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## Legislative Committee on Bill C-30

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**Chair**

**Mr. Laurie Hawn**

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Monday, February 26, 2007

• (1735)

[English]

**The Chair (Mr. Laurie Hawn (Edmonton Centre, CPC)):** I'll call the meeting to order.

[Translation]

Welcome to meeting No. 15 of the Legislative Committee on Bill C-30.

Today, we will be hearing from two organizations. First, we have Mr. Sidney Ribaux, General Coordinator and Co-founder of Équiterre.

[English]

Also, from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, we have Mr. Gordon Steeves, first vice-president, and Ms. Mary Jane Middelkoop, senior policy analyst.

We will start with Monsieur Ribaux.

[Translation]

You have 10 minutes for your presentation. Then, we will move on to the questions.

[English]

Monsieur Ribaux, the floor is yours.

[Translation]

**Mr. Sidney Ribaux (General Coordinator and Co-founder, Équiterre):** Thank you very much and good afternoon, members of the committee. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to testify before you.

Our organization, Équiterre, has existed for over 12 years and we promote solutions to individuals, businesses and governments. We work with over 100 organizations every year and we reach approximately 300,000 people in Quebec.

In its current form, Canada's Clean Air Act will not allow us to appropriately address problems related to pollution and greenhouse gases in Canada. Équiterre believes that serious changes need to be made to this legislation in order to ensure sustainable protection of our environment.

Canadians and Quebecers have high expectations with regard to the environment and Kyoto in particular. Équiterre believes that Parliament and the government must take action in seven areas of intervention that we have identified.

First, reaffirm Canada's long-term commitment to the Kyoto Protocol. Second, set specific and quantifiable targets for 2008-2012 in order to honour our commitment to reduce emissions by 6% below 1990 levels. Third, set intermediate and long-term reduction targets in order to ensure an 80% reduction in emissions by 2050. Fourth, regulate heavy industry, which represents 50% of GHG emissions in Canada. Fifth, regulate energy efficiency and greenhouse gas emissions standards for auto manufacturers that meet or exceed the best practices in North America. Sixth, adopt an ambitious energy efficiency strategy for the country. Seven, adopt a sustainable transportation strategy for the country.

For more detailed information on the first five items that I mentioned, we invite you to refer to presentations made by our partners in Climate Action Network Canada: Greenpeace for points 1 through 3, the Pembina Institute for point 4 and Pollution Probe for point 5, as well as to the other organizations and partners who spoke on this issue.

For its part, Équiterre wants to speak on the last two elements, in other words energy efficiency and transportation.

According to the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, 40% of greenhouse gas emission reductions in Canada could be achieved through energy efficiency. Équiterre believes that improving energy efficiency is the way to go, since this is the least costly way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and there is an enormous technological economic potential. Furthermore, this option will create the most jobs per billion dollars invested. It comes as no surprise then that, in the British plan on energy and climate change, energy efficiency measures represent 50% of all GHG emission reduction initiatives.

There are many things that Canada can do in this area, many of which are surprisingly simple. The round table said, in particular, that it was not so much about determining which technology to implement, but rather deciding how to implement nearly all possible technologies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Équiterre encourages the government to be proactive in adopting regulations prohibiting the sale of products that are not energy efficient.

I want to give a very simple example, and it might seem somewhat insignificant: incandescent light bulbs. We believe that this technology should no longer be sold in Canada. In passing, Australia did just that by announcing, last week, that traditional light bulbs would be banned by 2010. This is the kind of regulation that we want. The resulting energy savings and reduction in greenhouse gases are possible with measures that cost the government very little and push industry to adapt in order to improve energy efficiency.

Naturally, other areas could be regulated, including household appliances and heating and cooling systems, which should not be sold unless they meet the ENERGY STAR program criteria. In other words, instead of making ENERGY STAR an optional incentive program, we propose making it mandatory in order to ensure even greater efficiency.

● (1740)

We estimate that up to 40% of greenhouse gas emissions in Canada come from building operation. Therefore, significant action needs to be taken in this area. Unfortunately, take-up of some programs is insufficient at present. For example, the ecoENERGY Retrofit program offers incentives for owners in order to urge them to invest in energy-saving improvements. However, this program targets barely 140,000 homes over four years! In comparison, the round table previously mentioned advised the government to provide support to at least 165,000 households per year. Équiterre believes that a target of 200,000 would be achievable and more appropriate, given the enormous potential of homes across Canada.

The EnerGuide program, which preceded the ecoENERGY Retrofit program, had demonstrated that we could achieve greenhouse gas emission reductions of 3.9 tonnes on average per home. So this is an interesting program to develop.

If the ecoENERGY Retrofit program remains unchanged, results might not be forthcoming. In fact, the program does not directly relate financial incentives to concrete energy efficiency improvements, whereas the former EnerGuide program did to a greater extent. It would be worthwhile looking more closely at the implementation of this program in order to ensure that targets in which we are investing are being achieved.

Another example of some inconsistency with regard to energy efficiency is the cancellation of the Commercial Building Incentive Program, which has encouraged energy efficiency improvements in buildings since 1998; the Canada Green Building Council recognized the success of this program. It should not only be renewed but also improved.

The Government of Canada should also lead by example in this area. Public Works and Government Services Canada currently requires new buildings to meet the goal-rating of LEED Canada or Leadership in energy and environmental design standard, which is the main standard in green architecture in North America. Équiterre believes that the government can and must do better by aiming for platinum, which is the highest rating, for buildings that it builds itself or rents on a long-term basis. This is an achievable goal, as the Gulf Island National Park Reserve Operations Centre in British Columbia proves, which Parks Canada opened this fall. This is the first building in Canada to have obtained the platinum level accreditation from LEED.

Canada should also reduce the amount of energy being used by the transportation sector. In order to do this, we will need to not only improve vehicle energy efficiency, which is essential, we will also need to review the entire transportation system. Because the criteria used to assess road infrastructure needs in urban areas will need to be reviewed, Équiterre encourages the Government of Canada to impose a moratorium on funding for highways and roads in urban areas. This moratorium should be maintained until Canada has, in particular, adopted a cohesive strategy on urban sprawl. This strategy must then guide the granting of federal funding, as well as the activities of the government itself. In fact, the location of federal buildings, the number and proximity of parking spots provided and incentives related to purchasing transit passes, for example, are factors that influence how government employees travel. In short, we invite the federal government to ensure consistency.

At the same time, Canada must support the construction of strategic infrastructures in order to reduce the number of motorists driving without passengers. London is an inspiring example. Last week, London authorities extended the perimeter of the urban toll system established in 2003, extending to nearly 30 square kilometres the area within which drivers must pay an entrance toll. This measure has cut traffic in the downtown core by 20%, according to Ken Livingstone, Mayor of London, who also wants to impose a special tax on the cars generating the most pollution. To date, nitrous oxide has dropped by 13% in London, particle matter by 15% and carbon gas by 16%. In addition to reducing congestion and GHG emissions, the urban toll has generated significant funding for public transit.

● (1745)

With or without an urban toll, the Government of Canada must make significant investments in public transit and alternative transportation.

