



House of Commons  
CANADA

## **Standing Committee on Finance**

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FINA • NUMBER 028 • 3rd SESSION • 40th PARLIAMENT

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**EVIDENCE**

**Wednesday, September 22, 2010**

**Chair**

**Mr. James Rajotte**



## Standing Committee on Finance

Wednesday, September 22, 2010

• (1530)

[English]

**The Chair (Mr. James Rajotte (Edmonton—Leduc, CPC)):** Good afternoon, everyone.

I call this meeting to order, the 28th meeting of the Standing Committee on Finance. I want to welcome you all back to Parliament, and I want to especially welcome the new members of our committee. This is a committee, as you will see, that works very well together, and I'm sure you'll enjoy your time here very much.

I just want to point out to members that we did have a subcommittee meeting yesterday. We did go through the witnesses for the pre-budget consultations. Hopefully all of the party suggestions are included in the list that you have. As well, you should have the travel itinerary for the first trip, out west, and you should have a calendar for the fall schedule.

Basically, we're here today to assure that this list includes all the suggestions by the parties and to see if there are any questions regarding the travel itinerary.

We'll go first to Monsieur Paillé.

[Translation]

**Mr. Daniel Paillé (Hochelaga, BQ):** Mr. Chair, on behalf of the Bloc Québécois, I would like to welcome Ms. Mendes and Mr. Szabo to the Standing Committee on Finance and would like to say that we are very happy that Mr. Wallace stayed on the committee. I would have missed him otherwise.

[English]

**The Chair:** We all missed Mr. Wallace terribly this summer. In fact, he sent a video of himself to me, which I will share with the committee members if you so wish.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Chair:** We will first go to the chosen participants. I believe you have all received this and you should have reviewed this. Are there any additions that members need to make?

Mr. Mulcair.

[Translation]

**Mr. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP):** Mr. Chair, I would like to inform you that the caucus of the British Columbia NDP will soon provide me with the name of the MP who will accompany you in British Columbia. We usually have local people. So I will let Jean-François know as soon as I have confirmation of this person's name.

It will probably be the same person for Saskatchewan in order to make things easier, but I am waiting for a confirmation.

[English]

**The Chair:** *Merci.* And I understand....

[Translation]

**Mr. Daniel Paillé:** We split our task into two: as MP for western Quebec, I will go out west and Mr. Carrier will go to the east.

**An hon. member:** Oh, that's a great idea!

[English]

**The Chair:** Okay. *Merci.*

So I take it the list as presented is acceptable? Thank you.

Are there any questions, perhaps from the new members, regarding the travel itinerary? If you do have any specific questions regarding logistics, you can talk to the clerk, Jean-François, or you can talk to Kate Bourke, our logistics officer.

• (1535)

[Translation]

**Mr. Daniel Paillé:** I understand that we are waiting for a confirmation on the MPs who will be leaving from and returning to Montreal and not Ottawa. That's the staff again... All right.

[English]

**The Chair:** Okay.

We also discussed at the committee—

**Mr. Massimo Pacetti (Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel, Lib.):** Mr. Chair, for Saskatoon we're returning...*jeudi*? We said the later flights, right? Or should we be booking the two o'clock...?

**The Chair:** Our understanding is that it's just too difficult to do the tours and catch the two o'clock flight.

Do you want to comment?

[Translation]

**The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Jean-François Pagé):** Depending on the first day, if we don't have a lot of witnesses in Saskatoon, perhaps we can visit the site in the afternoon. As a result, we would only have to do one tour on Thursday morning and we could finish earlier.

That will depend on how many witnesses we have.

[English]

**The Chair:** There are just the other two items....

I want to get approval for this motion that the committee defray the hospitality expenses related to working meals to be held during its travel to Kamloops on September 28, 2010.

**Mr. Mike Wallace (Burlington, CPC):** I'll move it if you need it. What do you need it for?

**The Chair:** The plan was to perhaps have a luncheon with the first nations band we're visiting.

It's moved by Mr. Wallace. *D'accord?*

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

The other two items, which I'm just going to highlight for the committee, we can discuss today or we can delay. The main thing to do is pre-budget consultations.

We discussed Bill C-470. This has to be reported back to the House October 29. The subcommittee discussed the possibility of having an extension because there are a large number of witnesses who wish to present on this piece of legislation.

I believe Mr. Pacetti is going to talk to the mover of that motion.

Mr. Pacetti.

