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# **Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs**

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**EVIDENCE**

**Thursday, December 11, 2014**

—  
**Chair**

**Mr. Joe Preston**



## Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs

Thursday, December 11, 2014

•(1105)

[English]

**The Chair (Mr. Joe Preston (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC)):** I call the committee to order. This is meeting number 63. Today we are here pursuant—

Yes, Mr. Scott.

**Mr. Craig Scott (Toronto—Danforth, NDP):** Mr. Chair, I'm just wondering if we can have unanimous consent that the vote will count despite the fact that you're not wearing a tie.

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

**The Chair:** The chair already discussed that with the clerk this morning and suggested he'd be very happy to leave and we could get back to this later on in February.

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

**The Chair:** We'll carry on, but thank you very much.

We're here to do clause-by-clause study on Bill C-586. We have a number of amendments to go through.

If you all remember clause-by-clause—your chair will remind you as he moves along—we start off with the preamble and the short title. They get dropped to the bottom and we'll pick them back up later.

(On clause 2)

**The Chair:** Clause 2 has no amendments, so the chair will call the question.

Mr. Lukiwski.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, CPC):** The government will be voting no.

**The Chair:** The government will be voting no on clause 2.

Is there further debate on clause 2?

Seeing none, I'll call for the vote.

**Mr. Craig Scott:** I would ask for a recorded vote.

(Clause 2 negatived: nays 5; yeas 3)

(On clause 3)

**The Chair:** Yes, Mr. Reid.

**Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington, CPC):** On a point of order, Mr. Chair, perhaps we could save a bit of time here.

Mr. Scott, is it your intention that all votes be recorded, in which case we could skip your having to ask the chair each time, or is it just on certain ones?

**Mr. Craig Scott:** I think so; all votes that are not in favour of...

Yes, let's just say that all votes should be recorded.

**The Chair:** Okay. That will save us time.

You have enough paper and you're all set.

**Mr. Scott Reid:** Actually, sorry; I am interested in saving time. Could I suggest that if everybody is in favour of something, then we actually just skip the recording of those votes, and if there's any opposition we then start the recording?

**Mr. Craig Scott:** That's fine by me too. I wasn't expecting this—

**Mr. Scott Reid:** All right.

**The Chair:** All right.

Shall clause 3 carry?

Mr. Lukiwski.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** The government will be voting no.

**The Chair:** Let's do a recorded vote on that, then, please.

(Clause 3 negatived: nays 5; yeas 3)

(On clause 4)

**The Chair:** Mr. Lukiwski, you need to move this, but before you do, I'll suggest that amendment G-1 is consequential to amendments G-2 and G-5, and a vote on amendment G-1 will also apply to amendments G-2 and G-5.

Mr. Lukiwski, we'll have you move the amendment.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** I so move.

**The Chair:** Would you like to speak to it? Or no, wait; you've moved it, so I'll now go to NDP subamendment 1, which applies to amendment G-1.

We'll have Mr. Scott go to that one first.

**Mr. Craig Scott:** We're perfectly happy with the government amendments, except we would like to supplement them.

Within the current amendments, what would end up being subsection 67(5) in G-1, at the bottom of the page, would have to be renumbered as subsection 67(6) so that we could insert the following as a new subsection 67(5):

Within one month of the convening of a new Parliament after a general election, the chief agent of every political party shall report, in writing, to the Chief Electoral Officer the institutional position or positions of the person or persons who will be authorized by the party under subsection (6) to endorse prospective candidates.

I circulated a document giving the rationale. The rationale is simply that under the government amendments, which are welcome, it's still the case that nobody will know who is to endorse the candidates until this very late stage in an election process. The only requirement is to name a person, a human being, or more than one person. Our view is that a party should know well in advance what positions within their party structure are the ones that will be assigned this role, and therefore that can be named well in advance. Then the government's provision kicks in for naming who those persons are 25 days before polling day.

**The Chair:** Is there debate or are there questions on the subamendment?

**Mr. Scott Reid:** I have a question.

The way the bill is now written, I'm assuming that the link between the officer who approves prospective candidates and individual ridings has been separate, that is, it's not one person per riding. Am I correct in that, Mr. Scott?

**Mr. Craig Scott:** Yes. It's now made completely general and optional. Each party indicates which person. Because of the government's amendment, "or persons", it could well be that the party will decide that there's going to be a person per riding. They could decide that there's one person for the party as a whole, or they could decide that there's a panel at the national level, but the old system, Mr. Chong's system, has been entirely removed by this.