Équiterre invites the Government of Canada to more closely monitor compliance with the voluntary GHG emissions reduction agreement for cars and vans that it reached with auto manufacturers in April 2005. Équiterre believes that the bill should include an amendment to the Motor Vehicle Fuel Consumption Standards Act, in order to ensure that vehicle emissions are regulated once the voluntary agreement expires. Should there be any delays in the implementation of this agreement, Équiterre encourages the federal government to immediately adopt legislation to implement California's emissions standards.

Canadian voters are impatiently waiting for the Canadian government to take significant action. A public poll conducted early this year shows that the environment is the top concern of Canadian voters, before health care, the conflict in Afghanistan and the economy. This poll also showed that this is the area in which the government's performance disappointed them the most. In November, the results of a poll also showed that 71% of Canadians felt that the government's plan to deal with pollution and climate change was not ambitious enough. Last month, a new poll confirmed that the environment and climate change are the main concerns of Canadians, and 68% of those polled stated that they were more concerned than last year. Clearly, Canadians remain unhappy. And they have reason to be afraid, since, in 2004, greenhouse gas emissions in Canada exceeded 1990 levels by 27%.

Canada's Clean Air Act will not reassure Canadians. The government must keep its international commitments on climate change. It can no longer withhold its signature from the Kyoto Protocol, and moreover this is undermining its credibility. Canadians want their country to take action in order to stop climate change, which is the greatest crisis facing humanity according to 72% of polled Canadians.

Thank you.

[English]

**The Chair:** Merci.

Next, from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, we have Mr. Gord Steeves. Lead the way for ten minutes, please.

**Mr. Gord Steeves (First Vice-President, Federation of Canadian Municipalities):** Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

My name is Gord Steeves and I'm the acting president of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. I'm joined by one of our senior policy analysts, Mary Jane Middelkoop.

As you may be aware, Mr. Chairperson, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities is the organization that represents virtually all Canadian municipalities, from the very largest to the very smallest, encompassing about 90% of the Canadian population.

• (1750)

[Translation]

I want to thank you for giving me this opportunity to appear before your committee on behalf of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

[English]

I won't speak in detail to all the specific recommendations we are making for Bill C-30. These are spelled out in our submission.

[Translation]

I apologize for not having our brief available in French. It was impossible for us to have both versions ready for today, but we will have the French version tomorrow.

[English]

While municipal governments will not be heavily regulated by the proposed Clean Air Act, how it is implemented and its effectiveness are important to Canadian cities and communities. Bill C-30

provides the Government of Canada and Parliament with the opportunity to recognize formally the fundamental role municipal governments play in combatting smog and greenhouse gas emissions.

[Translation]

Unfortunately, in its current form, the bill does not meet that criteria. That is why we are proposing specific amendments which I will come back to in a moment.

The 1,500 municipalities that belong to the FCM are already making a significant contribution to Canada's environmental targets. For example, we are taking part in projects to reduce energy consumption, encourage the use of public transit and reduce the amount of garbage sent to landfills.

[English]

We could do more. Our current efforts are largely uncoordinated, without an overall plan or design. We could make an even greater contribution to cleaner air and reduce greenhouse gas emissions within a national plan and with national coordination.

[Translation]

A long-term intergovernmental partnership is the only way to meet the challenges posed by climate change and air pollution. In the framework of this partnership, we will have to redefine and clarify roles and responsibilities based on more functional criteria.

[English]

It is essential that Bill C-30 recognize the role of municipal government in meeting Canada's environmental objectives and that it be implemented in partnerships with cities and communities.

The importance of a coordinated intergovernmental action is illustrated by a recent U.S. report. The Institute for Local Self-Reliance, a U.S.-based think tank, surveyed climate change activities in ten U.S. cities that signed the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement. It found that while cities' commitments are real and in some cases involve significant programs, they face an uphill struggle. Not more than one or two of the ten cities will meet their goal of reducing emissions 0.7% below 1990 levels by 2012. The report found that some cities had hoped to achieve their goals with the help of state and federal policies such as renewable electricity standards, improved vehicle efficiency, and stricter fuel economy standards.

[Translation]

This offers important lessons for Canada. Despite their good intentions, municipal governments cannot meet the challenge to clean the air and stop climate change on their own. Actions by other governments can have a huge impact locally.

[English]

On the plus side, subsidies, standards, and incentives can support local efforts. On the negative side, confusing rules and regulations or a failure to provide resources can hinder them.

[Translation]

Coordinated intergovernmental action is needed to ensure that municipal governments can reach their full potential. Our inability to focus the potential of municipal governments would be a lost opportunity.

[English]

Municipalities generate emissions through the operation of buildings and facilities and as a consequence of services like waste management, water treatment, and public transit. In addition, we have influence over land use practices, transportation systems, the energy efficiency of community building stock, and the sources of energy used. Efforts to enlist the municipal sector in meeting broad national environmental goals such as FCM's green municipal fund are producing results. However, the scope of the problem as well as the untapped potential of our cities and communities requires more.

[Translation]

The FCM believes that there is a clear opportunity for the federal government to adopt an integrated and strategic approach to clean air and climate change. However, this approach will not be without its challenges. Municipal governments lack the resources and fiscal tools they need to maintain their infrastructure and meet their other responsibilities.

[English]

In addition, we may not always have the legislative authority to introduce new fees or levies to promote emission reduction activities.

The FCM submitted a plan to the previous Minister of the Environment for a collaborative approach towards cleaner air and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. We met Minister Ambrose and agreed to strike a joint FCM and Environment Canada working group. The working group was designed to make the partnership real by advising us on the opportunities to work together for cleaner air and lower greenhouse gases in our communities.

• (1755)

[Translation]

The municipalities are prepared to help clean our air and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and they can start now. We do not need to wait for new legislation in order to start working together. Investments in public transit, energy efficiency and climate change adjustment measures by municipal governments can produce immediate results.

[English]

However, framework legislation such as Bill C-30 can and does set the tone for government action. Its silence on municipal government's potential and role in combatting smog and climate change undermines the cooperation necessary for progress. For this reason, we are proposing an amendment to CEPA that recognizes the role of municipal governments.

The FCM recommends that the composition of the CEPA National Advisory Committee, as outlined in part I, subsection 6(2) of CEPA 1999, be amended to require participation of a municipal government representative.

[Translation]

Canada cannot achieve its climate change and clean air targets without the commitment and active participation of municipal governments. And, without this amendment, Bill C-30 will not help to resolve this situation. The municipal governments are prepared to work with the federal government and the governments of the provinces and territories in order to make a concrete and quantifiable contribution to the fight against climate change and air pollution.

[English]

Bill C-30 should be amended to recognize the role and place of Canada's cities and communities in combatting smog and climate change. Only then can the legislation serve as the foundation of a credible coordinated national strategy on clean air and climate change.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

We'll move to our seven-minute round.

Mr. Godfrey, please.

**Hon. John Godfrey (Don Valley West, Lib.):** It's good to see the FCM again. We've dealt with each other in the past.

I was wondering when you heard the presentation from Équiterre whether you agreed with the position that in fact Bill C-30 ought to be a more aggressive or ambitious piece of legislation in terms of the various things that Mr. Ribaux spoke of—for example, reaffirming the Kyoto Protocol, setting out targets for the 2008-12 period, having a regime in place for large final emitters. What was your reaction to the ambition of Mr. Ribaux's comments?

