



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

44th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities

EVIDENCE

NUMBER 038

Wednesday, October 19, 2022



Chair: Mr. Robert Morrissey

Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities

Wednesday, October 19, 2022

• (1700)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Robert Morrissey (Egmont, Lib.)): I call this meeting to order.

Welcome to meeting number 38 of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities.

Today's meeting is in a hybrid format, pursuant to the House order of June 23, 2022. Members are attending in person in the room and remotely using the Zoom application.

To ensure an orderly meeting, I would like to take a few minutes for the benefit of the witnesses and members. Before speaking, please wait until I recognize you by name. For those participating virtually, please use the “raise hand” function before speaking. Click on the microphone icon to activate your own mike. When you're done speaking, please mute yourself to minimize interference. For those in the room, if you wish to speak, please raise your hand. Your microphone will be controlled by the verification officer.

The clerk and I will manage the speaking order. You may speak in the official language of your choice, and interpretation services are available for the meeting. If interpretation services are lost, please get my attention. We'll suspend while they're corrected.

I would also like to remind members that no screenshots are allowed. Should any technical issues arise, please advise me, and we may need to suspend to correct them.

Before we begin today, I would like to ask if we have the consent of the committee to proceed with the election of the first vice-chair.

Mr. Aitchison, go ahead.

Mr. Scott Aitchison (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'm not entirely sure how this process works exactly. Can I get some advice? I have an idea of someone for the first vice-chair, and if I'm just to propose that now, I'll do that.

The Chair: Madam Clerk, please speak to it.

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Danielle Widmer): Pursuant to Standing Order 106(2), the first vice-chair must be a member of the official opposition. I am now prepared to receive motions for the first vice-chair.

The Chair: If the official opposition wants to move at this time, go ahead. Or we can deal with it on Monday, at the next meeting. It's totally at your discretion.

Mrs. Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC): Monday is fine.

The Chair: If you want to deal with it on Monday, that's fine. Thank you, Mrs. Falk.

Pursuant to the order of reference of Wednesday, June 15, 2022, the committee will resume its study of Bill C-215, an act to amend the Employment Insurance Act.

I would like to inform all members that the witnesses are appearing today virtually, and they have concluded the technical test. Interpretation services are okay to proceed.

I would like to welcome our witnesses to begin our discussion with five minutes of opening remarks. The witnesses today are officials of the Department of Employment and Social Development. We have Anamika Nandy, director general, employment insurance policy, skills and employment branch; and Benoit Cadieux, director, special benefits, employment insurance policy, skills and employment branch.

You will have five minutes for your opening remarks. It's my understanding that Monsieur Cadieux will provide the opening five-minute statement.

Monsieur Cadieux, you have the floor.

Mr. Benoit Cadieux (Director, Special Benefits, Employment Insurance Policy, Skills and Employment Branch, Department of Employment and Social Development): Thank you.

Good afternoon, everybody. My name is Benoit Cadieux. I'm the director for employment insurance special benefits policy at Employment and Social Development Canada.

Today, I'm joined by my colleague Mona Nandy, who is the director general of employment insurance policy at ESDC.

[Translation]

As you may be aware, in June 2021, Parliament approved, through the Budget Implementation Act, 2021 No. 1, an extension of employment insurance sickness benefits.

This extension increases from 15 to 26 the maximum number of weeks of EI sickness benefits payable to workers, including the self-employed who are registered, when they are unable to work due to illness, injury or quarantine. The target date for this extension to come into effect is the end of 2022. The exact date will be announced later this fall.

[English]

The EI program is a labour market program designed to provide short-term income support to workers during temporary absences from work. A key objective of the EI program is to support labour market reintegration, and it is designed with the expectation that claimants will return to work after interruptions resulting from life events or job loss.

In this context, EI sickness benefits are designed to complement other supports available to workers in cases of longer-term illnesses, such as employer-provided benefits and longer-term disability supports.

Roughly one-third of EI claimants use all 15 weeks currently available under EI sickness benefits. Out of this number, close to half do not return to work following their sickness leave. Most of those who do return to work do so within 10 weeks after exhausting their benefits.

• (1705)

[Translation]

Bill C-215, as introduced, would amend the Employment Insurance Act to extend to 52 weeks the maximum number of weeks of sickness benefits that may be paid to a worker or self-employed person when they are unable to work because of illness, injury or quarantine.

[English]

This bill also contains coordinating amendments to ensure that if this bill should receive royal assent before or on the same day as the extension to 26 weeks comes into force, this bill would repeal the provisions related to the extension to 26 weeks so they don't come into force afterwards.

[Translation]

Finally, this bill does not specify any date of entry into force. It is therefore implicit that it will come into force on the day it receives royal assent.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Cadieux.

[English]

I will now open the floor for statements, beginning with Mrs. Falk for six minutes.

Mrs. Rosemarie Falk: Thank you very much, Chair.

Thank you to the department for being here and being willing to answer questions.

This committee has repeatedly heard that EI sickness benefits are wholly inadequate. This isn't a new thing. During this committee's study on EI modernization, we heard that the benefits should be ex-

tended to about 50 weeks, and that was ultimately the recommendation given by this committee to the government and to the department. We now know that the government has rejected that recommendation and wants to extend the benefits up to only 26 weeks.

In the department's consultations on EI modernization, were you able to identify support for the extension of sickness benefits to 52 weeks?

Mr. Benoit Cadieux: Thank you for the question.

As I've mentioned, the results from the EI sickness benefit evaluation that was conducted in 2019 and published in 2020 indicated that claimants were much less likely to return to work after taking more than 26 weeks of leave. That included those who exhausted their 15 weeks of benefits. What the evaluation found was that 10 weeks afterwards, claimants were much less likely to return to work, and those who did tended to return within 10 weeks of exhausting their 15 weeks of benefits.

Therefore, extending sickness benefits to 50 or 52 weeks would provide additional income supports to many workers who may not be expected to return to work at all. This—

Mrs. Rosemarie Falk: I'm sorry, but I have limited time. Why did the government or the department choose to go forward with only 26 weeks if there is that need for more—especially since this committee had already made recommendations through previous studies that we should have more than 26 weeks—for instance, 50 or 52 weeks? Why is the department going forward with only the 26 weeks?

