

Legislative
Assembly
of Ontario



Assemblée
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de l'Ontario

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

G-6

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

G-6

**Standing Committee on
General Government**

Committee business

**Comité permanent des
affaires gouvernementales**

Travaux du comité

2nd Session
42nd Parliament

Thursday 24 March 2022

2^e session
42^e législature

Jeudi 24 mars 2022

Chair: Logan Kanapathi
Clerk: Isaiah Thorning

Président : Logan Kanapathi
Greffier : Isaiah Thorning

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ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON
GENERAL GOVERNMENT**

**COMITÉ PERMANENT DES
AFFAIRES GOUVERNEMENTALES**

Thursday 24 March 2022

Jeudi 24 mars 2022

The committee met at 1301 in room 151.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Isaiah Thorning): Good afternoon, honourable members.

In the absence of a Chair and Vice-Chair, it is my duty to call upon you to elect an Acting Chair. Are there any nominations? Mr. Bailey.

Mr. Robert Bailey: I'll nominate Mr. Pettapiece.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Isaiah Thorning): Okay. Mr. Pettapiece, do you accept the nomination?

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Yes, I do.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Isaiah Thorning): Are there any further nominations? There being no further nominations, I declare the nominations closed and Mr. Pettapiece elected Acting Chair of the committee.

The Acting Chair (Mr. Randy Pettapiece): Good afternoon, everybody. The Standing Committee on General Government will now come to order.

We are joined by staff from legislative research, Hansard, and broadcast and recording.

Please wait until I recognize you before starting to speak. As always, all comments should go through the Chair.

Are there any questions before we begin?

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

The Acting Chair (Mr. Randy Pettapiece): Seeing none, on the agenda is committee business. Are there any motions? Mr. Bouma.

Mr. Will Bouma: Thank you, Chair. Through you, I move that the committee enter closed session for the purposes of organizing committee business.

The Acting Chair (Mr. Randy Pettapiece): Ms. French.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: If this is an appropriate time to have discussion on the motion, I would like to ensure, while we have this opportunity to have anything on the record, that I say that I don't understand, again, why this government feels the need always to do things behind closed doors when we are here to discuss public committee business that, again, as I've said many times at these committees, should be open and transparent. Behind closed doors just seems needless. I don't think we're going to get into any secrets or discussions. I think that outlining the plan for this bill or any other, frankly, should not be in camera and should be public, should be accountable, should be transparent.

I will also take this opportunity to request a recorded vote. If it's not the appropriate time, I'll do that after. But that is my statement on this. I don't know why the secrecy, all the time. That finishes my statement, Chair.

The Acting Chair (Mr. Randy Pettapiece): Mr. Glover.

Mr. Chris Glover: I just want to add my voice to objecting to going in camera. We've done this in the committee since this government took office, and I have no idea why we go in camera for these committee meetings. This is public business. This has to do with the people of Ontario. It's their money that we're going to be talking about. It's their broadband access that we're going to be talking about. None of this should be hidden from them. None of the deliberations should be hidden from them. It should all be in public. So I'll just state my objection to going in camera.

The Acting Chair (Mr. Randy Pettapiece): Mr. Bourgouin.

M. Guy Bourgouin: Écoute, je veux mettre mon objection sur le record. Je ne comprends pas pourquoi. C'est un gouvernement qui dit qu'il est transparent, mais quand ça vient aux comités, puis qu'on semble encore demander que ça soit sous, pas embargo, là—mais que les commettants ou les personnes de l'Ontario ne puissent pas voir ce qu'on discute—pour discuter d'un projet de loi qui va les affecter, je trouve que c'est un manque de transparence. C'est un manque d'intégrité.

On devrait, comme élu, promouvoir l'intégrité et la transparence. Quand on voit dans un comité comme ça que l'opposition est constamment après se battre pour avoir de la transparence—après ça, on se demande pourquoi le monde est cynique envers les politiciens. Ce sont des conditions comme ça qu'on impose aux personnes de l'Ontario. Je trouve que ça n'a pas sa place. On est élu par ce monde, par les personnes de l'Ontario, par nos commettants. Ça veut dire qu'on devrait être transparent. Ça ne devrait pas être caché, puis on devrait débattre ces projets de loi ouvertement, avec transparence et intégrité.

The Acting Chair (Mr. Randy Pettapiece): Mr. McDonell.

Mr. Jim McDonell: I just wanted to add that the House here, the Legislature, is based on traditions, and as we did under the former governments—the NDP, Liberal and Conservative governments—committee business has always been done not in public. We're just continuing on with that tradition.

The Acting Chair (Mr. Randy Pettapiece): Ms. French.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: Further to my original point, having dealt with the government before this government, which—I don't have too many nice things to say. However, I will say that committee business was committee business. Whether people showed up or not was not relevant; it was still accessible by Hansard transcript. For things to go in camera or things to become closed session when we're supposedly dealing with organizing committee business, there is no reason. That is not a tradition. That is just the druthers of this particular government, it would seem.

Again, if this is an appropriate time, let me reiterate that I would like a recorded vote when it comes to this.

The Acting Chair (Mr. Randy Pettapiece): Okay, thank you. Any other comments? If none, I will now put the question. Shall the motion carry? A recorded vote.

Ayes

Bailey, Bouma, McDonell, Sabawy, Wai.

Nays

Bourgouin, French, Glover.

The Acting Chair (Mr. Randy Pettapiece): I declare the motion carried.

We will now enter closed session for the purposes of organizing committee business.

The committee continued in closed session at 1308.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT

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