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**Official Report  
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(Hansard)**

SP-17

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

SP-17

**Standing Committee on  
Social Policy**

Committee business

1<sup>st</sup> Session  
43<sup>rd</sup> Parliament  
Monday 15 May 2023

**Comité permanent de  
la politique sociale**

Travaux du comité

1<sup>re</sup> session  
43<sup>e</sup> législature  
Lundi 15 mai 2023

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Chair: Brian Riddell  
Clerk: Lesley Flores

Président : Brian Riddell  
Greffière : Lesley Flores

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL POLICY

## COMITÉ PERMANENT DE LA POLITIQUE SOCIALE

Monday 15 May 2023

Lundi 15 mai 2023

*The committee met at 0900 in committee room 2.*

### COMMITTEE BUSINESS

**The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell):** Good morning, everyone. The Standing Committee on Social Policy will now come to order.

As always, please wait to be recognized by myself before speaking. All questions and comments will need to go through the Chair.

On the agenda this morning is committee business. Are there any motions? I recognize MPP Martin.

**Mrs. Robin Martin:** I move that, pursuant to standing order 63(d), the following time be allotted to the consideration of the estimates of the ministries selected by the committee:

—the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services for three hours;

—the Ministry of Colleges and Universities for three hours;

—the Ministry of Education for three hours;

—the Ministry of Health for three hours;

—the Ministry of Long-Term Care for two hours;

—the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility for two hours; and

That the ministers responsible for those respective ministries be invited to appear before the committee; and

That for each ministry the minister be allotted 20 minutes to make an opening statement followed by question and answer in rotations of 20 minutes for the official opposition members of the committee, 10 minutes for the independent member of the committee, and 20 minutes for the government members of the committee for the remainder of the allotted time; and

That the committee meet for the purpose of considering the estimates of the selected ministries at the following times:

—on Monday, June 5, 2023 from 9 a.m. until 10:15 a.m. and 1 p.m. until 6 p.m.; and

—on Tuesday, June 6, 2023 from 9 a.m. until 10:15 a.m. and 3 p.m. until 6 p.m.; and

—on Monday, September 11, 2023 from 9 a.m. until 10:15 a.m. and 1 p.m. until 6 p.m.; and

—on Tuesday, September 12, 2023 from 9 a.m. until 10:15 a.m.; and

That if any invited minister is unavailable to appear before the committee, the parliamentary assistant or parliamentary assistants may appear before the committee in their place.

**The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell):** Is there any debate? I recognize MPP Gélinas.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Could we have a three-minute recess so I can do the math to see how many hours we've got booked and all that?

**The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell):** I don't see why not.

*The committee recessed from 0902 to 0907.*

**The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell):** Is there any further debate? I recognize MPP Gélinas.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** The schedule is tight. What happens if something derails, as in, we are called for a vote and we lose a few minutes in all of that? I'm just curious to see. Would that mean that we would not get the last ministry's minister, the Minister for Seniors and Accessibility? If we're called for a vote or there's something happening so that we cannot continue to do estimates in the time that is scheduled there, will we lose that—or is there an openness that we would continue in order? Let's start with that question.

**The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell):** Is there any further debate?

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Are we going to do the question first so it gives us an idea on what we could talk about with the other—because I had some comments I want to make around long-term care, but—

*Interjections.*

**The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell):** So what we would do is recess and look at it then.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Yes, if anything happens that we have to leave, will we lose [*inaudible*]. The first time I think [*inaudible*]. So what happens if we run out of time, as in, we're now Tuesday, September 12, it's 10:15, but we're not done the hours allocated at the top?

**The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell):** The committee would need to decide on changing the schedule at that time. I don't think we need to worry about that until that approximate time happens.

I recognize MPP Gretzky.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** I think what my colleague is asking is, there are only so many hours per each ministry, so if we have to leave here, does that time stop? Say we've gone through the first five ministries and the last is the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility, for two hours, and we've been called out during other ministries for votes and that takes 10 or 15 minutes. Does that time count toward the allotted hours, or does the clock stop, so that when we come back from votes we still have the full—

**The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell):** MPP Gretzky, the clock would stop.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** So we don't lose any time—

**The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell):** Correct.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** Thank you.

**The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell):** Is there any further debate? I recognize MPP Shamji.

**Mr. Adil Shamji:** First, a point of clarification: The motion, as written, does that also indicate the sequence in which these estimates will be—

**The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell):** Could you repeat that a little louder, please?

**Mr. Adil Shamji:** I'm sorry. In regard to the motion here, as written, the sequence in which the ministries are listed—does that also reflect the sequence in which they will be reviewed?

**The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell):** The sequence was determined last week, and that's what we'll be following—not the one that's listed on the sheet.

I recognize MPP Gélinas.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Last week, the first one was health, not children, community and social services.

**Mrs. Robin Martin:** No, I have it. It was children, community and social services.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** No. The opposition gets to pick first, and my first pick was health.

**Mrs. Robin Martin:** But I brought the motion and this is it.

**The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell):** The order will be based on the selection from last week.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Could you give us the selection from last week?