Mr. Benoit Cadieux: That would be a question for your colleague, the minister of ESDC.

Mrs. Rosemarie Falk: Did the department not get direction for what this committee recommended, 52 weeks? Did it get direction for only 26 weeks?

Ms. Anamika Mona Nandy (Director General, Employment Insurance Policy, Skills and Employment Branch, Department of Employment and Social Development): Maybe I can jump in there to add a little bit.

During the consultations on EI, we certainly received a significant amount of input to support increased access to EI benefits, including for claimants who experienced job loss or have experienced life events that require them to step away from work.

We're in the process of reviewing all of that input to consider how to move forward with a plan for EI modernization, but as it stands—

• (1710)

Mrs. Rosemarie Falk: If the consultations aren't done and the department is still combing through recommendations, why are the department and the government going forward with 26 weeks, as opposed to the 52 weeks that this committee had given the recommendation for? It just seems like we're putting the cart before the horse if we haven't gone through all the work beforehand but are coming out with 26 weeks.

Ms. Anamika Mona Nandy: The commitment to increase the sickness benefits from 15 to 26 weeks was, as my colleague indicated, part of a budget 2021 commitment. It was included as part of the Budget Implementation Act, 2021, which was approved by Parliament. Further to that, we are proceeding with the work required to implement a sickness benefit extension from 15 to 26 weeks.

At the same time, we continue work on supporting the modernization of EI through consultations that include thematic of how to improve access and adequacy of the program for all claimants—

Mrs. Rosemarie Falk: Okay. Thank you.

Did the department make the recommendation to the minister to only proceed with 26 weeks?

Mr. Benoit Cadieux: I would say that recommendations made to the minister are confidential and are a cabinet confidence. I cannot speak to what recommendations were made by the department to our minister.

Mrs. Rosemarie Falk: Okay.

What is the date when Canadians will be able to access the 26 weeks?

Mr. Benoit Cadieux: As mentioned by the minister earlier in the House of Commons, this extension will come into effect by the end of 2022. An exact date will be announced later this fall.

Mrs. Rosemarie Falk: Wonderful. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mrs. Falk.

Now we'll go to Mr. Kusmierczyk.

Please, would you identify which one of the witnesses your questions are directed to?

Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk (Windsor—Tecumseh, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to start off by saying thank you to Mr. Cadieux, and to Ms. Nandy as well, for your extensive work in the last number of months on the EI modernization and the extensive consultations with Canadians that have taken place through a number of round tables from coast to coast. Thank you so much for your work on that important initiative.

I wanted to ask Mr. Cadieux a question. When was the last time any extension to the EI sickness program was initiated?

Mr. Benoit Cadieux: Thank you for the question.

EI sickness benefits were never extended. They have been 15 weeks since their introduction in 1971.

Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk: So this is the first major change. The extension from 15 to 26 weeks is really the first change in over 50 years. Is that correct?

Mr. Benoit Cadieux: That is correct.

Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk: In that extension from 15 to 26 weeks—which, again, will be introduced by the end of this year—how many Canadians do we expect will benefit from this change?

Mr. Benoit Cadieux: It is expected that this extension will benefit approximately 169,000 claimants per year, who will benefit from additional weeks of sickness benefits beyond the 15 weeks that are currently available.

Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk: That is absolutely a significant number, for sure.

We know that EI sickness benefits are one of...there are other options that are available avenues to support Canadians who have to take time off work because they're sick. Can you talk about other long-term disability support, like the Canada pension plan disability support? How does it complement and how does it work with EI sickness benefits? Can you talk about what the differences are that underpin those two programs?

• (1715)

Mr. Benoit Cadieux: Thank you. That's a great question.

Many employers offer short- and long-term disability coverage to their employees. Approximately eight million workers in Canada are covered by such benefits, and those are the ones we know are covered and registered through the premium-reduction program that the EI program offers.

For most of these eight million workers, those benefits are far more generous than the EI program. They include paid sick days, paid sick leave, for example. That's one type of those benefits. They often provide coverage for up to 100% of that employee's salary.

Those are often the first line of resort for employees who have to take time away from work because they're sick. After that, they can access EI sickness benefits for up to 15 weeks—soon to be 26 weeks—and if they're still sick beyond that, a lot of these workers have access as well to long-term disability benefits or Canada pension plan disability benefits. If they are unable to work for a very long period of time and they're unable to return to the labour market, they can then access, as I said, the Canada pension plan disability benefits.

Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk: So the EI sickness program is really meant to be a short-term program that maintains that connection to the labour force, whereas, for example, CPPD is meant for long-term disability. Is that correct?

Mr. Benoit Cadieux: That's exactly right. EI sickness benefits tend to be viewed as short-term benefits for temporary illnesses to give time to the workers to recover until they are able to get back to work, whereas there are other benefits and supports available for longer-term illnesses for workers who require more time before they are able to return to work or in cases where they are not able to return to work at all.

Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk: You would know as well, obviously, that COVID has changed our thinking about illness and spending time away from work. How is COVID expected to impact the EI sickness program? Have you given that some thought? Also, conversely, how will extending the EI sickness program to 26 weeks help Canadians who are, for example, experiencing long COVID and other symptoms?

Mr. Benoit Cadieux: Thank you for the question. This is something that we're looking into. I would say that we don't have the data yet to really be able to say what impact long COVID has had on EI sickness benefit take-up. Certainly those who are unable to work due to long COVID could have access to EI sickness benefits, and with the extension to 26 weeks, they will have access to up to half a year of income support in the case where they're unable to work due to long COVID.

I would just add that there are also flexibilities built into EI sickness benefits that allow claimants to receive those 26 weeks of benefits within a 52-week benefit period. So the claimant who perhaps is able to return to work here and there, a few days a week, perhaps a week here and there, and gradually return to work can do so and can spread the use of their sickness benefits over a full year, allowing them to return to the labour force gradually.

Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Kusmierczyk.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Chabot, you have six minutes.

Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to our witnesses.

I say this very respectfully, but we will not be able to get clarification from you on certain questions because there have been political overtones. I understand that you have responded to a colleague in this sense.

