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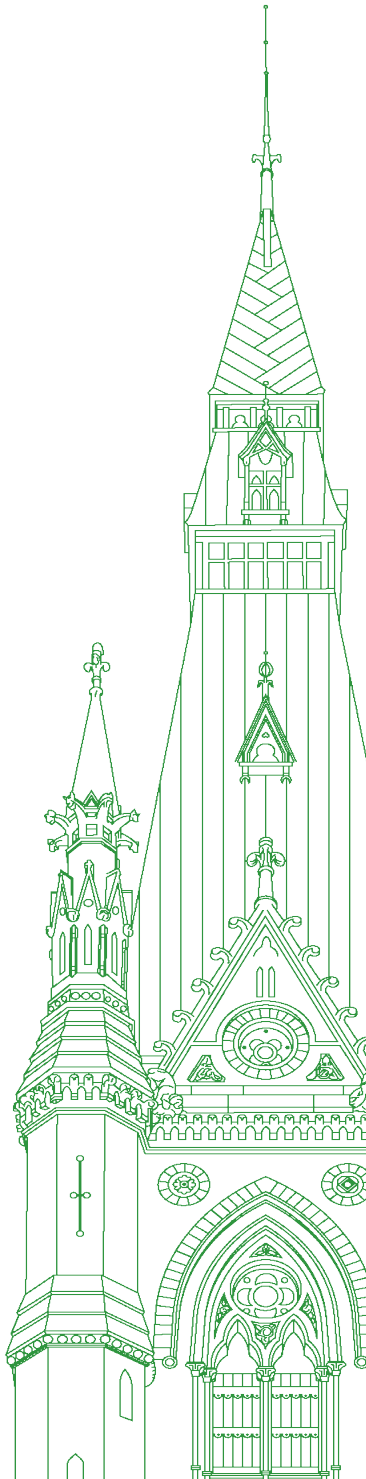

Chair: Salma Zahid

Standing Committee on Science and Research

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● (1100)

[*English*]

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

Welcome to meeting number 33 of the Standing Committee on Science and Research.

We are meeting today to resume our study on the implications of the Canada-China preliminary joint arrangement on Canada's electric vehicle sector.

As a heads-up to all members, I'll be saving a few minutes at the end of our meeting to discuss some committee scheduling.

I would like to make a few comments for the benefit of all witnesses and members. Please wait until I recognize you by name before speaking. For those on Zoom, at the bottom of your screen, you can select the appropriate channel for interpretation: floor, English or French. As a reminder, all comments should be addressed through the chair.

With that, I would like to welcome our witnesses for our first panel.

We are joined by Margaret McCuaig-Johnston, senior fellow at the University of Ottawa. She's here in person. We are also joined by David Shipley, chief executive officer and co-founder of Beauceron Security. Our third witness for this panel is Rachel Doran, executive director of Clean Energy Canada. She's joining us by video conference.

All of the witnesses will have five minutes for their opening remarks, and then we will go into our rounds of questioning.

With that, I'll ask Madame McCuaig-Johnston to start.

You have five minutes for your opening remarks. Thank you.

Margaret McCuaig-Johnston (Senior Fellow, University of Ottawa, As an Individual): Thank you, Madam Chair.

In my positions with InnovAction, the science strategy, the Prime Minister's national advisory board on science and technology, advanced manufacturing technologies and ADM positions at the Department of Finance, NRCan and NSERC, my career has focused on science and technology policy, programs and funding, including initiating Canada's technology road map for electric vehicles so that Canadian companies could be major players in the sector.

I have a master's focused on China and have spoken Mandarin since 1979, so I was often asked to lead delegations to China and help them build their R and D capacity. I therefore see China through the lens of technology. As I've focused in recent years on China's surveillance technologies, I've seen clearly the risks they pose to people in China as well as to Canadians. That's why I'm concerned with the prospect of Chinese EVs coming here.

I'd first like to address the serious risks posed by the Baidu software in the vehicles that are to be imported, including Teslas and other western cars made in China. Simply put, the data from the microphones, cameras and GPS are stored in China, where they can be reviewed by Chinese officials using algorithms. In addition, any firm or individual in China must spy for Beijing if requested.

We've seen that vehicles can be remote-controlled from China. A U.S. Department of Energy report says that a surge through the cars while they're charging would destabilize the electricity grid and cause brownouts. We simply can't have such vehicles on our roads. Any that arrive must use QNX software by BlackBerry with data stored in Canada. While QNX is used in some Chinese vehicles, Chinese authorities there require that their data be stored in China. This is not acceptable for cars coming to Canada.

Furthermore, I've done a six-year study of dozens of Canadian technology company joint ventures with Chinese partners. All of them have had problems, most of them serious. If we have joint ventures here in auto technology, we should have technology transfer to Canadian firms, but their foreign investment law says Chinese authorities are not permitted to require a company to share its IP with a foreign firm. Chinese officials may say they will try to do that, but in the final analysis they will say that their hands are tied. Also, there is a strong business culture in China that no technology must be shared outside the firm, so we shouldn't be expecting that to happen.

I've spoken elsewhere about the risks of the aluminum in the vehicles as coming from unpaid Uyghur forced labour. With increased attention being devoted to that issue, I and several others wrote a constructive letter to the Prime Minister about the gaps that Canada has in 2026 regarding its forced labour policy enforcement, in contrast to what it was doing just last year. Canadians don't want to be driving cars made by slaves.

In addition, it's critically important that we be in a strong position to defend our enforcement of forced labour policies in the face of the U.S. section 301 investigation that will assess Canada's current practices. If they determine that we've dropped the ball, all Canadian products entering the U.S. could face tariffs of 25%.

Worse, while we've called for verifiable transparency in supply chains, Beijing brought in a new national security regulation on April 7, after our letter to the Prime Minister was sent, that prohibits anyone in China from revealing any information on their supply chains. Executives of foreign firms asking whether products come from Xinjiang could be banned from leaving the country, or worse. Why would Beijing pass such a regulation? It is because they don't want anyone to know.

Now we're left to accept that the aluminum is made with forced labour, but importing products made in whole or in part with forced labour into Canada is illegal. Given that, I don't see how we can import the cars at all. However, we know a consequence could be Beijing punishing our canola farmers for the fourth time. We should be diversifying our canola trade away from China as a top priority or find that every Canadian foreign policy is subject to Beijing's approval.

Thank you.

● (1105)

The Chair: Thank you.

With that, we will now go to Mr. Shipley.

You will have five minutes for your opening remarks. Please go ahead.

David Shipley (Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder, Beauceron Security): Thank you so much, Chair and committee members.

I appreciate the opportunity to appear again to talk about this issue.

I want to begin with a simple truth. The issues I'm going to speak to are not about Chinese vehicles only, and they are not limited to electric vehicles. I'm going to focus on the issues around connectivity. I've provided images to help you understand what I mean. Unfortunately, I can't share them by screen, but the clerk has sent them to your emails.

Exhibit A is a photo that shows the display of the modern software-defined car that comes from Hyundai's user experience lab in Seoul, which I recently visited. Exhibit B shows a modern steering wheel. It's important to note that there is no mechanical link to the front wheels. It's drive-by-wire. Software controls the steering. Exhibit C is the wireless connectivity functionality and secure gateway systems in this computer on wheels. Exhibit D is the fuse box, which is the last, best opportunity to intervene for safety and privacy.

The architecture that I have shown you in those images isn't unique to Hyundai or electric vehicles. It's in almost every new Ford, Toyota and Honda in Canadian driveways. An F-150 is just as much a computer on wheels. So is a Civic, and so on. If someone can connect to them, they can find ways to hack them.

In 2015, security researchers remotely took over a Jeep Cherokee on a highway, with a Wired magazine journalist behind the wheel. They cut the transmission at speed, and later demonstrated control of the steering and brakes when the car was in a parking lot. One vulnerability forced the recall of 1.4 million vehicles.

Little has changed in vehicle cybersecurity over the past decade.

Last year, researchers at Black Hat Asia demonstrated how they compromised a 2020 Nissan Leaf through its Bluetooth connection, pivoted through the internal network and set up persistent remote access over the cellular modem. From there, they controlled the doors, the wipers, the horn, the camera, the in-cabin microphone and the steering wheel, including while the car was in motion. It took Nissan more than 18 months to resolve that.

Earlier this year, a cyber-attack took down a Russian alarm system provider serving multiple car brands. Thousands of drivers could not unlock their cars or start their engines. Some reported engines shutting down while they were driving.

If anyone on the committee believes that the hardware and software designed outside of China are immune to their advanced, state-sponsored hacking teams, the examples I provided show evidence to the contrary. All software can be hacked.

Banning Chinese-branded cars will not stop China's advanced hacking teams. They will redirect their efforts. They will look for holes in every other manufacturer. They will look for holes in the cloud platforms that every automaker now runs, and they will find them.

The risks are not unique to Chinese EVs, and it would be a catastrophic mistake to think they will not hack other cars to achieve the same objectives. China has demonstrated the capability and the audacity to hack into even the most sensitive government systems. They can and will hack connected cars.

Last year, we learned that a Chinese state group called Salt Typhoon lived inside AT&T, Verizon, T-Mobile and at least six other American telecoms undetected for three years. They compromised the very wiretap systems the U.S. government built for itself. Canada's own cyber agency co-signed the public warning. They broke into those same systems again this March.

By the way, China did not invent this playbook. The Snowden disclosures showed that western governments have pressured companies to compromise technology in the interests of their states. If we are going to take this entire issue seriously, we need to take it seriously for every vehicle on Canadian roads, from every jurisdiction.

Now I want to focus on what keeps me up at night. Espionage and privacy are real risks. They are serious, but they are not at the top of my list. Physical safety is. A compromised phone can leak your location or listen to conversations. A compromised car, at 100 kilometres per hour, is a two-tonne weapon.

