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# Standing Committee on Science and Research

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Chair: Salma Zahid





## Standing Committee on Science and Research

Wednesday, December 3, 2025

• (1630)

[*English*]

**The Chair (Salma Zahid (Scarborough Centre—Don Valley East, Lib.)):** I call this meeting to order.

Welcome to meeting number 20 of the Standing Committee on Science and Research. The committee is meeting to study artificial intelligence.

I would like to make a few comments for the benefit of the witnesses and members. Please wait until I recognize you by name before speaking. Just as a reminder, all comments should be addressed through the chair.

I would like to welcome our witnesses for today. We have the Honourable Evan Solomon, Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation. He is also the member of Parliament for Toronto Centre, which is very close to my heart, because I landed in 1999 and that was my first home.

We are also joined by Mark Schaan, associate deputy minister, Department of Industry.

Mr. Solomon, you will have five minutes for your opening remarks. Thanks a lot for appearing before the committee and taking time out of your busy schedule. After that, we will get into the rounds of questioning.

You have the floor. Please go ahead.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Evan Solomon (Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation):** Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Members of the committee, thank you for inviting me to appear as part of your study on artificial intelligence.

I'm joined today by an official from my department.

I welcome the chance to speak about the work under way to strengthen Canada's leadership in these important and rapidly evolving fields.

[*English*]

AI is already shaping every sector of our economy, and that will only grow. Canada enters this moment with real strengths: world-class researchers, a vibrant ecosystem of start-ups and scale-ups, and recognized leadership in responsible AI. We are investing in every aspect of this ecosystem and therefore in the future of our economy, especially in science and research, which are the focus of our discussion today.

Canada, of course, was the first country to launch a national AI strategy, back in 2017, and we're very proud of that. We were one of the first to appoint a dedicated minister for the transformative technology AI, and I'm honoured to have the job.

However, leadership is not a birthright. Countries around the world are moving very quickly, and Canada is doing the same with ambition, clarity and responsibility. Our guiding principle is AI for all. We know technology moves at the speed of innovation, but citizens move at the speed of trust, so we need to build on a foundation of trust so we can have the economy of the future.

Canada has deep roots in this field. Our researchers invented modern AI, and Canada is home to the three great pioneers: Yoshua Bengio at Mila, our institute in Montreal; Geoffrey Hinton at Vector Institute, in Toronto; and Rich Sutton at AMII, in Edmonton. All three, by the way, are Turing Award winners, the highest honour in AI around the world. Of course, Geoffrey Hinton also won the Nobel Prize. They are widely known as the godfathers of AI. Their work has laid the foundation for today's systems and continues to anchor Canada's strength in research, training and responsible AI leadership.

Since this new ministry was established, we've taken concrete steps to build on its foundation. This fall, we launched the national AI strategy task force, bringing together 28 leaders from research, industry, labour and civil society. In over 30 days, they completed a focused sprint that is informing a refreshed AI strategy that we will introduce in the new year, almost two years ahead of schedule.

To support this, more than 11,300 Canadians shared ideas through our public portal, which is the largest digital engagement in our department's history, along with dozens of submissions from stakeholder groups. Canadians are part of this moment, and they want AI to deliver real benefits.

That's why we're investing in the infrastructure that accompanies the need to compete. Our \$300-million AI compute access fund is part of a \$2-billion sovereign AI compute strategy. That received more than 1,300 applications, demonstrating the strength and ambition of Canada's AI ecosystem.

The economic impacts are also clear. Today, 800,000 Canadians work in the tech and digital sector, the largest and fastest-growing job sector in the country, and 150,000 workers specifically work in AI. These are good, high-paying jobs that are central to our future prosperity.

A recent Deloitte and Vector Institute study found that AI contributes roughly \$100 billion to Canada's economy, with more than 17,000 new AI-related jobs created in Ontario alone last year. For every federal dollar invested in this sector, nearly \$10 has come from the private sector. That's why we're supporting companies that are building globally competitive solutions. Let me name a few.

We signed a memorandum of understanding with Cohere, a large language model, one of the best in the world. It was the first of its kind between the Government of Canada and a Canadian AI company to explore how advanced models can support better government services for the public.

In Oakville, companies like Geotab are using AI across millions of connected vehicles. On the west coast, companies like Sanctuary AI are pushing the frontier of robotics. These firms reflect the breadth of Canadian talent and the opportunity ahead.

We continue to strengthen our research foundations. Last week alone, I announced \$42 million for the University of Toronto to expand its advanced computing capacity, delivered through the Digital Research Alliance of Canada. AMII, Mila and Vector remain critical anchors for research excellence and talent development.

The next great discoveries are happening right here in Canada. Talent is one of our great advantages. Budget 2025 included \$1.7 billion to attract 1,000 of the top researchers around the world and their labs to come to Canada and expand pathways for skilled workers in AI, quantum and emerging technologies.

The government is leading by example. We are introducing AI tools inside departments—working with trusted technology providers—to modernize service delivery and ensure that public servants have the tools they need, and we're following clear principles of safety, transparency and human oversight to deliver better services to Canadians.

Finally, trust is essential. That is why we are preparing updated privacy and data protection legislation to keep the information of Canadians safe, to protect children online and to ensure companies are accountable for how personal data is handled in the age of AI.

All this work is about Canada's modern digital sovereignty. It means having the capacity, the talent, the infrastructure and the partnerships to shape our digital future and maintain our leadership in science and research. We are building in Canada, we are buying in Canada and we are believing in Canada.

We're the pioneers and the foundation of modern AI. We are turning that foundation into economic prosperity, stronger public service, better jobs and trusted innovation for Canadians.

• (1635)

Thank you, and I welcome the committee's questions.

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

We will now start our first round of questioning of six minutes each.

We will start with MP Baldinelli.

Please go ahead. You have six minutes.

**Tony Baldinelli (Niagara Falls—Niagara-on-the-Lake, CPC):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you, Minister, for being with us this afternoon.

I'm going to get right into it, Minister.

In terms of AI, what is your definition of sovereignty as it relates to IP and data retention?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** Sovereignty is at the core of our strategy. Making sure that we build a sovereign AI ecosystem is critical. Sovereign AI has multiple definitions. There's an operational one and there's a legal one in terms of how we RFP, but I would say this is about making sure that Canada's most sensitive data is protected under Canadian law. That's—

**Tony Baldinelli:** Can I follow up on that question?

In August, as you indicated earlier, the government signed an MOU with Cohere, and \$240 million was provided from the Canadian sovereign AI compute strategy. The government's own release said that it will “enable Cohere to secure enough private capital to incentivize its strategic partners to build a new cutting-edge, multi-billion dollar AI data centre in Canada.”

One of the first moves Cohere did with the \$240 million was partner with an American company called CoreWeave to build this AI computing data centre. What is so Canadian or sovereign about this?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** Thank you for asking a great question about one of our national champions, Cohere, which we are very proud to back.

I just want to remind the committee and honourable members that there are only four countries in the world that have large language models: the U.S., China, France and Canada, with Cohere. This investment in Cohere—remember that this was an investment in Cohere—we are absolutely proud of, because they now have a large language model—

**Tony Baldinelli:** But the investment in the data—

**The Chair:** I'm sorry for interrupting. It's one person at a time. I would request all MPs to let the minister respond.

**Tony Baldinelli:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Minister, with all due respect, on the investment in the data centre and the creation of the data centre, we've had companies come forward here. One, for example, was eStructure, which mentioned that they've built and have control of 14 data centres.

Is there anything in the MOU that guarantees that the investments you've provided go to Canadian companies?

• (1640)

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** We are very proud to have invested in Cohere. This is the most important issue—that we are investing in Canadian companies that keep their IP in Canada.

They employ 450 people here in Canada. They are trading around the world. I think most Canadians are very supportive of Cohere's business and of the fact that they are a Canadian company building here in Canada. How they want to grow their company is a Cohere question, but I will tell you this: We are very proud to invest in Cohere.

**Tony Baldinelli:** Do you have any guardrails as part of the money you have provided to ensure that the money you are providing—taxpayer dollars—will ensure that Canadian companies, like eStructure, for example, which came forward.... They had no idea of this arrangement between Cohere and CoreWeave.

Going back to the sovereignty issue, CoreWeave is an American tech company. The U.S. CLOUD Act was enacted in 2018. That act allows U.S. enforcement to compel U.S. technology companies to disclose data they control regardless of where that data is stored globally, so CoreWeave, which is building this data centre, is subject to the U.S. CLOUD Act.

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** Let me tell you, first of all, how proud we are to invest in Cohere.

**Tony Baldinelli:** That doesn't meet your definition of "sovereign".

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** Cohere absolutely is a sovereign company.

**Tony Baldinelli:** No. CoreWeave and the data centre, the U.S. CLOUD Act....

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** I've said repeatedly that sovereignty is not solitude. Our great Canadian companies are going to trade with many companies and work with many global companies, but Cohere is a Canadian company employing 450 Canadians—good jobs—and trading around the world, and it's building a large language model. Canadian companies like RBC are their clients. Bell is their client. They are a champion company, and we are very happy to have made sure they have the capacity and tools to grow into a global company.

**Tony Baldinelli:** Minister, CoreWeave is a partner with Nvidia, which supplies CoreWeave with GPUs, also known as graphics processing units. In fact, they signed a deal between themselves for \$6.8 billion in August.

Are you aware of any of these companies being connected in any way with Brookfield?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** We are very happy to have invested in Cohere. I'm not sure who Cohere's clients may be, but I will say that the investment in Cohere to make sure they have the capacity and tools to thrive, they employ Canadians and they keep our IP here is very much a champion story that I'm sure the honourable member would also support.

We want Canadian companies here. We want the IP here. We want Canadian jobs here, and we want to make sure that, of the four countries that have large language models—and it's competitive—Canada has Cohere. I'm sure the honourable member would support the idea of keeping Cohere here, building jobs here, building investment—

**Tony Baldinelli:** Canadian jobs here, yes.

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** These are Canadian jobs.

**Tony Baldinelli:** We're creating data centres with U.S. companies, which could be subject to the U.S. CLOUD Act. How is that very sovereign?

This is my last question for you. As the Minister of AI, have you ever approached the Prime Minister to have discussions with regard to his holdings in companies such as Nvidia or in inputs...such as Brookfield?

Brookfield and Nvidia just signed an agreement on November 19 for the creation of \$100-billion AI infrastructure fund. Are you aware of that?

**The Chair:** The time is up. We'll have to proceed to the next member. Maybe you can get to that in the second round.

We will now proceed to MP Rana for six minutes.

Please go ahead, MP Rana.

**Aslam Rana (Hamilton Centre, Lib.):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you, Minister, for your time.

As you mentioned, back in 2017, Canada was one of the first countries to launch a national AI strategy. How did this prepare Canada for recent innovations in AI?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** Thank you so much for the question. I really appreciate it.

We have been investing in Canada's AI ecosystem to build it from top to bottom. It's very important that Canada has a sovereign ecosystem that we support so it can work with companies around the world, but keep Canadian jobs and Canadian IP here. That's why we've invested in foundational research, in our commercialization, in our large language model companies and in making sure that we have the opportunity to grow. We have a pair of world-class researchers, with great digital infrastructure with our industry partnerships.

I'm glad the honourable member is asking me about this. We should be very proud of our three national institutes. What's happening at Vector in Toronto, Mila in Montreal and AMII in Edmonton is something Canadians would be very proud of. I wish Canadians could see not just the remarkable, world-leading research, but the commercialization that goes on there in turning that research into remarkable companies. These companies are going on to do remarkable things.