**Mr. Gord Steeves:** Thank you very much for the question, Mr. Godfrey.

I can tell you generally that I think our organization would, at worst, certainly have no problem with emission targets being set. However, at best I think we'd be completely accepting of emission targets as aggressive as the government wanted to set them. At the end of the day, I want to stress that municipalities—large, medium, and small—stand ready to do whatever we can today to address greenhouse gas emissions and the reduction thereof, which we're hoping can and shall be done with or without targets, or with or without the agreement on specific targets. While we agree, I think, that targets are very, very important, we also want to stress that we're ready to act right now in any form, while the discussion of targets ensues.

**Hon. John Godfrey:** Again to the FCM, we've seen over the last little while provinces specifically agreeing to work towards Kyoto targets, and recognizing Kyoto as an objective. We've seen that with Quebec and British Columbia. We may be seeing it soon with Ontario. We've seen it with Manitoba, where you're from, Mr. Steeves. What is the situation in terms of the specific recognition of Kyoto and the sort of pledge of Canadian cities to do what U.S. cities are doing under the mayors' climate commitment?

•(1800)

**Mr. Gord Steeves:** Thank you again for the question.

With specific reference to the Kyoto Protocol, it is accepted FCM policy that the Kyoto Protocol is worth striving for. I should also add that within our organization a lot of individual municipalities across Canada have adopted a commitment towards trying to achieve the Kyoto Protocol. So globally there's the assessment that this is where we are trying to get to, if that answers your question generally with respect to the Kyoto Protocol.

**Hon. John Godfrey:** Would it also be true, and I think I'm repeating what you said, that the only way in which we can meet this great national objective, this national project, is for all levels of government to speak to each other and to work collaboratively, and not for one level of government to deal with the municipal sector uniquely through the provinces?

**Mr. Gord Steeves:** Absolutely, Mr. Godfrey, and I'm sorry that I missed that part of your question, because that's a huge part of our suggestion as municipal governments from across Canada. We have specific asks in our written presentation, not the least of which is we're recommending that the preamble as talked about in clause 2 of Bill C-30, which talks about the amendment of the preamble of CEPA, be amended to include municipalities as part of the consultation process. Also it goes deeper, in that with respect to clause 18 of Bill C-30, which talks about the amendment of section 103.02 of CEPA, there's some debate as to "may" versus "shall", wherein the federal government is given the "shall" directive to consult certain sectors of society and then given the "may" option of consulting municipalities. We would certainly like to see that changed in the auspices of the definition of committee, going back to the original legislation, wherein municipalities are simply made a partner of this process going forward.

This is not because we want to step on anyone's toes. We think our ambitions as municipalities ultimately are the exact same ambitions as the federal and provincial governments, but we think we truly have something to offer. Obviously, as everyone at this table is well aware, the lion's share of greenhouse gases is produced in concentrated municipalities, and we think we have something to offer.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. John Godfrey:** Mr. Ribaux, has Bill C-30, in its current form, and the various announcements made over the last two months by the Conservative government, resulted in a comprehensive plan to fight climate change?

**Mr. Sidney Ribaux:** Clearly, the answer to that question is no. I won't repeat the seven points with which I started my presentation. I will simply say that it is clear that, for Canadians and Quebeckers in particular, with whom we work most closely, climate change is an important issue. To some extent, the Kyoto Protocol is a symbol of this issue.

Our efforts to educate or mobilize the public reference Kyoto for the reasons we have given, including Canada's commitments. A comprehensive strategy must inevitably deal with the issue of large emitters, and regulations for the automobile sector, among others. Until we deal with those aspects, we cannot consider ourselves to have seriously addressed the issue of climate change.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Mr. Bigras, you have seven minutes.

**Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, BQ):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

First, welcome to the committee this evening to discuss the issue of energy efficiency and Bill C-30.

A few days ago, we heard from a renowned Quebec specialist on climate change, Mr. Claude Villeneuve. He told us it was becoming increasingly difficult to really reduce greenhouse gas emissions, quite simply because the energy policy in Canada was different from coast to coast. The example he gave us was, in fact, the difficulty in maximizing GHG emissions reduction for each dollar invested in the fight against climate change, particularly in the area of buildings.

He also told us that, since 95% of electricity in Quebec comes from hydroelectricity, which is quite different from what happens in the rest of Canada, it was impossible to implement a program such as the EnerGuide program or any other program to maximize GHG emissions reduction for each dollar invested in the fight against climate change.

I believe that 40% of GHG emissions could be avoided if we focused on energy efficiency. The figures are quite telling, and you said so clearly. With regard to energy efficiency, how could we maximize greenhouse gas emission reductions for each dollar invested by the federal government or any other government in the fight against climate change?

My question is for either witness.

•(1805)

**Mr. Gord Steeves:** Thank you for the question. I would like to answer in English.

[*English*]

It was an excellent question. I have a pretty good answer.

If the direct question is how can the federal government maximize its efficiency in terms of dollars spent, I might suggest using programs like the program we have in place at the FCM, which we've called green municipal funds. I wouldn't expect members of the committee to necessarily be familiar with the program, but it provides a lump sum to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities in the amount of about \$250 million, which municipal governments can access to do grants to municipalities to do studies for energy efficiency in all the projects they are doing—be it buildings, water and waste, rapid transit, or whatever happens to be the order of the day for that particular municipality. That program is then followed up after the grant with a reduced interest loan, not a grant, to municipalities. The municipalities can access that money and leverage it against their own dollars within their municipality to complete the project.

This is done over and over again in municipalities right across Canada, and this is a project that has been going on for the past several years. It's a wonderful project, and a great example of how it can work. It has the beautiful effect of the federal government being able to loan money, not grant, to the larger extent, and have it matched at the municipal level. It is a good example of how those partnerships can be created. What happens from coast to coast is that you see literally hundreds of projects being done, big projects, in municipalities that are completed and have a great effect on greenhouse gases.

The good news in this story is that in many cities over the years, even though the private sectors, the people going to and fro in the cities, haven't made that marked a decrease, there actually has been a great deal of effect made in Canadian cities—Calgary, Edmonton, for example—where the city administration output has been drastically reduced. They're truly good news stories. When Bill C-30 talks about domestic offset systems and how those can be arranged, groups like the Federation of Canadian Municipalities are ready to step in and act as clearinghouses and aggregators to collect and distribute those types of offset systems that can work. While every municipality is setting its own course for greenhouse gas reduction, there can be a system that amalgamates it, aggregates it, and keeps track of it over time.

There are really some great success stories out there. That would be my answer to some of the issues you pose.

[Translation]

**Mr. Bernard Bigras:** More concretely—and this is probably what you were referring to when you mentioned some projects—I would like you to tell us about the Benny Farm project in Montreal which received the Bronze award for its sustainable construction. This project received \$3 million, I think, from green municipal funds.

I would like to know whether you believe that there are things in this project that we might want to include in Bill C-30 in terms of standards or reference points. With regard to energy efficiency, do you have any recommendations in light of the success of this kind of project?

