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# Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities

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Monday, August 8, 2022

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Chair: Mr. Peter Schiefke





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• (1405)

[English]

**The Chair (Mr. Peter Schiefke (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, Lib.)):** I call the meeting to order.

Welcome to meeting number 26 of the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities. Pursuant to Standing Order 106(4), a meeting has been requested by four members of the committee to discuss their request to undertake a study of airport delays and cancellations.

Today's meeting is taking place in a hybrid format pursuant to the House order of Thursday, June 23, 2022. For members in the room—and it does not seem there are any, but I will say this anyway—if you wish to speak, please raise your hand. For members on Zoom, please use the “raise hand” function. The clerk and I will manage a speaking order as best we can. We appreciate your patience and understanding in this regard.

We will now begin by opening the floor for discussion on the request to meet. With that, I'm passing the floor over to Ms. Lantsman.

Ms. Lantsman, the floor is yours.

**Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I will keep it short.

I think the chaos at Toronto Pearson International Airport has reached a deplorable stage. Pearson has been ranked the worst airport in the world on flight delays, with Montreal coming in second. That was in July, months after the government was made aware of the predictable mess.

We had committee testimony warning us that passenger traffic would surge this summer. We saw huge airport lineups at the beginning of April, and I think at this point it's unacceptable for the government to be taken by surprise or continue to tell Canadians that they're working on it.

All of the warning signs were there, and there should be at the very least a plan to fix the issues that we're seeing now, which are still happening and have not been meaningfully improved for passengers. The international news has covered the story. Our own outlets have documented the delays. Ordinary Canadians are still posting pictures—as recently as yesterday in Montreal—as they wait to get on planes and into customs halls. It's our view that the minister should address the critical issues facing our airports so that Canadians can understand that the government is doing something to fix

the mess and not simply waiting out the peak travel season in an effort to further abdicate their responsibility.

I think Pearson and the GTA statistically stand out for poor performance, followed closely by Montreal. Those are well-known stats, as they are featured in major international publications such as The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal and the BBC. I think that poses a serious conundrum for our tourism sector and our economy as a whole, so I think it's time for the minister to update the committee.

As such, Mr. Chair, I'd like to present the following motion, which was also detailed in the letter you received from members of this committee:

That the Minister of Transport appear before the committee for no fewer than 2 hours, on the subject of airport delays and cancellations, ArriveCan and re-imposed measures on travellers. That this meeting take place no later than August 22, 2022, and that, if possible, this meeting be televised.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms. Lantsman.

I believe, having spoken with all parties, that there is support for this motion. Therefore, I'd simply ask all members if there are any objections to adopting it.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** Colleagues, the clerk has flagged that August 22 falls within the next critical system maintenance window—

[Translation]

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Mr. Chair, I would've liked for the motion to be read before it was adopted. That's why I had my hand up.

**The Chair:** Are you talking about the motion?

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** Yes, I'm talking about the motion.

We heard Ms. Lantsman speak to the motion, but would it be possible for someone to read it?

**The Chair:** Ms. Lantsman just read it.

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** She read the whole thing?

**The Chair:** Yes.

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** All right. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Great.

[*English*]

Colleagues, the clerk has flagged that August 22 falls within the next critical maintenance window of August 22 to September 9. With that in mind, we will be working to secure the minister before next Friday, August 19, if there are no objections.

Okay. Thank you, everyone, for participating.

Seeing no other business, this meeting is adjourned.

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