● (0955)

**The Chair:** I call the meeting back to order.

Mr. Lake is next, followed by Ms. Desrochers and then Mr. Ste-Marie.

**Hon. Mike Lake:** I wanted to weigh in on this. I made a couple of notes as the conversation was happening.

To the Chair, you mentioned the idea of “subject to the ministers' availability”, which we hear fairly regularly in committee. I did a bit of math. Between now and the end of the week of the 19th, there are 336 hours. We're looking for one hour from each of these ministers. I would presume that the ministers' offices can find an hour for their ministers to appear before the committee. I'm glad to hear from them any time between the 19th and the 23rd. There's a whole week.

We should be able to resolve the availability issue, given that the Prime Minister has referred to this legislation as the “most consequential” legislation in decades. I'm sure he'll free up his ministers to appear before our committee to deal with this.

Ms. Desrochers brought up the 20 hours or whatever for the committee to study this. The point I would make is that ministers are pretty important to this conversation. If we're going to get the most out of witness testimony, hearing from the ministers who are directly involved in the legislation for an hour each will be pretty important. If we could extend it from 20 hours in total to 23 hours in total, it would ensure that we give enough time to each of the ministers to weigh in.

I think 104 of the clauses are related to Minister Dabrusin's portfolio. There are 300-plus clauses. I think 57 are related to Minister Hajdu's portfolio. To have each of them on their own for an hour before the committee, taking questions and having the chance to explain the portions of the legislation related to their portfolios, would be pretty important for Canadians, broadly, to have an understanding of this legislation, which the Prime Minister refers to as the “most consequential” legislation in decades.

● (1000)

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

Go ahead, Ms. Desrochers.

[*Translation*]

**Caroline Desrochers:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

We have listened carefully to our colleagues. We held discussions during the adjournment of the sitting and, in a spirit of co-operation—even though we did not necessarily intend to adopt a motion this morning—I believe we had agreed on what the chair proposed earlier, namely to reach a consensus on the key points and deadlines to guide the next steps.

However, my colleagues prefer to adopt a motion. We have certainly heard the concerns raised by our colleague Mr. Ste-Marie, of the Bloc Québécois, regarding the flexibility of the timetables and the importance of ensuring that witnesses are heard, while allowing sufficient time for organizations and witnesses to submit written submissions.

I thank Mr. Lake for the maths lesson. However, I would point out that there are still a limited number of hours available if we are to proceed swiftly.

As you said right at the start of your remarks, Mr. Albas, we want to proceed swiftly on this motion, but we want to do things properly. So, I think it is more useful for the group to devote as much time as possible to the witnesses.

I would therefore like to propose some limited amendments to the text you have submitted so that we can move forward. It would be a great shame to spend all the time we have today on this and to start from very rigid positions. For our part, we are in a spirit of flexibility.

Mr. Chair, I would like to propose amendments to Mr. Albas's motion. May I continue?

[*English*]

**The Chair:** I'm sorry, Ms. Desrochers. I was carrying on conversations at the same time.

If you could repeat what you said, I'll get to your point of order. Repeat the last part of what you said so I understand it.

[*Translation*]

**Caroline Desrochers:** Mr. Chair, what I said was that we would be prepared to work towards reaching agreement on a motion and adopting it today in order to be effective. If we could start in this way, I think it would set the committee's work on the right track. It would also take into account the concerns of our colleague from the Bloc Québécois.

So, I would like to propose amendments to the motion put forward by Mr. Albas. I can read them out to you now, or we can send them via—

**Gabriel Ste-Marie:** Before that, I would like to raise a point of order.

● (1005)

[*English*]

**The Chair:** What is your point of order, Mr. Ste-Marie?

[*Translation*]

**Gabriel Ste-Marie:** To ensure compliance, given that I had proposed amendments, if there is a friendly agreement between the parties, I would like to withdraw them so that Ms. Desrochers can propose hers.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Okay. I say this at my own peril, but I think we're all trying to get to the same place. We're trying to figure out which dates work for everybody.

Technically, we can deal with your proposed amendment, dispose of that, move on to another amendment and then get back to the main motion in whatever form that ultimately takes.