If I may, I'll give you one example of the things we see. RL Core Technologies is a company started by a professor of machine learning called Martha White. She works in Edmonton at the University of Alberta. Martha White was doing research in how AI can change water purification systems, which are very important in Canada and around the world. She never thought that her research would turn into a company, but she created a company and has raised between \$7 million and \$10 million for it. She's the CEO of RL Core Technologies. We met with her. She's employing people. She's converted her research into jobs, working with AMII, one of our research institutes.

That's another great example of how when you invest here and you become leaders in AI research and science, which is what this committee is all about, you see how that turns into commercialization, jobs and solutions that will have a positive impact on the world.

• (1645)

**Aslam Rana:** Thank you, Minister.

How does the government plan to balance collaboration between the private sector and Canadian research institutions with the need to protect Canadian intellectual property and data sovereignty?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** It's a great question.

The government is working very closely to make sure we have ways to incentivize the private sector. First of all, that's part of our AI institutes' mandate. We also have a digital cluster called Scale AI, based in Montreal. Their job is to help commercialize AI, support AI companies and small and medium-sized businesses.

We also have a \$2-billion investment fund that we are investing with very strongly across sectors, and have billions of dollars in AI infrastructure and our AI compute access fund, all of this to help stimulate growth, investment and job creation in this sector.

**Aslam Rana:** Budget 2025 saw massive investment in advancing artificial intelligence programs, such as the AI compute access fund and the AI sovereign compute infrastructure program, which received almost \$1 billion in funding. Can you speak to how these investments push Canada to the forefront of AI research and its application for Canadian companies?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** You're seeing that these investments have really paid off. I'll go back to, first of all, the Deloitte study and the fact that we've had \$100 billion of economic growth here because of this sector. For every dollar invested here from the federal government, we've had 10 times the return. That's just one example.

We're speaking about Cohere. The founders of Cohere studied under Geoffrey Hinton, who is, of course, the leader of the Vector Institute. Cohere is a Canadian-headquartered large language model developer. That's very important.

Just so Canadians appreciate this, when we talk about large language models, people may know ChatGPT and Anthropic—they hear about them—but Canada has Cohere. Only the U.S., China, France and Canada have large language models. Those are the kinds of systems that can generate language and their predictions.

This is a very important company. Canada has the intellectual property and technology here, and the growth is coming from Canada. That really stems from the fact that it begins with the world-leading research—

• (1650)

**The Chair:** Can you wind up in the next five seconds?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** —and world-leading frontier scholarship that we have and support here.

**The Chair:** Thank you. Time is up.

We will now proceed to MP Blanchette-Joncas for six minutes.

Please go ahead.

[*Translation*]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski—La Matapédia, BQ):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Minister, good afternoon and thank you for being here.

My human intelligence network has heard some very strong words from you. I'll repeat them to make sure we're on the same page. You mentioned that it's important to rely on trust, which is essential. You talked about transparency.

Minister, you have refused six separate invitations from the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics, while your department is conducting a consultation on artificial intelligence. According to what was revealed in *La Presse*, actors were able to submit anonymous responses to your public consultation.

You talk about transparency and trust, which leads me to ask you this question: How can Canadians trust your artificial intelligence strategy when anonymous actors, including potential foreign actors, can influence public policy while you refuse to answer questions in Parliament?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** Thank you for your question.

I'm going to answer you in English, because it's easier for me.

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** We're used to that. That's fine.

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** I understand the questions in French, but I speak French like a Spanish cow.

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** As the Prime Minister says,

[*English*]

“Who cares?”

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** No, it's very important.

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** That's okay. French is a secondary language. It's not an official language. We understand that.

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** It's a very important language, and I understand it well.

[*English*]

We are very proud of our task force. There are 28 members, whom we chose. Remember, they had 30 days. They submitted their proposals. We are currently making sure they are translated and coded, and all of them will be made public. That's the first thing.

Second, there are 11,300 public submissions, which we're also very proud of. All of those will be made public as well. This is a fully transparent process, and we want it to be, because this is the largest digital public engagement in our industry's history.

I'm also very proud of the fact—

[*Translation*]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** That answers my question, Minister. Thank you very much.

Today, you can assure us that the list of stakeholders from the consultation, as well as the briefs received, will be made public. Can you guarantee that foreign actors won't have anonymously influenced the consultation that's going to guide the pan-Canadian artificial intelligence strategy?

Minister, I'm speaking to you. I'm the one asking questions. I see that you aren't interested in this.

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** Thank you for your question. It's a very important one.

[*English*]

That's why I want to make sure I give you the exact right answer—always.

We will be making sure there are summaries of all the feedback we've received. Part of what's happening is that these public engagements will feed into our national AI strategy, which we're

building and happy to talk about. We have an AI strategy, as you know, but we're building a new—

[*Translation*]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** I'll use your words, “transparency” and “trust”.

Can you confirm today that the names, the consultations and the briefs submitted as part of the public consultation on your national strategy will be made public, yes or no?

[*English*]

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** I've said this before, but I'm very proud that we've already made the names of all 28 members of our task force public. You will be able to read them.

As for the 11,300 public submissions, I don't know every single public submission name.

[*Translation*]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** I understand that you're buying time and that you don't want to answer the question. Again, these are your words: “transparency” and “trust”. Trust is essential, and there's a need for transparency. Those are your own words, the ones you used in your opening remarks.

I'll go back to my question. Will you make public all the names of the people who contributed to the public consultation to ensure that no one is anonymous and that people don't think foreign forces are anonymously influencing Canada's pan-Canadian artificial intelligence strategy?

[*English*]

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** We are very transparent about the task force members we publicly asked to submit their proposals. We also opened up a portal where we had 11,300 interventions. This was a public consultation. We're very proud that Canadians intervened.

We are crafting our AI strategy very transparently, which is why I am here at committee. I'm very happy to talk about it.

● (1655)

[*Translation*]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** What you're doing today is dangerous. You can't give a simple “yes” or “no” answer to this question: Can we identify the people taking part in a public consultation so that we can ensure that a policy as important as the one on artificial intelligence isn't subject to any foreign interference?

Do you recognize the seriousness of your current inaction and irresponsibility?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** Thank you for your question.

[English]

We are very transparent and open. We put together a public task force that was chosen by 28 people. It was very public, very transparent. We will absolutely be publishing their reports. Everyone can see them. We are in the middle of translating them, and this is open and transparent. We had a public portal, which is exactly what government should do. They should ask the public to give their opinions on important subjects like AI, and we're very proud of it.

[Translation]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** We're going to find out the names of all the people who contributed to the public consultation, then, right?

[English]

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** My deputy seems to want to answer, but we are very proud of the—

**The Chair:** I'm sorry for interrupting, but the time is up for Mr. Blanchette-Joncas.

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** —transparency of our process.

[Translation]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** Not answering is an answer.

Thank you very much.

[English]

**The Chair:** We can come back to that in the second round.

With that, the first round ends. We will now start our second round of five minutes and two and a half minutes.

MP Ho, please go ahead. You will have five minutes.

**Vincent Ho (Richmond Hill South, CPC):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Minister, you previously served as a publisher of Gzero Media, a media arm fully owned by Eurasia Group, which is a global political risk consultancy that sells geopolitical analysis to multinational companies and foreign governments. You also sat on the Eurasia Group management committee, which is its senior leadership body.

Can you confirm that you held both of those roles from 2022 until 2025?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** I was the publisher at Gzero Media, and I was part of the senior management team of Eurasia Group.

**Vincent Ho:** Have you resigned from that role?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** I resigned long before I ran for the election.

**Vincent Ho:** Do you still receive compensation in any way? Do you have any ownership interests in, or get royalties from, Eurasia Group or Gzero publishing?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** No.

**Vincent Ho:** As a member of the management committee, you would have been privy to some information about the AI analysis and AI policy of the clients of Eurasia Group or of Gzero. Do you see an issue there with your role as the Minister of Artificial Intelli-

gence, as some of those clients may be stakeholders in your role as the Minister of Artificial Intelligence?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** I'm very proud of the fact that I have long experience in the public sector. I was a small business owner, and I started a company, Shift magazine. I co-owned that. As a small business owner, I'm proud of my experience working as a publisher of Gzero. Like any experience, I've learned a lot. I took away a lot from that experience. I think it's very important.

**Vincent Ho:** Did you also get information that was not public from your experience at Gzero—information about Gzero's clients?

**Corey Hogan (Calgary Confederation, Lib.):** Excuse me, Chair. I have a point of order.

I know that I'm a substitute at this committee, but looking at the motion being debated, I fail to see the relevance of this.

**The Chair:** Thank you. That's not a point order. The minister is here to talk about artificial intelligence.

Please go ahead, MP Ho.

**Vincent Ho:** I'll go again.

Have you ever had to recuse yourself for ethics reasons because of the information you had in your previous role at Gzero Media as it relates to your work as Minister of Artificial Intelligence?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** Again, no, I have not. I'm very proud of the work I did at Gzero Media doing geopolitical analysis.

**Vincent Ho:** Have you had any interactions with any president, former employees, associates or business partners of Gzero or the Eurasia Group since you became Minister of Artificial Intelligence?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** Yes, I've had some friendly conversations with my former employees there. Obviously, they congratulated me when I got elected. They've been very friendly conversations—nothing business-related.

**Vincent Ho:** Do any members of Gzero or Eurasia include Gerald Butts, the former principal secretary to Justin Trudeau?

● (1700)

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** He was a member and works at Eurasia Group, yes.

**Vincent Ho:** So you've had conversations with Gerald Butts.

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** Yes.

**Vincent Ho:** Okay.

Have any members of Gzero or Eurasia Group tried to lobby you, directly or indirectly, since then?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** No.

**Vincent Ho:** Gerald Butts is very involved in Liberal circles. You just said that you have had conversations with him. What kind of conversations would you have had with him?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** One of the interests I share with many people at Eurasia Group, I would say, and with many people here, is geopolitics. I discuss geopolitics and what's happening around the world with many people. This is not anything I do on a regular basis, but like many honourable members here, I have a fascination with geopolitics and the world-class work that many organizations do. I read newspapers. I read—

**Vincent Ho:** What safeguards do you have in place, or do you even have any safeguards, to make sure that the AI policy you propose does not interact with your former employer, with whom you seem to have had conversations or interactions since you left the firm?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** I follow all the highest standards that the Ethics Commissioner or anyone else has asked from me. I follow all those standards. I follow the rules exactly as I'm told to do and exactly as I would expect any member to do.

**Vincent Ho:** How about the Prime Minister's interest in Brookfield? Do you have any safeguards you consider to make sure it doesn't enrich the Prime Minister?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** Again, I follow all rules.

My focus here, I will say, is twofold. My focus is on sovereign AI and AI for all, and on the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario. Those are really what I am focusing on.

I expect and assume that everybody follows the highest ethical standards.

**The Chair:** Thank you. Your time is up.

We will now proceed to MP McKelvie for five minutes.

Please go ahead.

**Jennifer McKelvie (Ajax, Lib.):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you, Minister, for joining us today.

Since you mentioned you like geopolitics and what's happening in the world, can you let us know how you're making sure that Canada's AI research ecosystem stays competitive internationally?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** Thanks for the question. I appreciate the honourable member's work, always.

We all know that AI is a transformative technology and that Canada has a long-term strategy as the first country to have a national strategy designed to keep our country competitive.

There are couple of things. The pan-Canadian AI strategy, which was introduced back in 2017, has invested billions of dollars in Canada's ecosystem. There are some key elements, like our CIFAR AI chairs and our national AI institutes. I keep mentioning them because they matter. They're world-leading. We have AMII in Edmonton, Mila in Montreal and Vector in Toronto. We have many centres. Waterloo is a centre. Sherbrooke is a centre. In Vancouver, there's.... We have an incredible cluster of remarkable innovation.

Because this is science and research, I just want to focus on our CIFAR AI chairs program. We have appointed over 125 researchers. They train about 250 graduate students and post-doc fellows every year. That gives us a pipeline of innovation. They go on

not only to do more research, but to found companies that are transformative and create good jobs here.

