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• (1630)

[Translation]

The Chair (Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.)): Good afternoon, everyone.

On the speaking list I have Mr. Leslie—he was in the middle of speaking last time—Mr. Mazier, Mrs. Chatel, Ms. Collins, Mr. van Koeverden, Mr. Soroka and Mr. Deltell.

[English]

Mr. Gerald Soroka (Yellowhead, CPC): May I also get on the speaking list?

[Translation]

The Chair: I want to make clear to committee members that we are not in camera, although we are discussing future business.

[English]

Mr. Dan Mazier (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC): I have a point of order.

Is there interpretation?

[Translation]

The Chair: Can you hear me now? No, you can't hear me.

Okay, I'll start again. We are continuing debate on the motion that was on the floor at the end of Monday's meeting. I have a long speaking list. We're not in camera, even though we're discussing future business. I consider today's meeting to be somewhat equivalent to a subcommittee meeting because we'll be discussing the schedule.

I want to let you know that all the sound tests have been done, and everything is working well.

Mr. Leslie, you had the floor when we finished Monday's meeting, so you can pick up where you left off last time.

The floor is yours.

[English]

Mr. Branden Leslie (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Just to clarify, this is on the subamendment. Have I technically moved my subamendment?

The Chair: Yes, and you were speaking to it.

Mr. Branden Leslie: Excellent.

I appreciate—

The Chair: Hold on for a second. We'll distribute where we're at.

Mr. Branden Leslie: I'll wait. I think it's important that people see the text in writing.

The Chair: Mr. Mazier, I have good news for you.

I mentioned that the deputy minister of ISED could not be here on the 18th, but he's now going to be here.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Hey, there you go. Is it the new one or the retired one?

The Chair: It's Mr. Tremblay. I guess he's the new one. Still, it's a deputy minister. We're getting a deputy minister as opposed to someone delegated by him.

Go ahead, Mr. Leslie.

Mr. Branden Leslie: Will that deputy minister have answers, or is he too new?

The Chair: I can't answer that.

Mr. Branden Leslie: That's fair enough.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I was speaking earlier this week regarding my proposed subamendment, which I will read out once again for anybody watching and for committee members who now have it in front of them. It's an addition to the end of clause (b) on the proposed motion. It states:

but none shall commence until the committee has heard from Minister Boissonnault in relation to the study of the factors leading to the recent fires in Jasper National Park.

Mr. Chair, I think all of us have been around this committee table for the numerous meetings we've had on what I think is a very important issue to the people of Jasper, to the people of Alberta and really to all Canadians, particularly those who live near other national parks and are somewhat concerned about the potential impact of the pine beetle and, more broadly speaking, wildfires, on their livelihoods, their way of life, their families and their communities.

The fact of the matter is that these fires were catastrophic. We are still seeing those effects that I mentioned on families and businesses. The community of Jasper has demonstrated remarkable resilience in the face of destruction. A third of the town burned, with nearly \$1 billion in damage and 2,000 people left homeless. The process of recovery has really just begun. Obviously, it will take quite a while.

In terms of our work in investigating the factors that led up to that, I think we need to get this right. I think time is really of the essence here. I think we need to ask ourselves a critical question: Is there a reason that Minister Boissonnault can't find the time in his schedule to come to our committee for one hour prior to December 4?

I believe that was the proposed date.

• (1635)

The Chair: Is that a question for me?

Mr. Branden Leslie: Yes, just for clarity.

The Chair: I have no idea. That's what they told us was—

Mr. Branden Leslie: December 4 is the proposed—

The Chair: I mean, unless the committee changes its mind and asks him to come at a later date, he can come on December 4, and in my mind I've slotted him in for December 4.

Mr. Branden Leslie: We couldn't possibly ask him to come earlier, though. Is that what you're saying?

The Chair: No. December 4 was the first opportunity, I was told.

Mr. Branden Leslie: Mondays and Wednesdays are pretty busy for him.

The Chair: I don't know.