Have you made any recommendations? Many bills have been tabled over the last 50 years. All the studies done by experts or scientists on the number of weeks of benefits needed to recover from a serious or long illness—we often talk about cancer, but there are other types of illnesses—show that it takes an average of 41 weeks of benefits.

At the very time of the introduction of the 15 weeks of EI sickness benefits, the Parliamentary Budget Officer was saying that even then it was below what it was 50 years ago.

Currently, I have the impression that we are being told about the bright side. Indeed, many workers have more generous private insurance. But what we want is for benefits to be used for workers

who pay into EI and who, in 60% of cases, have no group or private insurance.

Self-employed workers can purchase the special benefits for a premium. This is not the case for regular EI benefits, which affect many workers. In 2022, the government chose to provide 26 weeks of benefits in its budget. It did so despite the result of scientific studies, despite a report from this committee that made recommendations well before the reform consultations, and despite Bill C-265, passed unanimously by our committee, that increased the duration of benefits from 15 to 50 weeks.

From the department's perspective, after all you've heard, do you at least agree that 26 weeks of benefits will not meet all the needs of workers who pay into EI and who would be entitled to additional benefits? Do you also agree that some workers will be left behind?

• (1720)

Mr. Benoit Cadieux: Thank you very much for your question.

The average number of weeks of sickness benefits paid, based on the most recent data we have, for 2020 and 2021, is nine weeks. Of all claimants who received sickness benefit, 33%, or about a third, use the maximum allowance of 15 weeks of benefits. It is really these people who will be able to benefit from an extension of benefits to 26 weeks. By going from 15 to 26 weeks, they will be able to receive up to 11 extra weeks of benefits.

Ms. Louise Chabot: That's your point of view, but maybe you don't see certain elements of the statistics.

People on a meagre 15 weeks of benefits sometimes go back to work under unfortunate conditions in order to accumulate enough hours to qualify for further benefits. There have been witnesses who, suffering from cancer, have had to return to work between chemotherapy treatments because they had no other choice.

I think 26 weeks of sickness benefits is not enough. The bill before us proposes 52 weeks, whereas the previous bill proposed 50 weeks.

The implementation of the 26 weeks of benefits was originally announced for July. It has now been pushed back. What explains the delay in implementing the 26 weeks of benefits?

Mr. Benoit Cadieux: Thank you for your question.

Initially, the commitment was to have this extension in place by summer 2022. However, due to the pandemic, temporary measures were put in place to enhance the EI program and facilitate access. These temporary measures were applied until September 2022. Because of these measures, many Service Canada resources had to be mobilized to put these measures in place, but also to meet the higher than normal demand.

This explains why the implementation of the extension to 26 weeks of benefits was delayed until the end of 2022.

● (1725)

Ms. Louise Chabot: Basically, this bill proposes an extension to 52 weeks. Depending on what you say, if it is passed in its current form, whether it is 26 or 52 weeks, anything is possible.

Mr. Benoit Cadieux: Normally, when a change is made to the EI program, it takes at least a year to make the necessary changes to the system. It's not just changing the different systems that deliver the program; it's also training Service Canada agents and changing the procedures and guides that agents use. It's still a lot of work. It's not as simple as changing a number in the law.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Chabot.

[English]

Ms. Zarrillo, go ahead for six minutes.

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I just want to mention the important testimony that we heard earlier in the week. It became fairly clear in that testimony that there is a gender lens to this work. I have some questions around the gender lens and the study that was done and published in 2021, but also, I have to think that in 1972 they weren't really thinking about putting a gender lens on this work.

My question for Mr. Cadieux is around how the research was done. Was a gender lens applied in this study? I would be interested specifically in what workers pivoted to after the 15 weeks and 10 weeks. They said they didn't necessarily come back. What did they pivot to, and was that data disaggregated by gender?

I have a second question on the gender lens. There is a note here in the brief that the Office of the Parliamentary Budget Officer sent some numbers forward. We know there is a significant gap in pay in Canada as it relates to men and women, and I'm interested to know whether a gender lens was applied to that budgeting effort.

Mr. Benoit Cadieux: Thank you for the question. That's an excellent question. There certainly was a gender lens. I don't have all the data right in front of me to be able to answer the question and really break it down by gender. Perhaps this is something we can get back to the committee with a more fulsome answer on.

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo: Thank you. I'll just follow up on that question.

A lot of what we heard about on Monday—and I know there's been a lot of testimony in relation to employment insurance over time—did affect women, in terms of the different kinds of cancers but also in terms of maternity, although there is also parental leave. I just want to get an understanding of what came up in the study

around being able to stack some of these benefits around life events. It's been said today that life events just tend to happen, and this bill is really saying, hey, we need 52 weeks for sickness alone.

What kind of feedback do you have around stackable benefits for life events?

Mr. Benoit Cadieux: Certainly, as part of the consultations that recently concluded, this was a topic that we heard quite a bit of feedback on. Participants certainly indicated that there was a need for flexibility and the ability to combine different types of benefits together, especially when multiple life events occur in close succession.

Currently, up to 50 weeks of EI benefits can be combined when regular and special benefits are accessed in close succession. There are certain circumstances in which only EI special benefits are accessed and up to 104 weeks can be accessed.

● (1730)

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo: When the information comes back around gender, can you add this one? I'd be interested in knowing about that feedback for stackable or other life events, and whether there was a gender lens you could apply to that too whereby we could see the data for women, gender-diverse people and men. That would be great. Thank you very much.

Mr. Benoit Cadieux: I can just perhaps add quickly that in general for EI sickness benefits, 56% of claimants are women, versus 44% who are men. Those are the stats that I have with me right now, but certainly we can provide additional statistics to properly respond to your question.

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo: That brings another question to mind. In 1972, what were the stats of women and men in the workforce? I will be so interested to know where we started from in EI when that information comes back.

We have labour shortages, which we've studied in committee. We're talking about labour shortages. I just wanted to have an understanding of it. Was there any data modelling done around whether the 15 weeks, the 26 weeks or the 52 weeks gave us the best opportunity to get folks back to work healthy and happy?

Mr. Benoit Cadieux: As I mentioned, approximately 33% of claimants currently exhaust their 15 weeks of benefits. Among those, what the evaluation in 2019 demonstrated was that close to half—about 45%—never returned to work afterwards. For those who did return to work, the vast majority returned to work within the first 10 weeks after exhausting their 15 weeks of benefits.