• (1810)

**Mr. Gord Steeves:** Once again, thank you for the question.

[English]

I can't speak with any great knowledge of the particular project in Montreal, but I can say, with respect to Bill C-30 in front of the committee and the amendments spoken thereto, in particular subclause 46(2), which talks about amending section 20 of the Energy Efficiency Act, that what we are suggesting with respect to this act is that the federal government establish a continued revolving loan fund to help kick-start municipal energy efficiency projects, including those targeting water and waste water treatment facilities, street lighting, and building energy performance.

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities has historically found that the method of helping municipalities help themselves with this type of legislation and this type of regulatory framework is best for augmenting already existing critical mass energy at the municipal level. Again, it has the benefit of creating those types of synergies. Hopefully in the discussion the committee will agree with us on the

wisdom of putting those programs in place that don't simply offer a handout but offer a partnership. Obviously, incumbent and implicit within that request is that municipal governments continue to be—I don't say become, I say continue to be—partners with the federal government ongoing.

**The Chair:** Okay, thank you very much.

Let's move on. Mr. Cullen, for seven minutes, please.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Thank you, Chair, and thank you to our witnesses.

I have a small question for Mr. Ribaux. There's been some debate as to who's the source of the problem in Canada. I read an article in the *National Post* this past weekend in which the leader of my party described the need to green the tar sands in Alberta. And I read a letter to the editor coming back today saying it's not Alberta's fault, but it's Ontario's and Quebec's fault because Ontario and Quebec consume all the energy; Alberta simply produces it. How useful is this conversation in terms of us achieving the types of changes we need in our economy in this country? How productive is the conversation you've seen as to whose fault it is, which province or which particular jurisdiction?

[Translation]

**Mr. Sidney Ribaux:** I would like to respond by saying that I don't think it's a matter of laying blame; we are facing a problem. Humanity is facing one of its greatest crises in its history and we need to find solutions. Your committee, government, Parliament, have to find solutions. There are things we can do if we want to attack the root of the problem. Quite clearly, in Alberta and Ontario, there are some very large emitters. We have to deal with them. There are ways to ensure energy savings and change consumption. Cars and houses we buy are contributing to the problem because, in fact, we are consuming. I think that your committee should come up with a plan of attack, on all levels, for the government of Canada.

[English]

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** One thing you commented on is that as the bill sits right now and what you've seen from the government, there isn't an overall plan to meet our targets. Initially, when the government took office it announced a transit pass incentive—people could write off taxes. It was costed out at \$2,000 a tonne for savings. How effective was this use of taxpayers' dollars in terms of meeting our Kyoto target?

[Translation]

**Mr. Sidney Ribaux:** This brings me back to Mr. Bigras' question.

We have to be careful: some measures have multiple benefits. For example, improving access to transit has a very significant impact on the cost of infrastructure within a municipality, on quality of life, access to transportation for low-income earners, workers and so on. So, we cannot assess that kind of measure solely by calculating greenhouse gas emissions, although that is potentially one of the spin-offs.



The other aspect I want to mention, to come back to Mr. Bigras' question, is that the investments and regulations you make today will lead to significant reductions in 5 years, 10 years, 20 years. That is why we are talking about an overall energy efficiency plan, an overall transportation plan. We have to consider what you do in terms of short-term, intermediate-term and long-term targets. That is how all measures need to be considered. The initiative you mentioned is interesting if it is part of an overall transportation plan, but, when taken alone, it is not easy to calculate the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

• (1815)

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** Thank you very much.

[*English*]

Mr. Steeves, again, your organization, the FCM, represents virtually every municipality, large and small, in this country. You made a brief mention in your testimony of the joint working group, that you had agreed with the previous Minister of the Environment to work together. What's happened with it?

**Mr. Gord Steeves:** Thank you for the question.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** I assume it wasn't contractual or anything. This was just a verbal agreement between your organization and the government to work together, and that was made in December.

**Mr. Gord Steeves:** That's correct. There was a commitment made by the former minister to work in partnership, and obviously that situation changed. We have requested of the new minister that we meet with him, and at this stage we are unsure of how that is going to proceed. We don't have any indication positive or negative.

I just want to clarify one thing. We represent member municipalities comprising almost 90% of the population. As you can appreciate, there are thousands of small municipalities, so a lot of them we don't actually represent. It's just the largest ones comprising the lion's share of the population.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** I want to clarify this. You represent 90% of the Canadian population at the municipal level. Did you just say you haven't met with the new minister and you have not been able to confirm this initiative you had agreed to? I would suggest it wasn't an agreement with the previous minister; it was an agreement with the government. It doesn't matter who is sitting in the chair.

Have you not met with Mr. Baird?

**Mr. Gord Steeves:** No, we have not.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** Have you requested this?

**Mr. Gord Steeves:** We have.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** You're an organization representing 90% of the Canadian population, and what's interesting to me about your organization is your capacity to actually make the changes required in planning and infrastructure redevelopment. You folks seem to be an integral player in this. I'm a little surprised and not a little disappointed.

We're a fan of the green municipal fund for obvious reasons—the renewability of it, that it constantly regenerates itself. Do you envision—and I haven't seen your amendments yet—that something can be done along the order of how that fund has been working with

direct respect to greenhouse gas reductions so there would be a revolving fund, or if cities could gain access?

**Mr. Gord Steeves:** I hope I understand the question properly. You're talking about potential changes to the green fund?

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** Or the creation of a new fund entirely, but with its focus being that cities would be able to sign on to achieve a certain amount of measurable reductions and have a revolving rotating fund that would access it.

**Mr. Gord Steeves:** Could I confer with my colleague?

Does that sound familiar?

**Mrs. Mary Jane Middelkoop (Senior Policy Analyst, Federation of Canadian Municipalities):** We do, under the green municipal fund, have a capacity-building campaign called the partners for climate protection program. Under that program, municipalities—we now have close to 150, representing a significant portion of the Canadian population—voluntarily sign on to this program, pass a council resolution, and establish targets for greenhouse gas emission reductions.

At this point in time we have some pretty significant large cities across the country and some of the smaller communities as well that have actually developed action plans that would in fact exceed the Kyoto targets for their corporate operations. Some of them are now extending that to be a community-wide focus.

The challenge for our members, for municipal governments, has been in finding the resources necessary to actually implement the actions identified in those action plans. This is similar to the arguments made from the Institute for Local Self-Reliance in the United States suggesting that there was a very positive initiative and willingness to act by their municipal governments but there was the inability to move forward because of a lack of resources and because of a lack of leadership shown by all orders of government.

• (1820)

**The Chair:** I'm sorry, we're a minute over already.

We'll move on to Mr. Warawa, for seven minutes please.

**Mr. Mark Warawa (Langley, CPC):** Thank you, Chair.

Thank you to the witnesses for being here. It's very interesting. The topic of today is tools, energy efficiency, so I appreciate your comments.

Mr. Steeves, we haven't met, but as parliamentary secretary I've met with your president more than one time and look forward to meeting with you personally. I believe FCM is very important. I'm glad you're here. After 14 years of local government—that was my background and introduction into politics—I know how important.... You are in the front lines, and we're really excited you're here today.

On tools and fuel efficiency, Mr. Cullen started going down that pathway in asking Mr. Ribaux questions regarding the other half. Half of the greenhouse gas emissions are being created by manufacturing, oil and gas. The other half of greenhouse gas emissions are coming from us as consumers. We have questions from the Liberal members, asking if we can meet the Kyoto target.