Let me just give you a stat, because I think facts matter. Our CIFAR AI chairs rank third in global impact. We trail only Google and the Max Planck Institute for Informatics. That means we produce papers that are four and a half times more likely than the global average to appear in the top 1% of cited journals. Just so Canadians know this, that puts us ahead of Meta, MIT, Oxford, Stanford and China.

These are significant leadership moments that Canadians should be proud of. Maybe we should tell our story more. What we've done is remarkable.

Our sovereign AI compute strategy, which we announced in budget 2024, includes \$2 billion and \$925 million over five years in this budget to ensure that our businesses, researchers and innovators have access to large-scale, secure compute.

Let me just say one other thing we've done. Sometimes Canadians aren't aware of how rich our ecosystem is. We have something called the Digital Research Alliance of Canada. The alliance has invested close to \$300 million alone in trying to increase Canada's research compute capacity by 50%. In the new year, Canada will be building an AI supercomputer for our researchers, which will put us at the top of the G7. This is an incredible program. We're working on it right now. Canadians should be very proud that our program to build the kind of supercomputer that researchers need to solve the problems of tomorrow right now and right here in Canada is happening.

Again, we have quite a remarkable ecosystem we've invested in to make sure that this ecosystem not only stays competitive internationally but is a leader internationally.

• (1705)

**Jennifer McKelvie:** Certainly, I think we're punching above our weight. I love that you brought statistics to show that.

On the pan-Canadian strategy, what are the key deliverables, key milestones or key successes that you think justify added investment in this area going forward?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** The pan-Canadian AI strategy has been absolutely successful. The reason we are renewing it is that the technology is moving so quickly and we want to make sure we're not only fostering innovation, but promoting economic growth. We want good jobs and high-tech jobs to stay here in Canada. We also want the intellectual property—the innovation—to stay here.

What are some key successes?

The three national AI institutes are globally renowned. I've travelled the world. I was in the U.A.E. In that region, they know Mila. They know who Yoshua Bengio is because of his pioneering work. They know Geoffrey Hinton at Vector, and they know all the researchers there. They know Rich Sutton, the pioneer of machine learning, and AMII.

These institutes are brand names in AI circles, and people should be very happy. That helps us recruit top talent around the world. Again, the AI institutes—

**The Chair:** Please wind up, because you have 10 seconds.

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** I'll end on a fact, because you like statistics. Since 2021, the national AI institutes have supported 1,800 companies in the private sector, which have employed great Canadians, given good jobs and contributed to our economy.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

We will now proceed to MP Blanchette-Joncas for two and a half minutes.

[*Translation*]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Minister, since you say that trust is essential, let's get to the heart of the matter.

How can Canadians and Quebecers trust the pan-Canadian artificial intelligence strategy when 80% of the country's data is hosted in the United States, which means they're accessible through the CLOUD Act? How can you guarantee our digital sovereignty if Canadian AI still relies on American infrastructure?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** Thank you for your question.

[*English*]

We know that sovereignty is not solitude and that a lot of data will be stored in clouds such as AWS in other countries. That is happening for innovation. That is exactly why we have a strategy to invest in Canadian infrastructure from data centres, from research and from companies: to make sure we're moving towards a sovereign AI. That's exactly right.

[*Translation*]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** I know your strategy. In any case, I'm looking at it, and I see that you don't have a plan.

Let's move on to another substantive issue.

According to our analyses, data centres could account for up to 14% of the country's electricity demand by 2030. Quebec already has the cleanest and most stable electricity in the country. Why doesn't your strategy explicitly recognize that Quebec has to be the energy cornerstone of our digital infrastructure?

[*English*]

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** I'm very happy to talk about the strategy. We have not yet launched the renewed strategy. That is coming. This is why I'm looking forward to presenting it to you when we launch it in the new year.

I don't want to answer a hypothetical, but you're right: Quebec has fantastic clean energy infrastructure. We're working with the Government of Quebec to make sure of two things. One is that they have the digital infrastructure to thrive in this economy. I will say that this is why Mila is located there. Scale AI, our cluster, is also located there to build that ecosystem.

• (1710)

[*Translation*]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** Do you agree that Quebec should be the cornerstone of your artificial intelligence strategy, which requires a great deal of energy?

[*English*]

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** Quebec is a very important part of the ecosystem. Quebec energy is very important to the idea of the clean energy grid we want to build as a government, and Quebec will continue to be very vital to building the economy of the future because of its clean energy.

By the way, because they have great investments, La Caisse and other great—

[*Translation*]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** We also have the expertise.

[*English*]

**Hon. Evan Solomon:**—organizations are continuing. They have lots of expertise.

**The Chair:** Thank you. The time is up.

We will now proceed to MP DeRidder for five minutes.

Please go ahead.

**Kelly DeRidder (Kitchener Centre, CPC):** Thank you for coming today, Minister.

You spoke proudly today about how, in 2017, you launched a national AI strategy. We've had witnesses at this committee testify that nothing has been implemented from that launch. In fact, you've said yourself that we're doing a refreshed AI strategy now, but it will be nine years later by the time you guys actually table it. We've already spent billions of dollars. Meanwhile, we remain in second-last place in the G7—sixth out of seven in the G7—for our innovation. We don't need a new mission statement, Minister; we need a strategy.

What's your strategy to commercialize and monetize Canadian innovation in Canada so it stays in Canada and so that the new \$2-billion investment in this budget is a positive net return to the Canadian taxpayer?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** We have made tremendous progress. We are fifth in the world right now in terms of AI publications, according to Stanford's AI index.

**Kelly DeRidder:** According to the global innovation index, we're sixth, not fifth.

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** I'm just—

**Kelly DeRidder:** You say we've made tremendous strides moving forward. Can you give me some examples of what those strides are and of the tremendous positive impact we've made on our economy since the 2017 launch of your AI strategy?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** I'm delighted to.

I will point to the recent Deloitte study that was put out with the Vector Institute, which pointed out that the AI sector alone has generated \$100 billion to benefit Canada. That's a fantastic piece of innovation.

The digital sector is the fastest—

**Kelly DeRidder:** That's not what the experts are telling us, though. This money isn't coming into Canada. In fact, the experts are telling us we're losing our innovation.

We have great research here. I have U of W in my region. We have many incubators in my region. Kitchener Centre is Canada's innovation capital, but we do not monetize and commercialize here in Canada.

We're losing our IP. We're losing our data. It's going to the States or abroad. What is your strategy to make sure it stays here in Canada?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** I also agree with you that we have tremendous research...and your region is one of them, and what's happening—

**Kelly DeRidder:** What's your strategy, Minister?

**The Chair:** I request that the minister be given an opportunity to answer the question. It's one person at a time, please.

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** Again, let's not talk down the incredible work that's happened at our AI institutes. Let's—

**Kelly DeRidder:** I'm not talking down anything. I think we have great research. I'd like to know what your strategy is, please.

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** I'm going to point to stats. The honourable member asked me for statistics.

**Kelly DeRidder:** No, I asked you for your strategy.

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** Okay. The strategy will continue to invest in AI infrastructure. For example, our AI compute access fund of \$300 million gives small and medium-sized businesses—

**Kelly DeRidder:** What's behind the money? Money is money, but what is your strategy?

**The Chair:** It's one person at a time, please. I would ask the member to please respect the minister and let him answer the question.

**Kelly DeRidder:** He's not answering. That's the problem.

Two billion in taxpayer dollars is in this next budget. We understand, yes, there's investment, but what's the strategy behind the investment?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** If I may, I'm delighted to talk about the strategy. One strategy is to make sure we give compute access to small and medium-sized business that need it to innovate. We were happy that when we opened that fund, it was oversubscribed, with 1,300 companies applying. That's part of it.

Building a supercompute facility is part of it; there is \$700 million for that. Investing with our sovereign compute fund in champion companies, as we've done with companies like Cohere, is part of the strategy.

**Kelly DeRidder:** Are there any guardrails to ensure that the data and IP from these investments remain here in Canada and that we have a sovereign approach for these investments.

● (1715)

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** There are always guardrails to make sure that in any—

**Kelly DeRidder:** Can you give me examples?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** —investment the Canadian government makes, we make sure that it's a Canadian company, or there are guardrails against things like—

**Kelly DeRidder:** Are the data and IP staying here?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** Yes, and making sure there are no head-quarter changes. Those are always factors in determining what we invest in.

Going back to the strategy, one way to see results is the fact that... An independent study by Deloitte says it's generating \$100 billion. There are 800,000 people working—

**Kelly DeRidder:** That doesn't have anything to do with the strategy. You're giving me some talking points, so I'm going to switch gears. What I've learned from this is that, effectively, nine years later we are starting over.

There is another problem: We don't have the grid capacity to lead AI globally. You said that we are global leaders in AI capacity, but the experts at this committee have said that we don't have the grid capacity for the supercompute buildings. Who is—

**The Chair:** The time is up, MP DeRidder and Minister. We will come back in the next round.

We will now proceed to MP Deschênes-Thériault.

Please go ahead for five minutes.

[Translation]

**Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Minister, thank you for being here today.

As you know, artificial intelligence is thoroughly transforming social relations, research activities, the economy and the delivery of public services, including in sectors essential to the vitality of francophone communities across the country.

What measures will our national strategy put in place to prevent linguistic bias, including those related to data and knowledge in the design, the implementation and the optimization of AI models? How will we ensure that we meet our obligations under the Official Languages Act, particularly to ensure the substantive equality of our two languages?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** Thank you for your question. It's very important to our government and to me.

[English]

The adoption of artificial intelligence in Canada has to reflect our foundational principles of linguistic duality and bilingualism, ensuring that any type of tech progress we have—and this is why we say AI for all—reinforces the equal status of French and English.

That's why we're embedding bilingualism and culturally representative data as core governance rules. That's really important. We're ensuring that Canadian AI systems are trained.... I don't want to get too technical, but the datasets they train on have to be in both languages.

By the way, we're working on programs for indigenous languages also, because it's very important to have large datasets of indigenous languages. I've spoken to the Premier of Manitoba about this, as we look for ways to make sure that it's not just in French and English.

[Translation]

It's very important. Indigenous languages are involved as well.

[English]

It is very important that we have large datasets there. There's work to be done there for sure, but we have to understand our regional realities, and we have to reflect our cultural context so we have fair, trustworthy outcomes.

Let me just say that because of the Official Languages Act, government technology is always deployed and guaranteed to have full equality and to adhere very strictly to the Official Languages Act to make sure it's inclusive. Let me give you one example from la belle province. In Quebec, the Information and Communications Technology Council—the ICTC—and Mila have entered into a learning partnership to help Canadian students and workers build technical, ethical and governance skills to thrive in the AI economy, making sure that we have equity and absolutely the two official languages.

[Translation]

**Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault:** This is an important issue for me as an Acadian MP, for my colleagues from Quebec and for my francophone colleagues across the country.

I'm going to switch gears. In Canada, we have world-class expertise in artificial intelligence. We have some very talented researchers.

How do our recent investments in artificial intelligence support the development of the AI research sector in Canada? How will those investments help address the obstacles that our Canadian researchers currently face?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** That's also a very important question, because we have to build our research infrastructure.

• (1720)

[English]

We are building on that. In this budget, as the honourable member would know, we have \$925 million over five years to build large-scale sovereign AI infrastructure on top of what we've been doing to make sure we have public and private research and innovation. We're really investing in that.

We're also establishing a sovereign public compute facility to work to make sure not only that our universities and our researchers in applied AI research have the compute power, but that we're attracting talent that wants this. One thing that is very important in that community is that researchers go to places that have access to compute, and that's one of the magnets Canada has.