● (1110)

The pool of people who could wield that weapon is widening. State services are no longer our only concern. Concerns now include a domestic abuser tracking a partner through a vehicle app, a grievance-driven misanthrope egged on by online radicalization groups like “The Com”, and a ransomware crew. Apps and AI tools are lowering the skill floor for exploitation, and Canada does not have a framework to detect, deter or respond effectively to any of this. We are behind, and the risk grows every day—not only from the PRC.

I made recommendations earlier this year to the Standing Committee on Industry and Technology that would help us address these risks.

The first is a physical disconnect requirement. Every connected vehicle sold in Canada should include a clearly identified hardware switch or fuse—a real one, not a software toggle—that can sever cellular and wireless external communications at the owner's discretion. This power-down is the last, best option. No, AI can't override physics.

The second is a connected car bill of rights—

The Chair: I apologize for interrupting. Can you quickly wrap it up, please?

David Shipley: Sure.

Have a connected car bill of rights so that people can have guarantees around security.

The third is security as a baseline regulatory requirement. We would never allow a car on Canadian roads with defective brakes. We should not allow cars on Canadian roads with known defective cybersecurity.

The Chair: We will now go to Madame Doran. She's representing Clean Energy Canada.

Please, go ahead. You have five minutes for your opening remarks.

Thank you.

Rachel Doran (Executive Director, Clean Energy Canada): Good morning, members of the committee and Madam Chair.

Clean Energy Canada is a national think tank at Simon Fraser University that is focused on advancing the country's energy transition.

I want to acknowledge, as the other speakers have spoken to, that this committee is studying a complicated issue involving geopolitics, security and a technology shift. These are issues that attach to much of the relationship and trade between Canada and China, as China is Canada's second-largest trading partner.

To zoom in on electric vehicles for a moment, there are a few key facts.

Electric vehicles will save Canadians money, period. Electric vehicles reduce carbon emissions over their lifetime versus a fossil fuel-powered vehicle, period. Electric vehicles are at the bottom of a long ladder of technologies that we can electrify to improve efficiency and affordability in people's lives, which is why they're the first technology to kick off a global shift to electrification, period.

The last period is this: The global auto sector is undergoing a rapid transformation. EVs are expected to make up 30% of new sales worldwide this year, and 40% by 2030. China is poised to see a sales share of around 80% by this time. China bet on electric vehicles almost two decades ago and now has a head start in technology, producing cost reductions and exports that can dominate global markets. You can't have a strategy around the future of transportation without having a China strategy, period.

In the summer of 2024, when Canada first announced the 100% tariff on Chinese electric vehicles, we noted that the federal government had had an opportunity to take a measured approach that balanced the priorities of traditional automakers in Canada's local industry with the needs of affordability-constrained Canadian consumers and our climate. Instead, Canada started with a 100% tariff approach—one that mirrored only the U.S. at that time—while Ethiopia, Australia, Brazil, the U.K. and Nepal gained access to lower-priced Chinese EVs and experienced the massive savings that come with these vehicles. Our recent analysis shows that in Canada these savings can be between $23,000 and $32,000 over 10 years of vehicle ownership. This year, we ran those vehicles that are currently on the market in a comparator of two popular Chinese models—without the federal rebate—that could make their way to the Canadian market potentially. These figures were before the recent hikes in gas prices.

To be clear, Clean Energy Canada does not support fully opening domestic markets to Chinese EVs at this time, but if Canada wants to have an auto sector in the future, let alone a competitive one, we need to be able to produce high-quality, affordable EVs and the parts and materials that go into them. “Technological and production cost reduction advancements by Chinese automakers and battery manufacturers present an opportunity for Canada to diversify its electric vehicle supply chains through strategic partnerships.” That's not Clean Energy Canada. That's the chief economist of TD Bank in 2025.

While unrestricted exposure risks wiping out domestic industry, controlled competition forces domestic manufacturers to step up their game and learn. Joint ventures can help bring technology and know-how to our manufacturing base. This can all drive innovation and productivity gains, while leading to better cars for consumers. Take the EU, which reached 27% new electric car sales in 2025. It maintains tariffs on Chinese EVs, but these are lower and more flexible tariffs. It has over 20 EV models available at sub-$40,000 Canadian price points. Only seven of those are from Chinese brands and 10 are European.

Chinese EV manufacturing plants have led to investments up the supply chain for local suppliers. Last June, BYD announced that Voestalpine, an Austrian steel manufacturer, will supply their $6-billion EV plant in Hungary. Similarly, Forvia, a French car parts supplier, has signed a deal with BYD's second EV factory in Turkey. Some local suppliers have cited falling demand from existing automakers as an issue that Chinese automakers can make up for.

A two-pronged approach of selective exposure to Chinese EVs and opening the market simply back to 2023 levels, or below 3% of the market, plus preferential market access for domestic producers, is a better path for Canadian auto sector competitiveness into the future.

At the end of the day, the Canadian government also needs to be standing up for Canadian consumers. Canadians want these vehicles and believe they'll be of high quality. Our January 2026 polling shows that more than one-third of Canadians are open to buying a Chinese EV. Among the 50% of Canadians who are interested in an EV generally, 70% expressed varying levels of interest in getting a Chinese one.

By allowing the sale of a limited number of Chinese EVs into Canada at a lower tariff rate, and by reserving a rising portion of this quota for EVs with an import price of less than $35,000, Canada is making the right choice. It's focused on creating the affordable EV segment we've been missing, while setting us up for success in a swiftly changing global market.

● (1115)

The Chair: With that, we will now start with our first round of questions, with six minutes each.

We will begin with MP Baldinelli for six minutes.

Please go ahead.

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

Thank you to the witnesses for being with us today.

Ms. McCuaig-Johnston, I'm going to begin with you, if I could.

The Liberal government wants to call importing Chinese EVs an affordability measure.

Do you think vehicles made with forced labour and that collect and transmit Canadians' personal data and information back to Beijing undercut our Canadian auto sector, which employs hundreds of thousands of Canadians in good-paying jobs? Do you think this could ever be considered a good affordability measure for the Canadian public?

Margaret McCuaig-Johnston: I don't, and I'm very concerned about our auto workers.

There was no consultation with our Canadian auto manufacturers in the course of these negotiations. You see this by the fact that they weren't aware of things they should have been aware of—things like forced labour for vehicles and software risks with vehicles.

I will mention, specifically, the EU tariffs, if you're talking about affordability. The EU tariffs have been up to 35% lower, but the EU has found that this is eating into not just comparable competition among EU vehicle manufacturers but also, even, combustion engines and used car sales. They're getting rid of the tariffs. Vehicle manufacturers in China can opt for them, if they want to. SAIC has opted to keep its 35% tariff. The others are negotiating prices that will be at the same level as the competition.

What we're doing here in Canada is the reverse. We're going way below the competition. When I say “competition”, we've heard that Chinese EVs will be just 3% of the Canadian car market. Well, look at electric vehicle sales. You heard the number at this committee of 30% of electric vehicle sales. That's if you include buses and electric vehicle trucks. I asked the president of Electric Autonomy to cut the numbers for me in order to carve out the autos and SUVs. The number of sales in 2025 was 123,000, so 49,000 of that would be 46%, not 30%. That rises to 70% quickly, and that's way more than half—57%. Chinese EVs, within a couple of years, would be getting way more than half of all the EV sales in Canada last year.

● (1120)

Tony Baldinelli: To follow up, during your most recent appearance at the industry committee, a Liberal government member questioned your credentials and expertise as an expert witness who can credibly speak about forced labour taking place in China. I'd like to give you an opportunity to comment on that.

Also, a recent United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights release, issued in January, is entitled “UN experts alarmed by reports of forced labour of Uyghur, Tibetan and other minorities across China”.

That release says:

> According to the experts, forced labour in China is enabled through the State-mandated “poverty alleviation through labour transfer” programme, which coerces Uyghurs and members of other minority groups into jobs in Xinjiang and other regions.

I'd like to get your comments.

Margaret McCuaig-Johnston: Thank you very much. I appreciate the member's question.

I also appreciate the fact that this has raised the issue of forced labour sky-high. A group of us has taken the opportunity to write to the Prime Minister to propose areas where we think Canada has backtracked this calendar year on its enforcement of forced labour, and what we can do to get back to what we were doing just last year. This is really important if we're going to be successful in the section 301 investigation.

I must say that the member who took me to task at the last meeting was lauded in state media in China. The story went all across social media in China. He's a hero and I'm a zero. That's a problem for me because I have a lot of friends and former colleagues in China with whom I can't communicate now because I'm sanctioned. I can't tell them what happened and what the impact has been here. I've been hearing from a lot of Han Chinese. They've been saying that they, too, have been subject to forced labour in China. That's something I'm going to be responding to.

Tony Baldinelli: Could you table with this committee the letter that you've written to the Prime Minister?

Margaret McCuaig-Johnston: Yes. I've given that to the clerk, and it's being translated by the industry committee.

Tony Baldinelli: I don't think members of the public are aware of the U.S. investigation under 301. It's an investigation with regard to forced labour and is investigating, I think, up to 60 countries. What is the impact of that, and what could the impact be on our CUSMA negotiations?

The Chair: I'm sorry for interrupting. Maybe you can come back with those answers in the second round. Time is up for MP Baldinelli.

Now, we will proceed to MP Noormohamed for six minutes.

Please go ahead.

Taleeb Noormohamed (Vancouver Granville, Lib.): I want to thank all the witnesses for being here.

I want to begin by saying that I have, for a very long time, like others from all parties, been deeply concerned about workers' rights—not selectively. I think issues that many have raised in China and other parts of the world are real concerns that we should be mindful of in the agreements that we strike and in the way that we position conversations that we have.

I'm sorry, Professor McCuaig-Johnston, for the challenges that you are now dealing with.

I want to bring us back to the conversation that we are having here about domestic issues related to Chinese EVs and their sale in Canada. I also want to talk a little bit about the broader question of data, because you and a couple of other witnesses have mentioned data, the ability of cars to be taken over, and so on and so forth. We've heard from Mr. Shipley about the issues related to cars being taken over and these challenges.