Certainly, an extension to 26 weeks would help that group of claimants who are most likely to return to work shortly after exhausting their 15 weeks of benefits. Any extension beyond 26 weeks—for example, an extension to 50 or 52 weeks—would certainly provide support to additional claimants, but a lot of these claimants are individuals who unfortunately would not be likely to return to the labour market.

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo: Thank you.

The Chair: We'll begin with Ms. Ferreri for five minutes.

You have the floor.

Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to our witnesses.

I'm going to back up a bit because I want to sort out a few questions that I have. I'm new to HUMA—and thank you for having me—and have been recently appointed as shadow minister for families, children and social development as well.

Mr. Cadieux, you're director for employment insurance special benefits policy at Employment and Social Development Canada. On the question that my colleague asked earlier in terms of why the recommendation wasn't extended to 52 weeks, you said to go back to the minister of ESDC. I'm a little confused as to which minister that is, because when we look at the mandate letters, there are four ministers and four parliamentary secretaries.

Who are you saying we should be asking?

Mr. Benoit Cadieux: My response was really to say that a lot of these decisions were political decisions, so at the end of the day, you would have to direct your question to the minister responsible for the EI program, which is Minister Qualtrough.

Ms. Michelle Ferreri: I'm just going to read to you from the mandate letter for Minister Gould. It says:

As the Minister responsible for Service Canada, lead the development and implementation of modern, resilient, secure and reliable services and benefit delivery systems for Canadians and ensure those services and benefits reach all Canadians regardless of where they live.

Wouldn't you say that it would also be Minister Gould?

Mr. Benoit Cadieux: Minister Qualtrough is responsible for the policy of the EI program, so any questions regarding policy questions would have to be directed to her.

• (1735)

Ms. Michelle Ferreri: We had a very powerful witness here in HUMA this week, who has been working on this for 13 years. She went through health issues herself. She's been told by all levels of government, by all ministers, that this has been approved, yet 13 years later, we're still in this same holding pattern. Can you tell us why?

Mr. Benoit Cadieux: I'm not sure I understand the reference to "13 years later". Could you, perhaps, elaborate on that?

Ms. Michelle Ferreri: Yes. She started an organization, "15 weeks is not enough", and has been advocating, for 13 years, to extend EI benefits from 15 weeks to 52 weeks.

Mr. Benoit Cadieux: Certainly, I cannot speak to why it was not extended earlier. All I can say is that, right now, the proposal is to extend it to 26 weeks. I can't say why it wasn't extended earlier than that.

Ms. Michelle Ferreri: Can you clarify for me, then—since you're the director for special benefits employment insurance policy at Employment and Social Development Canada—why you wouldn't know the answer on what the delay has been? What's your role, then?

Mr. Benoit Cadieux: Certainly, there are a number of reasons why a government may or may not choose to extend benefits. It is beyond my decision whether to extend beyond 15 weeks. I could not provide you with an answer as to why the government of the day chose to wait until now to extend sickness benefits. Multiple governments were in place during those 13 years.

Ms. Michelle Ferreri: Thank you for your answer.

How much time do I have, Mr. Chair?

The Chair: You have a little less than a minute.

Ms. Michelle Ferreri: Thank you so much.

What's frustrating for Canadians watching at home, I guess, is the lack of timely or targeted delivery of services, which were promised. Where is the accountability to taxpayers? I hear you saying that it's not you, that it's the minister. I would love to know your thoughts on where people should point their attention.

Where does the accountability fall? We're asking for something everybody seems to agree on, yet we're still sitting here in a holding pattern.

The Chair: Give us a short answer, please.

Ms. Anamika Mona Nandy: Perhaps I can jump in on this, if that's okay.

As officials, we respond to the priorities of governments of the day. When we're talking about the sickness extension from 15 to 26 weeks and the implementation of that extension, it is in response not only to a government commitment but also, as I mentioned before, to parliamentary approval of the additional weeks of sickness benefits to 26 weeks.

As we have indicated, we are moving forward with implementing that commitment as quickly as possible—before the end of the year. That's what we are proceeding with, while understanding that there is a proposal before this committee to further extend sickness benefits to 52 weeks, under this bill.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Ferreri. That concludes your time.

Now I believe it's Mr. Long for five minutes.

Mr. Wayne Long (Saint John—Rothesay, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Good afternoon, colleagues.

Ms. Nandy and Mr. Cadieux, thank you very much for coming today and for your work on this.

I was surprised, Mr. Cadieux, when you were talking about... The average draw was nine weeks, and 33% used 15 weeks. Can you confirm that and elaborate, please?

Mr. Benoît Cadieux: That's correct. The average number of weeks of EI sickness benefits used—for somebody who used only EI sickness benefits—was nine weeks, and 33% of claimants used all 15 weeks available to them.

• (1740)

Mr. Wayne Long: When you did that analysis, what year was that?

Mr. Benoît Cadieux: This is 2020-21 data.

Mr. Wayne Long: Has it changed? Has it increased? Has it stayed somewhat static?

Mr. Benoît Cadieux: I would say that fiscal year was a bit of a different type of year, given the pandemic, so the data is, perhaps, not reflective of a normal year. In previous years, that percentage was slightly higher. For example, I believe it was 36% in 2019-20. Now, in 2020-21, it's 33%.

Mr. Wayne Long: Thank you.

Ms. Nandy or Mr. Cadieux, can you speak to what analysis the department has conducted that supports the increase in the maximum number of weeks of EI sickness to 26? What analysis did you do?

Mr. Benoît Cadieux: To inform the extension to 26 weeks, certainly we looked at things like the results from the evaluation of EI sickness benefits. We looked at consultations and feedback received from stakeholders and at recommendations made by them. We've looked at the annual data on the usage of EI sickness benefits as well to make a recommendation.

Mr. Wayne Long: Thank you.

Has the department compared the potential impact of 26 weeks compared to 50-52 weeks? Have you done an analysis on that?

Mr. Benoît Cadieux: Could you clarify what you mean by the "impact"?

Mr. Wayne Long: I mean the financial impact.