They want to go to places that have top talent and leadership, like our institutes and, by the way, like the University of Waterloo; the Université de Sherbrooke, a university at the very front of the forum; McGill; U of T; the University of British Columbia; and the University of Alberta—many across this country. We make sure we're supporting that.

I will just remind you that in this last week, we invested another \$42 million in what's called SciNet, which is the online forum where researchers across the country can work together—

**The Chair:** I'm sorry for interrupting, Minister. Can you please wind up?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** Yes.

That gives them the compute power that researchers across the country can use.

**The Chair:** We will now proceed to MP Baldinelli and MP Hogan for three and a half minutes, and then we will end the panel with one and a half minutes for MP Blanchette-Joncas.

Go ahead, MP Baldinelli.

**Tony Baldinelli:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you, Minister.

During your remarks, you talked about the need to want to operate and how Canadians expect “a foundation of trust”. You were invited to appear before the ethics committee. A motion to appear was passed in September. You've had all fall and plenty of opportunities to go, but you keep avoiding it. In fact, I would suggest that you're dodging it.

Will you commit to appearing before the ethics committee before the Christmas break?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** I am always happy to talk about AI and our sovereign strategy. If we can find the time to do that in this incredible.... This is why I'm delighted to be here today. I'm always delighted to share and take questions about it.

**Tony Baldinelli:** Well, Minister, the committee requested a two-hour appearance from you today.

**The Chair:** I'm sorry for interrupting—

**Tony Baldinelli:** Unfortunately, you're only here for an hour. The ethics committee is meeting right now. If you're going to finish here in an hour, I would suggest that they make time for you to appear if you'd like to take that extra hour there.

**Corey Hogan:** I have a point of order, Chair.

**Tony Baldinelli:** In fact, you were supposed to appear here—

**The Chair:** I'm sorry for interrupting. There's a point of order.

**Tony Baldinelli:** —but denied that opportunity after a motion was passed by this committee.

**The Chair:** We have a point of order.

**Tony Baldinelli:** The minister is not appearing for the full motion.

**The Chair:** There's a point of order. Stop the clock.

Go ahead, MP Hogan.

**Corey Hogan:** Chair, if we're going to cite the motion again, I will say there is nothing about these matters within the motion. It talks about “Recent advances in fundamental and applied research in the field”, “The needs and challenges of research centres, universities, and public institutes”, “The role of the federal government in promoting a responsible [AI] research ecosystem” and “The mechanisms for ensuring the diffusion, valorization, and protection of Canadian scientific discoveries”.

This question from the MP is entirely out of order.

[*Translation*]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** I have a point of order, Madam Chair.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** I request that members please keep the questions on the subject we have today.

Go ahead, MP Mahal.

**Jagsharan Singh Mahal (Edmonton Southeast, CPC):** I just wanted to reply, Madam Chair, to the point of order. The scope of the questioning of the minister is fairly wide.

**The Chair:** We are getting into debate.

MP Blanchette-Joncas, do you have a point of order?

[*Translation*]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** I have a point of order, Madam Chair.

This is my colleague Mr. Hogan's first time in committee. I have been a member since January 2021. This is his first time here, so I'd like to welcome him.

I'd just like to point out to him that I moved a motion on Monday, November 24—

[*English*]

**The Chair:** You're getting into debate.

[*Translation*]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** No, Madam Chair. I just want to tell my colleague that we asked Minister Solomon to appear for two hours. He's now here for one hour.

My colleague is saying the opposite. I just want to state the facts.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Okay.

We will go to MP Baldinelli.

**Tony Baldinelli:** Going back to the notion of having a foundation of trust, it's very hard to establish trust, Minister, when this government committed \$400 million to Algoma with no job guarantees, for example. Some \$220 million was paid out to Stellantis, and they've indicated that they're not proceeding. You've committed \$250 million through the sovereign fund to Cohere, and there are no guardrails through the MOU to ensure that \$250 million of Canadian taxpayer money is going to support Canadian businesses.

Can you see why Canadians might have some concerns in regard to this notion of having a foundation of trust?

• (1725)

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** I'm delighted to talk about Cohere. We have invested in Cohere—one of the four large language models. They employ 450 Canadians.

**Tony Baldinelli:** Its first step was to hire an American company when Canadian companies exist. How are we supposed to create a Canadian ecosystem when Cohere hires an American company that has ties to numerous American companies? Oh, by the way, one of them has ties to Brookfield.

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** Let me just say that any definition of sovereignty.... They're headquartered in Canada, their IP is in Canada—

**Tony Baldinelli:** That's a foundation of trust, Minister.

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** —and they're trading in Canada.

**The Chair:** I request that the member please allow the minister to answer.

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** It's a great question. The member asked me about sovereignty. They were founded in Canada. They employ in Canada. Their IP resides in Canada. They're trading around the world. This is a Canadian company that we're happy to champion.

**Tony Baldinelli:** CoreWeave is not.

**The Chair:** Go one at a time, or it will become very difficult for the interpreters to interpret. I would request that members please allow the minister to respond to the questions they are asking.

**Tony Baldinelli:** In your capacity as Minister of AI, would you have had the opportunity to discuss with the Prime Minister his ethics screens with regard to some of his holdings? Would you find it interesting to find that some of the names I've mentioned this afternoon are actually held by the Prime Minister?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** My discussions are almost always about building an ecosystem to create jobs here in Canada, and all—

**Tony Baldinelli:** Minister, this is about establishing a foundation of trust. The perception of conflict is a huge concern. The Privy Council clerk, Mr. Sabia, who's from St. Catharines—a great Niagara boy—divested himself of Brookfield holdings because of the perception.

Minister, 10 years ago you lost your job—

**The Chair:** The time is up.

**Tony Baldinelli:** —at CBC because of the perception of a conflict. You should be well aware of this issue.

**The Chair:** Thank you, MP Baldinelli. The time is up.

We will now proceed to MP Hogan for three and a half minutes.

**Corey Hogan:** Thank you, Chair, and thanks to the entire committee for allowing me to be here today.

Thank you, Minister.

Minister, I want to focus a bit on the regional development of AI. Of course, I'm from Alberta, one of the strongholds of artificial intelligence development in this country.

During a recent visit to AMII, you highlighted Canada's AI leadership, and you announced new funding for AI literacy and compute access. The budget also commits \$1 billion to AI compute and infrastructure investments, including \$20 million for AMII, in my home province of Alberta, to expand compute capacity for researchers. This is great. This infrastructure will help businesses seize opportunities from AI. It will create jobs, and it will create economic growth, but we need more of it.

How do regional hubs like AMII fit into the government's strategy to ensure access to sovereign compute resources? What role are regional hubs going to play in scaling AI adoption nationally?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** Thanks for the question. It's a great opportunity to highlight what AMII does.

In some ways, I wish these were brand names. You're from Alberta, so you'll know what the Alberta Machine Intelligence Institute is all about. It is incredible. It was founded by Rich Sutton,

who's a Turing Award winner. When you go to this institute, you see that it is absolutely remarkable. It plays a central role in our strategy.

It is a hub for so much, and not only to make sure that companies in Alberta.... There are remarkable AI companies creating jobs and solving remarkable issues in health care, in agriculture and in energy, and they need compute capacity. Making compute accessible is part of that. Energy companies, for example, in Alberta are working with AMII researchers to reduce emissions and to improve efficiency in oil and gas and clean hydrogen production. We're investing in local ecosystems.

I'll go back to a remarkable visit I had recently at AMII and go back to the company RL Core Technologies. We talk a lot about clean water, not only in some regions of Canada but also around the world. There is a classic company...an AMII researcher using the investments we made and using that regional hub to develop a company and raise money not only to teach the next generation of great minds but also to build a company and employ people, and then export that company around the world. It is absolutely central to our strategy, and that's why we're continuing to invest in those hubs.

• (1730)

**Corey Hogan:** Thank you, Minister. You're right. There are a lot of great AI successes in Alberta.

There's a Calgary-based company, Hifi, I want to highlight. It uses fibre optics and AI for pipeline monitoring. It can detect changes in temperature, flow and vibrations, which in turn makes pipelines safer to operate and makes sure people aren't digging where they're not supposed to be digging. It can tell if there are problems developing. It's a growing area of knowledge and expertise for our country. It's already creating massive economic developments.

I want to push on capturing economic and social benefits from these AI investments. The applications of AI are broad, and as I mentioned, they impact a lot of industries, including not only energy but also health, climate and defence. How will Canada's next AI strategy balance these priorities to make sure that investments maximize both economic growth and social benefits for Canada?

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** We have everything from the AI-driven diagnostic tools at Toronto's University Health Network to the defence industrial strategy. It will allow us to have dual-use technologies. If I had time, I'd give a long list of great Canadian companies with innovators and pioneers using this technology to employ people and to drive innovation in the country.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

We will end this panel with one minute for MP Blanchette-Joncas.

[Translation]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** Minister, can you commit today to ensuring that any future legislation on artificial intelligence will include specific protections for copyright and for creation in French in Quebec?

[English]

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** Well—

[Translation]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** The possible answers are “yes” or “no”.

[English]

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** The legislation I am preparing is on privacy and data. The Minister of Canadian Heritage is really the one who's going to be in charge of the copyright legislation. I don't want to speak for that minister, but I am certainly working on privacy and data legislation. I'm happier to stay in my lane and speak about that.

[Translation]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** That wasn't one of the possible answers, so it's an incorrect answer.

Several hundred experts, including Yoshua Bengio, whom you like to quote so much, warn us that advanced artificial intelligence models could threaten humanity.

Where do you draw the actual line between innovation and protecting the public? What type of artificial intelligence model do you think should be strictly regulated or banned in Canada?

[English]

**Hon. Evan Solomon:** AI safety is absolutely critical. That's what our legislation will be about.

We have invested \$50 million in the AI safety institute. Yoshua Bengio in Montreal is one of the leading thinkers on that. We're working very closely with him. That's a great question.

[Translation]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** Madam Chair, I would like an answer in writing. I'm not really satisfied with the length of the answer or the explanation. It doesn't reassure me.

[English]

**The Chair:** Can you please repeat that?

[Translation]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** Given that you gave the minister 10 seconds to answer my key question, could I receive a written response?

**The Chair:** The time is up.

If it is possible, could you send in a written response? We will circulate it to members.

With that, this panel comes to an end.

On behalf of all members of this committee, Minister, I really want to thank you for your time and for providing us with important information for this study on artificial intelligence.

We will begin in a few seconds with the next panel. The meeting is suspended.

• (1730)

(Pause)

• (1735)

[English]

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

I would like to welcome our witnesses from the Department of Industry: Mark Schaan, associate deputy minister, and Nipun Vats, assistant deputy minister, science and research sector.

There will be no opening remarks. We will go directly into our first round of questioning. We will begin our first round of six minutes with MP Ho.

MP Ho, please go ahead. You have six minutes.

**Vincent Ho:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thanks for being here, deputy ministers.

I'll get straight to it. The Liberal government announced a \$700-million sovereign AI compute fund last year, a fund that is explicitly advertised as a five-year effort to build up Canadian AI infrastructure. Earlier this year, the very first cheque they wrote was for \$240 million, representing more than a third of the entirety of the fund. It went to Cohere. Can you confirm that?

**Mark Schaan (Associate Deputy Minister, Department of Industry):** I can confirm that, yes.

**Vincent Ho:** Cohere used that \$240 million not to build Canadian compute, but to purchase the capacity from another company, CoreWeave, to help them build it out. Is that correct?

**Mark Schaan:** The nature of the investment to Cohere under the compute challenge program was to further their R and D efforts as it related to the build-out of their continued capacities. That included the further articulation of their LLM capacity, which included data centre operations.