We've also heard from a number of witnesses—Professor Boyd, Professor Jaccard. Professor Mark Jaccard of Simon Fraser University has been to the committee. I guess I'll quote him, and this is in relationship to the Kyoto target. And we acknowledge that we've inherited an environmental mess that we are committed to clean up, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but it has to be in a way that has tangible results that reduces greenhouse emissions without destroying the Canadian economy.

Professor Jaccard said, “You would have to destroy one-third of the buildings and equipment in your economy in the next four years to meet the Kyoto target.” He said we'd have to raise \$4 billion to \$6 billion a year for five years to buy foreign credits—that is, assuming emissions of about 200 million tonnes over target each year between 2008-12. He said that buying credits is an option often discussed but little understood. He said:

Buying international credits in a four-year time frame is virtually impossible because you have to buy it from someone. Someone somewhere has to have done some greenhouse gas reductions and we have to be able to verify that they did that. That is really difficult.

So we've had a number of testimonies of the difficult mess we're in with the environment. We are committed to doing much more than the previous government. On the question of tools, what really can we do?

Mr. Ribaux, you made a comment saying that one of the tools you'd like to see is a moratorium to stop funding of all roads and bridges. My question to Mr. Steeves is this. What would be the impact if a local government were required by the federal government...? And we're talking jurisdictional problems here, because the municipalities are under the jurisdiction of the provinces and territories, not under the federal government; that's a whole other question, if we start going down that. But what if Mr. Ribaux's suggestion were adopted by the provinces, and you were required to build no more roads, do no more road widening?

I'll just finish here and then you can understand where I'm coming from.

My understanding is that to create a reduction where I can reduce my greenhouse gas emissions between now and 2050, if I'm still alive, we're going to have, say, a 60% reduction of where we are now. To reduce that, if every one of us set even a goal of 40%—right now I'm going to reduce my greenhouse gas emissions as a consumer, as a Canadian, by 40%—we're going to have to change the way our communities are structured. We're going to have to densify. We're going to have to build more public transit. We're going to phase into communities that are different from what we have now. Where we spread out, we're going to have to densify.

What is a realistic timeframe for setting a goal of making a substantial reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, but doing it in a way considering where we are and where we have to get to? How quickly can we stop building roads and bridges? How quickly can we densify? How quickly can we come up with some of the suggestions that Mr. Ribaux has just said?

•(1825)

**Mr. Gord Steeves:** Thank you very much for the question, sir.

With deference to my new friend who is sitting with me, we would not support the idea that suddenly a federal or a provincial government would stop contributing to the construction of roads and bridges in our community. This is a tradition that's developed over the course of some years now, obviously, and regardless of how you feel about greenhouse gases and how you think it might be combatted, the fact of the matter is, for a lot of different reasons, we need roads and bridges in our communities. Obviously people have to get around.

But there are a couple of things. I think my friend might have been talking about some reallocation and some prioritization, I'm not sure. But the MRIF program funds—strategic infrastructure funds that have long been used by municipalities, provincial government, and the federal government to fund these large-scale projects—are and will continue to be a necessity in the governmental atmosphere of Canada. At least we hope they will be. To lose those would be catastrophic for the city of Winnipeg. Cities and communities are using this funding from different levels of government to rebuild bridges so we don't see very unfortunate situations like the situation we saw in Laval not too long ago.

The window is wide open for focusing on different types of projects. Instead of focusing on interchanges in every single place in the suburbs of cosmopolitan areas, there might be a chance to reconsider that possibility and look at spending that money on more rapid transit projects. But I want to be very, very careful not to eliminate the need for those, because at its base we are paying for a lot of these projects through the gas tax program, and the concept is a very fair one, which is the user pay principle.

**The Chair:** Okay, Monsieur Ribaux, a very quick response to that.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Sidney Ribaux:** What I meant was a moratorium on expansion, on the funding of the expansion of highways and bridges in urban areas. We're not saying that funding for roads and bridges in rural areas or communities where there is no public transit system should be stopped. We are targeting the expansion of highway capacity in urban areas. Obviously, we are thinking in particular of major urban centres. This distinction needs to be made, and it is written that way in our brief.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Merci.

Mr. McGuinty, for five minutes, please.

**Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.):** Thanks, Mr. Chair.

Good evening, witnesses. Thanks for coming.

I'd just like to pick up on points you made during your presentations.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Ribaux, with regard to your comments on the federal program on energy efficiency in our commercial buildings, which is called in English

[English]

the commercial building incentive program, this program has been running for 10 years and has helped 541 projects aimed at improving the energy efficiency of new commercial, institutional, and multi-unit residential buildings—not an unimportant project for the country with 541 projects participating. On average, the buildings that participated became 35% more energy-efficient than they otherwise would have been.

I'm sure the FCM is aware of this as well. It would have been something that would be made known to privately owned buildings in cities like Winnipeg, for example.

Can you help us understand why the Government of Canada would kill this type of program? We're talking about energy efficiency tools here, and we're talking about this partnership in Canadian society to reduce greenhouse gases.

[Translation]

**Mr. Sidney Ribaux:** What I can say is that it's clear that Canada needs to take action with regard to buildings in order to reduce greenhouse gases. Because I am leading a green building project in Montreal and I'm working with most of the people in this sector in Montreal, I can tell you that the major investors and major building developers are prepared to do a great deal to make buildings more energy efficient and greener, but they need encouragement, they need a framework to ensure they take this action. They also need what I would call a level playing field, and the CBIP or the Commercial Building Incentive Program, was a first step, although it was clearly not enough. We believe that this program should be reintroduced and should go much further.

I would say that when professionals work on buildings and there's a program like the CBIP, they are more likely to examine options that they might not have otherwise. We clearly believe that this program should not have been abolished and that it should be reinstated.

• (1830)

[English]

**Mr. David McGuinty:** Mr. Steeves, could you also give us some understanding? What is the position of the FCM with respect to its first priorities in terms of, for example, federal investment in cities to be able to assist with reducing greenhouse gases? For example, there are very mixed views about the use of a tax-deductible transit pass. What is the priority now of the FCM membership? If there were a choice, for example, between investment in core public transit infrastructure or a tax-deductible transit pass, what would be the preference of the FCM?

**Mr. Gord Steeves:** We're going to be coming out with our national transit plan next week. I trust you'll all be looking for it.

To answer that question directly, we take no issue with the idea that the federal government would give individuals in Canada a tax credit for buying transit passes. That is completely fine with our organization. Obviously, that does not accumulate the millions of dollars necessary to build a rapid transit system in Toronto or Vancouver or Calgary or Edmonton or Montreal. They're two completely different things. And if the federal government wishes to provide tax credits, that is fine. But obviously that can in no way

impinge on what we see as a necessity to have federal government funding to address these huge costs for infrastructure, so we can have the capacity to move these people who might be interested in achieving that tax credit.