Mr. Branden Leslie: The reality is that the residents of Jasper—those who have lost their homes; the family members of those who are putting up people who have lost their homes, and the friends and the neighbours who are doing just the same; and those who have lost their businesses and their entire livelihoods and are probably currently battling with insurance companies over all of this, along with dealing with potential legal and accounting fees—are waiting for answers. They're waiting for some sort of solace that we can do better in the future, and I think they believe that we must do better in the future.

Obviously, in any tourist community like Jasper, local businesses are the lifeblood of the economy. Where I'm from is much closer to Riding Mountain National Park, where I was just a few weeks ago, and that is the most important part of the community. The vitality is sustained by all of the jobs created locally and those they bring in, both for jobs and for research. That's what makes our national park communities so important.

In my view, Jasper's residents need leadership right now. They need to understand what happened and how it will be prevented from ever happening again.

I'll be blunt. From talking to my colleague from the region in particular and some people on the ground there, I know there are families who still don't know where they're going to live and who don't have direct, immediate friends and family they can post up with for what is going to be a lengthy period of time.

Small business owners there are at a loss. They're stuck. They have no revenue. They don't know what to do. They don't know whether they have the confidence to rebuild in the community. As I said earlier, they're battling with insurance companies.

I don't want to call it insurmountable, because I believe in Canadian entrepreneurship. I believe in Canadian people. It can be overcome, but it is extremely difficult. We not only need to recognize the moments of that fire overtaking that community but we also need to respect the aftermath of it and the impacts it has had on all of the individuals I've just mentioned, and even on many of the tourists who want to go there and have booked trips and had things changed.

The people of Jasper are trying, and they will get back on their own two feet, but we need to do everything we can to support them, particularly after acknowledging that we didn't do everything we could to prevent this catastrophic fire from happening.

We are told that there is a plan in place from the current government and that the federal government is working with provincial and municipal governments and indigenous partners, which is excellent news. I think it's fantastic to hear that those efforts are being undertaken, but like any other government program or project, I'm always a bit skeptical of the timeliness of the execution of that plan. We need to see that plan in action.

In my view—and this is the reason for my subamendment to this motion—we need to hear directly from the minister who has now been appointed by the current Prime Minister as part of that effort to understand what happened and, more importantly, how we can rebuild that community and protect them from having this ever happen again. We need to hear directly from the minister on how we are going to see a rebuild happen.

I'm not looking for vague announcements, news releases or even backgrounders or written statements. I want to see and hear directly from the minister, and I think all Jasperites do. I think members of this committee, broadly speaking, all reasonably want to hear what concrete steps are going to be taken and what that is going to mean, in terms of real timelines, to the people who are dealing with this devastation in real time.

The people of Jasper simply need to know how the federal government is going to support them and how this recovery process will be coordinated, and that we as parliamentarians know where the pressure points are to apply the necessary pressure to ensure that it happens swiftly and that this isn't some forgotten disaster where the people who were directly impacted will just be lost to time. Mr. Chair, the fact of the matter is that time is critical on this particular topic.

We have heard, and I do appreciate the comments from the Prime Minister and the government more broadly that this recovery for Jasper is a priority, but, as we all know, actions speak louder than words. Words mean very little to people who are dealing with such distress—financial, family and otherwise.

• (1640)

We are hearing that Minister Boissonnault, if December 4 is his earliest appearance opportunity, is too busy to attend this committee. Listen, if that means that Minister Boissonnault is spending all of his time on the ground, talking to small business owners, talking to councillors for the community and talking to individuals who have been left homeless and, frankly, anybody else who has been impacted by this devastation, then I might be willing to accept that. Thus far, I have not seen any evidence that that is the case. To me, it's not acceptable.

In my view as a parliamentarian, as somebody who has done, among my colleagues, a thorough, important, valuable and timely investigation into this matter, I think his appearance is essential, to put it mildly. It's not just for the people of Jasper but for anybody who's seen this issue online or on TV, or heard it on radio or anywhere else and thinks that this is important. These are my fellow Canadians facing real, substantive challenges, and I want to see the outcome of it be real, be quick and be what we would expect of a government that was negligent in its responsibilities.