Mr. Benoît Cadieux: Yes. The Parliamentary Budget Officer did an estimate and estimated that an extension to 52 weeks would cost approximately \$1.9 billion per year ongoing. This compares roughly to \$1 billion for an extension to 26 weeks.

Mr. Wayne Long: Thank you.

A lot of illnesses, I guess, could be classified as somewhat intermittent. For example, I don't hide it, but when I was in my twenties and thirties, which was a hundred years ago, I suffered greatly from panic attacks and anxiety. I obviously didn't have them continually; I would have them in periods.

Could you speak to the benefits of the 26-week program and how flexibility that would help somebody like me could be built into the system?

Mr. Benoît Cadieux: Sure. There are two ways the program provides some flexibility for those with episodic or intermittent illnesses. The first one is that claimants have the ability to work while on claim, while they're claiming EI sickness benefits. For any [*Technical difficulty—Editor*]. For example, a claimant can return to their job throughout the week, even though they're claiming benefits—for example, if they are looking to reintegrate slowly back into the workforce.

The second way is that those 26 weeks of the EI sickness benefits can be received over a 52-week benefit period. A claimant does not have to take all 26 weeks consecutively. If they are ready to start going back to work, they can go back to work for one week, take benefits a week later if they are unable to work and ease back into the workplace that way.

Mr. Wayne Long: Ms. Nandy, can you comment on what the department's plans are to actually inform Canadians of these new measures?

Ms. Anamika Mona Nandy: Thank you for the question.

As I mentioned, there were the legislative amendments that were necessary to implement the change from 15 to 26 weeks. It was approved through budget 2021.

What they've also indicated is that there would be a coming into force date determined by the Governor in Council, so when that date is determined, there would be notification to Canadians as to the implementation of these benefits.

As we said, the plan is to have them implemented by the end of the year.

• (1745)

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Ms. Chabot, you have the floor for two and a half minutes.

Ms. Louise Chabot: Do you agree with me that some people need more than 15 or 26 weeks before they can return to work? They need to heal themselves in privacy before returning.

Mr. Benoît Cadieux: Thank you for your question.

As I mentioned earlier, it is important to bear in mind that there are other supports available to people who cannot return to work after receiving 26 weeks of benefits. For example, long-term benefits are available to many Canadian employees. This is an option for those who need more time to return to work.

Ms. Louise Chabot: You said earlier that 33% of people were receiving 15 weeks of benefits. They might have needed more, but they used up the number of weeks they were entitled to. Some may not have returned to the labour market. Let's not forget that there are humans behind the statistics.

My reading of the situation is different from yours. You say that other programs are available to those who have used the 26 weeks of benefits. There is talk of increasing special sickness benefits to 50 or 52 weeks, but you have to assume that not everyone will use them and that some people with episodic illnesses, such as multiple sclerosis, or more serious illnesses, need them. These people are paying into EI and hoping to get back to work.

[English]

The Chair: Who is going to answer?

Was that a question, Madame Chabot?

[Translation]

Ms. Louise Chabot: Statistics show that 33% of people use 15 weeks of benefits. What happens after that?

Surely not all of these people have returned to work. In some situations, there is nothing after 15 weeks. In Quebec, that means social assistance.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Chabot.

[English]

Your time has concluded.

We will now go to Ms. Zarrillo for two and a half minutes.

Ms. Zarrillo, you have the floor.

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I just want to say that I appreciate Madame Chabot's passion today, because we've heard too many stories about people who have lost their homes, their life savings and family members. This is life-or-death for many people.

I want to go back to something that came out in the study, just around easier access to EI benefits: making it easier to apply, making the benefits more accessible, and even making it easier to access combined benefits because of successive life events.

I wonder, Mr. Cadieux, if you wouldn't mind sharing what modernization is coming by the end of the year around the ease of accessing benefits and whether it is going to become easier for everyone who needs to access those benefits.

Mr. Benoit Cadieux: Thank you for the question.

I would just say that the government has not yet announced its plan for the modernization of EI. This is something that will be announced later this year.

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo: Now we're talking about how it's in the works to have an increase to 26 weeks by the end of the year. There will be no change in how those benefits are accessed, no change in ease of accessibility. There will be no change. Is that what you're saying?

• (1750)

Ms. Anamika Mona Nandy: Perhaps I could just jump in on that, if that's okay. I think what my colleague Mr. Cadieux was trying to say was that the change with regard to an increase in sickness benefits to 26 weeks is on track to be implemented by the end of the year.

In addition, the government has, as per its budget 2021 commitment to support reforms to the EI program, conducted extensive consultations over the past two years. Those consultations will inform further modernization of the program that would respond to what we heard during those consultations about the importance of having improvements in accessing the program and in the adequacy of EI benefits for workers, including those workers who experience successive life events.

That's part of the modernization, but, as Mr. Cadieux indicated, that work is ongoing to support reforms to the program, again, to be informed by all of what we heard during the consultations.

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo: Thank you.

I'm going to close it out again on the gender lens. There is some discussion about some information from the Parliamentary Budget Officer. I would like to reiterate that I would like to know what the formula was for these estimates, specifically around the \$1.9 billion.

Was there a gender lens applied? We know that women are more often in part-time employment and earn lower wages. I want to understand the formula that was used to come up with the estimates.

That's it.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Does one of the witnesses want to answer?

Mr. Benoit Cadieux: This is a question we'll have to come back to the committee on. We'll have to consult with our parliamentary budget office colleagues.

The Chair: Does that suffice, Ms. Zarrillo? Okay.

With that, given that we started late, I'm going to conclude the questioning rounds with witnesses. We will suspend for a few minutes as we prepare for the clause-by-clause review of the bill.

We'll suspend for five minutes while we make the changes. We'll be joined by the legislative counsel, and the same witnesses will be coming back.

• (1750)

(Pause)

• (1755)

The Chair: Thank you, committee members.

We will now begin the second hour. We have the ability to go to the full hour, if it's required.

Before we begin clause-by-clause consideration of the bill, which we're moving to, I want to advise the committee that we have to waive the 48-hour deadline to give notice for amendments. We only have amendments from the NDP and, because there are no independent members sitting on the committee, we need a motion to waive the 48-hour notice to file amendments.

