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Tuesday, March 10, 2026

Co-Chairs: Marcus PowlowskiYonah Martin



Special Joint Committee on Medical Assistance in Dying

Tuesday, March 10, 2026

• (1840)

[*English*]

The Joint Clerk of the Committee (Matthieu Boulianne): Honourable Senators and members of Parliament, there is quorum.

As the Senate joint clerk of your committee, it is my duty to preside over the election of the Senate joint chair. I'm ready to receive a nomination to that effect.

The Honourable Pierre Dalphond (Senator, Quebec (De Lorimier), PSG): I propose Senator Yonah Martin.

The Honourable Pamela Wallin (Senator, Saskatchewan, CSG): I second that.

The Joint Clerk (Matthieu Boulianne): It is moved by the Honourable Senator Dalphond and seconded by Senator Wallin that Senator Martin be the joint chair of this committee.

Is it agreed, honourable members?

(Motion agreed to)

The Joint Clerk (Matthieu Boulianne): I invite Senator Martin to the chair.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

The Joint Chair (Hon. Yonah Martin): Good evening, colleagues.

We made it on time. There was a vote pending in the Senate, and changes were happening on the fly. It's nice to be here.

Welcome to some of our new members. I've been the co-chair with my colleagues, some of whom are also returning for this third round—for us, in any event.

Thank you very much for your confidence and for your nomination, Pierre Dalphond and my colleagues.

We're going to proceed to the election of the Senate deputy chair. I'm ready to receive a nomination to that effect.

Senator Wallin.

Hon. Pamela Wallin: I would like to nominate Senator Dalphond.

The Joint Chair (Hon. Yonah Martin): The Honourable Senator Wallin moved that the Honourable Senator Dalphond be the Senate deputy chair of this committee.

Is it agreed to adopt this motion?

(Motion agreed to)

The Joint Chair (Hon. Yonah Martin): I will turn it over to our joint clerk from the House.

The Joint Clerk of the Committee (Jean-François Lafleur): Thank you, Madam Co-Chair.

[*Translation*]

Honourable members of the committee, pursuant to Standing Order 106(3)(a), as the joint clerk of the committee, I will now preside over the election of the joint chair and the vice-chairs from the House of Commons.

I must inform members that the joint clerk of the committee can only receive motions for the election of the chair. The clerk cannot participate in debate or receive other types of motions.

Pursuant to the motion adopted by the House of Commons on November 20, 2025, the chair must be a member of the government party.

I am ready to receive motions for the chair.

Mr. Maloney, you have the floor.

[*English*]

James Maloney (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.): I'd like to nominate Dr. Marcus Powlowski.

The Joint Clerk (Jean-François Lafleur): Thank you very much, Mr. Maloney.

It has been moved by Mr. Maloney that Mr. Powlowski be co-chair of the special joint committee.

Are there any other nominations? I don't see any.

(Motion agreed to)

The Joint Clerk (Jean-François Lafleur): I declare Mr. Powlowski duly elected. Congratulations.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

The Joint Chair (Marcus Powlowski (Thunder Bay—Rainy River, Lib.)): Thank you all.

This is a new one for me. I've done many things in my life, but this is my first time being the chair of a committee. I would say I have a particularly unenviable job, considering I have a bunch of real lawyers here, and Judge Dalphond, who was previously a judge at the Court of Appeal.

• (1845)

[*Translation*]

It's a little difficult for me to be in charge here, but thank you for voting for me.

Now we're going to choose the two vice-chairs from among opposition party members.

[*English*]

I need a nominee from the Conservative Party of Canada.

Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Sturgeon River, CPC): I would like to nominate Tamara Jansen.

The Joint Chair (Marcus Powlowski): Do we all agree on Tamara Jansen?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Joint Chair (Marcus Powlowski): Tamara Jansen is elected vice-chair.

[*Translation*]

We're going to vote for the second vice-chair.

Is there a nominee for second vice-chair?

[*English*]

James Maloney: I'd like to nominate Mr. Luc Thériault.

[*Translation*]

The Joint Chair (Marcus Powlowski): Does everyone agree with this nomination?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*English*]

The Joint Chair (Marcus Powlowski): Congratulations.

The Joint Chair (Hon. Yonah Martin): Congratulations to all our colleagues who were duly elected to be part of the executive.

There are a few routine motions to go through. These are the proposed routine motions in your package.

The first motion states:

That the committee retain, as needed and at the discretion of the joint chairs, the services of one or more analysts from the Library of Parliament to assist it in its work.

Do I have a mover for this motion? I see Senator Moodie.

Is it agreed to adopt the motion?

(Motion agreed to)

The Joint Chair (Marcus Powlowski): We're going to alternate.

The second routine motion states:

That the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure be composed of the joint chairs, the vice-chairs, one additional member from the Senate and one additional member from the government; and that the subcommittee work in a spirit of collaboration.

Who would like to move that? Ms. Koutrakis moves it. As a second, we have Jeremy.