**Mr. Massimo Pacetti:** Well, I spoke to the people who are on this committee, and we're going to be in favour of extending it.

**The Chair:** Do I have approval from the committee to ask for the extension?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

The other item to highlight is Bill S-3. This is dealing with an act to implement conventions and protocols concluded between Canada and Colombia, Greece, and Turkey for the avoidance of double taxation and the prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on income. We were just asking members, and I think it was agreed at the subcommittee, that we have about two meetings on this piece of legislation in the fall.

**An hon. member:** Maximum.

**The Chair:** Two meetings maximum.

Do I have approval from the committee to schedule two meetings in the fall on this?

Mr. Pacetti.

**Mr. Massimo Pacetti:** There are no outstanding points, from our point of view. We'd prefer to have one meeting—

**The Chair:** One meeting?

**Mr. Massimo Pacetti:** —or even half a meeting—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Massimo Pacetti:** —if all parties can decide, and I can leave it to the parliamentary secretary to make sure all parties are on side.

I don't see the need. There's nothing controversial in it. We said we'd let it go, but I'd prefer not to okay a meeting if we're going to

have a meeting that's going to require filibustering. I prefer to waive my approval that we have even one meeting on this.

**The Chair:** Okay. We'll book one meeting, and we'll have one meeting maximum on this bill.

Mr. Menzies.

**Mr. Ted Menzies (Macleod, CPC):** Can I suggest that if we have a one-hour presentation from someone and we need to fill an hour... perhaps we could do it that way? Maybe it's a better use of our time.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you. That's all I need agreement on today.

Mr. Pacetti.

Sorry, Mr. Wallace.

**Mr. Mike Wallace:** No, no, go to Massimo because I want to go back a bit.

**Mr. Massimo Pacetti:** It's just on the second leg of the pre-budget...the eastern. Where are we going?

**The Clerk:** We're going to London for two days, Lebel-sur-Quévillon, and St. John's, Newfoundland.

**Mr. Massimo Pacetti:** We have people who want to appear in Montreal.

**The Chair:** Mr. Pacetti, there was an agreement by the committee to go to Lebel-sur-Quévillon.

It will likely be easier for them to come to Ottawa.

• (1540)

**Mr. Massimo Pacetti:** I thought we had changed the plan somewhere along the line, because we had agreed that it was going to be in St. John's. Okay. *C'est beau. Merci.*

**The Chair:** Okay.

Mr. Wallace, and then Monsieur Carrier.

**Mr. Mike Wallace:** I have a couple of questions, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, do we need a motion to have no motions or quorum calls or any of that stuff on the road?

**The Chair:** It's up to the committee. It would make my job as chair a lot easier.

**Mr. Mike Wallace:** I'll move that motion, whatever that motion is called, you know the standard motion on....

**The Chair:** That there be no dilatory motions during pre-budget consultations.

**Mr. Mike Wallace:** I'm moving that, and then I would still like to be on the speakers' list because I have other questions.

**The Chair:** Is everyone okay with that motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Mike Wallace:** Thank you.

The second question I have for you is for our own scheduling. When we're in Ottawa you have meetings every day of the week, basically, but Thursday. Do we have any sense of what time of the day they would be on the Monday and Tuesday? Are we sticking with the same timeframe or what?

**The Chair:** Obviously, Monday and Wednesday are 3:30 to 5:30. I'm open for discussion about Tuesday.

**Mr. Mike Wallace:** So Mondays are in our regular time slot.

**The Chair:** That's correct.

**Mr. Mike Wallace:** It doesn't say that here, so I wanted to make sure of that. But for Tuesdays we're not sure. That's the answer thus far. If you can give me that answer sometime, that would be great, because we'd like to schedule it. I have another committee I'm on, on Tuesdays, so I need to be able to switch on and off or get replacements.

An additional question, the third of my fourth, is now that we've approved the numbers...I didn't count up how many witnesses we have. Does it fill all these spots, or does it overflow these spots, or are we in okay shape? How do we look?

**The Chair:** The committee agreed to a maximum of 150, and we have 159. That gives us some leeway, because obviously some may not be able to appear and some may not want to.

**Mr. Mike Wallace:** Very good.

Finally, do we know what we're doing for the site visits? Are we doing site visits in St. John's, Newfoundland? Do we know what we're doing there? Could you send what we're doing at those spots? An organization had an idea, which I passed on, and they'd like to hear whether they're doing it or not.