Do we have agreement?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Thank you, committee members.

I would like to provide members of the committee with some instructions and a few comments on how the committee will proceed with clause-by-clause consideration of Bill C-215.

As the name indicates, this is an examination of all the clauses in the order in which they appear in the bill. I will call each clause successively, and each clause is subject to debate and a vote.

If there are amendments to the clause in question, I will recognize the member proposing the amendment, who may explain the amendment. The amendment will then be open for debate. When no further members wish to intervene, the amendment will be voted on. Amendments will be considered in the order in which they appear in the bill or in the package each member received from the clerk. Members should note that amendments must be submitted in writing to the clerk of the committee.

I, as chair, will review slowly and allow all members to follow the proceedings properly.

Amendments have been given an alphanumeric number in the top right corner, which I take all members of the committee have. As I indicated, there have only been three amendments received. There's no need for a seconder to move an amendment. Once moved, you will need unanimous consent to withdraw an amendment.

During debate on an amendment, members are permitted to move subamendments. These subamendments must be submitted in writing. They do not require the approval of the mover of the main amendment. Only one subamendment may be considered at a time, and that subamendment cannot be amended. When a subamendment is moved to an amendment, it is voted on first. Then, another subamendment may be moved, or the committee may consider the main amendment and vote on it.

Once every clause has been voted on, the committee will vote on the title and the bill itself, and an order to reprint the bill may be required—if amendments are adopted—so the House has a proper copy for use at report stage. Finally, the committee will have to order the chair to report the bill to the House. That report contains only the text of any adopted amendments, as well as an indication of any deleted clauses.

Again, I would like to welcome back to the committee the two officials from the department whom you met in the first hour. We will not go through introductions. You know who they are.

At this time, I am going to ask the legislative clerks who are here with us, and who will address any legislative questions you may have, to introduce themselves before we begin the clause-by-clause discussion.

• (1800)

Ms. Émilie Thivierge (Legislative Clerk): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'm Émilie Thivierge, and I'm one of the legislative clerks assigned to Bill C-215. I'm here with my colleague to assist the committee with the clause-by-clause consideration of the bill.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean-François Pagé (Legislative Clerk): Hello. My name is Jean-François Pagé. I am here to assist Ms. Thivierge with the bill.

[*English*]

The Chair: Let's begin.

I call clause 1.

Go ahead, Ms. Zarrillo.

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Do you want me to read it? I think everyone has it.

I would just start by saying that the testimony that—

The Chair: Yes, Madame Chabot.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Louise Chabot: Mr. Chair, the interpreters say that they cannot hear Ms. Zarrillo because her microphone is on mute.

[*English*]

The Chair: Okay, it should be audible now.

I would ask Ms. Zarrillo to identify the amendment that she is speaking to.

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo: Sure. This is on clause 1. I have an amendment that relates basically to stackability. After the testimony on Monday, it was actually quite powerful, the amount of feedback I got from a lot of women who have experienced their benefits expiring in the past. This amendment relates to that.

I want to thank this committee for the grace to be able to bring in this amendment on such short notice based on the testimony on Monday. The amendment is that Bill C-215, in Clause 1, be amended by replacing line 6 on page 1 with the following: "(c) despite subsection 12(6), because of a prescribed illness, injury or—

• (1805)

The Chair: Ms. Zarrillo, that is not the first clause. That is not the first amendment.

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo: Do you want me to do NDP-1?

The Chair: Yes, because it comes first.

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo: I thought this one did. I thought we were on clause 1.

The Chair: I'm sorry. It is, but we're on NDP-1.

Please move your first amendment, Ms. Zarrillo.

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo: I was trying to do the easiest first.

This one relates to parental or pregnancy benefits, when we want to be able to have the full 52 weeks for sick benefits and not to have any deductions from your parental or your maternal.... Do you want me to read it?

The Chair: Yes.

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo: All right. This is to amend the bill by adding before line 4 on page 1 the following new clauses:

0.1 Subsection 8(2) of the Employment Insurance Act is amended by striking out “or” at the end of paragraph (c), by adding “or” at the end of paragraph (d) and by adding the following after paragraph (d):

(e) receiving pregnancy or parental benefits or their equivalents from a provincial parental insurance plan.

0.2 Subsection 10(10) of the Act is amended by striking out “or” at the end of paragraph (c), by adding “or” at the end of paragraph (d) and by adding the following after paragraph (d):

(e) in receipt of pregnancy or parental benefits or their equivalents from a provincial parental insurance plan.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Zarrillo.

I’ll give my ruling on this. I have been advised by the legislative clerk that Bill C-215 amends paragraphs 12(3)(c) and 152.14(1)(c) of the Employment Insurance Act to increase from 15 to 52 the maximum number of weeks for which benefits can be paid because of illness, injury or quarantine. The amendment seeks to amend subsections 8(2) and 10(10) of the act to add an additional ground of extending the qualifying period and the benefit period for persons in receipt of pregnancy or parental benefits.

House of Commons Procedure and Practice, third edition, states on page 772:

Since an amendment may not infringe upon the financial initiative of the Crown, it is inadmissible if it imposes a charge on the public treasury, or if it extends the objects or purposes or relaxes the conditions and qualifications specified in the royal recommendation.

In the opinion of the chair, the amendment you propose seeks to amend sections of the act that are not modified by Bill C-215, which is not procedurally allowed, and also proposes to broaden the grounds for extending the qualifying period and the benefit period to a new category of persons, which imposes a charge on the treasury. Therefore, I rule the amendment inadmissible.

Would you like to comment, Ms. Zarrillo?

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo: I would. Thank you so much.

One thing I wanted to bring up was that today we did talk about the gender lens. We did talk about the fact that in 1972 they were maybe not applying it. As well, we didn’t get confirmation that any of the budgetary estimates applied a gender lens, so I would argue that there might not be an increase.

The second thing I wanted to talk about was that Bill C-215 needs to be accompanied by a royal recommendation before it can receive third reading in the House of Commons...and voting that the bill “would entail an increase in public spending in a way and to an end that is not currently authorized.” It’s my understanding that this bill itself has not yet received that royal recommendation.