Professor McCuaig-Johnston, are you concerned about Polestar 2s that were sold in Canada prior to 2025?

● (1125)

Margaret McCuaig-Johnston: I haven't looked into that particular brand.

Taleeb Noormohamed: The Polestar 2s were manufactured in China and were sold in Canada prior to the 100% tariffs and then were no longer sold in Canada as part of the agreement or the JV with Voler and those cars. Should we be concerned about cars that were manufactured prior to 2025 as well?

Margaret McCuaig-Johnston: I would say that it entirely depends upon the software that's used. If it's Baidu software, then yes. If it's QNX, then I would want to double-check that the data is being kept in Canada.

Taleeb Noormohamed: Digging into the question of data, given the complexity of Canada's relationship with the U.S. right now, given the ownership structure of Tesla and given Elon Musk's relationships, for example, with the U.S. government and with U.S. government decisions in respect to data that is stored in the U.S., should Canadians be equally concerned about information that their Tesla might be gathering that will then be living on U.S. servers that the U.S. government could access, if it so chooses, under the CLOUD Act?

Margaret McCuaig-Johnston: Certainly, the Teslas that will be coming—and some have already come—from Shanghai use Baidu software, so that's Chinese—

Taleeb Noormohamed: I'm talking about the ones that are already in Canada. That Tesla data is stored on U.S. servers.

Margaret McCuaig-Johnston: I wouldn't be as concerned because we have seen China's malign intent towards Canada in a much larger way than we have from the U.S. I know that we have a very erratic U.S. President right now, and I know that there's a significant concern about U.S. fighter jets that store their data in the U.S. and that data must be controlled and updated from the U.S. as a condition of sale.

It's a good question. I would want to look at what might be done with the QNX software and with BlackBerry keeping it in Canada. If we're going to do that for Chinese EVs, then we should do that perhaps for U.S. EVs as well. That's not a bad idea.

Taleeb Noormohamed: Obviously, requirements under PIPEDA apply to any vehicles, any software and any data that is collected and stored in Canada. Is that correct?

Margaret McCuaig-Johnston: I didn't quite get the question.

Taleeb Noormohamed: PIPEDA applies to all transactions being done in Canada, whether it's data collected or so on and so forth. That, to my understanding, applies to any EVs, theoretically Chinese and others, that come to Canada. Is that correct?

Margaret McCuaig-Johnston: I don't know. That's something I don't—

Taleeb Noormohamed: Okay. The agreement, if it does.... I think this is one of the things that we need to dissect a bit, because I want to make sure, like you, that Canadians are kept safe.

There are several separate issues. One is, of course, the issue related to labour and China. There's the issue related to making sure we're protecting jobs in this country and the issues related to how Canadian data is stored. I want to make sure that in these conversations, all of which are important, we're not conflating one with the other and vice versa. Sometimes we have a tendency in short spurts of questions to try to conflate one with the other.

For me, there are really three batches of things that we need to interrogate. One is obviously the issues related to labour in this country and in China. There's the issue of jobs in this country versus the export of jobs to others. The third, then, is the issue of data.

When it comes to the privacy protections of Canadians, this is something that has come up in previous conversations. There's been an acknowledgement that privacy laws in this country should apply and do apply to any vehicles that are imported. I would observe and I would consider that under the agreement we have to bring in the 49,000 Chinese EVs, this applies to them as well. We should all, I think, take a moment to figure that out, because I think it does then address that particular piece of the conversation.

When we go to the issue of jobs in this country—I would pose this to you, Professor McCuaig-Johnston and then to Mr. Shipley—the reality is that vehicles made in this country have components that have come, fortunately or otherwise, from different places, whether it's the U.S. or it's China, and so on and so forth, and those components go into Canadian-made vehicles.

Canadian-made auto jobs right now are not growing. Is there an opportunity for us to work with Chinese manufacturers to create jobs in this country? Do you think that's something that as a government we should be looking at?

● (1130)

The Chair: I'm sorry for interrupting The time is up. Maybe you can come back to those questions in the second round.

With that, we will proceed to MP Blanchette-Joncas for six minutes.

Please go ahead, MP Blanchette-Joncas.

[*Translation*]

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

I welcome the witnesses who are with us today.

My first questions will be directed to Ms. McCuaig-Johnston.

Ms. McCuaig-Johnston, it is a pleasure to have you here with us again.

The government has already deemed it necessary to impose a surtax—

[*English*]

The Chair: I'm sorry for interrupting. There's a translation issue. We'll stop the clock so that we can look into it.

Now it's good. Please go ahead.

[*Translation*]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Ms. McCuaig-Johnston, the government has already deemed it necessary to impose a 100% surtax on Chinese electric vehicles. That wasn't that long ago. It was in August 2024.

In your view, what has changed, concretely, to the point where this opening is now acceptable—that is, allowing tens of thousands of Chinese vehicles to enter the market?

[*English*]

Margaret McCuaig-Johnston: I wrote a brief to the government, to the Department of Finance, leading into that 100% tariff, and nothing has changed substantively regarding the vehicles. All of the reasons.... There were multiple reasons why the government put on the tariff.

Nothing has changed, except that we needed to solve the canola problem and China has now learned that it can use canola as leverage. I fear that it's doing that in asking the Canadian government to support China in becoming a member of the CPTPP. You know, maybe if we don't do that, our canola will be at risk.

[*Translation*]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: On April 17, 2025, the Prime Ministerstated that the greatest threat to our security was China. Today, we are entering into a trade agreement with people who, according to the Prime Minister, are the greatest threat to our security.

Given your expertise, what are your observations on this matter?

What message does this send to other countries that are our allies?

[*English*]

Margaret McCuaig-Johnston: We will always trade with China. The question is how you protect yourself from what are, in many cases, obvious risks. That's one of the things we're here talking about today: the range of risks that we face with this deal.

We've seen a lot of commentary on the risk of the agreement between the RCMP and the security police, the same security police that set up police stations across Canada, Chinese police stations, and in other countries as well.

There is a range of risks, and in taking China's approach of "strategic partnership"—that's their language—and having their requirements for what they call a "stable" relationship with China, and being "pragmatic", which is the Chinese language they put into their readouts, Canada has gone, in my view, a bit too far, in that I thought we could have put something else on the table to relieve canola, something like investment in conventional energy rather than EVs. I think EVs are too big a risk.

[*Translation*]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: I understand.

During your appearance before the Standing Committee on Science and Research on September 25, 2023, you said that Canada should not give its resources to China.

When it comes to electric vehicles, don't you see a bit of that kind of compromise?

Doesn't this agreement risk, precisely, repeating the mistake you already denounced a few years ago?

● (1135)

[*English*]

Margaret McCuaig-Johnston: I am just looking for clarification. I am a big supporter of electric vehicles, especially Canadian companies in that market. I'm pleased to see that we are going to have witnesses later on in this meeting on that subject. I am in favour of that.

To the extent that we can partner safely with people in China, that would be good, but I would raise a lot of big red flags about those partnerships. We have to be very careful about how we do it.

[*Translation*]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Indeed.

I want to come back to the red flags you mentioned.

I'd like to hear your thoughts on Canada's current foreign policy.

The government has made certain statements. It's the same government—we've just changed the bus driver—but it's as if, now, human rights are no longer being taken into account when establishing economic partnerships.

How is it possible to say one thing just a few months ago and do the exact opposite today?

What is your opinion on this?

[*English*]

Margaret McCuaig-Johnston: This is why it's really important to get back on track on forced labour. One of the things that we were asking for in a letter that we sent to the Prime Minister is something that actually is in a Bloc bill, which is legislation that will have something like what's called legally a "rebuttable presumption" about the goods mined in high-risk areas. The Prime Minister has said that China has geographic areas that are higher risk, and that we have to do more due diligence for those areas. The Prime Minister recognizes that very clearly. He himself in his previous life had actually done work on the issues related to forced labour and has supported organizations on that subject. I think he's had to compromise some of his own values, and that's regrettable. I think it's up to committees like this to help him with the risk management in this regard.

[*Translation*]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Thank you.

Ms. McCuaig-Johnston, if I recall correctly, the Prime Minister was the United Nations Special Envoy for Climate Finance. He said that we shouldn't—

[*English*]

The Chair: I'm sorry for interrupting. The time is up. Maybe you can come back to the questions in the second round.

With that, the first round comes to an end. We will begin our second round of five minutes and two and a half minutes. We will start with MP DeRidder for five minutes.

Please go ahead.

Kelly DeRidder (Kitchener Centre, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms. McGuaig-Johnston, do you agree with both Clean Energy Canada's statement and mine earlier in our study that forced labour should unequivocally not be a part of our supply chain, yes or no?

Margaret McCuaig-Johnston: Yes.

Kelly DeRidder: Can you explain to Canadians how forced labour is connected to EV production, backed by the Human Rights Watch 2024 report on forced labour specifically related to EVs?

Margaret McCuaig-Johnston: In China, there have been mass transfers of Uyghurs to places of work that have been set up, usually out in very rural areas where they are made to work to produce aluminum. They also work in coal mines. Both coal mines and aluminum are part of the inputs to EVs. It's through the aluminum that we see.... It's in dozens of parts, in the engine blocks and the wheels internally in the car that we get this forced labour.

The regulation that has been passed forbids anybody to ask about that. What do you do in the face of that? Clearly, China doesn't like people asking about forced labour. They've just brought in a regulation to the effect that nobody can ask about it, so what do we do? It's “Oh, okay, we'll just accept that. We'll accept all of your products, and we just won't ask any questions about forced labour.”

Kelly DeRidder: I'm asking you these questions today because I do not accept just not talking about it. Do you think that advocates like Clean Energy Canada should reconsider saying that this is a pro-Canadian choice, considering that our Canadian auto workers are up against forced labour and considering our Canadian values?

