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Chair: Ms. Iqra Khalid



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• (1235)

[English]

The Chair (Ms. Iqra Khalid (Mississauga—Erin Mills, Lib.)): Welcome back, everyone. We are now in public and web-cast. We will be proceeding with the clause-by-clause examination of Bill C-218.

Mr. Brian Masse will now be replacing Mr. Garrison, and Mr. Badawey is replacing Mr. Kelloway. It's very good to have both of you here today.

To assist us in our deliberations, we have in attendance, in Ottawa, Mr. Philippe Méla, our legislative clerk; and our faithful officials from the Department of Justice, namely, Carole Morency, director general and senior general counsel, criminal law policy section, policy sector; and Michael Ellison, counsel, criminal law policy section, policy sector.

Welcome to both of you. Thank you for being here.

Now we'll go to the clause-by-clause consideration. As members know, pursuant to Standing Order 75(1), consideration of clause 1, which is the short title, will be postponed until the very end.

(On clause 2)

The Chair: Within clause 2, we have two amendments, namely G-1 and CPC-1. Just so that members understand, I will be calling on G-1 first, because it was submitted first. If it is adopted, CPC-1 cannot be moved as they are identical. For the same reason, if G-1 is defeated, then so is CPC-1.

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): I have a point of order, Madam Chair.

I think you mentioned the time. In the documents I have, CPC-1 was submitted on March 10, 2021, whereas G-1 was submitted March 22, 2021. I believe that the CPC-1, by 12 days, was in advance and was first.

That's from the documents I've been provided with.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Masse.

Maybe I'll go to our clerks, or maybe we can just follow through what is, ultimately, in front of me and what is the order that has been provided to me by our legislative clerk.

Would that be okay with everyone? Can I just see a thumbs-up?

I see a thumbs-up. In that case then, we'll go to G-1.

Mr. Brian Masse: Unless we have different documents, Madam Chair. We'd better make sure that we actually all have the same documents. I may have unusual documents.

The Chair: All of you absolutely have the same documents that I have in front of me.

Maybe I'll just go, perhaps, to the legislative clerk to clarify which amendment gets put forward first.

Mr. Philippe Méla (Legislative Clerk): Yes, Madam Chair.

I would have to check which one was received by the clerk of the committee first and then sent to me. If you give me a few minutes for that, I'll get back to you.

The Chair: Okay. I guess we're going to wait.

Mr. Maloney.

Mr. James Maloney (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.): Given that they're identical and to avoid the delays about the order, why don't we just proceed?

Mr. Philippe Méla: Excuse me, may I add something else?

There are dates on the bottom of each document. Those are not the dates when they were received by the clerk of the committee. Those are the dates when they were either drafted or entered into the system. They're not when they were received by the clerk of the committee. If you are referring to those dates at the bottom of the page on each amendment, those are not referring to the dates they were submitted to the clerk of the committee. I can assure you that.

The Chair: Thanks for that clarification, Mr. Méla. I appreciate that.

If members are okay, we can go ahead with the agenda that is before me right now. It starts with clause 2 and the first amendment before me—

Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC): Madam Chair, I'm sorry to interrupt. I just received a text from Kevin Waugh, who is seeking to join us. He needs to be let in.

The Chair: Mr. Clerk, if you could please let in Mr. Waugh with the consent of the committee....

Are members okay with Mr. Waugh sitting in with us today?

Absolutely. He's been such a great representative, I think, over the past number of hearings on Bill C-218.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Marc-Olivier Girard): Madam Chair, since this meeting is currently being held in public, I'm not sure that I have to intervene for Mr. Waugh to participate. I will try to keep an eye on that to see if I have a notice of that sort.

He should be using his parl.gc.ca account, so he should be able to join automatically.

The Chair: Thanks for that.

Mr. Cooper, could you perhaps text back to Mr. Waugh to make sure he is using his parliamentary account in order to log in.

As you know, any member is allowed to sit in on any committee.

• (1240)

Mr. Michael Cooper: I think he might have been logging in with the in camera password, so let me just clarify that with him. Thanks.

The Chair: Thanks for that, Mr. Cooper.

Members, are we okay to proceed?

Mr. Philippe Méla: Madam Chair, if I may, I have the answer to the question that was asked regarding when the amendments were received. The government amendment was received on March 22. The CPC amendment was received on March 23, the day after, hence the order in which they appear in the package.