So I would challenge this, Mr. Chair, and I wonder if we could go to a vote.

• (1810)

The Chair: Madam Clerk, explain the significance of the vote and what’s being asked.

The Clerk: The question is on whether the decision of the chair shall be sustained. If you agree with the chair’s decision, you vote yes. If you disagree, you vote no.

(Ruling of the chair sustained: yeas 9; nays 2)

The Chair: Thank you, committee.

(On clause 1)

The Chair: At this stage, Ms. Zarrillo, do you want to move NDP-2?

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo: Yes, please, Mr. Chair.

I move that Bill C-215, in clause 1, be amended by replacing line 6 on page 1 with the following:

(c) despite subsection 12(6), because of a prescribed illness, injury or quaran—

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Zarrillo.

Again, Bill C-215 amends the Employment Insurance Act by increasing from 15 to 52 the maximum number of weeks for which benefits can be paid in the event of an illness, injury or quarantine. The amendment, NDP-2, seeks to prevent the total number of combined weeks of benefits in subsection 12(6) of the act to be taken into account for benefits paid in the event of an illness, injury or quarantine.

House of Commons Procedure and Practice, third edition, states the following on page 772:

Since an amendment may not infringe upon the financial initiative of the Crown, it is inadmissible if it imposes a charge on the public treasury, or if it extends the objects or purposes or relaxes the conditions and qualifications specified in the royal recommendation.

In the opinion of the chair, the amendment aims to relax the conditions for the payment of benefits provided for in the act, which requires a royal recommendation. Therefore, I rule amendment NDP-2 inadmissible.

Yes, Ms. Zarrillo.

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo: I wasn’t expecting that, Mr. Chair, but I will reiterate that on April 5, 2022, the Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons ruled that Bill C-215 needs to be accompanied by a royal recommendation before it can receive third reading in the House of Commons...and voting that the bill “would entail an increase in public spending in a way and to an end that is not currently authorized.”

Currently, this bill has not realized that royal recommendation, so I think there’s opportunity to make amendments.

• (1815)

The Chair: The ruling is not subject for debate. It can only be challenged.

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo: I would like to challenge it, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: The ruling on NDP-2 has been challenged.

Madame Chabot, you've raised your hand, but it would have to be on a point of order. We're going to a vote. There's no debate. My ruling has been challenged, which brings procedure to an immediate vote.

Madam Clerk, call the vote and explain the vote to the committee.

The Clerk: The question is, shall the decision of the chair be sustained?

If you agree, you vote yes; if you disagree, you vote no.

(Ruling of the chair sustained: yeas 9; nays 2)

The Chair: The clerk advises me that we have to suspend for a moment. We have a microphone issue we need to get clarified. I'm going to suspend for a couple of minutes to correct it.

Yes, Madame Chabot.

[Translation]

Ms. Louise Chabot: I'd like to ask a question, Mr. Chair.

Does the procedure allow us to challenge your ruling that the amendment is out of order, or should we just move to a vote?

When I raised my hand, I wanted to debate it and understand the whole thing. I am asking the question so that it will be clearer in the future.

[English]

The Chair: Thanks, Madame Chabot, for clarifying. You can challenge my ruling, but not debate it. It goes immediately to a vote.

With that, we'll suspend for a few minutes. We are having an issue with one of the microphones.

• (1815) _____ (Pause) _____

• (1820)

The Chair: Committee members, we will resume.

Regarding the technical issue, there was only one mike working in the room, which was causing an issue.

Just for the clarification of the committee, my ruling is sustained.

Shall clause 1 carry?

(Clause 1 agreed to)

(On clause 2)

The Chair: The third and final amendment that we have before the committee is NDP-3, on clause 2.

Madame Zarrillo, go ahead.

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

This is also in regard to being able to have some flexibility in the benefits based on other life events. The amendment states that Bill C-215, in clause 2, be amended by replacing line 10 on page 1 with the following:

(c) despite subsection 12(6), because of a prescribed illness, injury or quaran—

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Zarrillo.

Bill C-215 amends the Employment Insurance Act by increasing from 15 to 52 the maximum number of weeks for which benefits can be paid in the event of an illness, injury or quarantine. Amendment NDP-3 seeks to prevent the total number of combined weeks of benefits in subsection 12(6) of the act being taken into account for benefits paid in the event of an illness, injury or quarantine.

House of Commons Procedure and Practice, third edition, states on page 772:

Since an amendment may not infringe upon the financial initiative of the Crown, it is inadmissible if it imposes a charge on the public treasury, or if it extends the objects or purposes or relaxes the conditions and qualifications specified in the royal recommendation.

In the opinion of the chair, the amendment aims to relax the conditions for the payment of benefits provided for in the act, which requires a royal recommendation. Therefore, I rule this amendment inadmissible.

I see no challenge to the chair's ruling.

Madame Chabot, go ahead.

[Translation]

Ms. Louise Chabot: Mr. Chair, I challenge your decision and I will explain why.

Can I explain why? In this case, I do not understand your objection and this inadmissibility. There is a consistency...

You can't hear anything?

• (1825)

[English]

The Chair: The interpretation was not available for the first part of your comment.

[Translation]

Ms. Louise Chabot: I'll start over.

While earlier you explained to me that your decision was not open to debate, in the case of subsection 12(6), it seems to me that there is a logical fit and consistency with the bill. I now want to know why you consider this out of order.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you, Madame Chabot.

Again, according to procedure and precedent, the chair's ruling is not subject to debate. You can challenge it. If there's a challenge, we'll go to a vote.

[Translation]

Ms. Louise Chabot: I am challenging it.

[English]

The Chair: Okay.

Madam Clerk, call a vote on the chair's ruling on the amendment as being inadmissible.

The Clerk: The question is, shall the decision of the chair be sustained?

If you agree, you vote yes; if you disagree, you vote no.

(Ruling of the chair sustained: yeas 9; nays 2)

The Chair: The chair's ruling has been upheld.

That is the conclusion of the amendments that have been submitted.

(Clauses 2 and 3 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall the title carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Shall the bill carry?

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): I'd like a recorded vote, please.

The Chair: We'll have a recorded vote on the carrying of the bill. There were no amendments.