With respect to the second item that you were talking about, we're asking that amendments to the Energy Efficiency Act should include a proposal to establish new standards for industrial equipment, household appliances, and a strategy for new and existing commercial, residential, and institutional buildings to help kick-start some of these ideas. As one example, in Drummondville, Quebec, for retrofit measures at six municipal buildings, the city has invested \$125,000 since 2000, reducing greenhouse gas emissions by almost 2,000 tonnes and achieving savings of more than \$450,000 over the five-year period, just because there was the upfront money available. That's an example of the kinds of success stories we can see.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

We'll move on to Mr. Manning, for five minutes, please.

**Mr. Fabian Manning (Avalon, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I thank our witnesses for your presence here today. I certainly look forward to studying the amendments you have put forward.

I have a question for Mr. Steeves. Over the past decade, the air quality in Canada has worsened even beyond some people's wildest dreams, and certainly according to a study recently put forward by the OECD, Canada ranks near the bottom now as regards air quality. I'm wondering if you would put forward some ideas that you would see, and going forward on the short-, medium-, and long-term basis, of how we could right the wrong that's been done in the past decade or so in relation to air quality.

**Mr. Gord Steeves:** From our perspective, I'll try to slant my comments towards the bill that's in front of the committee. You heard me talk about the prospect of including municipalities in the discussion by virtue of the changes in the legislation that are being considered. In clauses 2 and 18 of Bill C-30 there is talk about amendments thereto. It talks about who should be included in the discussions. The first thing I would say is please include municipalities in those discussions, because the air quality problems you're talking about exist, to the largest extent, in the largest centres, and these people in these cities have a lot to offer. And the organizations that represent them, FCM and the provincial organizations, have a lot to offer. That's very important.

We are suggesting as well that in clause 18 in Bill C-30, amending section 103.09—this is all in our ask—that we add in references to the Canada–U.S. Air Quality Agreement, because you may be aware that a lot of the problems in terms of air quality that we're seeing in our cities are not as a result of pollution that's happening in Canada, but is in fact pollution that's coming up from the United States of America and flowing up to our north, which is a real issue for some of our cities. You've heard me talk about the kick-starting of the new loans under the Energy Efficiency Act. That's important. And we also talk about, in clause 47 of Bill C-30, putting in implementing a lot of the standards we've seen in the acts that have been implemented by California, which we have reviewed and we think are very progressive and would work in Canada.

So all of those, with the addition of the offset aggregator and the role that we might be able to play in cities and as an organization, we think we could really make a difference.

• (1835)

**Mr. Fabian Manning:** You said your organization represents 90% of Canadians, which is a huge number. It doesn't leave many outside of that circle.

I'm sure the leaders of our municipalities are just as concerned about economic growth and making sure our economy keeps moving. I wonder if you would give us some of your thought process.

Do you believe the goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions should be balanced with economic considerations? My belief is that we need one to help pay for the other, but it seems that we have a certain group of people who want 100% green and others who want it 100% smoke going up in the air. We're trying to find that median as a government. So from the point where you sit, it might be interesting to hear what you have to say.

**Mr. Gord Steeves:** We would never support anything that would destroy our economy. We might, however, be a little bit careful about overly embracing the idea that just because we're trying to address a lot of the issues with respect to sustainability, it might automatically translate into economic disaster.

I know people have different takes on this and people take different positions on the issue. I really believe—and I think our organization could really provide some research to the committee that would support the prospect—that indeed not only could sustainability in a lot of different sectors be achieved, and to a very large extent, but in many sectors of our economy you will see economic growth, not economic atrophy. That's one of the things that might be a bit of a misnomer in this debate.

We have seen cities like Calgary and Edmonton actually investing quite a lot of money in these areas. They're doing so in ways that really don't spell economic disaster at all. In fact, they're making the cities more attractive. Of course, obviously as we try to wade our way through all of this debate in a balanced way, we have to always be comparing the short-term fears against longer-term fears as well as finding that balance, which we think can be achieved.

**The Chair:** Thank you. We'll have to move on.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Lussier, you have five minutes, please.

**Mr. Marcel Lussier (Brossard—La Prairie, BQ):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Ribaux, you talked about what you thought about sustainable transportation. If you had to pick, as a decision-maker, between investing a billion dollars in new environmentally-friendly urban transportation such as a light rail system, or investing a billion dollars in reducing the cost of bus passes, what would you pick? Which one?

• (1840)

**Mr. Sidney Ribaux:** It's clear that we would invest in the infrastructure first.

**Mr. Marcel Lussier:** So, you think that it would be more effective to invest in public transit, in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

**Mr. Sidney Ribaux:** Certainly in Quebec a number of public transit systems are already being used to nearly full capacity. I think the situation is similar in the rest of Canada, which means that without more infrastructure, it will be difficult to increase the number of passengers.

In any case, it's a question of accessibility. If the infrastructure is not in place, people can't use it. That is clear.

I would make the following distinction, however: both are important to the extent that building infrastructure does not automatically come with the funding to operate it. This raises an entirely different issue that often needs to be addressed.

**Mr. Marcel Lussier:** Thank you.

Mr. Steeves, you talked about the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. Does this include all municipalities in Quebec?

**Mr. Gord Steeves:** No.

**Mr. Marcel Lussier:** None?

**Mr. Gord Steeves:** Yes, some municipalities in Quebec are members of the federation, but not all.

**Mr. Marcel Lussier:** Okay.

Ms. Middlekoop.

**Mr. Gord Steeves:** I would say there are 120.

**Mr. Marcel Lussier:** You say 120.

**Mr. Gord Steeves:** Yes.

**Mr. Marcel Lussier:** Ms. Middlekoop, you spoke of an agreement with 150 amalgamations of municipalities. How many of these are in Quebec?

**Mr. Gord Steeves:** There are 120 in Quebec.

[*English*]

**Mrs. Mary Jane Middelkoop:** No, I was thinking about the "Partners for Climate Protection" program. I don't have those numbers with me, sorry, but there are definitely some members from Quebec.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Marcel Lussier:** Do you know one of them?

[*English*]

**Mrs. Mary Jane Middelkoop:** Montreal.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Marcel Lussier:** Thank you.

Are you attentive to the activities of the association of American mayors? Is there any contact between the FCM and this association? Have you already visited model cities like Salt Lake City?

[English]

**Mr. Gord Steeves:** Yes, we did. I met with Mayor Nickels of Seattle, who chairs the group. In fact, I met him at COP 11 in Montreal. We have ongoing meetings with the National League of Cities each and every year, and then on a quarterly basis. So we're pretty in touch with our American friends.

[Translation]

**Mr. Marcel Lussier:** Thus, in the U.S.A., some municipalities are models for greenhouse gas reduction.

[English]

**Mr. Gord Steeves:** One of the greatest misnomers about the United States of America is that there are no great things going on in that country, when in fact there really are, especially in some states, particularly in the northwest in the United States, and in larger cities. There are some very progressive ideas.

[Translation]

**Mr. Marcel Lussier:** What percentage of Canadian municipalities have a greenhouse gas emission reduction program?

**Mr. Gord Steeves:** I do not know the exact number.

[English]

**Mrs. Mary Jane Middelkoop:** I'm not sure. The members of the Partners for Climate Protection program—there are approximately 150—can adopt any one of the milestones. There are five milestones, and one of them is to set targets. I'm not sure of that number, but it's available on our website, fcm.ca.