I'm proposing that it's easier if we can discuss the dates that are being bandied around the table by the three parties and try to land on that without wasting a whole lot of time on procedure. I think we're this close, so I'm throwing that out there, if people are prepared to do it that way.

We can at least hear what Ms. Desrochers has to say before you say no. Can we do that?

**Dan Albas:** Mr. Chair, there are amendments. If she's going to make a subamendment to the amendment, I welcome that procedurally, but we've just spent the last 15 minutes waiting for the Liberal Party to figure out what they are proposing. They continue to seem not to want to have the ministers come in.

**The Chair:** We don't know that, Mr. Albas, until we've heard the proposed subamendment. If you'll indulge me just for a moment—

**Dan Albas:** If it's a subamendment, we'll hear it.

**The Chair:** —let's hear what the subamendment is, and then we can carry on.

**Dan Albas:** If it's a subamendment....

**The Chair:** Well, we won't know until we hear it.

Ms. Desrochers, go ahead.

**Caroline Desrochers:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

[*Translation*]

I shall speak in French, Mr. Albas, as I have the text in French in front of me. My amendment proposes that the committee invite the following ministers, accompanied by civil servants, to appear before the committee, with two ministers at a time over two two-hour panels: the Honourable Steven MacKinnon, Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons; the Honourable Julie Dabrusin, Minister of the Environment, Climate Change and Nature; the Honourable Patty Hajdu, Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario; and we are adding the Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister responsible for Canada–U.S. Trade, Intergovernmental Affairs, Internal Trade and One Canadian Economy. I also move that “for one hour each” be deleted from the motion, because we want to ensure that the ministers will be here.

[*English*]

**Branden Leslie:** I have a point of order.

**The Chair:** Ms. Desrochers, I'm sorry. We have a point of order.

**Branden Leslie:** The point of order is of a very technical nature. A subamendment has to be within the scope of what was previously amended, which was only (e), (f) and (h), according to my Bloc colleague, so any subamendment needs to deal with only those points rather than start at the beginning.

**The Chair:** All right, Mr. Leslie, we can do this that way if you want.

Ms. Desrochers, please finish.

[*Translation*]

**Caroline Desrochers:** I thought Mr. Ste-Marie wanted to withdraw his amendment.

Mr. Albas, excuse me, but you say you want to work together and that you want things to move forward quickly. Are we really going to get bogged down in trivialities? We are trying here to work together on the motion you have proposed.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Do we have unanimous consent to allow Mr. Ste-Marie to withdraw his amendment?

**Dan Albas:** No.

**The Chair:** We do not have unanimous consent.

All right, we're going to play by the rules. We're going to have a very strict debate on Mr. Ste-Marie's amendment. Any other submissions will be dealt with later.

I have a speaking list. Ms. Desrochers has the floor. Then I have Mr. Ste-Marie, and then I have Mr. Albas. We are speaking specifically to the issue of the three date changes proposed by Mr. Ste-Marie and nothing else.

[*Translation*]

**Caroline Desrochers:** Regarding Mr. Ste-Marie's amendment, we propose that the meeting be scheduled for Wednesday, November 4 instead of October 29.

Mr. Ste-Marie, you had proposed a week later. This is a little sooner. We propose November 4 for submitting the amendments to the clerk.

Next, regarding the clause-by-clause consideration, you had proposed November 9. We propose November 16, which would give us a little more time to validate all the amendments.

As for the receipt of written submissions in both official languages, you had proposed October 29. We propose October 26 to give the analysts a chance to receive all the documents.

This is the subamendment we are proposing to your amendment.

[*English*]

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

Mr. Ste-Marie, go ahead.

[*Translation*]

**Gabriel Ste-Marie:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I had previously spoken on the amendment currently under discussion. It aims to allow time for witnesses and civil society groups, and to ensure they can take part in the debate. I welcome Ms. Desrochers's remarks, which are very much in line with this. I fully support her.

For us, what is important is being able to hear from witnesses before this committee. I also understand that my political group could have one witness per group, which we welcome, if there is scope for that. The three parties have discussed what would be proposed in the motion as amended by Ms. Desrochers. I would like to say that I am in favour of it and that I support it.