**Vincent Ho:** Data centre operations are contracted to CoreWeave.

**Mark Schaan:** CoreWeave was selected as the shell provider by Cohere as part of the R and D effort that we are supporting.

**Vincent Ho:** CoreWeave is a U.S.-based company, headquartered in the United States. In the committee last week, multiple Canadian data centre operators testified that they have existing capabilities and scalable facilities that can expand quickly.

Are you comfortable that Cohere decided to pick CoreWeave, a U.S.-based company, over Canadian competitors?

• (1740)

[Translation]

**Mark Schaan:** Thank you for the question.

[English]

I want to put our overall investment strategy in context. The \$2 billion, part of the 2024 envelope for building digital infrastructure in Canada, had a number of component parts, and \$300 million was dedicated towards the AI compute access fund. That is enabling small and medium-sized enterprises to be incentivized to continue their AI journey. It provides incentivized and subsidized compute loads that favour compute facilities that are operated by Canadians. That \$300 million is in the process of being finally articulated, and we'll have announcements in the new year.

The \$700 million was for the compute challenge, and there are two archetypal component recipients of that. One is someone with an R and D capacity that is actually utilizing sufficient enough numbers and volumes of data that they may themselves be a proponent, and the other archetypal client is a mid-tier data centre operator, provider or otherwise that is going to be incentivized to create further sovereign alternatives—

**Vincent Ho:** I know you can't control specifically, directly. You don't make the decisions at Cohere. I understand. You're a government official.

Did the government require Cohere to purchase the compute from a Canadian company? Were there any strings attached, or could they just pick whichever bid they pleased?

**Mark Schaan:** The overall envelope of the compute challenge continues the significant effort that goes into all of our contribution agreements as they relate to innovation and related programming—

**Vincent Ho:** In the contribution agreement, was there any requirement, to your knowledge, that would require a purchase from a Canadian supplier?

**Mark Schaan:** The contribution agreement centres around the R and D project of Cohere, and Cohere's R and D is what we are supporting through the compute challenge program—

**Vincent Ho:** Okay, Cohere decides how to build out the R and D. There are no strings attached, essentially. You would have said yes.

Back in the summer, Cohere signed an MOU with the federal government to “transform” federal public service delivery, which would inevitably give Cohere access to sensitive government data.

Knowing that, do you see any issue with outsourcing the infrastructure to CoreWeave, a U.S. company?

**Mark Schaan:** I think it's really important that we continue to note that the entity in question is a Canadian entity subject to Canadian law and is continuing to build out Canadian IP and Canadian R and D capacity.

Much like many of the operational environments that are privy to...the infrastructure providers to a number of our core industries, there are lots of dimensions to the relationship with their operator—

**Vincent Ho:** The operator—

**Mark Schaan:** —but what we care about is that Cohere remains Canadian.

**Vincent Ho:** I understand. You're following the four corners of the contribution agreement, but are you confident that this data centre operator, CoreWeave, which is operating a centre in Ontario for Cohere, is not subject to U.S. government jurisdiction and specifically to the U.S. CLOUD Act?

**Mark Schaan:** There are a few things. Cohere is in possession of the data, and Cohere is subject to our laws in relation to the protection and continued holding of—

**Vincent Ho:** CoreWeave is subject to U.S. laws, and CoreWeave would have access—

**Mark Schaan:** The operator of the LLM in question is Cohere.

**Vincent Ho:** Okay, but we have CoreWeave as a data centre operator, and CoreWeave is a U.S.-based company and is subject to the U.S. CLOUD Act.

Do you think this agreement creates long-term dependence on U.S. suppliers?

**Mark Schaan:** I'll try to be brief, but to zoom out to the overall intent of our \$2-billion sovereign compute envelope, it includes the creation of continued supports for sovereign alternatives and the build-out of sovereign infrastructure in this country. It has a number of component parts. One is for the research sector, one is for small and medium-sized enterprises—

**Vincent Ho:** How can you say it's sovereign when a key piece of that supply chain is owned and operated by a U.S. company?

**Mark Schaan:** A Canadian company is being supported in its R and D efforts to build out its own company here in Canada, with Canadian jobs and Canadian IP, and it continues to serve markets around the world.

**Vincent Ho:** I understand the jobs and IP part, but I'm talking about the data centre that's subject to U.S. law. Does that create a cause for concern for Canadians? It will have access to data—

**The Chair:** I'm sorry for interrupting. The time is up, MP Ho. You can come back to that in the second round.

Now we will proceed to MP Deschênes-Thériault for six minutes.

Please go ahead.

[Translation]

**Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Through our budgets, we're making significant investments in applied and basic research on artificial intelligence. What is our government doing to ensure equitable research funding across the country and across our various institutions?

**Mark Schaan:** Thank you.

The budget provides for multi-billion-dollar investments to attract talent in all regions of Canada, and those funds are distributed by the research funds and agencies, which are mandated to ensure that all institutions have equitable access to those funds. That's one of the foundations of our overall approach to research. We use the funds to increase research capacity and funding across the country and in all institutions, including French-language institutions.

• (1745)

**Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault:** Thank you.

Our strategy positions Canada as a global artificial intelligence leader, and we need the right infrastructure in place to ensure high-speed connectivity, ensure secure data sharing and foster co-operation.

Can you tell us about the state of our infrastructure in Canada? How will the investments we're making in budget 2025 strengthen our infrastructure and make Canada a world leader in this area?

**Mark Schaan:** I thank the member for his question.

As I said, it's important to note that a large part of the overall budget to build sovereign infrastructure in Canada is earmarked for universities, researchers and institutes. That's the third part of our strategy, and the relevant funding has increased in budget 2025.

Budget 2025 gives the government the opportunity to continue the process of establishing a supercomputer in Canada to meet all the needs of researchers in Canada and to ensure that researchers have access to artificial intelligence. That isn't just about access, but about deeper access, because it also includes access to services for [Inaudible—Editor] data and their capacity to use artificial intelligence. It's also about ensuring that projects are prioritized in the data centres that we're going to build.

[English]

**Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault:** Considering the fact that Canada is a global leader in AI, I would like to know how Canada is advancing responsible AI innovation and governance on the international scene. What steps are being taken to align Canada's AI research with global standards?

**Mark Schaan:** Canada has been at the heart of the continuation of ethical, responsible and trustworthy AI for longer than we've had an AI strategy. When the pan-Canadian AI strategy was introduced in 2020, so was the Montreal declaration on responsible AI. It was

why, in Canada's last G7 presidency—not this one—Canada was the first to put artificial intelligence on the international table and helped create the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence—first in our G7 year and then finalized in the G7 year of France, the year after.

Canada was also one of the earliest contributors to the AI safety network and is a fundamental partner globally, not only in the G7 on the Hiroshima AI Process, which is establishing global norms around codes of conduct and responsible use, but also on the AI safety side, where we're looking at evaluation techniques and mechanisms to ensure that frontier models are being tested and assured for Canadian safety and security, alongside those of our global peers.

I think those are all efforts by which Canada is positioning itself to ensure that responsible, trustworthy AI is a hallmark of our contribution and that we stay interoperable with our global peers and push the overall international agenda towards a more safe, secure and trustworthy iteration of artificial intelligence.

[Translation]

**Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault:** Thank you.

You're talking about the world-renowned ethical standards that we have in Canada. We have a voluntary code of conduct that targets responsible development and management of advanced generative AI systems.

[English]

I would like to know how this voluntary code of conduct makes sure that we have a responsible AI research ecosystem in Canada. I would like to hear your views on it and whether you have any data regarding this code of conduct, like its impact and why we adopted it.

[Translation]

**Mark Schaan:** Thank you.

The code of conduct for businesses and organizations that use generative artificial intelligence is a voluntary initiative designed to assure Canadians that they're doing so responsibly and ethically. Over 50 organizations and businesses have signed on to the code of conduct to date. That includes not only large businesses, but also small or medium-sized businesses, as well as the industry organizations that helped develop the code.

The purpose of the code is for companies to develop simpler and more responsible artificial intelligence systems to preserve Canadians' trust. I think there's an opportunity to increase the number of organizations and businesses that sign on. This initiative makes a significant contribution to the development of standards for companies that use artificial intelligence and helps reassure Canadians about how they're doing so.

• (1750)

[English]

**The Chair:** The time is up. Thank you.

[Translation]

**Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault:** Thank you.

[English]

**The Chair:** We will proceed to MP Blanchette-Joncas for six minutes.

Please go ahead.

[Translation]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** Mr. Vats, according to the report entitled “The State of Science, Technology, and Innovation in Canada 2025”, commissioned by your department, Quebec conducts approximately 25% of all Canadian research and development.

Can you confirm that Quebec receives an equivalent share of federal funding, yes or no?

[English]

**Nipun Vats (Assistant Deputy Minister, Science and Research Sector, Department of Industry):** I don't have those numbers on hand.

[Translation]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** Can you send us the data for the past 25 years, broken down by province, particularly in terms of federal support?

**Nipun Vats:** You want data from the past 25 years, is that right?

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** Yes, please. Thank you very much.

Mr. Vats, the report entitled “The State of Science, Technology, and Innovation in Canada 2025”, commissioned by your department, establishes three facts: Canada is going through an innovation crisis; Quebec is one of the few places that continue to have strong scientific performance; and the country is suffering from chronic underinvestment in research.

How do you explain the fact that, despite this finding, there is no federal plan to support Quebec's strengths, which account for a major share of Canadian research, or to correct Canada's structural lag in innovation?

Why are you ignoring what your own report defines as essential to scientific performance in this country?

[English]

**Nipun Vats:** When we invest in science and innovation, we invest in it based on excellence, so our research granting agency funding and our innovation programming go to researchers and

companies that demonstrate excellence. That is very true in Quebec. In this context, for AI, we have very large investments in Mila. We have IVADO, which has received very large federal grants. We collaborate very closely with universities in the province.

The fact that Quebec is very strong in innovation indicators is partly a function of a very strong collaboration between the Quebec government and the Canadian government. There are other factors involved. I think there are very strong ecosystems in Montreal, in Sherbrooke and in Quebec City that are also quite essential, and there is strong collaboration among research organizations within the province. Those things are not within our control but are recognized as the kinds of collaborations we have that promote innovation in Quebec. That's true in other parts of the country as well.

[Translation]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** Mr. Vats, the report from the Advisory Panel on the Federal Research Support System, once again, commissioned by your government and tabled in March 2023, recommended increasing core research funding, improving conditions for succession, modernizing federal laboratories and strengthening coordination among the three granting agencies. However, in budget 2025, none of those central recommendations were implemented.

How do you explain this contradiction between the findings of the Bouchard report and a budget that doesn't implement any of its recommendations? Does your department intend to take action, or has that report been shelved?

[English]

**Nipun Vats:** I don't think I would agree with the comment that budget 2025 did not respond to some of the recommendations.

Before we go to budget 2025, I think we need to recognize budget 2024. Budget 2024 had significant increases in the base budgets of the granting councils over a number of years.

[Translation]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** We're talking about 2025, Mr. Vats.

[English]

**Nipun Vats:** I think—

[Translation]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** The title is “Building Canada Strong”.

[English]

**Nipun Vats:** The investments we make are not over one-year periods, though; they're multi-year investments. The investments in research that were made in budget 2024 were over five years—increasing.

There is also, in this budget, as you know, \$1.7 billion for attracting top talent to Canada. Having top talent come to Canada means that you're building an ecosystem that trains a lot of Canadians, a lot of research students.

[Translation]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** I'll come back to that. Let me continue, Mr. Vats.

In its press release on budget 2025, Acfas, the Association francophone pour le savoir, states that it's impossible to build a Canada that's strong in science if research in French continues to go ignored and underfunded.

Why was Quebec's official language not mentioned anywhere in the scientific priorities in the last budget, and most importantly, why is your department ignoring science in French and the issues directly related to it?