•(1110)

**Mr. Scott Reid:** Well, this is the problem. In the event that it's still possible to do it by riding, and it may be the preferred system for some parties, as a practical matter it's impossible to do it a month after a Parliament, such as the current Parliament, has been convened, because we have no idea what the ridings are in fact going to be under the redistribution. That's an issue.

I would suggest that while I appreciate the intention here, I think this particular subamendment is problematic. Based on that, I will be voting against it.

**Mr. Craig Scott:** I think that much about the Elections Act or the Parliament of Canada Act will take into account the norm of a riding association's continuity. When redistribution comes in, that then can be attended to if it causes any consequential problems.

The principle here is the important one. Let's put it this way. Implicitly, for those riding associations that continue to exist, as they will after an election, this is what they have to do. At a minimum, then, everybody knows that when it comes to riding redistribution, where these two side-by-side ridings have been assigned the role, when redistribution happens, something has to happen to combine them. I actually don't see it as a barrier.

**The Chair:** All right.

Mr. Simms.

**Mr. Scott Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor, Lib.):** I'll ask for a quick clarification. What you're doing here then, the substance of it, which is to say that you can nominate any person or persons, is not going to change under your subamendment. What you're doing is that you're doing it in advance of the convening of a Parliament. To do that well in advance, obviously, it will be well before 25 days.

**Mr. Craig Scott:** Yes, after a new Parliament has commenced, so you know the position. Is it the president of the riding association? Is it the national director of the party?

**Mr. Scott Simms:** I see. Okay. I was worried that for any particular individual who gets appointed, then the circumstances may change.

**Mr. Craig Scott:** That's the whole point. It's an institutional position.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** Right. Got it: by title.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** If there's no further debate, I'll put the question on NDP subamendment 1.

Would you like that to be recorded?

**Mr. Craig Scott:** Yes, if there's going to be any split. I guess he was going back to the Scott Reid principle....

(Subamendment negatived: nays, 5; yeas, 3 [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

**The Chair:** That brings us back to amendment G-1, which has been moved by Mr. Lukiwski. I'll call the question on it.

**Ms. Alexandrine Latendresse (Louis-Saint-Laurent, NDP):** Mr. Chair, did you say it applies for amendments G-1 and G-5?

**The Chair:** Amendment G-1 is consequential to amendments G-2 and G-5. The vote on amendment G-1 applies to amendments G-2 and G-5.

Is there any debate at all on amendment G-1? I believe Mr. Lukiwski is preparing for his debate. There's no debate on G-1?

That carries unanimously.

(Amendment agreed to [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

(Clause 4 as amended agreed to)

(On clause 5)

**The Chair:** Shall clause 5 carry?

Carried.

**Mr. Blake Richards (Wild Rose, CPC):** Could you back up for just a moment?

I haven't had a chance to consider clause 5 yet. I was still turning the page. Could you just hold on?

**The Chair:** Sure.

I have a feeling you'll come to a good conclusion on it. I'm not going to fight it until we actually have to.

At this moment, we'll let him read it.

Are we okay on clause 5, or shall we talk about it?

•(1115)

**Mr. Blake Richards:** I'd like us to revisit that if we could, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Let's have a conversation.

Go ahead.

**Mr. Blake Richards:** Thank you. I appreciate that.

I think we should oppose this clause. I have some concerns with it. I'd like to ask for a new vote on it.

**The Chair:** Mr. Lukiwski, go ahead on that one.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** On the whole issue of nomination officers, after pretty extensive consultation with Mr. Chong, everyone agreed to replace it. The government will be voting against clause 5.

**The Chair:** All right.

Is there any conversation? You understood where we are on it?

**Mr. Craig Scott:** All this stuff has to fit together.

**The Chair:** Your chair was trying to be very efficient today, and apparently it's not going to work.

Let's return to clause 5.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** It's not because you didn't have a tie.

**The Chair:** That's part of it. It's way too laid back here today.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** It's distracting.

**The Chair:** Yes, it's way too laid back here today.

Shall clause 5 carry? No.

Do we want a recorded vote on that or are we okay?

**Mr. Craig Scott:** We're okay with that.

**The Chair:** All right.

(Clause 5 negated)

(On clause 6)

**The Chair:** We're now on to amendment G-2, which was already covered under the consequential amendment G-1.

Therefore, we'll now move to the amended clause 6.

(Clause 6 as amended agreed to)

(On clause 7)

**The Chair:** Go ahead, Mr. Lukiwski.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** The government will be voting against clause 7.