Unfortunately, we are currently at the stage of working things out. Perhaps this won't help, but I can suggest a possible solution. Where there seems to be a sticking point between the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party is on the possibility of hearing from the ministers concerned for one hour each. I think we are close to an agreement. We are now just one or two hours away from the committee meeting. I think that if the parties could talk to one another and find a compromise—that is the art of politics—we could begin examining the bill quickly, because it is important that we hear from as many witnesses as possible.

I would like to withdraw my amendment and support the agreement on what Ms. Desrochers is proposing. I do not think unanimous consent is required. I withdraw my amendment.

● (1010)

[*English*]

**The Chair:** You've already proposed withdrawing it. We need unanimous consent to do that. It's already been denied, which I think was probably Mr. Albas's point of order, so we can skip over that.

What we are discussing now is Ms. Desrochers's subamendment to the amendment, which is the change to the three dates that your member proposed.

I have a speaking list now of Mr. Albas and Mr. Leslie on this point.

**Dan Albas:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I am always happy to hear from Mr. Ste-Marie, and it appears that he's been quite effective at convincing the government that there should be more time made available for Canadians and for witnesses. I understand the merit to that argument, so I will thank Ms. Desrochers and Mr. Ste-Marie for their contributions on this front.

I will simply say that we are quite happy to support the subamendment. We think that any extension of time would probably facilitate a better process. However, I would also make the point, Mr. Chair, that facilitating a longer process means it takes a little less wind out of the sails for the government to say that the ministers can be made available only at a certain time. If we're going to be giving more time for Canadians to weigh in, I think this certainly allows for the ministers to appear.

I'll make a quick reference, Mr. Chair, to the fact that a minister doesn't need to come on the very first day. There's a lot of flexibility. To my understanding, ministers do show up in Ottawa. They are here. To slice out an hour of time, I would be willing to wake up a little earlier or stay up a bit later.

I am very happy that the Bloc member offered the hand of friendship to the Liberals and that the Liberals have taken it. I hope the Liberals can do the same on the issue of ministers' coming to the committee.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Let's hope we can carry on in this warm and fuzzy spirit and get this done.

We have Mr. Leslie and then Mr. Lake.

**Branden Leslie:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I will try to continue on in the warm and fuzzy spirit, and I will say that, yes, I am a big fan of procedure and rules and following them in this and every committee.

I think it is important. We have *Robert's Rules of Order* for the average board meeting, and we have a big green book that is meant to be followed. I will continue to advocate for us to follow procedure, and I appreciate that we have in this case.

I would echo my colleague in terms of the subamendment. It's great to see the government showing some willingness to extend dates.

I'll throw out a general question, although it will not impact how I would vote on the part (h) subamendment. Moving up the deadline by which submissions from stakeholders must be received by three days seems a bit contrary to the intention of the initial point of an amendment and a subamendment, but I'm not going to quibble on that. I think it's reasonable to support, and I certainly hope, as my colleague alluded to, that we can continue this show of collaboration and working together to make sure that we have the appropriate ministerial witnesses show up whenever they can.

I'm an early riser; I will have early meetings. I'm also a night owl; I will stay late. I will do whatever is necessary to make sure we have the appropriate ministers before this committee.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** That's inspiring. I think we all feel that way.

Go ahead, Mr. Lake.

**Hon. Mike Lake:** I'm taking a look at the implication of (e) as amended. It looks as though it will free up eight more hours of committee time for witnesses. I think we'd resolve a whole bunch of things, because now the committee could sit on the 2nd and 3rd. Is that correct?

The amendments' not having to be submitted until the 4th would allow a bit more time to fit some witnesses in and, therefore, solve the time crunch that Ms. Desrochers was talking about for the ministers appearing. I think we'd solve a lot of problems with this.

● (1015)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

We're going to vote on Ms. Desrochers' subamendment to Mr. Ste-Marie's amendments. I will repeat what my understanding is.

In paragraph (e), it will be changed from “October 29” to “November 4”. In paragraph (f), the date will be changed from “November 2” to “November 16”. In paragraph (h), the date will change from “October 22” to “October 26”.

**Dan Albas:** I'd like a recorded vote.

**The Chair:** Do I have that correct? Perfect.

(Subamendment agreed to: yeas 11; nays 0)

**The Chair:** The subamendment carries, which takes us back to Mr. Ste-Marie's amendment as amended. We'll start a speaking list.

