

Leader du gouvernement  
à la Chambre des communes  
Lieutenant du Québec



Leader of the Government  
in the House of Commons  
Québec Lieutenant

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0A6

Chair  
Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A6

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Dear Chair:

Pursuant to Standing Order 109 of the House of Commons and on behalf of the Government of Canada, I am pleased to provide the Government's response to the seventh report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs entitled, "Carrying Out Members' Parliamentary Duties: The Challenges of Voting During the COVID-19 Pandemic."

The Government would like to thank the committee for its thoughtful consideration of ways in which Members can fulfill their parliamentary duties during the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly as it relates to voting.

The committee's key recommendations fall exclusively within the purview of the House of Commons and its recognized parliamentary privilege to regulate its own internal affairs. Accordingly, it is the responsibility of Members to determine the most appropriate way for the House to meet and take decisions during the COVID-19 pandemic or any other exceptional circumstances.

Having said that, I want to make clear that the Government supports the House of Commons returning to its regular business in September. The only way to do this safely during a pandemic and to ensure that all Members can fully participate in the proceedings of the House of Commons is through the adoption of electronic/remote voting. This is also the only way to ensure that all Canadians, no matter where they live, are represented in the proceedings of the House of Commons.

The Government stands ready to continue to work with the House of Commons Administration through its established relationship with the Communications Security Establishment to ensure that any electronic/remote voting system meets the highest levels of security, and is ready to assist in any way that the House deems useful as it tests any system that it develops.

Similarly, the Government will continue to provide quality interpretation services through the Translation Bureau to ensure that the languages rights of Members and Canadians are respected and that the dedicated professionals who provide this service are protected during hybrid and virtual proceedings of the House and its committees.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

The Honourable Pablo Rodriguez, P.C., M.P.  
Leader of the Government in the House of Commons