Margaret McCuaig-Johnston: It's up against forced labour in China. This isn't just a handful of people. In 2024, there were 3.4 million Uyghurs transferred into jobs like this in forced labour. That's a large number of people. These are people working in slave conditions, and it's not just in China. It's in Brazil and Hungary.

Ms. Doran mentioned the BYD plant in Hungary. I'm glad she did. She should look up Hungary, BYD and slave labour, because forced labour has been shown in the hundreds—some 350—Chinese workers who built the plant in Hungary, and now the authorities there are investigating. In Brazil, the government fined BYD $10 million, because of forced labour in that plant. For BYD, which plans to have $2.4 billion in sales across South America, that's just the cost of doing business.

● (1140)

Kelly DeRidder: Would it not be better, in your opinion, for us to focus more on a trade deal with the U.S. and focus more on CUSMA for Canadian values instead of putting irritants like this EV trade deal in place?

Margaret McCuaig-Johnston: My own view is, yes, it would be better to focus on CUSMA, particularly with this section 301 investigation. We should see what we can do to improve CUSMA in order to get as much as we can under some new version of CUSMA. We should set this aside for a year or two years and see if we want to come back to it. That would be my preference.

Kelly DeRidder: Thank you so much.

Mr. Shipley, I have one question for you.

Should national security considerations play a larger role in determining which countries Canada partners with in strategic sectors like EVs?

David Shipley: Absolutely. We need to take national security more seriously than we are in this country with respect to EVs and all connected cars. I just reinforce the point that the threat from the PRC to Canada is real. Other experts have testified to the abundant evidence of that. The threat posed by every single Internet-connected car—47% of cars on Canada's roads today are Internet-connected—is growing and real.

Kelly DeRidder: Thank you to our witnesses for coming today.

The Chair: Thank you, MP DeRidder.

We'll now go to MP McKelvie for five minutes, please

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

My first question is for Ms. McCuaig-Johnston.

You have a long history in science administration and natural resources energy. Given that we are on the science committee, could you speak to some of those investments we should be making in science and technology, especially in the university sector, that can really help us to amplify our efforts in electric vehicle adoption and electrification?

One thing that would happen through this is that there would be more uptake in electric vehicles. What do we need to do to make sure our Canadian universities are really at the forefront of this technology, and that we're developing that technology here in Canada?

Margaret McCuaig-Johnston: We will not get the benefit of technology transfer from electric vehicles just being imported. We probably wouldn't get any, even if we do joint ventures, although we can try. We should be putting a lot more resources into battery technology and other related components, such as the advanced manufacturing technology sector for vehicle manufacturing.

I would like to see the next budget be an innovation budget. It could lay the foundation across all sectors of the economy and also look at bringing in innovation in social policy. If we had an innovation theme for the next budget, that would take advantage of the infrastructure initiatives being built, which I'm 100% behind. It would lay a strong foundation for other R and D across universities. We can always do more in commercialization. This is our one big flaw in our innovation environment. We should be looking at more opportunities for commercialization.

Frankly, I do agree that EVs are the cars of the future, which is why I started the EV technology road map in 2008. We need to maximize the number of companies that can take advantage of that, grow with that and take advantage of the university research that can feed into that process.

● (1145)

Jennifer McKelvie: Thank you.

My next question is for Ms. Doran.

I think you mentioned that 30% of new auto sales are of EVs right now. You anticipate it will be 40% by 2030. Internationally, we're seeing a big uptake. Is it fair to say that this trend of EV adoption is going to continue and there are considerable opportunities that can be seized here?

Rachel Doran: Yes, it's our opinion in looking at the global transportation market that the direction towards electrification is pretty undeniable.

Maybe just to speak to the complexity of the issues this committee is trying to address, it's important to realize there are companies like Volvo that have parent companies, such as Geely, that are Chinese. We have, as already mentioned, Teslas that are manufactured in China. General Motors is sourcing CATL batteries from China for Chevy Bolts. Stellantis has taken a stake in Leapmotor.

There are a lot of new partnerships emerging around the world. Because Canada has so many of the critical minerals that will feed into the battery supply chains, it's important for us to think about our opportunities in the auto sector really being much broader than final manufacturing. We should be looking for opportunities along the supply chain where we can insert our innovation and our materials, and ensure that we're getting more value-added along this supply chain. Now is the time to fit into some of those decisions and supply chains that are forming globally.

Jennifer McKelvie: On that, do you have estimates as we transition into EVs of the number of jobs we could look forward to in the areas of critical minerals, supply chains, batteries, vehicles—and I know you're in clean energy, so clean energy too—and infrastructure? Do we know what the opportunity is here?

Rachel Doran: We did a study—it dates back to 2022—looking at Canada's EV battery supply chain opportunities at the time. Out of four scenarios, Canada was looking at up to a $50-billion opportunity if it made the right choices. For a while, we actually got so many investments into Canada, the number of Gigafactories, etc., we went above some of our estimates.

Now with pullback from U.S., those figures have changed. Therefore, I would be reluctant to say they are specifically relevant today, but they maybe speak to how quickly the global market is changing and how fast we need to move to seize some of those opportunities. The opportunities are very real, so—

The Chair: I am sorry for interrupting, but MP McKelvie's time is up. Could you just quickly wind up?

Rachel Doran: That's fine. I'm happy to look at anything I can provide the committee in addition to my remarks.

The Chair: With that, we will proceed to MP Blanchette-Joncas for two and a half minutes.

Please go ahead.

[*Translation*]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Ms. McCuaig-Johnston, when a government MP questions the evidence of forced labour, isn't that indicative of a broader inconsistency between Canada's rhetoric on human rights and its recent trade choices?

I am referring in particular to the Prime Minister's efforts to strengthen economic partnerships with certain authoritarian regimes.

[*English*]

Margaret McCuaig-Johnston: I think the Prime Minister ultimately made it clear that he recognizes that there's forced labour in China and forced labour, in particular, in certain regions of China. Everyone knows that means Xinjiang.

However, the Chinese have also sent tens of thousands of Uyghurs to other parts of China to work in factories like Nike's and others. It is really implicating western companies in the forced labour, just as it would implicate Canadians if we buy electric vehicles that we know, pretty confidently, have forced labour in the aluminum in the cars. It implicates us, personally, in that. I think it would be really regrettable if we had those driving around our streets everywhere.

[*Translation*]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Ms. McCuaig-Johnston, my question is much more specific.

In your view, do the Government of Canada's commercial interests take precedence over the principles it claims to uphold?

● (1150)

[*English*]

Margaret McCuaig-Johnston: The government, at this time, is trying its best to diversify our trade to other countries in the world. I support that, but I don't think this should come at the expense of human rights, and I don't think it needs to. We can make choices that reflect our values as Canadians.

The Prime Minister and ministers have gone abroad and said that we have a values-based, pragmatic foreign policy. What countries like China hear when we say “values-based, pragmatic foreign policy” is the word “pragmatic”, and they think we'll just roll over whenever they tell us that they want us to do something. It seems that we may, from time to time, be doing that.

Personally, as somebody who's focused her career on public policy, I think that's terrible and not necessary. I think we can have our values—

The Chair: Thank you. The time is up for MP Blanchette-Joncas.

Now, we will have three minutes for MP Ho and three minutes for MP Noormohamed, and then we will end this panel. I want to keep some time at the end of the second panel for scheduling purposes.

Go ahead, MP Ho.

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

Ms. McCuaig-Johnston, you've warned that Chinese-made EVs have the ability to surveil Canadians through software. Earlier this month, I asked Canada's Privacy Commissioner if he was ever consulted by the Liberal government on the subject of Chinese- or foreign-made EVs. He said that his department was never consulted.

Given those risks, do you believe the Liberal government showed a lack of judgment by allowing Chinese-made EVs into the Canadian market without clear safeguards?

Margaret McCuaig-Johnston: I believe that there should have been wide consultation on this. We're seeing the result now that there hasn't been. We're trying to ring-fence some of these risks. When you talk about privacy and data, that's a big risk.

EVs driving onto military bases is another risk. Poland and Israel have banned it. Several people at this meeting have talked about components. The U.K. has banned any vehicle that has components from China from going onto military bases. It's not just Chinese EVs, but components in any other type of car.

I would include not just military bases, but CSIS, CSE, Global Affairs Canada and some other departments.

Vincent Ho: Mr. Shipley, you've warned that connected vehicles may function like rolling surveillance platforms. We've seen countries like Poland, the U.S. and Israel place restrictions on the use and import of Chinese-made EVs. Many other countries are now following suit.

What kinds of personal data could Chinese-made EVs potentially collect, transmit or expose without the driver realizing it? Did the Liberal government fail to understand these risks?

David Shipley: In my submission, you can see an example of a Tesla, which was parked in someone's garage and had its cameras on 24-7. That individual actually walked unclothed in front of the camera and it was captured, and that video was traded among employees for a laugh. We've already seen real examples of the rolling cameras, the microphones inside, the geolocation data and other things. They are a data collection platform.

I want to reinforce that China's nation-state hacking teams will hack Ford, GM, Tesla and others as well if they are not in there now doing the same thing because it makes sense to gather this kind of data. If we don't secure all connected cars, closing the door on China does not close China's hacking team out.

Vincent Ho: Thank you.

I'll use my last 15 seconds to bring up potentially extending—

The Chair: Your time is up.

Vincent Ho: Perhaps I should bring it up at the end, but we've lost one witness in the second hour due to unforeseen circumstances.

Through you, Chair, perhaps we could ask if it is the will of the committee to allow Ms. McCuaig-Johnston to stay for the second hour as well.

The Chair: I need to get some scheduling things resolved, so I want to keep some time. I think those five minutes for the opening remarks can be used for scheduling purposes. Sometimes people cancel because they have other commitments. We don't have control. Usually the witnesses stay for an hour, but I will leave it up to the committee members.