Mr. Albas has his hand up.

**Dan Albas:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I am sincerely happy to see some changes made to the amendment by Mr. Ste-Marie.

Again, I want to reiterate Mr. Lake's point. There is considerable time that has opened up for further witnesses. If the Liberals want to increase the amount of witness testimony we can have come in, I'm very supportive of that, but guess what else, Mr. Chair. I have a deal for them. This also allows the three ministers extra flexibility to come and attend.

The Conservatives are intent on scrutinizing the bill and having those ministers come and explain the provisions of the bill and how they will affect their work. They are the ones who are going to be charged with the ongoing carriage of these amendments. We are intent on doing our jobs while having an orderly process.

I really want to implore my Liberal friends, though.... Having this accountability is the baseline. I hope they're going to be looking to hop over the bar and support the main motion once Mr. Ste-Marie's amendment is passed.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Go ahead, Ms. Desrochers.

[*Translation*]

**Caroline Desrochers:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Albas, in a spirit of co-operation with our colleagues, so that we can move forward, I think we are prepared to revert to your proposal that the ministers appear for one hour each. So, the four ministers will each appear for up to one hour.

However, Mr. Chair, I must say that this is very disappointing, because our colleagues arrived here this morning saying they wanted to co-operate. We have shown flexibility. We have already invited the ministers responsible for introducing the bill. Now, as I was saying earlier, we are once again getting bogged down in procedural details. We are resorting to procedural manoeuvres to slow down proceedings, when we ought to be able to get down to work as quickly as possible. We are in complete agreement that the ministers must appear before the committee. Indeed, we have already scheduled the ministers' appearances so that they can be here in the committee. So, I think we have shown a great deal of willingness to compromise and co-operate.

We will therefore not be making any amendments to paragraph a, except to add Mr. Dominic LeBlanc.

Mr. Albas, we are even giving you one more.

● (1020)

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Hold on. To be clear on what we're talking about, for my understanding, are you proposing...?

Right now, we're debating the motion as amended—

**An hon. member:** No. We're on the amendment.

**The Chair:** Bear with me for a second. I'm asking for clarification. We are debating the motion. I understand that Ms. Desrochers is now proposing a further amendment. I just want to be clear on what that is.

**Dan Albas:** On a point of order, the Liberals made a subamendment, which we voted on. That means we're now on the amendment as it has been amended by the committee. I'm welcoming this change of heart.

Procedurally, let's follow the rules of this chamber and dispose of the subamendment, and then we'll give Ms. Desrochers the ability to bring forward her amendment on the main motion.

**The Chair:** Can we allow her to explain what it is so that we have context?

**Dan Albas:** Can we not just finish the...?

**The Chair:** We can, procedurally, but she's entitled to say what she's going to say. I'm asking for clarification of what she said. That's all. I'm not proposing to—

**Dan Albas:** Again, Mr. Chair, I believe you should be ruling on whether it's in order to have an amendment on the main motion while we're dealing with an amendment.

**The Chair:** We don't have an amendment proposed right now. She's outlined a position. I would like to allow her to finish outlining that position—

**Dan Albas:** Mr. Chair—

**The Chair:** —and then we will continue following the procedure.

**Dan Albas:** I have a point of order on relevance.

**The Chair:** Go ahead, Mr. Albas.

**Dan Albas:** This is not relevant to the matter before us. Your job is to make sure that we stick to the amendment as it has been amended. We're not speaking to something outside of it.

**The Chair:** I will determine what is relevant.

**Dan Albas:** I'm asking you for relevance, because this is why you're here.

**The Chair:** Yes. Thank you for the clarification.

Ms. Desrochers, do you have anything more to say before we move on?

**Caroline Desrochers:** I think we should suspend.

**The Chair:** All right. We can suspend for a moment.

● (1020)

_____(Pause)_____

● (1030)

**The Chair:** I call the meeting back to order.

To continue with our strict adherence to the procedural rules, we are—subject to anybody having any further submissions—ready to vote on Mr. Ste-Marie's amendment as amended by Ms. Desrochers's subamendment.

Go ahead, Mr. Albas.