**The Chair:** Is there any discussion or should we go to a recorded vote?

**Mr. Craig Scott:** Is there no amendment on this one?

**The Chair:** On clause 7 there is no amendment.

**Mr. Craig Scott:** We're fine with it.

**The Chair:** We're all fine with it being defeated?

All right.

(Clause 7 negated)

(On clause 8)

**The Chair:** Clause 8 is not amended. It sits as it is.

Is there any conversation on clause 8?

Mr. Lukiwski.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** The government will be voting against it.

**The Chair:** It will be voting against clause 8.

Are we having a discussion over that?

**Mr. Craig Scott:** We voted to keep it last time. At the same time that was a symbolic vote, so we're okay with that.

**The Chair:** Right.

We're governed on that then.

(Clause 8 negated)

(On clause 9)

**The Chair:** We have amendment G-3 to start off with.

Mr. Lukiwski, may I have you move that?

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** So moved.

**The Chair:** All right.

Then we have a number of NDP subamendments on clause 9. No, we don't. Sorry.

You're right. I'll get to those.

Amendment G-3 has been moved.

Is there discussion on it?

Mr. Lukiwski.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** It gives further clarification on, in the event of a tie, who actually will be presiding over the vote. There's a little bit more precision in case there are two members. For example, if both have the same length of service and you don't actually know which one shall take the chair to preside over the proceedings, it's the one who appears first in the *Gazette*. It just closes a loophole in case there were any problems with determining exactly who should be the one to preside over the—

**The Chair:** Are there any questions on that government amendment?

**Mr. Craig Scott:** I have a quick question.

Does this relate to this, or do we deal with this later?

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** No, we're going to be dealing with this separately.

**The Chair:** Okay.

(Amendment agreed to [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

**The Chair:** I would ask Mr. Lukiwski to move amendment G-4.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** So moved.

**The Chair:** That will lead us to three NDP subamendments, subamendment 2, subamendment 3, and subamendment 4.

Mr. Scott, would you like to move them, please?

**Mr. Craig Scott:** I also believe there are subamendments 5 and 6.

**The Chair:** I'm at subamendment 2.

**Mr. Craig Scott:** Yes, but there is a series.

**The Chair:** There's a series. We're going to get to them too, but we'll start with subamendment 2.

**Mr. Craig Scott:** What this is meant to deal with is it's inserting four words. At new subsection 49.8(1) in the government's amendment G-4, where it starts "At the first meeting" it should read, "Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions, the first meeting". The reason for inserting the words "Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions" is it's technical in the sense that what we have here is a structure designed by Mr. Chong to have a bunch of prescriptive rules and they read like prescriptive rules. Now we're shifting into a structure that makes them optional, and what makes them optional is that each caucus votes on them. They're sitting at a very juxtaposed, almost contradictory, way and just as a matter of legislative drafting to create the sense of a transition, I would suggest adding those words so that we're signalling that everything that's gone before is now being governed by what's coming after.

I recognize that the government amendment does include subsection 4. You see that on page 5 of government amendment 4. It says, "The provisions referred to in each of paragraphs 1(a) to (d) apply only if a majority of all caucus members vote in favour of their applicability". One could say that's indirectly an application clause. It basically says none of those rules beforehand apply, but really it's written as a rule to say what kind of majority is needed. It's not written as an application clause. Rather than inserting an application clause trying to figure out where that would be, we're on the record; we all know these are going to be optional rules, but I would just suggest a technical amendment that would link the two sections better than the current drafting does.

•(1120)

**The Chair:** Is there any further discussion on Mr. Scott's subamendment?

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** Very briefly, we don't believe the subamendment is necessary, Chair, specifically because the statute needs to be read as a whole, and it's certainly clear in the circumstances the provisions at issue apply when read in the statutory context.

The other thing I want to point out, Craig, in lieu of all of your subamendments, and I appreciate the spirit in which they were made, but quite frankly, we have spent an awful lot of time with Michael on this. We all want to see his bill passed, but we've spent an inordinate amount of time with him on some of the amendments that we brought forward. Michael has appreciated that. We worked with him very closely and we brought forward a package with which Michael is satisfied. To that end, frankly, I don't know if he's been made aware of any of your subamendments whatsoever.

**Mr. Craig Scott:** I've discussed my subamendments extensively with Mr. Chong, and he is supportive of all of them, more supportive

of some of them than others. The transparency ones he believes add to his bill. He would want to see them adopted.