(Motion agreed to)

The Joint Chair (Hon. Yonah Martin) : As a joint chair, I would like to nominate Senator Moodie for the subcommittee.

Senator Wallin, I know you were going to do it.

Hon. Pamela Wallin: I will second it.

The Joint Chair (Marcus Powlowski): We need one volunteer from the government to sit on the subcommittee.

Annie Koutrakis (Vimy, Lib.): I nominate James Maloney.

The Joint Chair (Marcus Powlowski): James, do you accept? Okay.

[*Translation*]

Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): I have a question, Madam Chair.

The Joint Chair (Hon. Yonah Martin): Go ahead, Mr. Thériault

Luc Thériault: I didn't catch that everyone was in agreement.

I may have had a slight objection, but if everyone is in agreement, let's proceed.

The Joint Chair (Marcus Powlowski): Okay.

[*English*]

The Joint Chair (Hon. Yonah Martin): The next routine motion states:

That the subcommittee be empowered to make decisions on behalf of the committee with respect to its agenda, to invite witnesses, and to schedule hearings and that the subcommittee report its decisions to the committee.

Do I have a mover for this motion? I see Senator Wells, from Alberta.

Is it agreed to adopt the motion?

(Motion agreed to)

The Joint Chair (Marcus Powlowski): Routine motion number four states:

That the joint chairs be empowered to direct communications officer(s) assigned to the committee in the development of communications plans and products where appropriate and to request the services of the Senate Communications Directorate and of the House of Commons Social Media Team for the purposes of the promotion of their work.

Does someone want to move it?

• (1850)

Hon. Pamela Wallin: I so move.

The Joint Chair (Marcus Powlowski): Is everyone in agreement on that?

(Motion agreed to)

The Joint Chair (Hon. Yonah Martin): The next item is the fifth motion, which states:

That witnesses be given five minutes to make their opening statement; that whenever possible, witnesses provide the committee with their opening statements 72 hours in advance; and that during the questioning of witnesses, the time allocated to each questioner be as follows: for the first round of questioning, five minutes to a representative of the party in the following order: House of Commons Conservative Party, House of Commons Liberal Party, Bloc Québécois, and three minutes for each senator; for the second round of questioning, three minutes to a representative of the party in the following order: House of Commons Conservative Party, House of Commons Liberal Party and two minutes for the Bloc Québécois, and two minutes for two senators on a rotational basis to be determined by the Senate parliamentary groups.

Is there a mover for this motion?

Michael Cooper: I so move.

The Joint Chair (Hon. Yonah Martin): Is it agreed to adopt this motion?

(Motion agreed to)

The Joint Chair (Marcus Powlowski): Motion number six says:

That the joint clerks of the committee be authorized to distribute documents to members of the committee and only when such documents exist in both official languages, and that the witnesses be advised accordingly.

[Translation]

I have the routine motions in English only. I'm sorry, Mr. Thériault.

Luc Thériault: It's okay.

[English]

The Joint Chair (Marcus Powlowski): I'm wrong.

[Translation]

We have them in French too.

[English]

Hon. Pamela Wallin: I so move.

The Joint Chair (Marcus Powlowski): We have a mover of that motion. Is everyone in agreement on it?

(Motion agreed to)

The Joint Chair (Marcus Powlowski): Motion number seven states:

That the joint clerks of the committee be authorized to make the necessary arrangements to provide working meals for the committee and its subcommittees.

This is perhaps the most important motion. Everyone has their hand up to move this one. Ms. Jaczek moves it.

Do we all agree that we want food? Is anybody on a diet?

(Motion agreed to)

The Joint Chair (Hon. Yonah Martin): Motion number eight states:

That either joint chair or, in accordance with the direction of the joint chairs, either joint clerk be authorized to approve payment of expenditures of the committee.

Is there a mover? I see Ms. Jansen.

Is everyone in agreement?

(Motion agreed to)

The Joint Chair (Marcus Powlowski): Motion number nine is on the travel, accommodations and living expenses of witnesses:

That, if requested, reasonable travel, accommodation and living expenses be reimbursed to witnesses upon application, not exceeding two representatives per organization; and that in exceptional circumstances, payment for more representatives be made at the discretion of the joint chairs.

Is there a mover for this motion? I see Ms. Koutrakis. It's seconded by Senator Moodie.

(Motion agreed to)

The Joint Chair (Hon. Yonah Martin): Motion number 10 states:

That, unless otherwise ordered, each committee member be allowed to be accompanied by one staff person at in camera meetings and that one additional person from each House officer's office be allowed to be present, and for the Senate, that the leader or facilitator of the Government and each recognized party or parliamentary group be entitled to one additional staff member at these meetings.

Do I have a mover? I see Ms. Tesser Derksen. Thank you.

Is everyone in agreement?

(Motion agreed to)

The Joint Chair (Marcus Powlowski): Motion number 11 is on the transcripts of in camera meetings:

That one copy of the transcript of each in camera meeting be securely retained by the joint clerks for consultation by members of the committee or by their staff; and that the analysts assigned to the committee have access to the in camera transcripts.