My understanding is that the minister has been given the title of ministerial lead for Jasper. Obviously titles are important, but the question must be this: Is that minister leading, or is this a show? Is he merely sitting idly by? I would love to hear it from him, whichever Randy wants to show up. His role should be about coordinating support, ensuring that the resources are flowing into the community and, most importantly, ensuring that Jasper's recovery is moving forward at the pace that the people on the ground deserve.

As far as I can tell—and I'll look to my colleague from the region to perhaps make comments after—the people of Jasper are very much still waiting for answers on many critical fronts. What is the plan to support the local businesses that are struggling to get back on their feet with the loss of tourism or the physical devastation of a fire to their particular business or something related to their business? How much financial assistance is making its way into the hands of those who need it most?

Broadly speaking, what is the federal government doing to ensure that Jasper remains on the front burner, that it isn't pushed to the back burner, that there's reconstruction and rebuilding of this notable, glorious national park? I have had the pleasure of visiting it, and I think many Canadians have. It is an iconic national park. Is it staying on the front burner, and will it forever? I think these are very reasonable questions.

Perhaps more importantly, as we heard through our investigation, with the fire coming from the south, there are still many, many dead pines standing within the national park. We are facing potential devastation with the wrong direction of winds in the rest of the community, the other two-thirds that was left standing. What is Parks Canada in particular doing to address these very real concerns?

In my view, the only way to address these issues, given that we've had a minister appointed responsible for the lead of Jasper, is to hear from that minister himself, so I think it's entirely reasonable that we ask this committee to convene to bring forward these very questions and to find out what he has discovered, recognizing that

he is a relatively new minister to the file—not that he may have never been to Jasper, but this is a new role.

We're weeks on now, and if the importance of this issue is as paramount as the government has claimed it to be, then the direction to one of the Randys is to go and understand the issues that are facing this community. I think it's entirely reasonable that at this point we get an update that Minister Boissonnault is relatively up to speed in terms of the impact that he has witnessed in his travels and engagements with the community.

• (1645)

Second, where are we with the plan to help Jasper rebuild? I think we need to understand the specific details of those recovery efforts. We might not be the experts around this table, but we've certainly heard a lot about the challenges that led up to this.

It's important to provide a public platform to enable Minister Boissonnault to provide the specifics, not just vague promises. In my view—and I think I can say this for my colleagues, at least—this is not the time for delay. The people of Jasper, particularly those who have been directly impacted, need and deserve answers, and they need and deserve them now.

Now, in my view, Minister Boissonnault's appointment here was an important step. I think it's a very real recognition of the devastation that has been caused to that particular community of Jasper. However, it is only a step. If we are going to take this with the seriousness it deserves, there are most definitely numerous steps needed, and they need to be taken in collaboration with locals. That's his job. I would love to hear directly from him how that is going. I think it is entirely reasonable.

This is not a matter of politics. It's a matter of lives and livelihoods—the ones that were lost through this devastation—and the opportunity to rebound into the future. It's a matter of understanding where Parks Canada went wrong and adjusting for the future.

I couldn't imagine being put in the position of experiencing a fire, personally. My family has been in the position of experiencing floods. I don't want to compare the two, but fires are simply devastating. Everything's lost, from your family photo albums—even if you had them on a USB or an old laptop—to the storage unit of your business and any aspect of your life we could all dream up and imagine. If what we owned, loved and lived disappeared, it would be devastating. To me, it's one of the most devastating possible natural disasters. That's not to minimize the impact of floods, but there's something more to it.

In my view, we shouldn't have to wait until December 4 for Minister Boissonnault to show up. Again, Mr. Chair, I would be happy to hear that on Mondays and Wednesdays, when this committee meets, Minister Boissonnault is on the ground in Jasper just talking to people. Perhaps his office could provide a response to clarify that, in fact, on Mondays and Wednesdays he is in Jasper.

• (1650)

Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Milton, Lib.): On a point of order, Mr. Chair, I would like to inquire of Mr. Leslie whether he intends to filibuster the whole meeting or—

The Chair: That's not a point of order.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Is it relevant to his motion?