[Translation]

**Mr. Marcel Lussier:** What are the five objectives?

[English]

**Mrs. Mary Jane Middelkoop:** One is to create a greenhouse gas emissions inventory and forecast. The second is setting an emissions reduction target. The third is developing a local action plan. The fourth is implementing the local action plan or a set of activities. The fifth is monitoring progress and reporting results.

[Translation]

**Mr. Marcel Lussier:** Did you add up the objectives of each municipality before determining that all municipalities could contribute to a 300-tonne or a 300,000-tonne reduction?

[English]

**Mrs. Mary Jane Middelkoop:** We have seen some results and we're tabulating them now. Currently, the Centre for Sustainable Community Development is the group within FCM that manages that program, and they are putting that information together for us.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. We'll have to move on.

Mr. Watson, for five minutes, please.

**Mr. Jeff Watson (Essex, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and my thanks to our guests who have appeared today.

Reading through some printed materials here, close to 55% of the country's greenhouse gas emissions can be influenced by decisions made by municipal governments. Clearly, then, as you've expressed today, there is a strong role that municipalities can play in tackling climate change. Can you give us some direction, if you will, on

where in local government some of the low-hanging fruit is with respect to tackling climate change quickly and deeply?

• (1845)

**Mr. Gord Steeves:** I'll give you a list of six things: energy efficiency in buildings; energy efficiency in lighting, particularly street lights; alternative fuels for municipal fleets; purchasing renewable energy, as opposed to fossil energy; and landfill gas and methane recapture in landfill operations in municipalities. Those are probably the most popular low-hanging-fruit methods of attack when it comes to GHGs.

**Mr. Jeff Watson:** Public transit is not in there?

**Mr. Gord Steeves:** Public transit is important. The thing about public transit is that the infrastructure for rapid transit is very expensive and obviously has to be done in big municipalities. A lot of municipalities obviously don't have rapid transit or transit at all. The lion's share don't. For those that do have rapid transit and want to expand their capability, it's very expensive and needs a tripartite agreement.

**Mr. Jeff Watson:** By that, can I conclude that it's not necessarily the short-term low-hanging fruit, but that it's a little more in the mid-term to develop the systems and actually place the infrastructure there to do that?

**Mr. Gord Steeves:** It's a priority and it does make a huge difference. It's just very expensive and difficult to access the funding.

I'm not sure if I answered you exactly.

**Mr. Jeff Watson:** Not directly. I'm just trying to get a sense of how much time it's going to take to put in place the types of transit systems you're talking about. In the major municipalities, clearly you can get a good bang for your buck, but what timeframe is it going to take to put something in place?

**Mr. Gord Steeves:** I do want to say that in our larger cities, like Montreal, Toronto, Calgary, Edmonton, and Vancouver, rapid transit systems obviously already exist. Funding from the federal government, through MRIF and gas tax legislation, has resulted in expansion. Vancouver, Edmonton, Toronto, and Montreal I think have all used funding to expand those systems already. So it's started. It's happening, and hopefully it's going to continue.

**Mr. Jeff Watson:** I want to come back to the economic questions. Clearly, in terms of municipalities, you need an industrial tax base to fund your budgets. Of course, your citizens who live there need to work.

I want to come back to the short-term window, because with respect to Bill C-30, I sense there's a strong desire in the opposition parties to probably make some amendment to enshrine the Kyoto target and timeline into the legislation itself. It would then become something very real and fixed that would have some consequences for you and for the businesses in your communities.

There are some of us who would like to see our industries make the kinds of investments required for the deep transformation of a carbon-constrained economy. It's a concern that if we have to comply with Kyoto by purchase of credits, for example, we're avoiding the investments right now to begin that kind of transformation.

Are you concerned that in the short-term window there could be some economic problems in the next four or five years? I'm not talking about the medium or long term, because we can see where industry needs to go and what the opportunities are, but if there's an amendment for a specific target and timeline that's difficult in the next four to five years, what are the repercussions at the municipal level? Are there some concerns about that?

We want to get the targets right. I guess that's what we're looking at.

**Mr. Gord Steeves:** That's a fair comment, and I completely acknowledge your concern. I think what you're saying is that greenhouse gases are an issue that has to be addressed, but we don't want to address this issue at economic peril if we don't have to.

Like you, we would be searching for a way to try to achieve real greenhouse gas reduction, while maintaining a robust economy at the same time. I think everybody in this room would have that exact same goal. At least I hope they would, because that certainly is in our interest.

I have been following the reports on the challenges right now with different industries and how they want to achieve the potential targets for reduction in different industries. I can't claim to be an expert in that, except to say that we would support any target the federal government wanted to lay out in terms of trying to address greenhouse gases in a measured and real way.

In terms of the analogy that I would use, I would draw upon the analogy of the cod fisheries out east, which we saw go through a very horrible situation and a moratorium. If that situation had been addressed at an earlier stage, in a real and less painful way, then perhaps we wouldn't have seen the graphic problem at the end.

• (1850)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

We'll move on to Mr. Scarpaleggia, for five minutes.

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Ribaux, at the very beginning of your presentation, you said that there was nothing in Bill C-30 that really helped to solve greenhouse gas and air pollution problems.

Am I right?

**Mr. Sidney Ribaux:** We said that Bill C-30 does not properly address climate change and air pollution.

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia:** I do not really understand your statement. Are you expecting regulations or funding programs?

**Mr. Sidney Ribaux:** Basically, what we are saying—

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia:** In other words, you feel that the bill has no value?

**Mr. Sidney Ribaux:** Your committee is studying ways to improve a bill. We are telling you that the current bill does not meet the intended objectives. We drew up a list of seven criteria that will help us to assess the implementation of the legislation, and of government action as a whole.

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia:** Will you submit amendments to the committee?

**Mr. Sidney Ribaux:** The comments we made today express our opinion of the bill.

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia:** You mentioned a program that was called something like the energy program for buildings and construction. Were you referring to the REDI program, as it is called in English?

**Mr. Sidney Ribaux:** I do not know. I mentioned the Commercial Building Incentive Program, the ecoENERGY Retrofit program that replaced EnerGuide, and the LEED certification.

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia:** I think that the PEBC is called REDI in English. Am I right?

**Mr. Sidney Ribaux:** I do not know the English acronym.

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia:** The people with whom I discussed this program told me that since the new government took over, this program has been radically modified in many ways. The rules were changed during the game. Suddenly, they announced that projects had to be submitted very quickly by a certain date. The deadline was practically impossible to meet due to the time that it takes to develop a project.

Were you aware of this?

**Mr. Sidney Ribaux:** The current government abolished the Commercial Building Incentive Program or the CBIP. That program no longer exists.

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia:** When was it abolished?

**Mr. Sidney Ribaux:** I do not know the date, but to my knowledge, it was during the previous budget. I could look it up, if you wish.

[*English*]

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia:** Ms. Middelkoop, are you familiar with the C-CIARN program, the Canadian Climate Impacts and Adaptation Research Network?

**Mrs. Mary Jane Middelkoop:** Yes.

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia:** I believe they published some kind of tool or guide for the FCM. Is that correct?

**Mrs. Mary Jane Middelkoop:** They developed a guide that listed actions that could be undertaken by municipal governments not for emissions reductions, but for adapting to climate change.