**Dan Albas:** I believe, if you seek it, there will be unanimous consent to approve the amendment as amended.

**The Chair:** Do I have unanimous consent?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Amendment as amended agreed to [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

**The Chair:** We're moving right along.

Mr. Lauzon, I'm going to give you the floor. We're now on the motion as amended.

**Stéphane Lauzon (Argenteuil—Papineau—Des Collines, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like to ask for an amendment to the main motion.

[*Translation*]

I shall now read out the motion in full, as it would stand if amended.

The motion proposes that, for the purpose of its consideration of Bill C-39, the committee invite the following ministers, accompanied by officials, to appear before the committee, two ministers at a time, for two two-hour panels: the Honourable Steven MacKinnon, Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons; the Honourable Julie Dabrusin, Minister of the Environment, Climate Change and Nature; and the Honourable Patty Hajdu, Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario; the Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister responsible for Canada–U.S. Trade, Intergovernmental Affairs, Internal Trade and One Canadian Economy.

The committee would also invite the parties represented on the committee to provide preliminary witness lists to the clerk, ranked in priority order, by no later than 12:00 p.m. on Friday, October 9, 2026, and their final lists of witnesses, ranked in priority order, no later than 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 15, 2026. The committee would set a deadline of 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 4, 2026, for amendments to be submitted to the clerk, and would complete the clause-by-clause consideration of the bill during the week of November 16, 2026.

Furthermore, notwithstanding—

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Mr. Lauzon, I'm sorry to interrupt. Mr. Lake has a point of order.

**Hon. Mike Lake:** I have two things.

He's reading very quickly. He might have missed part (d), and I may have misheard the date on part (e).

Are you making any changes between part (b) and part (h)? Do we need to read the whole thing?

**Stéphane Lauzon:** The only thing we're changing in part (h) is that “October 22” is now “October 26”.

**Hon. Mike Lake:** That was already changed.

**Stéphane Lauzon:** That was already changed.

**Hon. Mike Lake:** To be clear, Mr. Lauzon's amendment is not changing anything from part (b) to part (h). We don't need to read the whole thing.

**Stéphane Lauzon:** No.

**The Chair:** We're going to follow procedure strictly. We're not going to have a debate back and forth across the table. You've made your point of order.

**Stéphane Lauzon:** Maybe I can go a bit slower for the interpreters, Mr. Chair.

[*Translation*]

I would like to return to the point that the committee would complete the clause-by-clause consideration of the bill during the week of November 16, 2026.

● (1035)

[*English*]

**Hon. Mike Lake:** I have a point of order.

Because it was unclear about part (d) and part (e), if you're going to read the whole thing, can we go back to part (d) and start from there? I think part (d) was missed. Start from part (d) if you need to read the whole thing.

**Stéphane Lauzon:** There's no more part (d).

**Hon. Mike Lake:** You're taking part (d) out.

**Dan Albas:** What about part (f)? You said “End”, not “Begin”.

**The Chair:** Let's slow down rather than point of order this thing to death, which I understand is your right to do. I think we're trying to get.... We're getting close.

**Stéphane Lauzon:** We'll match the letters after.

**The Chair:** Let's let him finish, and then we can clarify after.

Mr. Lauzon, please continue.

**Stéphane Lauzon:** Let's fix that right now, Mr. Chair.

Part (c) stays the same. Part (d) is now

[*Translation*]

The motion would set Wednesday, November 4, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. as the deadline for submitting amendments to the clerk and would ask the committee to complete the clause-by-clause consideration of the bill during the week of November 16, 2026.

The motion would also ask the committee, notwithstanding the aforementioned deadlines and requirements, to allow for some flexibility in setting the committee's agenda should circumstances warrant it.

Finally, the motion would also propose that the committee issue a press release inviting interested parties to submit written submissions to the committee, specifying that it is preferable for such submissions to be presented in both official languages and that they must be received by the clerk no later than 5:00 p.m. on Monday, October 26, 2026, in order to be considered by the committee.

[*English*]

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

I have Mr. Ste-Marie, Mr. Lake and then Mr. Albas.

[*Translation*]

**Gabriel Ste-Marie:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like to thank my colleague Mr. Lauzon for tabling this proposed amendment.

I have a few points to raise.

Firstly, I fully agree with the paragraph proposing to have two ministers at a time for two hours, making a total of four ministers.