**The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell):** Yes, we can.

Any further debate?

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Can we see the selection before I talk? I don't want to embarrass the government if I don't have to.

**The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell):** Just give us a second, MPP Gates.

The order of the selection will be: Ministry of Health; Ministry of Education; Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services; Ministry of Long-Term Care; Ministry of Colleges and Universities; and, finally, Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** So when we come on Monday, June 5, the first ministry will be health?

**The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell):** As stated, yes.

I recognize MPP Gates.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Can we get this in writing, please? This is what was given to me when I came in. It's obviously wrong. Obviously, the government was wrong on the order. Can we get that so we have it in writing so somebody doesn't come up with some other thing to vote on or something like that?

**The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell):** Yes, you can. This is just in alphabetical order right now, but we will give you the correct one before you leave this chamber.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Okay. But the government had said that's how they are going to do them. I just wanted to—so

we are clear and we don't come where we're wasting the time of the committee to argue our order again.

I want to talk about two things. One, we have a crisis in health care, and I really believe that three hours is unacceptable. We've got Niagara Week this week here at Queen's Park. They're coming with some asks around health care, around paramedics. Three hours is really disrespectful for what's going on to our nurses, our doctors, our paramedics. I understand that they want to rush everything through. This is very similar to what we did last year, quite frankly.

Then I want to talk, in the second part, if I can, Chair—okay, go ahead. You put your finger up.

**The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell):** I recognize MPP Martin.

**Mrs. Robin Martin:** On a point of order: The only purpose of today's motion is to add an hour to the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility and the time to do that in the order of proceedings. The rest of this we discussed the last time we brought this motion. So all we're doing is giving an extra hour for seniors and accessibility here this morning. And I would like to call for a vote.

**The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell):** Any further debate?

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I'm going to continue talking if I can.

**The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell):** I recognize MPP Gates.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I am going to talk about long-term care again.

I brought forward a question last week on Orchard Villa. I believe the minister has an obligation to come here to defend going against the city council, going against the community.

Nothing has changed in long-term care. We're certainly having staffing issues. They're using agency employees. They're paying between \$150 to \$300 for agency nurses and PSWs.

At Orchard Villa—I'm going to repeat it again—we had our seniors die of dehydration. The military had to be called in—rotten food, soiled diapers, 80 people died—and the minister is defending giving Orchard Villa and the company a 30-year contract. I think it's awful, quite frankly.

We know that we're up to 5,600 who have died in long-term care.

MPP Jordan is here. I've had lots of discussions around this issue, but to come and say that we're going to have two hours for long-term care—and I know it happened last time, by the way. It was a fair question from my colleague, on what happens when we don't get to it. Well, we didn't get to long-term care. It was deliberate—deliberately done, because I talked to the minister. And I'm sure they're going to try to do the same thing again here. They don't want to talk about long-term care.

After I raised this issue, the minister said that the NDP doesn't want to build long-term-care facilities. I want to be clear: Long before this government came in, I was fighting for long-term care, and we have got a long-term-care facility that's being built currently in Fort Erie. For my colleague from St. Catharines—we have one in St. Catharines that she was there to talk about. So we are working

with the Niagara region. We're working with everybody to make sure we're building long-term-care facilities. I think we should continue to do that.

I believe we should build 1.5 million homes too—not on the greenbelt. That's kind of how I feel, and that's how our party feels.

But the minister did say we don't agree with that. I want to be very clear: I agree with building long-term care. I don't believe that we should be giving Orchard Villa, where 80 people died, a 30-year agreement, and I don't believe we should be going against the town of Pickering, that council, that community, that has suffered incredible—the families have suffered incredibly in that community.

We talked very personally when you were the Chair the other day, and I apologize for how I responded, but it's tough when you lose your mum and dad or your brother or your sister.

I'll just finish by saying that two hours is unacceptable. It's unacceptable to every senior in the province of Ontario. It's unacceptable to every family member who has lost somebody with COVID in long-term care. And it's certainly unacceptable to have 30-year agreements for people—

**The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell):** Thank you for your comments.

Now I'll recognize MPP Barnes.

**Ms. Patrice Barnes:** Not to disrespect the parents, but we were just talking about—

**The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell):** Speak into the mike, please.

**Ms. Patrice Barnes:** Sorry; I was just talking and—could we get to the vote of just setting the time limits, please?

**The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell):** Yes, so, let's put it—are all members ready to vote?

**Interjections:** Recorded vote.

#### Ayes

Barnes, Gallagher Murphy, Jordan, Martin, Pierre, Quinn, Wai.

#### Nays

Gates, Gélinas, Gretzky, Shamji.

**The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell):** The motion is therefore carried.

This concludes our business for today. The committee is now adjourned until 9 a.m. on Tuesday, May 16, 2023, when we will begin clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 98.

*The committee adjourned at 0921.*

## **STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL POLICY**

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Ms. Patrice Barnes (Ajax PC)

Mr. Wayne Gates (Niagara Falls ND)

M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas (Nickel Belt ND)

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