The Chair: He's speaking about Jasper.

Mr. Branden Leslie: Personally, I...

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: I'm just wondering. They're capable of it. [*Inaudible—Editor*]

Mr. Branden Leslie: This was the job that Minister Boissonnault was appointed to do. I will give credence and credit that he is new at it, but I don't think it's unreasonable, given the time crunch and necessity, for him to come and offer some sort of an update.

We know that governments are often slow to respond in general, and in particular to natural disasters. I've seen this repeated over numerous circumstances over the years in my own home municipality and in many municipalities that I represent. I think we probably all have, in some way, shape or form, seen delays on a DFA claim from the province going to the feds and been waiting for the DFA claim to come through, with debates on whether or not the receipts for the projects and the work undertaken were eligible or not eligible and disputes between various levels of government.

The reality is that at the end of the day, there is only one taxpayer. Whether they're paying provincially or municipally or to this big behemoth of a federal government, there is only one taxpayer, and I think we owe it to them to be as nimble, responsive and responsible as possible with those dollars.

That's why I think it's entirely reasonable to not wait a month to have Minister Boissonnault here as soon as possible, with the allowance that if he is in Jasper, I will accept that he can't be here that day. We can't just keep pushing back his appearance because we're worried about political optics, because the individuals in Parks Canada once debated on whether or not they should do prescribed burns. I do believe, in a fully non-partisan sense, that every member of this committee and, I think, of the government, does want to see this recovery move forward in as expedited a manner as possible.

I can only imagine that if your business had burned and remained closed, if you remained displaced with your family and if you were watching delays in Ottawa, you would be frustrated. I don't think it's reasonable to blame any of those individuals impacted for being frustrated. I think it's reasonable to say that the people of Jasper are counting on us, as opposition, to hold the government accountable and to demand answers, but, more importantly, to collectively make sure that the community is not forgotten, is not left behind.

I'd like to call on all members of this committee, regardless of party, to vote in favour of this amendment to make sure that we don't just push back all of the other work we've been doing in this committee to try to make this issue go away. I think it is very reasonable that the minister appear in mid-November once we are back from our Remembrance Day ceremonies that we are all going to travel to across the country, rightly and, hopefully, properly honouring all of those who have served in our armed forces.

I'd like to think that we could do it before the date that has been proposed. We still, as far as I can tell, Mr. Chair, have not seen a confirmed statement of attendance, and I always get worried when they say they are going to attend but, as we get closer, something comes up. I think that's a tactic that is regularly undertaken by those who want to avoid any accountability, and in my view it is time for the minister to appear.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: I'm sorry, Mr. Leslie. I just want to interrupt to provide some clarification. We did get something in writing, saying that he was available on the 4th.

• (1655)

Mr. Branden Leslie: For sure?

The Chair: That's what it says in black and white, yes.

Mr. Branden Leslie: Let's lock it in.

The Chair: It is, unless the committee changes its mind and doesn't want to see him on the 4th. I'm hoping that doesn't happen.

Mr. Branden Leslie: Well, with the support of all members today, we could make it happen earlier, but separately...and I don't want to say "more importantly", but perhaps it is—

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: On a point of order, Chair, I presume you have a speaking list.

The Chair: I do.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Could I ask who's on the speaking list?

The Chair: Yes. It's Mr. Mazier, Madame Chatel, Ms. Collins, you, Mr. Soroka and Mr. Deltell.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Okay. That's good.

Mr. Chair, it's a question about procedure. If Mr. Leslie filibusters, would it delay the meeting with Minister Boissonnault?

The Chair: Not necessarily.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: If it went on for a couple of meetings, would it potentially delay that?

The Chair: If it went on for three weeks, it would, yes.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: I'm just comparing it to the House. They're filibustering in the House as well and at the—

The Chair: This is not a point of order.

Excuse me. I have to stop this this exchange right now.

Mr. Dan Mazier: On a point of order—

The Chair: Is it a point of order?

Mr. Dan Mazier: Well, it's a point of clarification, actually.