Secondly, normally, when amendments are made, there is always good co-operation and constructive discussion; Mr. Lauzon came to speak to me.

However, I have noted that in the former paragraph f, which would here become paragraph e, he has changed one word that profoundly alters the meaning of the order of business we will have to carry out. I do not know whether this was intentional on his part or not. The previous clause read “undertake a clause-by-clause examination”, but he changed it to “complete”. If that is the case, I am tabling a subamendment to restore the word “undertake” rather than “complete”. We do not know how long this will take, and we have had no negotiations or discussions on this matter. In my view, it is premature to tie our hands now regarding the end date of the clause-by-clause consideration, when we have not even begun to hear from witnesses. Therefore, by mutual agreement, we can revert to “undertake”. However, if it is the wish of Mr. Lauzon and the Liberals that the word “complete” be used, I propose a subamendment to reinstate the word “undertake”.

**Stéphane Lauzon:** Mr. Chair, I can understand that. The main reason for changing it to “complete” is that, in the same sentence, it is stated that we want to complete the study by November 16, which is a deadline. However, one does not undertake something with a fixed date. So, in my view, saying that we are completing the study by a fixed date fits much better in the same sentence than saying that we are going to undertake a study. It's a matter of language.

**Gabriel Ste-Marie:** Mr. Chair, I would like to thank my colleague for his clarifications.

I therefore propose a subamendment to replace the word “complete” with “undertake”, in light of the arguments I have raised.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** I'm not sure that's a proper amendment. I think we'd have to defeat the amendment and then go back to the original language. That would be the proper process.

I'm being told you can submit a subamendment. We're debating and we're now limiting ourselves to the debate on “Complete”. If we want to do that....

Do we have a speakers list for that issue? I have Mr. Lauzon, Mr. Lake, Mr. Danko and Mr. Leslie.

Mr. Lauzon, go ahead.

● (1040)

**Stéphane Lauzon:** Is it on the word? Okay.

**The Chair:** That's all we're talking about.

[*Translation*]

**Stéphane Lauzon:** We can stop there, if you like. It's just that I felt that, in the end, when setting a deadline, it would have been more appropriate to state that we would complete or finalize the clause-by-clause study. That is another term we could have used. However, if you're absolutely set on keeping “undertake”, I don't mind replacing “complete” with “undertake”, Mr. Chair.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** We're going to have to vote on the “Begin” and “Complete” amendment.

Are there any other submissions on that fine point? Okay.

I have Mr. Lake, Mr. Albas and Mr. Leslie. We'll go down the row.

**Hon. Mike Lake:** I thought Mr. Danko was after me when you originally read out the list.

**The Chair:** That was on the list before. Now we're debating the subamendment.

**Hon. Mike Lake:** If it's going to come back to clause-by-clause on the 16th—I think that's a Monday—which is what we agreed to earlier, we don't know what that's going to look like at that point in time. To set a deadline for it to be completed....

Again, it's the “most consequential” legislation in decades. For us to predetermine, as a committee, that the process is going to be done that week.... I don't think this would be the process Canadians expect the most consequential legislation in decades to be passed through committee by.

I don't think we want to rush it. We may hear from witnesses, and even government members may decide that substantial amendments are in order to get this legislation right. I don't think you want to tie your hands as a committee to race to get this done by the end of—

**The Chair:** I'll let you have your time, Mr. Lake, but Mr. Lauzon has already indicated that he's willing to withdraw this point.

**Hon. Mike Lake:** I didn't hear that. I'm sorry.

I thank you for—

**The Chair:** This is why I was surprised that the three of you were still anxious to speak.

**Hon. Mike Lake:** We accept the withdrawal.

I'm sorry about that.

**The Chair:** We have unanimous consent—good.

The amendment proposed by Mr. Lauzon now carries on, but we've gone back to using the word “Begin”. That change is withdrawn from the amendment.

Now we are continuing to discuss the amendment with that small change.

**Hon. Mike Lake:** I have two things.

Number one is that I'd like to hear an explanation for why we're removing part (d).

The second is this: Would it be possible to reread part (a)? We don't need to reread the names, just the sentence at the beginning.