The Chair: Thanks very much for—

Mr. Brian Masse: There is an error with G-1, so I just want to make sure we have that right. There's an error that says "March 10" for Mr. Moore. That's what the confusion is over. Our documents have an error. The top left of our documents has "Mr. Moore (Fundy Royal)" and then "March 10, 2021".

I just want to make sure we did this correctly. The other one is March 22. I don't know why there is an inconsistency, but it's all good.

The Chair: As the legislative clerk had clarified earlier, the dates are in terms of drafting versus submitting. With the way my records show and the way the legislative clerk just let us know as well, the government amendment was submitted on March 22 and the CPC amendment was submitted to the clerk on March 23.

We are going to proceed now, if it's okay with members, on clause 2, with the first amendment submitted, which is amendment G-1.

I understand, Mr. Badawey, you'll be moving this amendment. Please go ahead, sir.

Mr. Vance Badawey (Niagara Centre, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I move that Bill C-218, in clause 2, be amended by replacing lines 5 to 7 on page 1 with the following:

2 Paragraph 207(4)(b) of the Criminal Code is replaced by the following:

(b) bookmaking, pool selling or the making or recording of bets, including bets made through the agency of a pool or pari-mutuel system, on any horse-race; or

I will leave it at that.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The Chair: Would you like to speak to this amendment as well, Mr. Badawey?

Mr. Vance Badawey: Thank you, Madam Chair, for the opportunity, and thank you to committee members.

The effect of this amendment would be to render it identical, in effect, to Bill C-13. Like Bill C-13, this amendment to Bill C-218 would ensure that the parimutuel system of betting used by the horse-racing industry across this country would remain under the regulation of the federal Canadian Pari-Mutuel Agency.

Given the testimony we have heard from the horse-racing industry, stakeholders and the Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food, I believe it is in the best interests of the horse-racing industry to maintain the regulatory status quo. The horse-racing industry's primary source of revenue is wagering through the parimutuel system of betting. We must move to protect this revenue stream for the benefit of approximately 50,000 jobs across Canada.

While this amendment does not address the issue of historical horse racing, as raised in testimony by a number of witnesses, I do believe, Madam Chair, that it is an appropriate amendment and that, in fact, it fits within the scope of Bill C-218.

With that, Madam Chair, I will be voting to support this amendment.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thanks very much, Mr. Badawey.

Mr. Moore, go ahead, sir.

Hon. Rob Moore (Fundy Royal, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'm looking at these two amendments side by side. I'm wondering if someone on the government side can explain the outrageous lack of quotation marks at the beginning and end of their amendment, which are contained in the Conservative amendment.

The Chair: Would anybody like to speak to this outrageous use of quotation marks?

I'm sorry, Mr. Moore. I don't see any takers.

Mr. Arif Virani (Parkdale—High Park, Lib.): I can assure Mr. Moore that we will take up the matter with Mr. Kusmierczyk, who tabled the amendment.

The Chair: Thank you.

In that case, I will call the question on G-1. Would members like a recorded vote?

Mr. Clerk, go ahead and record the vote, please.

(Amendment agreed to: yeas 11; nays 0)

The Chair: Now I call the question on clause 2 as amended.

• (1245)

Mr. Arif Virani: Madam Chair, do we need to do a recorded division on each clause?

The Chair: I leave it to members to advise me if they would like to do it on division or not, but my standard go-to is to have the vote recorded if I'm not advised beforehand. Because we've started the vote, we'll continue with the vote. I advise members to let me know in advance for future clauses.

Go ahead, Mr. Clerk.

(Clause 2 as amended agreed to: yeas 11; nays 0)

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Arif Virani: Madam, I believe if you seek it, you shall find unanimous consent to approve every one of the remaining clauses, the title and to submit this back to the House.

The Chair: Do I have that consent to carry clause 3 unanimously?

(Clause 3 agreed to)

The Chair: Do I have consent to carry the short title unanimously?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Shall the title carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Shall the bill as amended carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Shall the chair report the bill as amended to the House?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Shall the committee order a reprint of the bill as amended for the use of the House at report stage?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Congratulations, committee. We have now gone through what I think is a record for the shortest time that we've spent on clause-by-clause. It is wonderful to see so much unanimity and consensus within our committee for all of the issues that we've discussed today. I really appreciate it.

At this time, Mr. Clerk, is there anything else that I need to go over with committee members?

The Clerk: I don't think so.

The Chair: In that case, this meeting is adjourned.

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