**The Chair:** That's where we are on this. I have a feeling of how this vote is about to go.

We can record that.

(Subamendment negated: nays 5; yeas 3 [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

**The Chair:** That moves us on to government subamendment 1 which is the sheet of paper that has been handed out. This is where it will go after it will return to NDP subamendment 3.

On government subamendment 1, we'll need Mr. Reid to move it. Mr. Lukiwski can't move the subamendment since the main amendment is his.

**Mr. Scott Reid:** So moved.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

I'll pick each of you for something later on, just so you don't feel left out.

Would you like to speak to Mr. Reid's subamendment?

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** Mr. Reid's subamendment speaks for itself.

**The Chair:** There, that's your opening.

Mr. Scott.

**Mr. Craig Scott:** Just to continue with the previous conversation, because this is a collegial process and because it's a private member's bill where one has to take the sponsor seriously, as the government is doing as well, I am aware of Mr. Chong's wanting to see a subamendment like this. We will be supporting it.

•(1125)

**The Chair:** All right. We'll vote on the government's subamendment 1.

Mr. Simms, I'm sorry. I didn't give you a chance to speak.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** That's quite all right.

(Subamendment agreed to [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

**The Chair:** We'll now move back, then, to subamendment 3.

**Mr. Craig Scott:** Yes. This is a small one.

I'll be referring, if it's okay with everybody, to where the government is inserting proposed section 49.8, I'm now referring to their proposed subsection 49.8(5). This appears on page 5 and states:<sup>As soon as feasible after the conduct of the votes, the chair of the caucus shall inform the Speaker of the House of Commons of the outcome of each vote.</sup>

I would simply like to add at the end the words "in writing" in regard to "shall inform".

**The Chair:** Your chair should also share with you that NDP subamendment 3 will also apply to NDP subamendment 4.

Mr. Scott, the same explanation carries.

Is there any further discussion on NDP subamendment 3?

**Mr. Craig Scott:** What do you mean by "apply"?

**The Chair:** It's consequential to subamendment 4. Whatever is decided on subamendment 3 would decide subamendment 4.

**Mr. Craig Scott:** I'd like to speak to subamendment 4.

**The Chair:** Do you also want to speak to subamendment 4?

**Mr. Craig Scott:** Yes. The reason is that subamendment 4, although it may be consequential in the sense of a necessary technical ruling from the legislative clerk, does add something significant. I'll read what subamendment 4 says. We'd be inserting a proposed subsection that would state: "For each caucus vote required after paragraphs (1)(a) to (d) where the caucus decides the relevant sections or subsections shall not be applicable in respect of that caucus"—for example, the caucus votes to reject the rule that says you elect your caucus chair—"the chair of the caucus shall inform the Speaker, in writing, what rules do apply within that caucus to the matters that are the subject of the rejected sections or subsections."

I think that for everybody listening the reason for this is obvious. Without that clause, the transparency function of Mr. Chong's bill, having gone from prescriptive to spotlighting, will disappear. First, all that we'll know officially is that a caucus voted against a rule. We won't know in any official way what caucus rule is in place of it. Does this caucus still elect their chair? If so, how? Does this caucus have the chair appointed by the leader? We don't know.

The point is that the whole purpose of Mr. Chong's exercise has been to try to create the right kind of normative pressure and spotlighting, let's call it, on parties to make sure their rules on these points are transparent so that civil society, the media, and general political debate can pass judgment on whether each party is doing something that's democratically justified in terms of the rules of caucus governance.

Without this provision, we'll end up with a very stripped-down bill, as opposed to a bill which really plays the spotlighting role that going to an optional rules approach should require. That's why those two are together.

**The Chair:** Yes, I understand that's why they are.

On that, Mr. Lukiwski.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** Yes, just quickly, we'll be voting against that. The whole intent of amendment G-4 is to provide some flexibility. Frankly, just by saying "in writing", it denies the ability of the caucuses to determine by themselves which method they want to communicate by, both to their own members and to the Speaker.

Your subamendment says that it has to be done in writing as opposed to a caucus chair simply rising in the House and informing the Speaker of the outcome of the votes. We're saying that we're going for more flexibility as to this prescriptive "in writing" clause.

**Mr. Craig Scott:** We're saying that's highly inadequate and that transparency is not served in the context of this bill if a record isn't created. This also will line up with our amendment asking that the Speaker cause the decisions of each caucus to be published on the parliamentary website.

**The Chair:** I think I have the views.

Mr. Simms.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** That also involves being transparent to the point where if you do not go with what is being suggested here, your alternative must also be in writing as well.