Mr. van Koeverden seemed to be a bit confused about what we're actually debating here today, so I will repeat the motion. He actually has the paper copy right in front of him. We distributed it right at the first—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Chair: Order.

Okay, I may have to suspend....

MP Leslie.

Mr. Branden Leslie: Thank you. I think we could have had this wrapped up a little bit quicker if we hadn't had some members from the government side shut down and adjourn debate on this. I think we could have wrapped this up long ago, and perhaps we could have gotten Minister Boissonnault here much earlier. I think that would have been a fantastic opportunity for us to show cordiality and really come together and understand that we want to have the best.

Importantly, the second reason I am moving this subamendment is that, broadly speaking, I do have serious concerns about the prestudy of Bill C-73. I understand that there are certain stakeholder groups that want us to conduct a prestudy as a priority to them. I also understand that we don't know when the next election is going to be, and people want to have legislation that they care about dealt with prior to that.

Listen, I understand that, Mr. Chair, but the reality around this table is that none of us knows when that next election is going to come. There are rumours circulating around this place, around Parliament Hill and on social media that the Prime Minister may prorogue Parliament at any time, and all of our committee's work will be thrown out.

In the House of Commons, you can move a motion to bring back to the House of Commons all of the legislative agenda of the government and potentially a private member's bill if they so choose, but all of the work that we have done as a committee is lost; it's gone.

What worries me is the idea of doing a prestudy on Bill C-73. In my view, it's frankly absurd. Also, in my view, and I think reasonably in the view of anybody who's an observer of this committee or of politics broadly, it appears to be an effort to put on the back burner the many other ongoing and important pieces of work this committee has been undertaking for the past many months in the hope that they may never have to be dealt with.

Now, Mr. Chair, I'd like to quickly outline some of the work that is outstanding at this committee.

We had a meeting that we debated a lot about afterwards on how we deal with reports or a letter from the five, I believe it was, oil and gas CEOs. Whether we like their appearance or not, they came, and we should, in some way, at the request of the committee, as previously done, highlight what that appearance meant and what they said, and then report that back to the House, which I believe was the motion previously passed.

Towards the end of the summer, we all flew back from our respective ridings a bit early, for one or two meetings, I believe. That carried on at the start of our session here into September, following the federal government's edict and egregious government overreach, which would put mills and entire communities out of business when logging is prevented from happening in the vast—

• (1700)

The Chair: We're departing a bit from Jasper.

Mr. Branden Leslie: I understand that, but I'm just recapping all of what this committee would be losing if we do not allow the work we have undertaken to continue. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Chair, how many meetings did we do on the freshwater study?

The Chair: We did about 19.

Mr. Branden Leslie: Do we have one left?

The Chair: No, we're done.

Mr. Branden Leslie: I know, Mr. Chair, that you have advocated for this particular topic of study for a long time—far longer than I've been a member of Parliament. I appreciate that. I really enjoyed that study, because it's very important to me. In many meetings with my municipalities and stakeholders, I joke that I'm a water MP. I'm from Manitoba. We're at the basin. I'm a water MP, so I appreciate that particular study. I fear that 19 meetings and the analysts' work behind it will be lost if we delay that study altogether, among many others, in lieu of something else.

We also have, of course, the net zero study, which includes billions of dollars—\$8 billion, I believe. It's probably going to dwarf the investigation being done by another committee—it's currently before the House of Commons—relating to the Sustainable Development Technology Canada investigation, which is on massive amounts of money.

We have the ongoing climate finance study for my Bloc Québécois colleague, which I think has two hours remaining on it.

More recently, for my NDP colleague, there is the Fort Chipewyan port dock contamination study. I'm not sure about its exact status, but it sounds to me as though Transport Canada may not be taking the issue with the seriousness—I don't want to put words in the mouth of my NDP colleague—it deserves. Apparently, Transport Canada is ignoring the requirement to share with the transport committee—

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sophie Chatel (Pontiac, Lib.): I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mrs. Chatel.

Mrs. Sophie Chatel: I don't see that as relevant to the proposed amendment.