Vincent Ho: Can we vote on having Ms. McCuaig-Johnston stay?

● (1155)

The Chair: Usually we have witnesses for an hour. We have to do some scheduling business at the end. Those opening five minutes will be used for that. I need to have some answers from the members of the committee in order to schedule, because this coming Monday is the last meeting with witnesses for this study. I need to get some direction from the committee members. We need to use some time. We will be using that time. I need 10 minutes to get some answers.

Vincent Ho: Ms. McCuaig-Johnston doesn't have to provide an opening statement again.

The Chair: We have three witnesses, so it would not be fair to ask just one. I think we should pose the question to all of the witnesses. Usually, the practice is that they leave after one hour and then we have witnesses for the second hour.

We have dealt with many meetings where we have only two witnesses. It's not something new that we have to deal with only two witnesses. The witness just cancelled in the morning, so there was no way we could schedule a third witness for this study.

Vincent Ho: I'd like to move to a vote on this.

Taleeb Noormohamed: I'd like my three minutes. I want to make sure I don't lose my three minutes. I still have—

The Chair: No, you will have your three minutes. We had to stop the clock. We will have three minutes before we end this panel. We are eating into the next panel's time.

Go ahead, MP Noormohamed.

Taleeb Noormohamed: I was going to offer a suggestion. If Professor McCuaig-Johnston is still here, why don't we take a minute during the break to try to resolve this amongst ourselves and see how best to do it? I want to make sure we hear from the other witnesses. I recognize that my colleague might want more time with the professor, but I suspect that we're probably better to solve it in a natural conversation rather than try to do it like this.

Vincent Ho: I'd like to just have a vote and deal with it. From conversations, it looks like some of the witnesses are willing to stay for the second hour. They're not providing opening statements again, so it would not throw the schedule off.

The Chair: We can take a vote.

I will ask the clerk to take the vote, please.

Just to clarify—

Vincent Ho: Anyone who wants to stay—

The Chair: Wait one second; just let me finish, MP Ho. Can you be clear on what you are saying for the vote?

Are you asking just one person to stay on, or are you asking all three witnesses to stay on?

Vincent Ho: I'd like to call a vote to allow the first-hour witnesses to stay for the second hour, should their schedules permit.

Thank you.

The Chair: I'll ask the clerk to take the vote, please.

An hon. member: [*Technical difficulty—Editor*]

The Chair: No, I need instructions. The last meeting with the witnesses is on Monday, and I need to get direction. I have to keep a few minutes at the end for scheduling purposes. When we start the second panel, we will see how many rounds of questions we can do.

Go ahead, MP Blanchette-Joncas.

[*Translation*]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I would like a clarification.

Is a motion required to request this type of measure, or is unanimous agreement among committee members sufficient?

Could the clerk let us know?

[*English*]

The Chair: MP Ho has moved a motion. I can ask the clerk to read it again, if you want, or MP Ho can repeat it.

[*Translation*]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: I would like to follow procedure, Madam Chair. We will need the motion in both official languages.

If you could suspend the session until we receive it, I would appreciate it.

[*English*]

The Chair: It is the prerogative of the member to move a motion. We have interpretation. If you want, I can ask MP Ho to repeat the motion.

● (1200)

[*Translation*]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Madam Chair, as you well know, before tabling a motion, we must first receive it in both official languages. I would therefore ask that you follow the procedure.

[*English*]

The Chair: Give me a minute to consult with the clerk. We are eating into the next panel's time.

Members, the clerk would like to explain the rule in regard to the notice of motion and the prerogative of members in moving a motion.

It's over to the clerk.

The Clerk of the Committee (Cédric Taquet): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Yes, it's the prerogative of a member to move a motion from the floor. We need to have it in both official languages only for a notice of motion put 48 hours before. Of course, under the topic of consideration, there's no notice required. A member can move a motion from the floor.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

We will take the vote.

(Motion negatived: nays 5; yeas 4)

The Chair: We will end this panel with MP Noormohamed for three minutes.

Please go ahead.

Taleeb Noormohamed: It feels so long ago, but I just want to go back to where we were. I want to go back to this conversation about data, Professor McCuaig-Johnston and Mr. Shipley, and about the concerns Canadians should have about data storage writ large. We've talked about EVs.

Professor, should we be concerned about other smart devices in our homes?

Margaret McCuaig-Johnston: I would say not as much as EVs.

Taleeb Noormohamed: Wouldn't you be concerned about a device in your home that's capturing video 24-7?

Margaret McCuaig-Johnston: Some people would be. For example, because of the threats that have been made against me, I've had cameras installed outside and inside my home, and I've gone through the trouble of checking. I chose Telus because I was able to verify that the equipment is made in Texas, not in China.

Taleeb Noormohamed: You would have been concerned, then, about the deal that Prime Minister Harper signed between Huawei and Telus, which he presided over. You would have been concerned about that.

Margaret McCuaig-Johnston: I would have been, yes. I was a big advocate of not having Huawei in our 5G.

Taleeb Noormohamed: You went to that effort to make sure you did not have Chinese equipment as part of your home surveillance devices. Should Canadians, then, not be concerned about those types of things as well? Whether it's a scale or the Amazon Fire TV Stick my colleague opposite tried to give to the member of Parliament, which you were concerned about earlier, these are all devices made in China that are in our homes, collecting data all the time.

Margaret McCuaig-Johnston: That's true, but a vehicle moves and can be used as a weapon. When your phone is charging in an electric vehicle, the ones from China download the contents of your phone, even when the car is turned off—that's all of the contents of your phone.

● (1205)

Taleeb Noormohamed: That's all vehicles. To be fair, my vehicle not made in China also downloads that information from my phone, but that can happen on the cloud all the time. Does it not?

Margaret McCuaig-Johnston: Citizen Lab has done a study of Baidu software from China. There's virtually no privacy protection in that. As we know, article 7 of the National Intelligence Law of China requires citizens and organizations to spy on behalf of the Chinese state.

Taleeb Noormohamed: The U.S. CLOUD Act gives the U.S. government certain provisions, protections and access to data that is held on U.S. servers. That includes data of Canadian citizens, which is captured on all manner of devices, including, for example, certain devices that may be made in China but which are owned by U.S. companies and powered by U.S. businesses. Does that not also concern you?

Margaret McCuaig-Johnston: It doesn't as much as China because of the malign intent that China has shown, multiple times, against Canadians, and multiple reports by Citizen Lab have shown the malign intent.

Taleeb Noormohamed: This is where I'm confused. You're concerned about EVs but not about the devices we have in our homes that our kids are exposed to every single day.

Margaret McCuaig-Johnston: I am concerned. I said that I was concerned.

The Chair: The time is up for MP Noormohamed.

With that, this panel comes to an end. I really want to thank all three witnesses for appearing before the committee and for providing their important testimony.

We will suspend the meeting so that the witnesses for the second hour can take their seats.

Thank you for appearing.

The meeting is suspended.

● (1205)

_____(Pause)_____

● (1210)

The Chair: I call the meeting back to order. Welcome back, everybody.

I would like to make a few comments for the benefit of the witnesses, as well as the members. Please keep the noise level low. Please wait until I recognize you by name before speaking. For those participating by video conference, click on the microphone icon to activate your mic, and please mute yourself when you're not speaking. For those on Zoom, at the bottom of you screen, you can select the appropriate channel for interpretation: floor, English or French. This is a reminder that all comments should be addressed through the chair.

With that, I would like to welcome our two witnesses for this panel.

We are joined by Dr. Ryan Ahmed, assistant professor, and Moataz Mohamed, associate professor. Both are joining us by video conference.

Welcome to committee. Thanks for appearing. Each of you will have five minutes for your opening remarks, and then we will go to the rounds of questioning.

I will ask Dr. Ahmed to start.

You have five minutes for your opening remarks.

Dr. Ryan Ahmed (Assistant Professor, Department of Mechanical Engineering, McMaster University, As an Individual): Chair and honourable members, thank you for the invitation.

My name is Dr. Ryan Ahmed. I'm an assistant professor of mechanical engineering at McMaster University and the deputy director of the Centre for Mechatronics and Hybrid Technologies. My research focuses on artificial intelligence and electric vehicle batteries. I held engineering roles at General Motors, Samsung and Stellantis, working on electric vehicles and autonomous vehicles in both the U.S. and Canada. I'm a professional engineer in Ontario.

I would like to leave the committee with three observations, followed by three recommendations.

The first observation is that the technology gap is widening. There is a growing gap between Chinese and North American EV manufacturers, driven primarily by vertical integration. Chinese firms, such as BYD, manufacture roughly 75% to 80% of their vehicle content in-house, compared to about 40% for Tesla and 20% to 30% for traditional OEMs, like General Motors and Ford.

Having worked on both sides—at Samsung on the supplier side and at GM on the OEM side—I can tell the committee that the tier-one and tier-two suppliers have a built-in limitation. Each supplier protects its own know-how and optimizes its own subsystem, and there is minimal optimization happening at the vehicle level. Without closing that integration gap, a tariff simply protects a shrinking share of the value chain.

The second observation is that Canada has made a generational bet on a softening market. Canada has committed $32 billion to electric vehicles and battery manufacturing, but the market is softening. With EV sales declining and major automakers scaling back programs, we are commissioning world-scale capacity into a softening market. The 49,000-vehicle arrangement with China must be evaluated in that context.

The third observation is that the Canada-China arrangement can be constructive, but only if it's paired with conditions on science, research and domestic value-added. If pre-built Chinese vehicles are sold directly into Canada, they obviously improve affordability, but they add little Canadian engineering or IP. If the agreement is instead tied to joint research with Canadian universities, local critical minerals sourcing and, of course, enforceable data security requirements, the agreement can accelerate rather than displace Canada's EV sector.

My three recommendations are as follows.

The first is to condition quota allocations on a minimum threshold of Canadian-engineered content and critical minerals inputs, such as lithium, nickel and cobalt.