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia:** Right. Was that useful?

**Mrs. Mary Jane Middelkoop:** Absolutely.

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia:** Why do you think the government has thrown the wrench into that program?

**Mrs. Mary Jane Middelkoop:** I can't speculate as to why the Government of Canada has cancelled that program, although they are completing the work, as far as I understand it.

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia:** Yes, but the researchers—I have some in my riding—who have been working on the all-important issue of how to prevent water catastrophes like we've seen in the past have essentially been told—

**A voice:** Like Walkerton.

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia:** Like Walkerton, essentially. They've been told they will be paid up to a certain point, and that's about it.

Would you be in favour of restored funding for that program?

**Mrs. Mary Jane Middelkoop:** The tool that was provided to FCM, in the form of a guidance document to assist municipal governments in understanding the impacts from climate change, was useful.

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia:** Excellent. Thank you.

The issue of wood-burning stoves has actually come up in one of the municipalities in my riding, in the municipality of Beaconsfield. How do you approach that issue? Is that something the federal government can do something about, beyond requiring that wood stoves be EPA-certified or EPA-style-certified, or is it up to the municipalities to essentially...?

In this case, some people in my riding would like their use banned. How do you feel about that? Do you feel they contribute significantly to the problem of air pollution and greenhouse gases? Who should be acting, beyond setting standards for the design of wood-burning stoves? Should we be going further? Should municipalities be looking at restricting their use to maybe only emergencies, to when power outages occur, or something?

•(1855)

**Mr. Gord Steeves:** I appreciate the question. It's very interesting. Again, I can't honestly claim to be an expert—

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia:** That's fine.

**Mr. Gord Steeves:** —on wood-burning stoves, but I will take this opportunity to highlight the need for federal standards in a lot of different areas.

Everybody can appreciate that when you talk about standards within the context of one municipality, it becomes very difficult. When you talk about standards not only in things like wood stoves, but in things like fuel efficiency standards that can be held to task from coast to coast to coast, then it becomes a lot easier for competition to be levelled interprovincially and inter-municipally.

One of the challenges or problems for municipal governments is that if a municipal government wants to impose a regulation that is a little bit more aggressive, the municipalities surrounding it might enjoy a competitive advantage overnight. We saw the same thing happen with the smoking bylaw. When one municipality implemented it, all the municipalities outside had a different playing field. That's why, in the area of wood stoves, energy fuel efficiency, packaging, and those types of things, the leadership of the federal government can really come in handy to impose those standards in turn.

**The Chair:** Sorry, you've already snuck up to seven minutes. Good job.

Mr. Jean, for five minutes, please.

**Mr. Brian Jean (Fort McMurray—Athabasca, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I have a very simple question to start. If you found out that it took ten people and \$50 to deliver a \$100 cheque, would you be upset if it was your money?

**Mr. Gord Steeves:** I'd probably have some questions, at the very least.

**Mr. Brian Jean:** Good. Now you know why we cut those programs that weren't working and weren't effective for Canadians.

My first question is for Mr. Ribaux. You are a founder of your organization with Mr. Laure Waridel. Is that correct?

**Mr. Sidney Ribaux:** Mrs. Laure Waridel, yes.

**Mr. Brian Jean:** I apologize.

In fact the group started in 1993?

**Mr. Sidney Ribaux:** Yes.

**Mr. Brian Jean:** And the year before, you went to the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro?

**Mr. Sidney Ribaux:** I didn't go myself, but other members of our group did.

**Mr. Brian Jean:** Your organization is pro-Kyoto and it has actually organized marches for Kyoto. Is that correct?

**Mr. Sidney Ribaux:** Yes.

**Mr. Brian Jean:** How many marches have you organized?

**Mr. Sidney Ribaux:** I couldn't say; I haven't counted them.

**Mr. Brian Jean:** Many though.

**Mr. Sidney Ribaux:** We haven't organized that many ourselves, but I would say we've participated in many.

**Mr. Brian Jean:** In fact your group has the view that the issue of poverty should become part of climate change and that the Kyoto tool is good because it actually transfers wealth from north to south. I have your web page here.

**Mr. Sidney Ribaux:** Is that a question?

**Mr. Brian Jean:** Yes. Your group says the issue is poverty and that you should use the environment and a transfer of wealth system from the rich countries to the poor countries...use climate change—

**Mr. Sidney Ribaux:** That general principle is something we support.

**Mr. Brian Jean:** To the FCM, I was reading with interest that you're reducing greenhouse gas emissions. You say that close to 55% of the country's greenhouse gas emissions can be influenced by decisions made by municipal governments:

Municipalities can reduce greenhouse gas emissions through land use, energy and transportation planning; infrastructure design; green procurement; building retrofits; water conservation; solid waste diversion; and the use of distributed energy systems.

It sounds like you wrote the Clean Air Act. Excellent.

My interest is in the transportation, planning, infrastructure design, and in fact building retrofits.

We had someone here, who was mentioned previously by the Bloc, Claude Villeneuve. He talked about green spaces and the effect that infrastructure and transportation have on the environment.

Indeed, your strategies and policy on clean air talk about infrastructure and transportation initiatives and strong legislation directed at smog-causing pollutants. Of course Kyoto has nothing to do with that. It talks strictly about greenhouse gases. But the Clean Air Act is doing that.

In general, the FCM is coming out very positively about some of the things we're doing—for example, the transportation infrastructure and going beyond greenhouse gases in dealing with air quality problems inside and outside the home. Is that fair?

• (1900)

**Mr. Gord Steeves:** Generally speaking, as an organization we have worked very strongly with the federal government over the last years in terms of many programs that have been implemented. The programs that began with the last government are going to continue with the current government. We see them as extremely positive. I hope I'm not overstepping my bounds by saying that I think we have a pretty positive relationship with the current federal government.

**Mr. Brian Jean:** Indeed I've met with many groups who are nothing short of ecstatic about the \$16.5 billion over the next four years. In fact they seem to know more about the next budget than I do, and they are looking forward to even more money.

Mary Jane Middelkoop, as the senior policy analyst you've actually said there's a need to make adjustments to our infrastructure. In fact I found that's one of your main policy-driven comments. Could you expand on that?

**Mrs. Mary Jane Middelkoop:** I'm not sure what you mean by adjustments to infrastructure, but when you look at the challenge of transportation with respect to public transit, as discussed earlier, we're looking at a range of measures. We're including things that increase ridership. We're including things that expand the capacity of a public transit system to absorb more riders. We talk about changes to the urban forum.

I don't think we can talk about public transit or measures to increase ridership without talking about the urban forum. We would suggest that we need to look at ways of encouraging more compact forms of urban design.

**Mr. Brian Jean:** In fact what we've come out with, as a government, on infrastructure and transportation goes along very well with your policy on air and greenhouse gas emissions. Is that fair to say?

**Mrs. Mary Jane Middelkoop:** There are some elements that are closely matched.

**Mr. Brian Jean:** Thank you very much.

Those are all my questions.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much for that.

Everyone has had a good chance, I think, to question the witnesses, so I think there's general consensus that we'll cut it off there. There's nothing wrong with finishing early once in a while.

I want to thank the witnesses very much for your time and your good presentations and answers.

This meeting is adjourned.

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