[*English*]

The Chair: I will remind you, Mr. Leslie, to drift back to the subject of the amendment.

Mr. Branden Leslie: That's perfect, Mr. Chair. I would be happy to.

My statement is simple as it relates to that: I cannot support the original amendment without adding the subamendment I proposed. What it does is simply hasten the pace of Liberal efforts to sweep all of this under the rug and push back all of the work I just outlined. There's a study for pretty much every party, except the governing party, perhaps, which wants to take advantage of the opposition and push back the work we have already done.

Of course, I didn't even mention that this includes, as it relates to Jasper—

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair. Could I see the clock? How many minutes into the meeting are we now?

The Chair: We're 30 minutes into the meeting.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Is it 30 minutes on just this one speech?

The Chair: Yes.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Thank you.

Is that a quarter of the meeting? How long do we have resources for today?

The Chair: It's until 6:30.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: For clarity, has this speech taken a little more than a quarter of the meeting so far?

The Chair: Yes.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Is it on whether or not we're moving fast enough?

The Chair: Yes. Well, sort of, I guess.

Go ahead.

Mr. Branden Leslie: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would rather take 30 minutes to explain why we should do things more promptly than take days, weeks and months and do nothing. I am happy to take a half hour of time to do better than the current trajectory of this Liberal government. I will take no issues with 30 minutes. In fact, I might go an hour. It might even be worth it.

The reality is that I cannot support the amendment as proposed, as I mentioned, without including this subamendment. I think we need to finish, perhaps, first and foremost.... I did outline many issues that are very important to Canadians of all stripes and of all regions, but the devastation that Jasper saw is, in my view, personally at least, the top priority. That's why I have moved the subamendment.

Collectively, I think the evidence is overwhelming. The Liberal government, in trying to move a prestudy on Bill C-73, is making a direct effort to change the channel from its failures in Jasper and from its failures for Quebec workers and, broadly speaking, taxpayers.

Bill C-73 was tabled in June. It has had a grand total of zero seconds of debate in the House of Commons. I'll come back to why that is very important. Just as importantly, I have never once seen Bill C-73—perhaps my colleagues can correct me—on one of those schedules of what is going to be coming up for debate in the House of Commons. For those who don't know, there's something called the Thursday question, where members of the official opposition ask the governing party what the agenda for the week ahead will be. The Thursday question response, as far as I can tell and have experienced, has never once included Bill C-73, so I don't believe this is actually a priority for the government. It might be a political priority, but it has not been proven to be in any way, shape or form

a legislative priority, where the government is using its House of Commons time to actually move this forward.

Let me tell you why this matters, Mr. Chair. Case law, as it relates to ministerial statements, is vital. In our democratic system, there is a principle that Parliament holds the authority to both scrutinize and debate legislation in the House of Commons prior to its moving to the committee stage. This includes what I think is a critical moment, or often 20 minutes of a moment, where the minister presents the bill, explains its contents, its purpose and its objectives in the maiden speech for that legislation in the House of Commons.

In my view, we must respect the procedural order of Parliament. This ensures that members of all political parties have the proper context and the full information necessary to engage in meaningful deliberation when it gets to committee, to ask reasonable questions of the expert witnesses which this and every other committee brings before it.

I'm not saying this to make an allegation that a prestudy has never been done before, that it's entirely this new idea, but in this context, it is a rather novel strategy. The minister has not spoken to this bill at all. Not one second, beyond tabling, has been dedicated to this legislation. When you look at LEGISinfo—

• (1705)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sophie Chatel: Mr. Chair, I have a point of order.

The Chair: Mrs. Chatel, you have the floor.

Mrs. Sophie Chatel: Is this about the subamendment?

I think the member is going a bit off topic. This is not at all about the subamendment.

The Chair: Yes, the member has moved away from the subject of Jasper and is now talking about the fact that a bill has not yet been debated.

Mr. Leslie, again, I remind you to stay on topic.

Mrs. Sophie Chatel: I don't think the subamendment is relevant.

The Chair: I don't really agree with that.