The second is to require that connected vehicle data from imported EVs on Canadian roads be stored, processed and audited under Canadian jurisdiction.

The third is to direct federal research funding to a national battery and vehicle software program that pairs universities, such as McMaster University, Waterloo and the Polytechnique Montréal, with Canadian automakers and suppliers so that the next generation of EV platforms is co-engineered in Canada, not just simply assembled or sold here.

Canada is not behind on minerals, talent or ambition. It is behind on integrated execution. Handled carefully, this agreement is an opportunity to correct that.

Thank you, Madam Chair. I welcome the committee's questions.

● (1215)

The Chair: Thank you, Dr. Ahmed, for your opening remarks.

You might have taught my son, because he's a graduate of mechanical engineering at McMaster University. He graduated in 2023.

I will now go to Mr. Mohamed for five minutes.

Please go ahead.

Dr. Moataz Mohamed (Associate Professor, Department of Civil Engineering, McMaster University, As an Individual): Good afternoon, Madam Chair and honourable members of the committee.

My name is Moataz Mohamed. I'm an associate professor in the department of civil engineering at McMaster University and the director of the McMaster Institute for Transportation and Logistics. My research focuses on transportation electrification, including bus transit electrification and personal vehicles. I have been researching how Canadians perceive, evaluate and decide whether to adopt electric vehicles, and what infrastructure and cost conditions shape those decisions.

I have over 54 peer-reviewed publications and my work has appeared in Nature Communications, Nature Scientific Reports and leading transportation journals. My research has been funded by Natural Resources Canada, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

I will use my time to present evidence from my research on four interconnected dimensions of electric vehicle adoption in Canada.

The first is the environmental benefits. In a comprehensive, evidence-based review, my team synthesized findings from over 4,700 different studies. We have found that electric vehicle adoption consistently produces a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and air pollutants relative to conventional internal combustion engines. However, the magnitude of that benefit is directly tied to the emissions intensity of the electricity grid used to charge electric vehicles. Canada's electricity grid is among the cleanest in the world, which places Canada in a very strong position to realize environmental gains.

The second is vehicle utility. Understanding why adoption still lags despite the strong environmental case is a central question that my research addresses. Our data, drawn from a national survey of approximately 20,000 households across every province and territory in Canada, consistently showed that the vast majority of Canadians drive well within the range capability of modern electric vehicles, yet the gap between the perceived and actual utility remains one of the most persistent findings in our work.

The third is the perception and adoption gap. Our research found that attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control are among the primary determinants of electric vehicle adoption intentions. However, positive adoption intentions do not reliably translate into actual behaviour decisions. We also found that many respondents reported being unaware of charging stations near their homes, yet when we cross-referenced their postal code with actual infrastructure data, charging stations were frequently present nearby.

The fourth is cost sensitivity. Across multiple studies, the purchase price emerges as the single, most consistent barrier for Canadians who have not yet adopted an electric vehicle. Even among those who acknowledge the long-term fuel savings, the upfront costs incessantly outweigh life-cycle cost reasoning in consumer decision-making behaviour. The picture is clearer when the transaction type is considered. Households replacing a primary electric vehicle are more sensitive to battery electric vehicle operating costs, while households that are adding a second vehicle are more sensitive to conventional vehicle operating costs.

The evidence from my research points consistently to a picture in which the environmental case for electric vehicle adoption in Canada is very strong, the practical utility of electric vehicles for Canadian drivers is frequently underestimated and the relationship between the infrastructure and adoption is mediated, in many ways, by perception. However, cost sensitivity at the point of purchase is a significant constraint for Canadians.

The findings point to one overarching conclusion, which is that access to lower-cost electric vehicles will increase adoption, particularly among the segment of the Canadian population that is currently on the margin of a decision. A greater availability of lower-priced electric vehicles in the Canadian market will expand the market incrementally and open the door to a segment of Canadians that current price points have kept out.

Thank you. I look forward to your questions.

● (1220)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Mohamed, for your opening remarks.

With that, we will now proceed to our first round of questioning, with six minutes each.

We will begin with MP Mahal.

Please go ahead.

Jagsharan Singh Mahal (Edmonton Southeast, CPC): [*Technical difficulty—Editor*] here with us. Either one of you can start. I want to get opinions from both of you.

Canada is currently investing tens of billions of dollars in domestic EV and battery manufacturing to build an industry and secure jobs. At the same time, the government is opening the market to heavily subsidized Chinese EV imports.

Is there a contradiction between those two objectives? What we are missing? Anyone can start.

Go ahead, Mr. Mohamed.

Dr. Moataz Mohamed: I will gently point out my title. I am Dr. Mohamed.

To answer the question, from an adoption perspective—this is the core of my study and at the core of my findings—the user is mainly concerned not about the supply chain and not about where the vehicle was made, but about the reliability of the vehicle, the predicted maintenance of the vehicle and, most importantly, the purchase price at the point of purchase.

Jagsharan Singh Mahal: Thank you.

Could Mr. Ahmed answer?

Dr. Ryan Ahmed: The way you look at it right now, there is a softening market, especially for EVs. The first reason is that all of the early adopters of electric vehicles have pretty much saturated. Consumers are looking for affordable, next-generation electric vehicles. Of course, the federal incentives have disappeared as well, so that has also impacted the market.

My third recommendation, as I mentioned to the committee, is that if we enable those Chinese vehicles to be imported into and sold in the Canadian market, they should be associated with conditions when it comes to data privacy, data security and having a threshold on Canadian-engineered content in those vehicles. It's not just an open market specifically for Chinese vehicles without any conditions.

● (1225)

Jagsharan Singh Mahal: You mentioned in your opening statement, as well as in the previous answer, that the Canadian government is investing billions of dollars in a market that is softening.

How do you think importing Chinese EVs is going to impact that market, which is already softening?

Dr. Ryan Ahmed: It will definitely have an impact on the market.

From a technology standpoint—and I have seen this as well, working in the industry—Chinese EVs compete significantly when it comes to cost. They can offer a lot more features per dollar compared to North American vehicles. For example, the starting price point of a BYD Seagull electric vehicle with significantly more features compared to North American vehicles is at around $22,000. It will definitely have an impact.

Of course, having cheaper electric vehicles available in the market would be beneficial to consumers. We can't just open it up without any conditions on it. When it comes to owning Canadian IP and also having the universities involved, that will open up the market to us.

To answer your question, yes, it will definitely have an impact on the market.

Jagsharan Singh Mahal: Chinese EV firms benefit from significant Chinese Communist Party support and operate under a different economic model.

Can Canadian firms realistically compete on a level playing ground under those conditions, Dr. Ahmed?

Dr. Ryan Ahmed: That's a good question.

My recommendation is.... Having both the OEM and the supplier model, as we speak right now, is not efficient. For example, the life cycle for an electric vehicle made by an average North American company, like GM and Ford, is around five to six years, while for BYD, it's between 18 and 24 months. Having vertical integration based here within North American manufacturing will be required to be able to compete with Chinese vehicles at the moment.

It is doable, but it requires significant investments from OEMs, suppliers and, of course, the government as well.

Jagsharan Singh Mahal: There are credible concerns about forced labour in upstream supply chains, particularly involving Uyghur labour in China.

In your view, can a supply chain linked to those specifics be considered environmentally or ethically sustainable, given the standards we keep in Canada?

Dr. Ryan Ahmed: I can't have a full picture of what is happening on that side, when it comes to labour laws and so on. I prefer to stay within a technical discussion and provide my engineering expertise.

Jagsharan Singh Mahal: Okay.

If Canada prioritizes lower-cost imports in the short term, does it come at the expense of long-term supply chain resilience and sustainability?

Dr. Ahmed, give a quick answer.

Dr. Ryan Ahmed: I'm sorry. Can you repeat the question?

Jagsharan Singh Mahal: The time is up, I guess.

The Chair: You might be able to come back to that in the second round.

We will now proceed with MP Deschênes-Thériault for six minutes.

Please go ahead.

[*Translation*]

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

Mr. Mohamed, during your remarks, you mentioned research you are conducting on the factors that lead to the decision to purchase an electric vehicle. You mentioned a study and a database that includes more than 200 variables.

In your professional opinion, how might the agreement with China regarding the limited import of a quota of electric vehicles have a positive effect on some of the factors that influence the decision to purchase an electric vehicle?

[*English*]

Dr. Moataz Mohamed: Thank you for the question.

The most important aspect that motivates or triggers the market is the price at the point of purchase. Once you buy a vehicle the first time, you start developing so-called habitual behaviour. You immediately alleviate your range anxiety. You don't think about range anxiety. You don't think about buying a bigger battery. The purchase price is a critical point for people joining the EV market.

What we have observed from our studies.... In science, we've coined the term “willingness to” analysis. It's the willingness to evaluate in the era of incentives or in the era of fuel savings, especially when fuel prices spike, compared with electricity prices. We consistently found that every dollar reduction in the gap between battery electric vehicles and internal combustion engine vehicles is evaluated by users at $1.40. If you reduce the gap in price, they see added utility and receive more incentive to get into the electric vehicle market.

We have also seen this when people are considering the pre-owned electric vehicle market. The pre-owned electric vehicle market is also growing. However, we can echo most of the same conclusions we found regarding new vehicles when it comes to pre-owned vehicles.

If you are a first-time EV buyer, purchase price is the Achilles heel.

● (1230)

[*Translation*]

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault: So I understand that importing more affordable Chinese vehicles could have a positive impact on the number of electric vehicles on our roads.

You also mentioned, in one of your research publications, the environmental effects of adopting electric vehicles, particularly in terms of having a highway system that would be more likely to help us achieve our climate goals.

Does that mean that the more electric vehicles we have on our roads, the more it contributes to achieving our climate goals?

[*English*]

Dr. Moataz Mohamed: Thank you for the question.