[English]

**Nipun Vats:** I don't know if I would agree with that last statement.

First of all, the approach to assessing research funding ensures that francophone applicants have an equal opportunity to apply and to be assessed in the official language of their choice.

With respect to science in French, as you know, there is an advisory committee, which has been doing its work to provide recommendations to the government. We anticipate those recommendations will come next year. They will provide further insights into what can be done to address issues with respect to French.

• (1755)

[Translation]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** Mr. Vats, the federal government doesn't measure any indicators to determine whether projects submitted in French receive fair treatment. How can you guarantee that there is no systemic discrimination if you don't even measure linguistic equity?

[English]

**Nipun Vats:** I believe that in past presentations to the committee, statistics have been provided by the granting councils on the number of applications that are provided in French and the success rate.

[Translation]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** What I just told you comes from the reports of the chief science adviser. I invite you to read it, Deputy Minister.

Why are federal organizations still not recording the language that researchers use in their submissions, work and publications? How can we correct a problem that the department refuses to measure?

[English]

**Nipun Vats:** I'm not sure I understand the question.

[Translation]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** There is no language data. French is made invisible. Federal agencies don't record the language used by researchers in their submissions, work and publications.

How do you want us to determine whether there's an inequity if your own government and your department don't even record that data?

**Nipun Vats:** We aren't the ones responsible for grants for researchers; the granting councils are. They have data, and I'm pretty sure they have submitted some of it to the committee in the past.

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** The new Official Languages Act requires real bilingualism. How can that obligation be met if no language data is collected when projects are evaluated?

[English]

**Nipun Vats:** This is all predicated on the same basic question: Is there data that gives you a sense of the use of French and the success of conducting research being funded in French?

As I've said, there are some base data points on this. We expect that additional information will be provided by the committee that is providing input to the government on science in French.

[Translation]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** I'm going to give you the opportunity to provide us with a more detailed written response. That will be simpler for us.

[English]

**The Chair:** I'm sorry for interrupting, but the time is up for MP Blanchette-Joncas. Thank you.

We will now proceed to MP Baldinelli for five minutes for our second round.

**Tony Baldinelli:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I quickly want to go to a matter that I raised on Monday verbally, after which I tabled a notice of motion. It's with regard to the hearings we held on Monday. My request—and I put it in the motion—was that we extend this AI study by one meeting to reinstate all the witnesses from December 1.

I'll read it into the record:

That the Standing Committee on Science and Research extend its study on artificial intelligence by one meeting, and that the committee reinstate all witnesses who were scheduled to appear on Monday, December 1, 2025.

**The Chair:** We have a motion on the floor. We'll have a debate.

Go ahead, MP Deschênes-Thériault.

**Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault:** Can you just suspend for a few seconds so we can take a look at the motion?

**The Chair:** I will suspend the meeting for a few minutes so members can look at the motion.

• (1755)

(Pause)

• (1810)

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

MP Baldinelli has tabled a motion, so we will have to deal with that motion before we can proceed further.

Is there any debate?

Go ahead, MP McKelvie.

**Jennifer McKelvie:** I am worried that we're not going to get the witnesses here on time. I'm also mindful that we want to do drafting instructions before the holidays so the analysts can prepare their work and so we can get the feedback we've heard from the witnesses who have appeared in front of us, as well as from the minister, into the record. Then we can start to draft some instructions so we can inform very important policy on AI in our country.

I have a lot of concerns about this motion and trying to ram this in at the expense of drafting instructions. It would be really nice to complete the report before the holidays and to see that happen.

I think we've heard some really great feedback, in particular today from the minister about the engagement he's been doing with Canadians and the 28 researchers. Additionally, many different companies have appeared before the committee over the last few weeks that were great.

We also have the opportunity to follow up with these witnesses through written questions. I know some of them will be submitting additional written feedback.

I'm not sure we want to ram this in at the expense of drafting instructions and of losing the meeting where we can plan out what we're going to do next for artificial intelligence and get our amazing analysts working. I'm really concerned by that.

**The Chair:** MP Baldinelli is in line, but I just want to clarify that after today's meeting, we are left with two meetings. That's just so all members know. On Monday, December 8, we will continue our current study on AI. That's the plan.

Have those witnesses been scheduled?

**The Clerk of the Committee (Cédric Taquet):** Yes. The notice of meeting is already published.

**The Chair:** The notice of meeting has been published. We have the witnesses.

This Wednesday, as it will be our last meeting before the holidays, I was planning to give drafting instructions to the analysts for the draft reports on the impact of the criteria for awarding federal funding on research excellence in Canada and on AMR, so that during the winter break, the analysts can work. Once we come back, we can have the reports so we can report them back to the House. That's what the plan was.

Go ahead, MP Baldinelli.

• (1815)

**Tony Baldinelli:** Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you to my colleague for her comments.

There's no intention to ram this through. That's why I have not placed a date here for their appearance. If the clerk is able to schedule them in the new year, I would be fine with that happening.

I understand that the chair and the analysts have prepared the summary of evidence for two studies. These are studies we did a long time ago. I would suggest—and I agree—that we get to the summary of evidence meetings and have them on Wednesday. When we return in the new year, we can have a meeting when we can get....

My only hope is that we get all the witnesses who were supposed to be here on December 1 together again on a subsequent date that we can schedule. I'm not looking to rush anything. Again, we could do that in the new year. We can stay with the chair's schedule of the hearings on Monday, and then we can do the summary of evidence for two reports on the Wednesday.

**The Chair:** Thank you, MP Baldinelli.

Before I go to the next MPs on the list, I just want to clarify that in order to get earlier witnesses, it took some time to schedule. Really, we cannot push them to come next week. Everyone is busy. We should keep that in mind.

I have MP Rana, MP Deschênes-Thériault and then MP Hogan.

**Aslam Rana:** As my colleague mentioned, six of our witnesses are already in line and everybody has to come for their witnesses. We don't have enough time. Also, the minister is busy right now with the G7. I would definitely ask you to keep this for next month, in February.

**The Chair:** We'll go to MP Deschênes-Thériault.

[*Translation*]

**Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'm also wondering about the motion.

I wasn't here, since I'm a new member of the committee. However, I know that a number of witnesses have already appeared and shared their expertise. We're waiting for a report. It would be a good idea to start drafting this report over the holidays so that we can submit recommendations to the House.

Developing an ecosystem conducive to artificial intelligence is a topical issue. Canada already presents itself as a world leader in artificial intelligence, and it is. Through the investments we're making, we will be able to further develop research and our infrastructure. This is happening now, not in six months or a year. We're reviewing the pan-Canadian artificial intelligence strategy now. We're investing in our infrastructure and our supercomputers now. We're thinking about ways to give even better support to artificial intelligence research now. I think this committee's recommendations will be very relevant in helping us develop our strategy and ensure that investments actually meet the sector's needs.

I'm concerned, then, about a motion that would delay the tabling of our recommendations in the House of Commons.

Artificial intelligence is already profoundly transforming our social relationships, the economy and the way we deliver public services. It will have impacts on education, health, culture and a whole variety of sectors. It's important to understand those impacts.

Witnesses have appeared and shared their views on the various consequences across a multitude of sectors. Why wouldn't we want our colleagues in the House of Commons to benefit from that as quickly as possible? I'm genuinely concerned about this.

We're investing nearly \$1 billion in budget 2025 to support Canadian artificial intelligence, on top of everything that has been done before.

I like to point out that Canada was one of the first countries in the world to implement and fund an artificial intelligence strategy. That was done in 2017. Indeed, we invested \$125 million in 2017, then \$144 million in 2021. This strategy had a number of goals, including attracting and retaining world-renowned artificial intelligence researchers. This is still relevant because, in budget 2025, we're investing more than \$1.7 billion to attract world-renowned talent to our various universities in Canada. I hope those investments will enable us to see talent in the artificial intelligence field.

Canada already has world-renowned talent at a number of its universities. Some of them came to testify. These are people who know the sector and who make our country proud. We will soon be implementing an international recruitment strategy to attract talent.

Given the investments we're making, and knowing that recruitment has been one of the pillars of our artificial intelligence strategy since 2017, I think the recommendations will be relevant. We can't afford to delay the publication of our work on this topic.

In our various strategies for the investments made between 2017 and 2021, we talked about supporting national artificial intelligence institutes and promoting the commercialization and adoption of artificial intelligence in all sectors, whether it be the education sector, the manufacturing sector, the cultural sector or the economic sector.

I'll digress for a moment. Our 2025 budget aims to build Canada strong, and that requires a strong economy. Since day one, our government has been working to strengthen the Canadian economy and make it more resilient.

It's important to understand that artificial intelligence is a factor we have to take into account in our efforts, because it's transforming our economy and certain sectors, such as the manufacturing sector. It's going to change the world of work. The government's efforts to strengthen the Canadian economy have to consider the impact of artificial intelligence. The pan-Canadian artificial intelligence strategy will definitely address such challenges.

I look forward to seeing the recommendations, because we don't operate in a vacuum. We have to look at the various work we're doing on artificial intelligence. It helps strengthen our economy. As I mentioned before, this is happening now.

A motion like that of our colleague can be well founded, but, as I said, it's complicated to invite witnesses on short notice. They may not appear until after the holidays.

• (1820)

We don't know when these testimonies will be heard after the holidays. We will then have to consider these testimonies and take the time to draft a report. This will cause further delays, which we want to avoid.

[English]

**The Chair:** I'm sorry for interrupting, but if I could have a second, it seems that with the list, this debate will continue.

Do I have the consent of members to allow the witnesses to leave? I don't want their time to be wasted.

**Tony Baldinelli:** This is a rather innocuous and easy motion to adopt. I'm baffled by why my colleagues are delaying such a motion.

**The Chair:** This debate is going to continue. MP Deschênes-Thériault has the floor. I just wanted to ask that for the witnesses, but there is no consent.

Go ahead, MP Deschênes-Thériault.

[Translation]

**Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault:** Thank you, Chair.

I am sorry. I apologize to the witnesses. I would have liked to hear more of their testimonies, but a motion that could delay the publication of our work has been proposed. I am sure they understand the importance of Canada's AI strategy, and they understand how important it is to inform the House of recommendations from experts and people familiar with the field. Since we are basing our recommendations on their comments on the subject, I am sure they understand the importance of making these recommendations sooner rather than later. They will forgive me, but we cannot keep asking them questions at the moment.

It should be noted that, in addition to funds allocated specifically to artificial intelligence, our government also funds AI research through grants and agencies, including the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Canada First Research Excellence Fund, or various other targeted federal science programs.

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** Madam Chair, I rise on a point of order.

[English]

**The Chair:** Go ahead, MP Blanchette-Joncas.

[Translation]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** I don't mind, but my colleague is wasting the time we have with two deputy ministers. I would just like to remind my colleagues how much these people earn.

We are debating a motion concerning keeping people—

[English]

**The Chair:** That's not a point of order.

Mr. Deschênes-Thériault has the floor.

[Translation]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** It is off topic, Madam Chair.

**Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault:** No, it is not. Let me explain why.

[English]

**The Chair:** Mr. Deschênes-Thériault has the floor. He's speaking to the motion that has been brought up by MP Baldinelli. We have our debate, and we have to continue until the debate collapses.

Go ahead, MP Deschênes-Thériault.

[Translation]

**Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault:** Thank you.

It wasn't a member of our party who moved the motion. I wanted to hear what the deputy ministers had to say. I was eager to hear their answers to the questions. I myself had other questions to ask. My colleagues had prepared several as well, and I am sure my colleagues in the opposition had some too. It would have been interesting to hear them, but unfortunately one of our colleagues decided to move a motion during this debate. It was obvious that there would be a debate after the motion was moved. When there is a motion, we, as democratically elected officials, can comment on it.