We want to postpone the study until after the minister's appearance. I think the subamendment is in order, but Mr. Leslie should avoid straying too far from the subject he is debating.

[*English*]

Mr. Branden Leslie: Certainly. I appreciate that, Mr. Chair, but I will offer a slightly revised version of that same reality.

The subamendment I have moved forward states, “but none shall commence until the committee has heard from Minister Boissonnault in relation to the study of the factors leading to the recent fires in Jasper National Park.”

Again, context is important. The motion where I am trying to say “but none shall commence” is about Bill C-73. I think it is entirely within the—

• (1710)

The Chair: I agree.

Mr. Branden Leslie: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate that.

Once again, in my view, it's novel; it's weird and it's odd that we are undertaking a study without any context. We're lawmakers—

The Chair: I know the finance committee does prestudies all the time, so I don't think it's that odd, but go ahead.

Mr. Branden Leslie: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate that.

It actually happens, I think, more frequently in the Senate after it's been through the House of Commons.

Now, prestudies on an issue are one thing. Pre-budget consultations are an example. I'm not looking to say this is entirely new, but the idea of a specific piece of legislation amending a current act without any specific direction.... I will get to why I think this is very important.

I think that you, Mr. Chair, as a lawyer, will actually appreciate this.

As I was saying, when you go to LEGISinfo, which is on the parliamentary website, where you look at the actual text of the legislation—and we are lawmakers; our job is to read and understand what the text of the words on the page of the law are—there's a big tab right beside it that says “Major speeches”. The first of the major speeches is the minister's maiden speech, and there is good reason for it.

Parliament has recognized that the role of that speech provides incredibly necessary context. Just as importantly, from a legal perspective, in any future legal proceedings, that is what a judge will look at: What was the intent by the minister of the Crown, the government, in moving forward with that legislation?

It doesn't matter what Branden across the way says. It doesn't matter what I say. It matters what the intention of the bill was. None of us—no Canadian, no parliamentarian—has seen what that intention is. We could read it in a silo, but that doesn't change our lack of understanding of what the government is trying to do with this legislation.

In my view, the normal process is first reading, tabling, second reading, maiden speech, debate, debate, debate and then it comes to us. The proposal to prestudy this in such a unique and novel way contradicts that process.

I want to underscore my position using relevant case law—

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sophie Chatel: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Mrs. Chatel, you have the floor.

Mrs. Sophie Chatel: I'm going to show my colleague that I'm listening, but I think he's really going off topic.

The Chair: He is way off topic, that's true.

Mrs. Sophie Chatel: Does he need help? I'm on the list. I can help him.

The Chair: Yes, you're on the list after Mr. Mazier.

Mr. Leslie, please get back on topic.

[*English*]

Mr. Branden Leslie: I am willing to, but I will say that I think I'm on topic. I think that as a legal mind yourself, I would be hard pressed to have you disagree with the importance of that maiden speech.

I think that any legal mind, anybody who's in the world, has experienced and seen judicial decisions that cite that initial statement from the minister. Debates in Parliament also do more broadly, but I'll go back to why LEGISinfo has a specific section on its website beside the link to the text of the bill that says “Major speeches”. They're making it very easy for future jurists to go ahead—

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sophie Chatel: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mrs. Chatel.

Mrs. Sophie Chatel: You established earlier that Bill C-73 was not directly related to the discussion on the subamendment and that Mr. Leslie should stick to his subamendment. He's going off topic again, talking about the legal profession and theories. I am confused.

Again, Mr. Leslie—

• (1715)

The Chair: That's true. Please get back on topic, Mr. Leslie.

Mrs. Sophie Chatel: Yes.

The Chair: You were talking about Jasper earlier. Please stick to the subamendment, Mr. Leslie.

[*English*]

Mr. Branden Leslie: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I will save these important arguments that we, as parliamentarians, have an obligation to consider when we decide whether or not we are going to move forward with a prestudy. I will save that for the main thrust of the amendment. I appreciate that I have perhaps veered a bit away from the subamendment, and I will reserve some of these pieces for later.

