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# **Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities**

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**EVIDENCE**

**Tuesday, December 5, 2017**

—  
**Chair**

**The Honourable Judy A. Sgro**



## Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities

Tuesday, December 5, 2017

• (1625)

[English]

**The Chair (Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.)):** Okay, we have the amendments. The only amendments we have that I'm aware of are the ones that Mr. Aubin has given us.

(On clause 1)

**The Chair:** Mr. Aubin, would you like to speak to NDP-1, please.

[Translation]

**Mr. Robert Aubin:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I will speak briefly about each of the amendments, since the ones I'm presenting are basically the same as those presented in the context of Bill C-227 and have been discussed. Since a new wording of this bill has been presented, I'd be out of my mind if I didn't try to push it a little further.

We all know that Bill C-344 is largely inspired by a similar Ontario bill. Although it is inspired by it, it stops very shortly after the starting point.

In proposing these amendments, I am trying to give a little more importance to this bill, which contains four or five clauses and is interesting in spirit, but which gives the minister the power to require an assessment of the local benefits without making him do so. That seems a little contradictory to me.

NDP amendment 1 proposes adding this paragraph to clause 1:

(1.1) Before awarding a contract for the construction, maintenance or repair of public works, federal real property or federal immovables, the Minister shall consult the public in order to assess the local need for community benefits.

Remember that the bill only deals with buildings that are financed or belong to the federal government. If we want to promote local benefits, the least we can do is go to the communities and ask them what their needs are, which could be filled by this bill once it's passed. This could be taken into account in a possible call for tenders.

I'll stop there.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Aubin.

Are there any questions or comments?

(Amendment negated)

**The Chair:** Okay, Mr. Aubin, go to NDP-2.

[Translation]

**Mr. Robert Aubin:** You disappoint me, but I'm persistent.

NDP amendment 2 exactly reflects the essence of the bill.

The bill states that “the Minister may”, but we are proposing that those words be replaced with “the Minister shall require”.

If you say to the minister that he may do something, that also means that he may not do it. We tried to put in wording that requires that the minister do what the bill states.

[English]

**The Chair:** Are there any questions or comments?

(Amendment negated)

**The Chair:** We are now on NDP-3.

[Translation]

**Mr. Robert Aubin:** That's 0-2. I'll try to be more convincing, but since I've already presented these amendments, I won't believe in miracles.

We are proposing that, to be more specific, clause 1 be amended by adding the following after line 17:

(2.01) The Minister shall, before awarding a contract for the construction, maintenance or repair of public works, federal real property or federal immovables, require bidders on the proposal to provide information on the measures considered to:

Then, it describes what those measures would be:

- (a) reduce the environmental impact of the work, property or immovable;
- (b) ensure respect for the biological diversity and ecological integrity of the surrounding ecosystems and contribute to their maintenance; and
- (c) ensure that the work, property or immovable is adapted to the effects of climate change.

During the study of Bill C-227, the committee wisely insisted that environmental issues be added to the elements it had to consider. That is exactly what NDP-3 is about.

In my opinion, the importance we are placing on the milieu, the environment and climate change is better defined by this addition than by clause 1 of Bill C-344.

• (1630)

[English]

**The Chair:** Are there questions or comments?

(Amendment negated)

**The Chair:** On NDP-4, go ahead, Mr. Aubin.

[Translation]

**Mr. Robert Aubin:** Zero out of three. It's almost torture, but I'll try my luck again.

The amendment reads as follows:

That Bill C-344, in Clause 1, be amended by adding after line 17 on page 1 the following:

“(2.1) The information to be provided must specify:

The current clause doesn't specify anything. But I humbly submit to this committee that we could include in the bill guidelines that would allow us to better measure the achievement of our objectives when the time comes for the report. I'll continue:

- (a) the number of apprentices the bidder plans to employ, broken down by trade;
- (b) the measures that he or she intends to implement to help these apprentices complete their training under the apprenticeship contracts; and
- (c) the measures that he or she intends to take to increase the employment opportunities for apprentices who are women, Aboriginal persons, newcomers, at-risk youth, veterans or local residents or for apprentices who belong to any other prescribed category of persons.”

You can see that, through each of these amendments, we are trying to go beyond the intent. Right now, with all the amendments that have been rejected, the bill is a road paved with good intentions where no obligations are required. As a result, there can be no results. There may be some, but we aren't giving ourselves the means to ensure it.