**The Chair:** The site visits for the central and eastern trip are being formalized now, if anyone has any suggestions. Mr. Paillé submitted one for Lebel-sur-Quévillon.

**Mr. Mike Wallace:** I submitted one for St. John's, Newfoundland.

Thank you very much. That's all I wanted to know.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

*Monsieur Carrier, s'il vous plaît.*

[Translation]

**Mr. Robert Carrier (Alfred-Pellan, BQ):** In June, we produced a report on the self-employed personal services business people working mainly in the information technology sector. The report was submitted to the House on June 10. I would like to know if we have received a response from the minister about the report, since it included a recommendation for the government.

In fact, we were asking the government to examine the Income Tax Act in order to propose legislative amendments based on the nature of the modern labour market, especially for small information technology businesses, so that taxes are fair for small business owners.

I received a copy of the letter that some IT people sent to the Minister of National Revenue. In the letter, they were asking that the recommendation be implemented. These people are in favour of the recommendation in our report and asked that the minister ratify it or go ahead with this amendment. The copy was addressed to the members of the committee and that is how I received it.

Could we at least find out from the office of the Minister of National Revenue whether there will be a follow-up on our report

and when we will receive some information? I'm talking about the report that we submitted. It would be nice to at least have a...

• (1545)

[English]

**The Chair:** From the committee's perspective, we have not yet received a response. I'll get Mr. Menzies to comment. My understanding is that by October 18 the committee should have a response to that report.

Mr. Menzies, do you want to comment?

**Mr. Ted Menzies:** That's fine.

I was going to say I can sure check into it.

[Translation]

**Mr. Robert Carrier:** Yes, you will check.

[English]

**The Chair:** Okay.

Mr. Szabo.

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** I will not be travelling with the committee next week. I understand I will be nominated to be a full member of this committee when that process goes through. If possible, I would appreciate getting copies of the handouts from next week's meetings, including the remarks, if they're given, circulated in advance, simply because there is a substantial delay before those matters appear on the website. That would help me keep up with significant presentations.

**The Chair:** I think we can get the consent of the committee to distribute the CDs to the two members. They have all the submissions to date.

Monsieur Mulcair.

[Translation]

**Mr. Thomas Mulcair:** Yesterday, we worked from two separate lists, in English and in French, so the numbers were different. Would it be possible to take two minutes to confirm a couple of things? Perhaps they have already been confirmed and I might have missed it because the numbers changed depending on the list. I also wanted to check a couple of our suggestions from yesterday.

What we call Canadian Housing and Renewal Association in the English version is called Association canadienne d'habitation et de rénovation urbaine in French. Have we included that?

**A voice:** Which number is that?

**Mr. Thomas Mulcair:** In the English version, it was number 131, one of the first ones I gave yesterday. It is easy to understand how we might have missed it since I gave it separately. It was the very first one I gave.

**A voice:** I will add it.

**Mr. Thomas Mulcair:** You will add it? All right, perfect.

**Mr. Massimo Pacetti:** Just one moment. Can we leave number 94?

**Mr. Thomas Mulcair:** Number 94? I'm sorry, I will take a look.

**Mr. Massimo Pacetti:** I thought you added that one; so we are leaving number 94.

**Mr. Thomas Mulcair:** Yes, but it is not the same thing. It is something else. I asked for number 131 yesterday.

That's fine. So that's all for us. Thank you.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Okay. We'll add that.

Is there anything further?

Mr. Menzies.

**Mr. Ted Menzies:** Mr. Chair, I have just a suggestion for when you're visiting the fine city of St. John's. I'm not sure if I'll be able to join you, but a great site visit would be what's considered to be the oldest building in Canada, the YellowBelly pub.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Ted Menzies:** If you have time, I understand it's a great site visit.

**An hon. member:** [*Inaudible—Editor*]

**The Chair:** Okay. I'll just—

**An hon. member:** We know every bar in town.

**The Chair:** Order.

I would just remind members—

**An hon. member:** Is this a reference to Mr. Wallace's shirt?

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Chair:** —that this is not an in camera meeting.

**Mr. Mike Wallace:** Oh, I've got a yellow belly, all right.

**Mr. Ted Menzies:** It's a great historic building in St. John's. I would encourage you to stop by.

**The Chair:** Thank you for that suggestion. We'll see if we can do a site visit there.

I want to thank you all for your cooperation today. I look forward to seeing those of you who will be in Surrey on Sunday evening, Monday morning.

Thank you.

The meeting is adjourned. *Merci*.

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