I would like to come back to the motion. This motion would delay the completion of our work on the study of artificial intelligence. I am currently trying to present the various points of view.

Why is it important for our recommendations be tabled in the House of Commons sooner rather than later? The recommendations we make will inform the direction our government takes on various issues in allocating the investments outlined in the federal budget. I want us to truly understand the potential implications of voting in favour of the motion, so I am making this connection.

I was talking about all research investments in Canada. These investments can also have an impact on artificial intelligence. I believe that the recommendations we make will be of interest to our research institutes and the various departments involved. We need to consider the recommendations we are going to make and ensure that they are truly tailored to meet our needs in terms of AI.

Last year, in 2024, the government launched the Canadian Sovereign AI Compute Strategy and invested \$2 billion in strategic infrastructure investments to ensure that Canadian innovators, businesses, and researchers have the computing capacity they need. This is very important because, if we want to remain a world leader in artificial intelligence, we must ensure that we have the necessary infrastructure. I raised this issue during my discussion with the minister. It is about infrastructure for high connectivity, high-level protection systems to safeguard data, and the infrastructure needed for collaboration.

Budget 2025 sets out these investments to ensure that we have the necessary infrastructure to remain a global leader in AI. I am confident that the recommendations in the study will contribute—

• (1825)

[English]

**Kelly DeRidder:** On a point of order, I don't know how current research funding in the budget has anything to do with this question.

**The Chair:** That's not a point of order.

**Kelly DeRidder:** He's not on topic. My point of order is relevant. Current research funding has nothing to do with this motion. He's talking about—

**The Chair:** I would request the member to please be relevant to the motion we have.

Please go ahead.

[Translation]

**Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault:** The motion before us reads:

That the Standing Committee on Science and Research extend its study on Artificial Intelligence by one meeting, and that the Committee re-invite all witnesses who were scheduled to appear on Monday December 1, 2025.

As I mentioned, it is important to understand the potential implications of this motion before voting. As we debate the motion, I believe that understanding its implications is part of the debate.

The direct consequence of this motion would be a delay in the publication of our report. Our reports enable us to make useful recommendations to our colleagues in the House. All the work done in House of Commons committees is fundamental work that helps improve our public policies.

Through my various examples today, I am trying to explain the importance of our recommendations in guiding the implementation of various public policies and investments that we are going to make.

I am concerned that adopting the motion will prevent us from inviting witnesses next week. If they are not available, we would be forced to complete the study this winter, in 2026. The problem is that this delays the publication of our report, proposals, and recommendations that would guide the House's work on AI. That is why I am presenting various AI-related examples included in the budget, as well as the potential repercussions of delaying the publication of our report.

In budget 2025, we allocated more than \$1 billion to support Canadian AI. I think it's really important to understand that the report needs to be submitted urgently. Why is it important to do so now, or as soon as possible? Because AI is transformative. It offers new opportunities for millions of Canadians, for businesses, and for our economy. Through budget 2025, we will help Canada build the computing infrastructure needed for AI, including through the creation of a cloud—

[English]

**The Chair:** One second, there's a point of order.

Go ahead, MP Mahal.

• (1830)

**Jagsharan Singh Mahal:** The budget itself is over 800 pages.

**The Chair:** That is not a point of order.

**Jagsharan Singh Mahal:** It has to be relevant.

**The Chair:** Yes, he's talking in regard to artificial intelligence and telling us the money is there.

**Jagsharan Singh Mahal:** The member opposite is talking about the budget itself. The budget itself is over 800 pages. The committee doesn't have that much time.

**The Chair:** I would like to remind members to please stay on the motion.

Please go ahead. The floor is yours.

[*Translation*]

**Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault:** I want to look at the motion again with my colleagues. I feel like I am repeating myself, but if the motion needs to be reread, I will reread it.

That the Standing Committee on Science and Research extend its study on Artificial Intelligence by one meeting, and that the Committee re-invite all witnesses who were scheduled to appear on Monday December 1, 2025.

That was not our choice. The problem is the filibustering by opposition colleagues, which caused us to exceed the scheduled time. We were—

[*English*]

**The Chair:** It's one person at a time.

MP Deschênes-Thériault has the floor, but I will just interrupt for a minute. I'm sorry for that.

**Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** We are already over the two hours we had for the meeting. Is everyone okay if we adjourn the meeting?

Go ahead, MP Blanchette-Joncas.

[*Translation*]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** Madam Chair, I need some information and I would like you to help me.

My colleague says that this motion is going to hold up the study. Won't his monologue also hold up the study? Does a debate involve just one person or several people? Is he engaging in a debate when he is the only one talking? That is what I am trying to understand.

Can you help me understand this?

[*English*]

**The Chair:** I'm sorry for that. He has the floor.

Is it the will of the committee to adjourn the meeting? We can suspend the meeting, and then on Monday we will come back and take up this topic.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Chair:** We are over our two hours. As there is no unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting, I'll suspend it.

The meeting is suspended, and on Monday we will come back to this topic.

[*The meeting was suspended at 6:32 p.m., Wednesday, December 3*]

[*The meeting resumed at 4:35 p.m., Wednesday, December 10*]

• (18435)

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

We are resuming meeting number 20 of the Standing Committee on Science and Research, which was suspended on Wednesday, December 3. When we suspended, the committee was debating a motion moved by MP Baldinelli.

When our last meeting was suspended, some very heated words were exchanged, so I wanted to give time to all members of the committee to connect off-line in a less heated environment and reflect on the best ways forward. At all times, our proceedings have been conducted in accordance with *House of Commons Procedure and Practice* and the Standing Orders. I would ask all members and staff on all sides to conduct themselves with decorum and respect for one another and for this place we have been sent to.

The speaking list, from when we suspended, remains the same. We are on the motion. MP Deschênes-Thériault has the floor, followed by MP Hogan—he's not in today—MP Baldinelli and MP Ho. That's where we were.

MP Deschênes-Thériault, you have the floor.

[*Translation*]

**Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault:** Thank you.

I was almost finished my intervention last week. I think my colleagues would have liked to hear the rest of my concerns about the motion, but I have nothing more to add. Thank you.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Okay.

We now come to MP Baldinelli.

**Tony Baldinelli:** Madam Chair, I'm going to be rather quick. I'd like to get to a vote, so I have nothing further to add. I look forward to voting on the motion.

**The Chair:** We have MP Ho on the list.

**Vincent Ho:** I agree with my colleague MP Baldinelli on that. Let's come to a vote. I think we've heard enough Liberal filibustering for the past couple of weeks.

**The Chair:** I don't have a list. We can go to the vote. I will just read the motion so that everyone knows it. The motion says:

That the Standing Committee on Science and Research extend its study on artificial intelligence by one meeting, and that the committee reinvite all witnesses who were scheduled to appear on Monday, December 1, 2025.

Seeing no debate, I will ask the clerk to take the vote.

(Motion agreed to: yeas 9; nays 0)

**The Chair:** We have passed the motion, so we will schedule this meeting for next year. The clerk will work with the witnesses on this.

Is there any further discussion?

Yes, MP Blanchette-Joncas.

[*Translation*]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I would like to return to the motion I proposed at the November 5 meeting. It concerned funding inequities in the research system, with a view to analyzing them by accessing certain data.

I have discussed this issue with some of my colleagues. I believe that together we can reach an agreement to ensure that the principles of ethics, confidentiality, and data security are properly respected. I think we need to hold discussions to establish what we want to do.

I would like to publicly reiterate the situation, which is quite simple. We conducted a study on the funding criteria for research excellence in Canada. We were surprised to learn—at least I was—that a researcher had attempted to obtain data for a research project for which he was already receiving funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council and had the support of an ethics committee. He was denied access to the data by two of the three funding agencies. The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council gave him access to some data to analyze these principles of inequity in the research system, in funding distribution or even in the way funding is granted. Unfortunately, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada denied access.

This is why I am reintroducing this motion, seeking the co-operation of my colleagues and sending a very simple but powerful message to the scientific community that is listening and watching us. People need to understand that what we are currently trying to do is already being done by a funding agency. We simply want there to be consistency in the protocol and in the way accredited researchers can access data through these three funding agencies.

In short, we are simply trying to achieve greater consistency in data management among the three granting agencies, once again, to advance science and knowledge, and to give access to this data to the researchers who want to conduct research. Without data, there can be no research. People are well aware of this, especially the members around the table.

I am curious to hear what my colleagues have to say on this subject. Obviously, I know that we have had discussions and that we are trying to clarify everything as simply as possible, because we all want to achieve the same result. I also think that, above all, we want to get to Christmas.

I could, of course, talk about the motion that was initially proposed, but I would prefer to avoid doing so, to save everyone time and not repeat all that.

I would like us to ask the funding agencies to look into this over the next 30 days and present us with their own solution to ensure that this data is transmitted. We are always talking about anonymized data. We need to ensure that there is as little inequity as possible in the way research is funded in the Canadian system.

Madam Chair, would you like me to read the motion again, or shall we discuss it together?

• (18440)

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Go ahead, MP Noormohamed.

[*Translation*]

**Taleeb Noormohamed (Vancouver Granville, Lib.):** If we read the motion again and discuss it together, we may be able to find a solution that suits us all.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Go ahead, MP Blanchette-Joncas.

[*Translation*]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I will reread the motion that I moved at the November 5 meeting:

Because the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) has already demonstrated its capacity to transmit disaggregated data directly to accredited researchers, in accordance with current ethical and legal requirements.

That the Committee request the government to establish an official and permanent protocol for the secure transfer of data held by the three federal granting councils, namely, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), specifically, the disaggregated data for all submitted applications, whether funded or unfunded, across all student and faculty funding programs starting at the master's level.

That this protocol aims to make accessible, in a disaggregated, anonymized, and secure form, all data relating to submitted funding applications, whether funded or not, for all student and faculty funding programs, beginning at the master's level.

That this include the (1) demographic data of applicants and collaborators, including applicants' responses to the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) questionnaire; the (2) applicants' and collaborators' institutions and departments; the (3) the language of the application; (4) all data concerning the type of application and project content (year of application, grant program, discipline, title, abstract, and amount requested by the applicant); the (5) identity of the evaluation committee, comments, assessments, and scores assigned to applications for each criterion; and the (6) the application outcome and amount awarded.

That access to these data be granted to accredited researchers who have received approval from a recognized research ethics board, and that such data be shared under a security protocol consistent with the international "Five Safes" model used by Statistics Canada and its Research Data Centres.

That the government assume responsibility for coordinating this process and submit to the Committee, within sixty days, an action plan specifying the responsible repository organization for data retention and transfer, the anonymization and security procedures, as well as the implementation and dissemination timeline.

I would now like us to take a moment to try to work together to simplify or rewrite it. Based on discussions I have had with my colleagues, I understand that we do not necessarily want to create specific criteria, as if a researcher were going to conduct research, but simply ensure a certain degree of consistency between protocols when funding agencies send data to accredited scientists. If my colleagues agree, we can suspend the meeting to discuss this together and take the time to write it properly. Then we can continue our work.

• (18445)

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Go ahead, MP Deschênes-Thériault.

[*Translation*]

**Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault:** I thank my colleague for his interesting motion. We could suspend the meeting to improve—

[*English*]

**The Chair:** I'm sorry to interrupt.

MP Blanchette-Joncas has requested to suspend the meeting, so I'll suspend the meeting for a few minutes so members can work it out.

The meeting is suspended.

• (1645)

(Pause)

• (1740)

• (18540)

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

We have received the motion, and it has been circulated to all members. The floor is open for debate.

Go ahead, MP Blanchette-Joncas.

[*Translation*]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

It is with great pride that I will read the motion resulting from the work that my fantastic colleagues on the committee and I have accomplished.