[English]

**The Chair:** Are there any questions or comments?

(Amendment negated)

**The Chair:** Mr. Aubin, on NDP-5, go ahead.

[Translation]

**Mr. Robert Aubin:** Madam Chair, if I understand correctly, this is my last attempt.

Here is the fifth proposed amendment:

That Bill C-344, in Clause 1, be amended by replacing line 3 on page 2 with the following:

“construction, maintenance or repair projects containing the following information:

- (a) the number of apprentices employed for these projects, broken down by the number of women, Aboriginal persons, newcomers, at-risk youth, veterans and local residents; and
- (b) a summary of the observations made by the communities and the public about the bidders' efforts to respect their commitments regarding the employment and training of apprentices.”

We are at the report stage. As my colleagues can see, the proposed amendment is consistent with the previous requests for amendments, which unfortunately were rejected.

It seems to me that when we get to the end of the process, if we also have a tool that allows us to properly evaluate what we wanted to do and the results we achieved, we could not only be aware of a mixed success or a lack of success, but also ensure that the next proposals are even more precise and clear.

So that's the essence of the proposal.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr. Aubin.

Are there any comments or questions on NDP-5?

(Amendment negated)

**The Chair:** It was a good amendment, though.

**Mr. Vance Badawey (Niagara Centre, Lib.):** Madam Chair, can I go back to NDP-1?

**The Chair:** Sure.

**Mr. Vance Badawey:** I just took a comment that Mr. Aubin made during NDP-4, I think, with respect to being a bit more specific and digging a bit deeper into the weeds. When I really look at NDP-1, I think it may do that, and therefore suffice for the other motions that were put forward.

● (1635)

**Mr. Robert Aubin:** We have no translation.

**Mr. Vance Badawey:** Testing, testing. The Philadelphia Flyers are the best hockey team in the NHL.

**Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC):** You are testing.

**Mr. Vance Badawey:** Yes, especially the last 11 games....

**The Chair:** Do you want to start again, Mr. Badawey?

**Mr. Vance Badawey:** Yes.

Madam Chair, we have no sound.

**Mr. Robert Aubin:** I know. He did a great job, but I can't—

**A voice:** The Montreal Canadiens are going to win the cup. Three games....

**Mr. Robert Aubin:** It's okay now.

**Mr. Vance Badawey:** Madam Chair, Mr. Aubin made a comment, I think it was on amendment NDP-4, that he wanted to dig a bit deeper into the weeds with respect to being more definitive on a lot of this, or parts or aspects of this motion.

I am really looking at NDP-1. It speaks about the triple bottom line, which is the social, economic, and environmental benefits. This motion may present itself to different projects. I think that it may in fact accomplish what he has been looking for—to dig a bit deeper into the weeds—with respect to amendments 2, 3, 4, and 5.

I don't want to speak for all members, but, personally, I would be willing to go back to that, Madam Chair, and support the NDP's intention there as it relates to defining social, economic, and environmental benefits as part of proposed subsection 20.1(1.1).

I am not sure what the protocol on that is.

**The Chair:** There needs to be—

**Mr. Vance Badawey:** I see the clerk looking at me with those evil eyes, so I'm not sure if I can actually do that—which, by the way, I am very much used to.

**The Chair:** I appreciate that, Mr. Badawey. In order to do that, we have to go back to NDP-1 and have unanimous consent to do that.

Mr. Hardie, go ahead.

**Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.):** I was going to say that Mr. Badawey isn't playing with a full deck here. In fact, I think you are actually working off some old notes here, Vance, because the NDP-1 that you are referring to here isn't the same as the NDP-1 that was passed out.

NDP-1, I think, was something Mr. Aubin looked at or brought forward when it was Bill C-227, when it said "benefit means a social, economic or environmental benefit". If Mr. Aubin had that note from the first one and was to present that as an amendment, I think he would find that it would be adopted.

**The Chair:** Okay. Just hold on, Mr. Hardie.

What we're dealing with now, though, is NDP-1. Mr. Badawey is asking that we go back so that he can make an amendment to NDP-1.

**Mr. Ken Hardie:** Yes. I think Mr. Badawey was looking at an old NDP-1 versus—

**The Chair:** We've just handed them out. There's no reason to look at an old one when we've just handed out new ones.

Sorry. Mr. Chong.

**Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC):** Madam Chair, I believe the question in front of the committee right now is whether or not there is unanimous consent to go back to reconsideration of the first amendment.