(Bill C-215 agreed to: yeas 11; nays 0)

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: The bill has been carried, the title has been carried, and the chair will report it to the House.

Thank you to the legislative clerks.

We still have a bit of committee business on which I need direction from the committee. The witnesses can leave at this time. Thank you, Mr. Cadieux and Ms. Nandy.

I need adoption of the budget that we spent on reviewing Bill C-215, in the amount of \$7,850. Do I have approval of the budget, or you'll have to cough up for the lunches you enjoyed when you were there?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: On Bill C-22, which is coming, I am reminding you of the deadline for the submission of prioritized witness lists to the clerk. Did we pick a timeline on that, or do we want to give it now? This is on Bill C-22, which was adopted in the House and will now come to the committee. Do you want the committee to make the decision on a deadline for submitting your witness lists? Do you want to make it this Friday at five o'clock, eastern standard time?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

• (1830)

The Chair: The deadline for witnesses for Bill C-22 will be on Friday at five o'clock.

The second part is that the committee should decide or give direction on the total number of meetings to hear from witnesses. Could I receive some direction on the total number of meetings?

Mr. Kusmierczyk, go ahead.

Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk: I would suggest the committee spend four meetings. Does that sound reasonable?

The Chair: Ms. Zarrillo, go ahead.

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo: Just on that, Mr. Chair, is there an opportunity to extend to another meeting, or maybe even two more meetings, if we end up getting a rich amount of testimony that we need to dig into a bit further?

The Chair: [*Technical difficulty—Editor*] to change its mind, Ms. Zarrillo.

There is a recommendation that we schedule four meetings with witnesses.

Would the committee like a briefing session from department officials before we commence the study? Do you want to do it before, or do you want to do it after?

Ms. Zarrillo, go ahead.

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo: I have a question. When do we anticipate that we will commence with witnesses?

The Chair: I will ask the clerk to speak on that.

We had the discussion. It looks like the earliest we could begin Bill C-22 would be October 31, because of the timeline to notify the witnesses and get them in.

Madam Clerk, do you want to elaborate on that?

The Clerk: We're looking at giving witnesses a week. If we receive witness lists by Friday at five o'clock, ideally, I would like to start getting invitations out on the Monday.

I'd like to give witnesses time to consider the invitations and prepare because, quite often, we're not giving witnesses enough time to prepare and do the opening statements. It would be helpful for those witnesses to give them time to view the invitation, make sure that the equipment they require is there, ensure that we have interpretation on the floor and modify the room to accommodate all individuals, both public and witnesses.

The Chair: Next, I have Madame Chabot and Irek.

I would remind you that the witnesses we will be hearing have challenges, so that's a requirement for the additional time.

Go ahead, Madame Chabot.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Louise Chabot: I want to ask a question that takes this into account. Will we have time to do what you suggest, which is to have a meeting with the officials beforehand, or a more technical meeting, without it diminishing the number of meetings with witnesses?

Is it possible to do that next week? I don't think we have any other topics to discuss.

• (1835)

[*English*]

The Chair: What are the wishes of the committee? We could schedule next Wednesday for officials to give a briefing on the bill, if the committee wishes that. Do I see a consensus?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: We will schedule next Wednesday for officials to come in and give a briefing on Bill C-22.

The second part I want to get through is this. On Monday, which is the 24th, I would like to schedule beginning the first review of the labour report, which you all have a copy of now. If that's agreeable to the committee, at the meeting on Monday we would begin a review of the labour report that the committee did, which you have the first draft of.

To the new members of the committee, there was a study by the committee and a labour shortage report done in the spring session, and that report's first draft was provided to committee members two weeks ago. We have yet to review that, so you have draft one of the committee's report on labour shortages.

If I see a consensus, the committee will move on Monday the 24th to begin the review of draft one of the labour shortages report.

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: I apologize. To go back to the departmental briefing, would it be possible to have the minister return? I know how passionate she is about this bill, and she's always very favourable in expressing her excitement and her desire to see this passed rapidly. I think it would be great to have her back at committee to share that with us once again.

I will say, as the official opposition, it might help us directly address some of our concerns with the specifications, so that we can all move it along faster.

It's just a consideration, Chair. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mrs. Kusie.

Go ahead, Irek.

Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk: It's a nice suggestion. If it's the will of the committee, I know that the minister is prepared to come and would like to come on the very first day of the study, if that's okay.

If the committee decides, whether that's October 31 or November 2, the minister would like to appear and be the first witness, if that's okay.

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: That would be excellent. Thank you.

The Chair: Okay. I'm seeing consensus that an invitation be sent to the minister to appear first, as the study begins. It will be either October 31 or November 2, depending on the schedule.

Do I see consensus on that?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Thank you, committee members.

I want to remind you that the deadline for applications for the Centennial Flame is October 31. It's just a reminder, again, that the deadline is the 31st.

With that, thank you, committee members, for your participation—

Mr. Michael Coteau (Don Valley East, Lib.): Did we get any more applicants?

The Clerk: I received inquiries by email. I'm hoping to receive at least two more prior to the deadline.

Mr. Michael Coteau: Do we have three now?

The Clerk: We possibly have three. I'm really encouraging everyone to do the last, final push before October 31.

The Chair: Thank you, committee members.

The meeting is adjourned.

Published under the authority of the Speaker of
the House of Commons

SPEAKER'S PERMISSION

The proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees are hereby made available to provide greater public access. The parliamentary privilege of the House of Commons to control the publication and broadcast of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees is nonetheless reserved. All copyrights therein are also reserved.

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the Copyright Act. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the Copyright Act.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

Also available on the House of Commons website at the following address: <https://www.ourcommons.ca>

Publié en conformité de l'autorité
du Président de la Chambre des communes

PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT

Les délibérations de la Chambre des communes et de ses comités sont mises à la disposition du public pour mieux le renseigner. La Chambre conserve néanmoins son privilège parlementaire de contrôler la publication et la diffusion des délibérations et elle possède tous les droits d'auteur sur celles-ci.

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la Loi sur le droit d'auteur. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre des communes.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la Loi sur le droit d'auteur.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

Aussi disponible sur le site Web de la Chambre des communes à l'adresse suivante :
<https://www.noscommunes.ca>