**Stéphane Lauzon:** Okay.

Let's start with part (a).

[*Translation*]

The motion proposes that, as part of its consideration of Bill C-39, the committee invite four ministers, accompanied by public servants, to appear before the committee, with two ministers at a time for two two-hour sessions.

[*English*]

**Hon. Mike Lake:** Okay.

Can we get the explanation for the removal of part (d)? You removed part (d), and we want to understand why.

**Dan Albas:** Could it be an error?

[*Translation*]

**Stéphane Lauzon:** Mr. Chair, obviously, in paragraph d of Mr. Albas's original motion, it read “insofar as possible”. This is indeed to allow analysts to check the availability of witnesses; therefore, it is not necessary to say “Instructs the chair to arrange, insofar as possible”. In fact, this is done automatically to secure witnesses. It is the clerk who does this, who checks the availability of witnesses. Therefore, the chair has no responsibility to arrange this. It is the committee that liaises with the clerk to ensure we can have witnesses. The clerk will check the list of available witnesses invited to appear before the committee. This has no relevance, in my opinion.

● (1045)

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Okay.

Go ahead, Mr. Albas.

**Dan Albas:** Mr. Chair, first, I want to thank Mr. Lauzon for coming to the table with a reasonable proposition in terms of having the ministers come. I don't understand taking out part (d), because it indicates our preference that we would like to see, wherever possible, three panellists. The exception when it comes to the ministers is laid out in the motion.

Mr. Chair, will you and the clerk be attempting to do that wherever possible, regardless of whether this motion goes forward with or without part (d)? Is that your intention?

**The Chair:** You pre-empted the next words out of my mouth. Of course I'm going to.

**An hon. member:** That's their job.

**The Chair:** Exactly. That's our job.

**Dan Albas:** Hearing that from you, Mr. Chair, makes me sleep well at night.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** There's the sound bite for today.

Okay.

Mr. Danko, do you have any comments?

**John-Paul Danko (Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I need to clarify the schedule for part (a). Maybe this is a translation thing, because what I heard in the interpretation was that the wording was “two ministers at a time for two hours each”. It's not clear whether each minister is appearing for two hours at a time or whether each panel is appearing for two hours at a time. What we're actually proposing is that there are two panels and that each panel invite two ministers, with each panel being two hours long. Therefore, there are four hours, total, of minister testimony.

I heard it in the interpretation as “two ministers at a time for two hours each”, which could be interpreted to be each minister, not each panel.

**Stéphane Lauzon:** That's a good point, but we're saying the same thing.

**Dan Albas:** Two hours, two ministers....

**Stéphane Lauzon:** Two panels. That's a good point. We can add “two panels”—

**The Chair:** Two panels, each of which is two hours long and contains two ministers.

**Stéphane Lauzon:** —two panels, two hours each for two ministers. The wording says everything.

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

We're on to Mr. Leslie.

**Branden Leslie:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I hope we can get this through relatively quickly. Thank you for coming forward with something more reasonable. I find it a bit strange that we couldn't do an hour with each minister—I assume it's for time reasons—but we could find two-hour blocks for two of them at a time. However, I will accept it. I appreciate the recognition that we should be beginning. The removal on (f) makes a lot of sense because we don't want to pigeonhole ourselves and be too prescriptive.

**The Chair:** This brings me to the end of the speakers list.

**Stéphane Lauzon:** I think, Mr. Chair, we have to ask for unanimous consent.

**The Chair:** Do we have unanimous consent to adopt the amendment?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Amendment agreed to)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

That takes us to the motion as amended, and there are no speakers.

**Dan Albas:** Mr. Chair...?

**The Chair:** I was so close.

Yes, Mr. Albas?

**Dan Albas:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to all members for collaborating with the Conservative Party today. I look forward to us working together.

**The Chair:** There's that warm and fuzzy spirit emerging again. That's great. Happy Thanksgiving.

Mr. Ste-Marie, go ahead.

[*Translation*]

**Gabriel Ste-Marie:** I think you can see there is unanimous support for what is being proposed here.

So, thank you, everyone. I look forward to working with you.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Do we have unanimous consent to adopt the motion as amended?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Motion as amended agreed to [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

**The Chair:** Okay, the motion is amended.

The meeting is adjourned.

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