**The Chair:** Yes.

**Hon. Michael Chong:** I'm happy to give that consent, as I'm sure other members will be, if you seek their consent.

**The Chair:** Okay. We've had the consent. We'll go back to NDP-1.

Make sure Mr. Badawey has the.... These were the ones that were handed out and Mr. Aubin gave us today.

What's your comment?

**Mr. Vance Badawey:** Basically, Mr. Hardie is right. This is an old document that I'm working from. I'm asking Mr. Aubin if in fact that's what he would want to do, based on the old document that I'm reading from right now.

**The Chair:** We don't have the old document. The only one who has the old document is you, so you should be dealing with the current document.

**Mr. Vance Badawey:** I am.

**The Chair:** Well, then use it.

**Mr. Vance Badawey:** I'm dealing with both.

**The Chair:** We're not dealing with the old one. That was before. We're dealing with this one right now. The one in front of us is the only one that we have unanimous consent to deal with.

**Mr. Vance Badawey:** Sorry, Robert.

**The Chair:** Ms. Block.

**Mrs. Kelly Block:** On a point of clarification, you're working from an old document but I think that's already in Bill C-344. I think it's in the new bill, if you look at clause 1, the exact thing you were suggesting.

• (1640)

**Mr. Vance Badawey:** Is that wording in there?

**Mrs. Kelly Block:** Yes.

**Mr. Ken Hardie:** Yes, it is in clause 1.

**Mr. Vance Badawey:** Let me take a quick look.

**The Chair:** That was one of the amendments that was adopted when it was before our committee before.

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

**Hon. Michael Chong:** Madam Chair, if, after Mr. Badawey has reviewed clause 1 of Bill C-344, he has a specific amendment that he wishes to move, perhaps he could move that amendment so that we're all working off the same page.

**Mr. Vance Badawey:** That's fine; it's already in. Good job, Robert.

**The Chair:** We have permission to go back. Do we need to vote on NDP-1 as originally presented today by Mr. Aubin? We don't have to go back?

We've opened NDP-1. We need to take another vote on NDP-1 as presented by Mr. Aubin today.

(Amendment negatived [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

**The Chair:** Now we're on to the bill itself.

Shall clause 1 carry?

**Mrs. Kelly Block:** On division.

(Clause 1 agreed to on division)

**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 I report the bill to the House?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Hon. Michael Chong:** On division.

**The Chair:** The bill has carried. Thank you all very much for that.

Now, one other piece of business that the clerk is insisting we talk about is Bill C-64. Since it was officially sent to us, according to the clerk, she would like us to be thinking about the witnesses for Bill C-64, which we will at some point have to deal with.

Mr. Chong.

**Hon. Michael Chong:** Madam Chair, I would like to suggest that we call, as an individual, former MP John Weston, who proposed this in the last Parliament. He has worked long and hard on this file, so it would be good to hear his perspective on this particular piece of legislation.

**The Chair:** Great idea. Okay.

The clerk is asking, though, that we use the extra time to think about the witness list, since we're not going to be meeting next week or Thursday, and submit them to the clerk by January 15.

How many meetings are we going to have on Bill C-64? Can we not wait until we see what it looks like? Okay. Does anybody have any idea of the number of meetings? I don't know how big the bill is. I haven't seen it.

**Hon. Michael Chong:** Why don't we wait until the witness list comes forward?

**Mrs. Kelly Block:** It's quite a long bill.

**The Chair:** Okay, so let's start with four meetings and reassess when we see the content and the number of concerns members have.

**An hon. member:** Not including the minister?

**The Chair:** No, not including the minister. Officials would be at a separate meeting, so there would be five meetings in total, possibly.

Is there anything else, Madam Clerk, you'd like to know? Are you good?

**The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Marie-France Lafleur):** I'm very well.

**The Chair:** Everything's good with you and our analysts?

Thank you, all.

Taking Mr. Chong's advice, I've done the best I could to move things along, and we won't be meeting Thursday of this week, nor are we going to meet next week.

**Mr. Vance Badawey:** We just had an agenda for the trade corridors. Can't we start that on Thursday?

**The Chair:** You can start your work, getting it ready for when we come back at the end of January.

**Mr. Vance Badawey:** Michael's going to throw his coffee cup at me.

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

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Michael Chong:** I would like to wish everyone a merry Christmas.

● (1645)

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Yes, the same to everybody. Merry Christmas. We'll have a great 2018. Hopefully the committee stays intact.

I'll move adjournment, and thank you to everybody.

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