**Mr. Craig Scott:** Yes.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** All right.

**The Chair:** I'll call the question on subamendment 3 and it will also apply to subamendment 4.

(Subamendment negatived: nays 5; yeas 3 [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

**The Chair:** We will now go to subamendment 5.

Mr. Scott.

•(1130)

**Mr. Craig Scott:** Because of the requirement that we would have wanted to see to report to the Speaker in writing what rules do apply, whether you're accepting, let's call them the Chong rules, or you have your own rules, because that has now been voted against, this would have to be modified with reference to the information: "Once the Speaker receives the information in subsection (5)"—it couldn't say subsections (5) and (6)—"she or he shall cause to be published in an accessible manner on the website of Parliament the sections and/or subsections accepted through caucus votes as well as, if any of those sections or subsections have not been accepted, the rules that apply in their stead." Because we lost the vote earlier, the words "as well as..." are going to have to be struck just to be consistent.

**The Chair:** I see what you're saying, that in subamendment 5, part of what you're asking for was defeated previously.

**Mr. Craig Scott:** Get rid of the words "and subsection (6)" and then the words after "caucus votes", starting with "as well as".

**The Chair:** Right, so remove from "as well as" all the way to the end. I have it.

**Mr. Craig Scott:** Yes. Again, we wouldn't want to see those words go, because we wanted to see the earlier section adopted, but it hasn't been.

**The Chair:** That's subsection (6) and then to the bottom—

**Mr. Craig Scott:** Yes, and it now reads: "Once the Speaker receives the information in subsection (5),"—which each party has to tell the Speaker, apparently not in writing. Hopefully, as Mr. Lukiwski said, it at least will be somebody rising in the House to tell the Speaker so it will be in *Hansard*—"she or he shall cause to be published in an accessible manner on the website of Parliament the sections and/or subsections accepted through caucus votes."

Here I really would like to appeal to the government. We now have a rather minimalist approach which is that each party does have to vote. They then have to tell the Speaker which ones they've accepted, effectively, what the result of the vote was, and all the information that the Speaker, under this provision, would be required to have put up on the website with respect to each recognized party caucus is literally did the party accept this, this, and this. It's still transparency, but really stripped down. I hope they would go with that.

(Subamendment negated: nays 5; yeas 4 [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

**The Chair:** We'll move to subamendment 6, and we're still on clause 9.

**Mr. Craig Scott:** In this one I should say that as I tried to make clear earlier, and having consulted Mr. Chong, this is not one that he particularly feels all that strongly about because he's had lots of back and forth with the government and has not prevailed when the government inserted the clause that says, "The outcome of each vote is binding on the caucus until the next dissolution of Parliament." So, he supports the fact that we're moving this but it's not one that he finds crucial. I want to be up front about that.

What we would like to do is, instead of saying the outcome of each vote is binding on the caucus until the next dissolution of Parliament, we would want to say, "Each caucus shall decide whether the outcome of each vote is binding on caucus until the next dissolution of Parliament". There are provisions here to indicate that whatever that decision is also has to be communicated to the Speaker. There are a couple of reasons for this.

One reason is pure consistency. The government is kind of going to the wall here on this being a completely optional process where Parliament is not reaching inside parties and telling them what to do, and yet this clause tells each caucus what to do. It basically means that a caucus is prohibited from revisiting its own rules. I see that as completely inconsistent with the government's position.

For example, what if the Conservative caucus voted and all the MPs come back and a whole number of them are at sea because they've just been elected and they go with the flow and agree to continue with the rule that the leader of the party can appoint the chair, but a year later, they realize it might be better to elect a chair. This precludes that. I don't see it as keeping in the spirit of either Mr. Chong's bill or the government's philosophy that we should not be mandating what parties do.

• (1135)

**The Chair:** Okay. Understood.

I think we'll put the vote in writing.

(Subamendment negated: nays, 5; yeas, 4 [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

**The Chair:** We are on government amendment G-4, as amended.

Mr. Lukiwski.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** Chair, we had table-dropped further amendments.

I apologize for not getting to all of the amendments. Except for this, we had provided those to you before. This is a last-minute one. We've had discussions again with the sponsor. It's a very minor one.

**The Chair:** If it's the one that's in front of me, you've adopted it.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** Oh.

**The Chair:** We have adopted it.

That's why I mentioned G-4 as amended, because it was amended by that one.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** Good.