Whereas the three federal research councils, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), promote research on research, which requires access to high-quality data;

That the Committee request the Government to direct the Tri-Council to develop a data management protocol and a secure data-transfer process to allow for the evaluation of funding distribution;

That this protocol aims to make accessible, in a disaggregated, anonymized, and secure form, all data relating to submitted funding applications, whether funded or not, for all student and faculty funding programs, beginning at the master's level;

That the dataset include all anonymized and disaggregated variables necessary to assess equity, fairness, and potential bias, including but not limited to career stage, field of research, language of application, institution type, and equity-deserving group self-identification variables collected under existing Tri-Council frameworks...

That access to these data be granted to accredited researchers who have received approval from a recognized research ethics board, and that such data be shared under a security protocol consistent with the international Five Safes model used by Statistics Canada and its Research Data Centers;

That this process complies with all relevant federal privacy and data-governance legislation, including the Privacy Act and the Directive on Privacy Practices;

That the Government assume responsibility for coordinating this process and submit to the Committee, within 30 days, an action plan specifying the organization responsible for data retention and transfer, the anonymization and security procedures, as well as the implementation and dissemination timeline.

[*English*]

**Tony Baldinelli:** There's a period that shouldn't be in one of the sentences, if that's worth bringing up.

• (18545)

**The Chair:** Okay.

We have the motion by MP Blanchette-Joncas. The floor is open for debate.

MP Baldinelli, go ahead.

**Tony Baldinelli:** Again, from a grammatical standpoint, there's a period in here that shouldn't be, but everything else is fine. It's in the paragraph that says, "That this protocol aims to make accessible, in a disaggregated, anonymized, and secure form, all data relating to submitted funding applications". Then there is a period, after which it says, "whether funded or not".

**Taleb Noormohamed:** I think it's a comma.

**Tony Baldinelli:** Is that a comma?

**Taleb Noormohamed:** Yes.

**Tony Baldinelli:** Listen, I don't have my glasses with me.

Then we're good. Let's go.

**The Chair:** Go ahead, MP Deschênes-Thériault.

[*Translation*]

**Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault:** While my colleague reads the motion, I would like to highlight the excellent collaborative work we have done. It shows that we are capable of working together. It is also an interesting motion in terms of research protocol. It could be useful in various contexts, particularly if we are interested in the issue of research in French. Such data provides a better understanding of the variables that come into play in the allocation of funding, such as the language of the application and the size of the institution, for example. I will therefore be happy to vote in favour of the motion.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Thank you, MP Deschênes-Thériault.

If members want to go through the motion, should I suspend the meeting?

**An hon. member:** Let's suspend.

**The Chair:** Okay, I'll suspend the meeting.

• (1745)

(Pause)

• (1800)

• (18600)

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

MP Blanchette-Joncas has the floor.

If you can, read the motion, please.

[*Translation*]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Would you like me to reread the motion from the start or just the part that was not translated?

[English]

**The Chair:** For clarity purposes for everyone, you should read the whole motion, please.

[Translation]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** Okay. I will take a deep breath and dive in:

Whereas the three federal research councils, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), promote research on research, which requires access to high-quality data;

That the Committee request the Government to direct the Tri-Council to develop a data management protocol and a secure data-transfer process to allow for the evaluation of funding distribution;

That this protocol aims to make accessible, in a disaggregated, anonymized, and secure form, all data relating to submitted funding applications, whether funded or not, for all student and faculty funding programs, beginning at the master's level;

That the dataset include all anonymized and disaggregated variables necessary to assess equity, fairness, and potential bias, including but not limited to career stage, field of research, language of application, institution type, and equity-deserving group self-identification variables collected under existing Tri-Council frameworks, and that any additional anonymized variables required by qualified researchers to conduct rigorous equity or bias analyses also be made available wherever permissible under federal privacy legislation;

That the Tri-Council harmonize data definitions, coding structures, and documentation across their respective agencies to ensure the comparability and usability of the released data for equity and bias analysis;

That access to these data be granted to accredited researchers who have received approval from a recognized research ethics board, and that such data be shared under a security protocol consistent with the international Five Safes model used by Statistics Canada and its Research Data Centers;

That this process complies with all relevant federal privacy and data-governance legislation, including the Privacy Act and the Directive on Privacy Practices;

That the Government assume responsibility for coordinating this process and submit to the Committee, within 30 days, an action plan specifying the organization responsible for data retention and transfer, the anonymization and security procedures, as well as the implementation and dissemination timeline.

That is the entire motion. I want to thank my colleagues once again for their collaboration and their team spirit.

• (18605)

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you.

We have a motion on the floor. Is there any debate? I see none.

Is there unanimous consent to adopt the motion?

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** Congratulations. It's good to see committee members working in collaboration. It seems to be the holiday spirit.

Go ahead, MP Noormohamed.

**Taleb Noormohamed:** Madam Chair, I would like to return to the motion that I previously tabled with respect to the minister's appearance at this committee. I understand there's been discussion. We had obviously begun debate on it. I understand that we may be able to address that one today and get it done with.

I understand there are some amendments to it that we may want to discuss, but I'd like to see if we can go back to that motion, please.

**The Chair:** Can you please read the motion?

**Taleb Noormohamed:** Yes. The motion reads:

That the committee invite the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development and the Minister responsible for CEDQ, Mélanie Joly, to appear before the committee on the topic of her mandate, on or before February 5, 2026.

That was the original motion we put forth. I understand there is a desire to amend it. We've had discussions about potential amendments, and I think we're all in agreement.

**The Chair:** We have the motion moved by MP Noormohamed.

Go ahead, MP Baldinelli.

**Tony Baldinelli:** I've been speaking with some of my colleagues, and we have—

**The Chair:** There's no crosstalk. Let's have one person at a time. Let the interpreters listen.

**Tony Baldinelli:** I have amendments to suggest to my colleague on his motion. I'd like to share those with my colleagues now so they can review them, and then we can ultimately come to a decision on the motion.

I'll share them with everyone now.

**The Chair:** Do you have them in both official languages?

**Tony Baldinelli:** Yes.

**The Chair:** Okay, we will get them distributed to members.

I will read the motion, because I think something was lost in the interpretation:

That the committee invite the Minister of Industry and the Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation to appear before the committee on the topic of their mandates, separately for two hours each, on or before February 5, 2026; and that if the ministers do not appear on or before February 5, 2026, the chair automatically report their failure to appear to the House.

That's with the amendment moved by MP Baldinelli.

Go ahead, MP Rana.

**Aslam Rana:** The Minister of Artificial Intelligence has been here already. Do we want to call him here again?

**The Chair:** Go ahead, MP Baldinelli.

**Tony Baldinelli:** This is to discuss both ministers.

I thank my colleague for his question, but these are related to mandates.

• (18610)

**Aslam Rana:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Go ahead, MP Noormohamed.

**Taleeb Noormohamed:** As I know my friend opposite would know, I'd be remiss if I didn't ask if we could do an hour for each minister.

**The Chair:** Are you moving an amendment?

**Taleeb Noormohamed:** I was asking him a question. We could see where we go from there.

**The Chair:** Is it a friendly amendment?

**Taleeb Noormohamed:** Yes, if he were to accept it.

**Tony Baldinelli:** I would prefer two hours. Then we'll see what the ministers' schedules are.

I was quite disappointed that we didn't have the minister appear for the full two hours on the AI study; instead, he only appear for one. I would ask that the two hours remain in the request.

**The Chair:** Go ahead, MP Noormohamed.

**Taleeb Noormohamed:** It's in the request. Let's see where we go.

**The Chair:** Okay.

Seeing no further debate, do we have unanimous consent to adopt the motion moved by MP Noormohamed and amended by MP Baldinelli?

(Motion as amended agreed to)

**The Chair:** I would like to ask members if it is all right to do the drafting instructions for the two reports on EDI and the AMR today so the analysts can work on them and we can have our draft reports when we come back. Is everyone okay with that?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** The drafting instructions are done in camera. We will have to suspend the meeting, because we are in public, and then move in camera to give the drafting instructions.

Go ahead, MP Blanchette-Joncas.

[*Translation*]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I don't see any problem with setting out instructions for future reports, but that wasn't planned for today.

When we have advance notice, we prepare the right guidelines for writing the report. I feel comfortable and am ready for us to begin. I wonder if my colleagues are open to making any other adjustments if necessary, but I don't want to hold up the committee's work. Perhaps we can do it again in the next few days.

I'm trying to figure out how we can organize ourselves.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** It is up to members to decide and let me know. If we would like to go ahead with the drafting instructions, we can do them today. If members are not prepared, we will have to wait until we come back.

Go ahead, MP Noormohamed.

**Taleeb Noormohamed:** In fairness to everybody, if the question is whether Mr. Blanchette-Joncas has had time—obviously we're

working on a lot of other things—to give drafting instructions, one option could be, if everyone agrees, that we begin the drafting of the—

**The Chair:** I have something. Based on my discussion with the analyst, if everyone is not ready today, someone from each party can send drafting instructions in writing to the analyst by December 23, if members so desire. Then they can start working on the draft reports. Once we come back, we will see when we can go through the draft reports.

Go ahead, MP Baldinelli.

**Tony Baldinelli:** We'll still get the draft reports when we return. Getting a reply by the 23rd won't delay you from having draft reports.

**The Chair:** I will pass it to the analyst to let everyone know.

**Kelsey Brennan (Committee Researcher):** The exact schedule is hard to determine in advance; it will depend on the length of the reports, but we should be able to get them to translation by mid-January, potentially for review by early February.

• (18615)

**The Chair:** Does that seem good with everybody?

**Tony Baldinelli:** That's both reports. Is that correct?

**The Chair:** Yes.

Does that seem good for everybody?

Go ahead, MP Blanchette-Joncas.

[*Translation*]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Have you named the reports? I want to make sure this is clear to everyone; you are referring to the report on the impact of federal funding allocation criteria on research excellence in Canada and the report on antimicrobial resistance, correct?

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Yes, it's both, because we completed the committee meetings for them.

Because we passed the motion to have an additional one meeting for artificial intelligence, we will have to do that before we can give drafting instructions. After that meeting, we will have the summary of evidence, and then we can go into it, so it will be for that too.

Please, before the end of the day on December 23, send instructions to the clerk of the committee. They will be circulated to the analysts so they can start working.

Is there any other business?

Go ahead, MP Blanchette-Joncas.

[*Translation*]

**Maxime Blanchette-Joncas:** Madam Chair, I would like to wish all the members of the committee, as well as the scientific community that listens to us attentively, a happy holiday season. We are thinking of them and we wish them quality time with their families and loved ones.

I would like to thank all the people who make the work of this committee possible, namely the analysts, clerks, interpreters, and all the technicians. I thank them for their excellent work and for enabling us to advance science in Canada.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Thank you, MP Blanchette-Joncas.

On behalf of all members of this committee, I will take the liberty to thank the clerk of the committee and our amazing analysts for all the work they do. Without their work, it is difficult to get our work completed. It has been a great session. We have done some important work.

I would like to take a moment to thank all members for the work they have done on this important committee. The scientific community and researchers are looking towards the work we do.

Also, I'll give a big thank you to all the staff on all sides: the staff of the MPs, as well as from all the whips' offices and the House leaders' offices.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!

**The Chair:** It is not possible for us to do the work we do without the help of our staff.

I'll give a special thanks to my staff, who put in a lot of time, particularly Jeff Jedras.

Also, on behalf of all committee members, I'll give a big thank you to our interpreters for all the work they do.

I hope that all members and staff have good holidays. From my family to your family, merry Christmas, happy holidays and all the best for 2026. Let's do the work Canadians have sent us here to do. I'm really excited to get into 2026.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!

**The Chair:** Is it the will of the committee to adjourn the meeting?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Thanks for all the collaboration today.

The meeting is adjourned.

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