Let me start with the environmental gains, because I strongly believe.... Also, evidence from research points, very clearly, to the competitiveness of Canada when it comes to clean electricity production. I'm speaking about the national average. We have very superior provinces in Canada that produce pretty much near-zero greenhouse gas emissions for each kilowatt hour of electricity produced in the grid.

In a professional capacity, I can state that the environmental gains from electric vehicles in Canada would be significant compared with other places, including the United States. Increasing the market adoption of electric vehicles in Canada will substantially reduce the transportation sector's greenhouse gas emissions.

As for the second point in your question—

[*Translation*]

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault: I'm sorry, but time is running out, and I'd like to ask you two more questions.

I represent a rural riding.

In your research, did you notice any notable differences between urban and rural areas based on the various variables you used?

If so, what would be the main challenges related to the adoption of electric vehicles in rural areas?

What could we do about this?

[*English*]

Dr. Moataz Mohamed: For rural versus urban, with urban there are fewer vehicle kilometres travelled on a daily basis. In rural, they drive more kilometres compared to urban settings. Infrastructure intensity, as it relates to access to charging points, is significantly important in rural areas, especially in rural areas in northern territories and relatively colder climates, as the battery range will be limited during cold weather.

[*Translation*]

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault: Mr. Ahmed, you said that your third recommendation was to invest in research on electric vehicles.

In which priority sectors should this research be conducted?

[*English*]

Dr. Ryan Ahmed: There are a few areas. The first is when it comes to the entire powertrain integration. The battery pack, electric motors and DC-DC converters—all of these units are an integrated platform. This is where China has an edge, I would say, compared to North American manufacturers.

There is another area as well, which is the second life. After these electric vehicle batteries have aged, we need to take these battery packs and repurpose them. They still have enough life to be used for a stationary application. That's another key research area as well.

● (1235)

The Chair: Thank you.

The time is up for MP Deschênes-Thériault. Now we will go to MP Blanchette-Joncas for six minutes.

Please go ahead.

[*Translation*]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Mr. Mohamed, electric vehicles collect sensitive data.

In your opinion, do users really have control over the data, or is it actually manufacturers?

[*English*]

Dr. Moataz Mohamed: I don't have the technical capacity to answer this question. I can answer from my own personal experience as a driver of an electric vehicle that there is an option to opt out of data sharing once you are operating it.

However, I don't know if this option is being honoured by the manufacturer or if the data has been collected regardless of my choice.

[*Translation*]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Price is a determining factor in the purchase of an electric vehicle. However, the federal government suspended its incentive program for the purchase of zero-emission vehicles in January 2025.

Ultimately, given the political pressure that was exerted, this program was reinstated in February 2026, but the financial assistance period will be temporary and regressive. The amounts granted will therefore be lower.

By doing so, aren't we sending the market a signal of medium-term instability, which would ensure that the very reason you mention is not taken into account?

[*English*]

Dr. Moataz Mohamed: I would agree that the change of the incentive package, the discontinuation of incentives and then reinstating the incentive brought some sensitivity and uncertainty into the market. I stress the importance of incentives because they offer an alternative pathway to reducing the cost of the vehicle significantly.

I think 2015 was the most generous incentive era, and we saw early adopters getting into EVs. However, what we are lacking here in incentives relates to pre-owned electric vehicle incentives and, in some provinces in Canada, restructuring incentives based on the price of the vehicle and the household income.

In short, incentives are one of the great tools to motivate electric vehicle adoption in any market.

[*Translation*]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: I would like to hear your opinion, in particular, on Quebec's performance, as it accounts for 46% of the country's electric vehicle fleet. We have been pioneers, particularly when it comes to incentives for purchasing electric vehicles.

Do you think that, aside from the financial aspect, there might be other reasons why Quebec has so many more electric vehicles, given its demographic weight relative to the rest of Canada?

[*English*]

Dr. Moataz Mohamed: Thank you.

Quebec is a pioneer and a very useful case study to dig deep into in order to understand and learn about the EV landscape.

As I noted in my opening remarks, we also have attitudinal and psychological factors that impact EV adoption. One that's very strong is the social norm. Educational and awareness campaigns to educate end-users on the benefits of electric vehicles, including the environmental benefits as well as the life-cycle cost benefits, are significantly important.

There's also the infrastructure intensity. What we have observed from our data is that a lot of people are not aware of the infrastructure. They don't see the charging stations because they don't use them, and their perception is that there are not enough charging stations. There is also peer pressure. When you see a lot of EVs on the road, this is an open invitation for other users to attend.

Aside from the cost, it's infrastructure in terms of charging infrastructure, especially in a multi-unit residential building. The second one is education and awareness. Both of them will motivate the market, as will stability in the incentive program.

[*Translation*]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Thank you.

You're talking about infrastructure and social norms. As you know, the federal government used public funds to purchase an oil pipeline that cost $34 billion. You understand that the oil being transported isn't even intended for local consumption, but rather for export. I'm trying to understand your perspective, based on your expertise.

We have the money to buy infrastructure for one type of energy—oil—but we still don't have the money to invest in infrastructure for new technologies that could reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

How do you perceive this somewhat contradictory message?

● (1240)

[*English*]

Dr. Moataz Mohamed: Given my limited expertise in the oil and gas industry, I can comment on the electrical vehicle infrastructure.

One of the untapped markets when it comes to EV consumers is the multi-unit residential buildings, because they don't have points of access for slow charging overnight. Also, the condominium agreements in many situations and cases are not updated to reflect a high percentage of electric vehicle buyers. If we are looking into electrical vehicle infrastructure, I would say that there is still a gap. It's the so-called chicken-and-egg situation. You provide the infrastructure and the visibility, and you hope that this will trigger users to utilize the infrastructure. It's the same as most of the fundamental services that we interact with on a daily basis.

If I were to comment on the EV infrastructure, I would echo the statement that there is a need to invest in electric vehicle infrastructure, especially when it comes to low-income neighbourhoods, as well as multi-unit residential buildings, just to make sure that there is a lens of equity and inclusion when it comes to the EV landscape.

The Chair: Thank you. The time is up for MP Blanchette-Joncas.

Now, before we end this panel, we will have three and a half minutes for Mr. Holman, three and a half minutes for MP Hirtle and then one minute and a half for MP Blanchette-Joncas.

We will begin with MP Holman for three and a half minutes.

Go ahead, MP Blanchette-Joncas?

[*Translation*]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Madam Chair, would it not be possible to extend the meeting rather than cutting off the speaking time of members addressing the witnesses?

[*English*]

The Chair: We have the committee for two hours. We will have to end it at one o'clock.

We need to discuss our scheduling. I mentioned at the beginning that we will have to do the scheduling part today, because we need some instructions in order to schedule further meetings.

[*Translation*]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Do we have the necessary resources to extend the meeting?

[*English*]

The Chair: I don't know what the availability is of members or our resources. We will have to get that checked. As I indicated in the beginning, we will schedule some time. Now we are eating into their time. We need 10 minutes for scheduling purposes.

I'll go to MP Holman for three and a half minutes.

Kurt Holman (London—Fanshawe, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you to all the witnesses who are here attending the science and research committee today.

Dr. Ahmed, you've worked across both industry and research in electric and autonomous vehicles. From your perspective, how important is it for Canada to maintain domestic engineering, manufacturing and supply chain capacity in the EV sector?

Dr. Ryan Ahmed: I believe it is absolutely critical at the moment. From watching and seeing the industry and on the research side, we know that we have world-class talent when it comes to battery pack integration and knowledge in battery management systems. To stay competitive, as I mentioned earlier, our issue occurs when it comes to the entire vehicle integration, integrating the battery pack with electric motors and inverters and optimizing the system as a whole.

I see that when it comes to talent. We have incredible talent. For example, last year the McMaster team won for the second time the battery workforce challenge, which is a North American competition. There were 12 North American teams from the U.S. and Canada. We have exceptional teams here. The issue occurs when it comes to integrated execution.

Kurt Holman: If a country relies more heavily on imported EVs rather than on domestic production, what are the risks in terms of loss of technical expertise, innovation capacity and long-term competitiveness?

Dr. Ryan Ahmed: My recommendation was to not open the entire market, specifically, for Chinese vehicles, as an example, but to have a conditional quota there. It's similar to what, for example, China did with Tesla. Back in 2019, they allowed Tesla to open a Gigafactory in China. They gave them cheap credit and cheap loans. They allowed them to invest there but on the condition that a Chinese supplier needed to be involved.

I see this as an opportunity for Canada as well in a similar fashion. It's not to just open to markets specifically and allow vehicles to be sold here, because that would have a significant impact on our workers, and we're not going to gain much out of it. The point is that if we open that, there needs to be a condition on the engineering content and IP specifically for Canadians to have Canadian suppliers involved. That's simply my recommendation to the committee.

● (1245)

Kurt Holman: We've heard proposals around importing partially assembled vehicles or knock-down kits. From an engineering and manufacturing standpoint, do these approaches build meaningful domestic capability, or do they risk limiting Canada's role to final stage assembly?

Dr. Ryan Ahmed: If you're importing just vehicles or doing just bare minimum assembly, there won't a lot of IP or knowledge gained specifically for Canadians. That's why, again, my recommendation was to have Canadian suppliers involved as a condition for critical minerals and for suppliers that are involved in the assembly of those vehicles. Any company that doesn't meet that minimum requirement would basically be excluded from that quota. That's my recommendation.

The Chair: Thank you, Dr. Ahmed.

Now, we will proceed to MP Hirtle for three and a half minutes.

Please go ahead, and welcome to the committee.

Alana Hirtle (Cumberland—Colchester, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm happy to be here.

Dr. Ahmed, I'm wondering if you finished your comments in response to MP Deschênes-Thériault's question earlier. Do you need another moment to finish that response?

Dr. Ryan Ahmed: I'm good. Those were all my thoughts.

Alana Hirtle: Okay.

We know that the number of new EVs sold around the world has only been increasing over the last few years. Nearly 24% of new cars sold in 2024 worldwide were EVs.