**The Chair:** We're voting on amendment G-4, in its entirety, as amended.

**Mr. Craig Scott:** On division.

**The Chair:** Sure.

(Amendment as amended agreed to on division)

**The Chair:** Shall clause 9, as amended, carry?

(Clause 9 as amended agreed to on division)

**The Chair:** Shall clause 10 carry?

**Mr. Craig Scott:** On division.

(Clause 10 agreed to on division)

(On clause 11)

**The Chair:** I'll ask Mr. Lukiwski to move amendment G-5.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** So moved.

**The Chair:** I don't have a subamendment so we'll go right to amendment G-5.

(Amendment agreed to [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

**The Chair:** Shall clause 11, as amended, carry?

(Clause 11 as amended agreed to)

**The Chair:** Shall the preamble carry?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Shall the short title carry?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** I don't know why I'm looking at Mr. Simms. I apologize for doing that.

**An hon. member:** It's the tie.

**The Chair:** Shall the title carry?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Shall the bill carry?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**An hon. member:** On division.

**The Chair:** Shall the bill be reported to the House?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Since we have changed it, shall the bill be reprinted?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Is there anything else on that one?

**Mr. Craig Scott:** I'll only say, Mr. Chairman, that we voted on division for the passing of the bill. I'd like to consider the impact of the fact that none of the subamendments carried. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Understood.

There was one other item, now that we've finished Mr. Chong's bill. I congratulate him on his work and the committee on its work in getting it done within the period of time that Mr. Chong wanted to see it happen.

To go back to Mr. Stewart's e-petition motion and the report we're generating for it, can I ask the members if we can send it to you the paperless way?

**Mr. David Christopherson (Hamilton Centre, NDP):** Does it save time?

**The Chair:** Yes, time and effort, and a whole bunch of trees.

• (1140)

**Mr. Craig Scott:** A bunch?

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**The Chair:** Well, it's an e-petition, so I thought it would be nice to say that we're going to send all the stuff to you that way.

Thank you very much. We will do that.

**An hon. member:** We've just learned that the chair has a bonsai collection.

**The Chair:** Is there anything else besides the chair wishing all of you a very merry Christmas?

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** Just to go back to your previous point, Chair, do you know when that might be? I know that we weren't anticipating it until some time in the new year.

**The Chair:** Well, the clerk will make it so that they can come out to you that way.

**Mr. Andre Barnes (Analyst):** It will be seven to ten days before the House returns.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** Perfect.

**Mr. Craig Scott:** Either that or they can leave it for pickup.

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**The Chair:** Yes.

Is there anything else for the great good of this committee?

I'll say that 2014 has been a wonderful year with all of you.

Mr. Reid.

**Mr. Scott Reid:** I know that you're going to do the Christmas wishes to everybody, but I want to say, and I think I reflect what all of the Conservative members here feel, that not just the staff but the

opposition members here are a real pleasure to work with, and it's an honour to have had the last year to work in their company.

**The Chair:** Agreed. There are times when we differ philosophically, but this committee always seems to be able to leave the room with a smile on its face. We did some tough legislation this year when you consider the finishing of redistribution and the Fair Elections Act, so I thank all of you for that hard work.

I thank you for making your chair's job about as easy as it could possibly be.

Did you notice that we came second as best committee in the *Hill Times* survey? We tied with the defence committee, but they're far less than us anyway....

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** Is that tied for second...?

**The Chair:** Yes, tied for second—

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** The number one committee would be...?

**The Chair:** —and the finance committee beat us by a good chunk. You know Mr. Rajotte....

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** Oh, he lobbies—

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**The Chair:** He lobbies, you know. They think if they vote for him that somehow finance is going to give them more things.

**Mr. Scott Reid:** There's a special budget in that committee for taking reporters out to dinner too.

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**The Chair:** Yes, we don't have that.

To finish, I'll thank our clerk and analysts. It's been a great year with you.

**Mr. Craig Scott:** Just to echo all of that, happy holidays to everybody, and thank you, everybody, for being such hard workers and for being so civil in this committee. Thanks to all of you.

**The Chair:** It makes a difference.

Mr. Simms.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** On behalf of Mr. Lamoureux, I love you all.

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Scott Simms:** You're the most wonderful crew I've ever, ever worked with, on behalf of Mr. Lamoureux.

**The Chair:** We know that wasn't on behalf of Mr. Lamoureux because it was way under 10 words.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** You were supposed to say "on division".

**The Chair:** I thank you all, and to all a good night.

The meeting is adjourned.





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