Is there a mover for this one? I see Mr. Bailey. It's seconded by Senator Wallin.

Is it agreed to adopt the motion?

(Motion agreed to)

• (1855)

The Joint Chair (Hon. Yonah Martin): Motion number 12 states:

That the committee publish its proceedings in both official languages.

Senator Moodie moves it.

Is it agreed to adopt the motion?

(Motion agreed to)

The Joint Chair (Marcus Powlowski): Motion number 13 on notices of motions states:

That 48 hours' notice be required for any substantive motion to be considered by the committee, unless the substantive motion relates directly to business then under consideration, provided that:

- (a) the notice be filed with the joint clerks of the committee no later than 4:00 p.m. from Monday to Thursday, and no later than 2:30 p.m. on Friday;
- (b) the motion be distributed to members and the offices of the whips of each recognized party in both official languages by the joint clerks on the same day the said notice was transmitted if it was received no later than the deadline hour; and
- (c) notices received after the deadline hour or on non-business days be deemed to have been received during the next business day.

Is there a mover? I see Ms. Jansen.

Is it agreed?

(Motion agreed to)

The Joint Chair (Hon. Yonah Martin): Motion number 14 states:

That the joint clerks inform each witness who is to appear before the committee that the House administration support team must conduct technical tests to check the connectivity and the equipment used to ensure the best possible sound quality; and that the joint chairs advise the committee, at the start of each meeting, of any witness who did not perform the required technical tests.

Is there a mover? I see Mr. Thériault. Thank you.

[*Translation*]

Luc Thériault: I would like to comment on that. I want to make sure that the people in charge of sound in the room and both joint chairs are aware of this.

In committee meetings, I often have to point out that the volume for the witnesses, the chair and the members is much, much louder than the volume for the interpreters in my earpiece. As a result, I have to max out my volume, which is really dangerous for me and for them. Therefore, while sound tests are being conducted for witnesses participating via Zoom, it is also extremely important to conduct sound tests for participants in the room so the volume is balanced and I can stop having tinnitus.

The Joint Chair (Marcus Powlowski): That was a common problem at the Standing Committee on Health.

Luc Thériault: Good. It's on the record. Thank you.

[*English*]

The Joint Chair (Hon. Yonah Martin): Is it agreed that we adopt this motion?

(Motion agreed to)

The Joint Chair (Marcus Powlowski): Motion number 15 states:

That all documents submitted for committee business that do not come from a federal department or members' or senators' offices, or that have not been translated by the Translation Bureau, be sent for prior linguistic review by the Translation Bureau before being distributed to members.

Is there a mover for this motion? I see Ms. Koutrakis.

Is it agreed?

(Motion agreed to)

The Joint Chair (Marcus Powlowski): Motion number 16 is on access to digital binders:

That the joint clerks of the committee be authorized to grant access to the committee's digital binder/portal to the offices of the whips of each recognized party.

Is there a mover for this one? I see Ms. Jansen.

Is it agreed?

(Motion agreed to)

The Joint Chair (Hon. Yonah Martin): Motion number 17 states:

That the joint chairs shall have the ability to fully participate, including to move motions and to vote on all items before the committee, and any vote resulting in a tie vote shall mean that the item is negated.

Is there a mover?

Michael Cooper: I so move.

The Joint Chair (Hon. Yonah Martin): Is it agreed to adopt this motion?

(Motion agreed to)

The Joint Chair (Marcus Powlowski): The intention was to go into camera for the next part, but I want to ask something beforehand.

It's the first time I've sat as chair. It's certainly made me realize the importance of the people who sit beside us who do a lot of this work and are a big part of making these committees function.

I would ask the clerks and the analysts to briefly introduce themselves so we know who they are and what their role is. Now that I sit up here, I realize how little of what happens here is me and how much more of it is the people sitting beside us.

Isabelle Chénier (Committee Researcher): My name is Isabelle Chénier. I've been at the library for about three years. I'm filling in for Julian Walker.

Tu-Quynh Trinh (Committee Researcher): My name is Tu-Quynh Trinh. As Isabelle mentioned, we have a third analyst, Julian Walker, who will be supporting this committee. Unfortunately, he couldn't be here tonight.

We're all very honoured to help you with your work here. Thank you.

● (1900)

[*Translation*]

The Joint Clerk (Matthieu Boulianne): My name is Matthieu Boulianne. I'm the joint clerk, together with my House of Commons colleague, for the Senate.

The Joint Clerk (Jean-François Lafleur): Hello, my name is Jean-François Lafleur. I'm the joint clerk, together with my colleague, Mr. Boulianne, for the House of Commons. I'm also the clerk of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights.

[*English*]

The Joint Chair (Hon. Yonah Martin): This concludes our organizational component of the meeting. There is a general agreement, I believe, to conclude this organizational meeting and go in camera.

[*Proceedings continue in camera*]

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