How does this increase in EVs worldwide improve opportunities for the Canadian auto sector?

Dr. Ryan Ahmed: I see the future as electric autonomous. We see that electric vehicles, from a cost standpoint and from an efficiency standpoint, are superior to internal combustion engine vehicles. Of course, right now there is a bit of a softening demand, specifically because of, first of all, customer acceptance. It takes a long time for customers to accept changing from internal combustion engine vehicles to electric and autonomous vehicles.

Of course, the $12,000 incentive being removed and then reinstated has an impact as well. It's also the price point, which is what Dr. Mohamed mentioned earlier on. Electric vehicles at a 30% premium compared to conventional vehicles is a roadblock for many. I would say that having the incentives and having access to affordable electric vehicles as well will expand the market quite significantly.

Of course, to answer your question specifically, we see electric vehicles as incredible opportunities for Canada and Canadians.

Alana Hirtle: Thank you.

Dr. Mohamed, the International Energy Agency has predicted that the share of electric cars in overall car sales is set to exceed 40% in 2030.

Is it fair to say that this is not experimentation, but that this is where the market and the money are going?

Dr. Moataz Mohamed: The short answer is yes. The long answer is that there will be some significant deviation within different countries. This is more of a global prediction. When you consider country-by-country specifics, you will have some leading countries like China and Scandinavian countries. Then you will have Europe, and go into the U.S. and Canada.

As Dr. Ahmed mentioned, the future is electric and autonomous, and the future is affordability as well.

The Chair: Thank you, Dr. Mohamed.

With that, the time comes to an end for MP Hirtle.

We will end this panel with MP Blanchette-Joncas for one and a half minutes, please.

[*Translation*]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Madam Chair, before we begin, can you tell us if the resources are available?

[*English*]

The Chair: We don't have an answer as of yet.

[*Translation*]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Okay.

Madam Chair, in the future, would it be possible to check whether we can extend the committee meeting before informing us?

[*English*]

The Chair: We cannot always do that. We have to make a decision based on every committee meeting with the agenda that we have.

Please go ahead with your time.

● (1250)

[*Translation*]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: You understand, Madam Chair, that I am losing speaking time. It is my parliamentary privilege to speak here.

If you wish to schedule sessions for the upcoming calendar, we can also schedule subcommittee meetings.

[*English*]

The Chair: We try to do subcommittee meetings whenever there is a chance available, but at times, we need some answers for our scheduling purposes. Setting up the agenda is the chair's prerogative. Whenever we need answers in order to schedule meetings, we have to do that. We have done it in the past. At times, we have to do it. We generally don't do it, but sometimes, when we need that, we have to do it.

[*Translation*]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Madam Chair, for your information, you have never convened a subcommittee meeting since this committee was established in this legislative session.

You understand that cutting into our speaking time, which is quite valuable, in order to plan the committee's schedule is not fair, in my opinion.

[*English*]

The Chair: I'll take your point, and we will look into what we can do.

With that, your time is up.

We will have to end this meeting.

[*Translation*]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Could you ask the clerk if we have a response regarding the available resources?

[*English*]

The Chair: We have some resources available, but it will be the will of committee members whether they want to adjourn the meeting or suspend the meeting. We are eating into the time we need for scheduling purposes. I would request that you please bring this up when we do the scheduling meeting. I can free the witnesses, so we can get the work done. If we have to schedule a meeting for next week, I need some answers today.

[*Translation*]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Madam Chair, would you like to ask the members if they wish to extend the committee meeting?

[*English*]

The Chair: Is it the will of members to extend the time for a few minutes?

I see some heads saying no, so there is no unanimous consent to extend the time.

Go ahead, MP Noormohamed.

Taleeb Noormohamed: We have, theoretically, seven minutes left. In that time, we need to be able to do scheduling, I presume.

We have a question from Maxime that needs to be addressed. How do we propose to do all of this in seven minutes? What can we reasonably do in seven minutes?

The Chair: I think I can get some answers for next week. Otherwise, we will have to cancel the meeting on Thursday. Is it the will of the members to have the meeting cancelled on Thursday? Because if I don't get some answers today....

Some hon. members: No.

The Chair: That means we have to make some decisions today.

With that, I would like to thank both our witnesses.

Thank you, Dr. Ahmed and Dr. Mohamed, for your important testimonies and for taking the time to appear before the committee. You can leave while we move to the business part of this meeting. Thanks a lot once again.

With that, I would like to get back to some of the scheduling we have to do.

Next Monday, April 27, will be our last meeting on the EV study, so witnesses are scheduled for that.

The committee needs to determine its next study. Pursuant to the practices of this committee that we have seen in the last year, it would be the Liberal Party's turn to choose the next study. The committee adopted a few motions to that effect on February 9. To hear which one will be the next study, I will turn to the Liberal members.

MP McKelvie.

Jennifer McKelvie: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I would be pleased to recommend that we undertake the study on the role of universities and colleges, the National Research Council of Canada, federal departments and industry experts in supporting Canada's dual-use and defence research needs as a component of NATO spending targets.

The Chair: This motion was adopted on February 9. Is everyone okay with that?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Okay That is good. That will be our next study.

I would like to bring to everyone's attention that the committee can resume the consideration of the draft reports on AMR. Version two will be sent to the members as soon as possible. When will that be by?

● (1255)

Kelsey Brennan (Committee Researcher): It will likely be tomorrow.

The Chair: Version two of the AMR report will be sent to members by tomorrow.

We also have to commence the consideration of the draft report on the impact of the criteria for awarding federal funding on research excellence in Canada on Thursday, April 30.

My suggest is this: I don't think we need much time for version two of the AMR report. We can quickly do that. Next, so that the analysts can start working and we don't waste much time, we can quickly give drafting instructions on AI and this EV study. Then we can go into the consideration of the draft report for the impact of criteria for awarding federal funding on research excellence. That's this coming Thursday, April 30.

Does that work for everybody?

MP Blanchette-Joncas.

[*Translation*]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Madam Chair, I would like to know when you have scheduled the review of the reports we are awaiting, both on antimicrobial resistance and on the criteria for excellence in research funding.

When have you scheduled it?

[*English*]

The Chair: That's what I just said.

Can we keep the noise level a little lower, and can I have everyone's attention, please?

That's what I am suggesting. It's that, for next week, we have the witnesses for the EV study on Monday, and then the meeting on Thursday will be for the consideration of the draft reports and drafting instructions. We will quickly go through version two of the AMR report, give drafting instructions on the AI study and the EV study, and then get into the consideration of the draft report on the impact of the criteria for awarding federal funding on research. That will be April 30.

MP McKelvie.

Jennifer McKelvie: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'd like to confirm, then, that the dual-use research study will start on May 4. What will the deadline for witnesses be?

The Chair: Yes, that's what the clerk is asking me. We have to decide the date for the submission of the witnesses. Is it possible that we do it by tomorrow before the end of the day?

An hon. member: What about Monday?

The Chair: My suggestion would be that partial lists be submitted by tomorrow and then that the final lists be submitted by 5 p.m. on Monday, April 27.

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: MP Blanchette-Joncas.

[*Translation*]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Madam Chair, that's too tight, in my opinion.

Giving 24 hours' notice to review the witness list is something we've never done before.

[*English*]

The Chair: Because we have to resume the study, you can give a partial list, whatever number you can give. The final submission of the witness list will be Monday at 5 p.m.

MP Noormohamed.

Taleeb Noormohamed: As we come to an end, I wanted to raise something that came up earlier in the committee.

Thus far, I think we have managed to work in a reasonably collegial, collaborative format. A couple of members have expressed some concern over some reasonably unparliamentary language that was used, in particular a comment that was made about somebody who may or may not consider switching teams, which folks were pretty offended by.

Among us, I wonder if there's a way we could try to—

An hon. member: [*Inaudible—Editor*]

Taleeb Noormohamed: I don't think it was very much on the record. That's part of the challenge.

The Chair: Thank you, MP Noormohamed, for pointing that out.

I would request that all members use parliamentary language and work collegially with each other. This is one of the topics, I think, where too much partisan politics is not needed. I think we can do important work and contribute towards building Canada strong. I hope the members can work together. Building Canada strong is not partisan.

There's one quick thing before we end this meeting.

On March 23, the committee adopted a motion to invite the chief statistician, the president of the NRC, the chief science adviser and the president of the Canadian Space Agency each for two hours. Lisa Campbell, president of the CSA, is confirmed for Monday, May 25. The chief statistician is confirmed for May 28.

The president of the NRC would be available June 4, 8 or 18. Can we send an invitation for June 4? Would that work for everybody?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Okay. The chief science adviser has scheduled activities outside Canada in May and would be available in June. We could invite her for June 1 or June 8. Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Okay.

Go ahead, MP Noormohamed.

● (1300)

Taleeb Noormohamed: Madam Chair, from a scheduling standpoint, we have the last meeting on EVs coming up. The meeting after that is going to be presumably the draft reports. God willing, we get through all of the draft reports in that meeting, inshallah. If not, then off we go to the next one.

Assuming we do, then we have break weeks. We would have two meetings on this study, and then would we go to the science advisers?

The Chair: What we will do is for next week, we will have the last meeting on the EVs and the consideration of the draft reports, and then we will start the new study.

We have break weeks coming up, so we will see about the rest of the work based on the dates that have been given, which are already scheduled for this motion which was passed on March 23 in regard to the chief statistician. Then we will schedule these.

Taleeb Noormohamed: My point is that it seems once we finish with the advisers, we have two more meetings left on the upcoming study and then we're pretty much done.

The Chair: Yes, I will put all these things in the calendar, and the clerk will send it to everyone.

We have six weeks left before we rise for the summer. I will put everything in the calendar and work with the clerk. I will work on the calendar with the clerk, and then the clerk will send a tentative calendar to all the members.

Is it the will of the committee to adjourn the meeting?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: The meeting is adjourned.