I will wrap up by saying this subamendment matters to people. I look forward to hearing from my colleague from Yellowhead, because I know he has talked to many people on the ground who are frustrated. I won't repeat the many reasons, but we all know why they are frustrated.

I will refrain from going into too much detail about why, from a parliamentary history perspective and a normal, typical legislative perspective, we should not entertain the idea of Bill C-73, other than to say, most importantly, as it relates to the subamendment, that we have a duty to Canadians to not hide the work we've done for months and months, whether it is bad for the government or good for the government. It shouldn't really matter. However, I don't appreciate it when the government wants to hide things.

As it relates to the Jasper wildfires, this is something that's devastating, not only to that community but to anybody who has visited there and had the opportunity to experience that beautiful national park and the hospitality of the people who live, work and play within it.

I hope my colleagues from all parties agree that it is entirely reasonable to pass my proposed subamendment, which would ensure that Minister Boissonnault doesn't delay this forever and that he comes here and provides an update to our committee so that we can wrap it up and have a fulsome study to report back to the House.

I will pause there, Mr. Chair.

Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Mazier.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Thank you, Chair.

The Prime Minister 28 days ago appointed Randy Boissonnault as the minister responsible for Jasper's recovery. Twenty-eight days ago, Randy Boissonnault should have been here testifying at the Jasper wildfire investigation. If Minister Boissonnault is in charge of rebuilding Jasper, why is he not prioritizing this committee and the people of Jasper? I think it's a disgrace to the people of Jasper that Minister Boissonnault is hiding from this committee. There are many reasons Minister Boissonnault may not want to appear at this committee, and I'm going to list a few.

Over the course of the Jasper wildfire investigations Canadians have been exposed to some damning testimony and evidence that suggests this government was grossly negligent in protecting Jasper. On September 26, Minister Guilbeault testified at the Jasper wildfire investigation. He claimed that Jasper's wildfire preparedness was a success, but he also told this committee that he was briefed on the serious likelihood of a catastrophic fire in Jasper. Instead of taking responsibility for his department's actions and lack of actions, he avoided answering the questions Canadians were asking. In response to his appearance, the National Post wrote an article with the following headline: "The environment minister repeatedly evaded questions about the federal government's response to multiple warnings of the potential for a catastrophic forest fire in Jasper". How true.

The Jasper wildfire investigation also revealed that senior Parks officials were discussing cancelling prescribed burns in western Canada months before Jasper burned. In an email exchange obtained through an access of information request, a senior Parks Canada official asked, "At what point do we make the organizational decision to cancel...prescribed burns in Western Canada?" Then the official stated, "political perception may become more important than actual prescription windows."

This email exchange was black and white. It was crystal clear what was being discussed, but instead of taking responsibility, this government claimed that everyone but them was misinterpreting this email.

They said this was a discussion about mechanical removal, but nowhere in the email was this mentioned. In fact, it was another Parks Canada official who verified our concerns through another email exchange that was obtained. Another senior official responded to that email and stated, "I hope we don't get into a blanket shut-down," and, "It is critical to continue those kind of burns. It is how they maintain the [community firebreak], and when they fall behind, it is very difficult to catch up."

It wasn't just Conservatives raising concerns with this email. It was Parks Canada's very own officials too. Was Minister Boissonnault aware of these discussions?

On October 2, the Minister of Emergency Preparedness admitted at the Jasper wildfire investigation that he was unaware the environment minister's officials were discussing the cancellation of prescribed burns. He later refused to admit that Parks Canada should have removed more dead trees to protect Jasper. During that meeting, Minister Guilbeault's senior vice-president at Parks revealed that he does not take any—I can't believe I'm reading this again—minutes at their operations meetings when asked to hand over evidence to the Jasper wildfire investigation. I can't believe that. You don't take any minutes. No matter, you can't prove anything. How convenient. It's actually quite frankly absurd too.

When asked how many dead trees remained standing in Jasper, Parks Canada could not answer this basic question. It was for these reasons that the National Post published an article the following day. The article stated, "Steven Guilbeault doesn't want your Jasper fire questions—he's saving the planet, don't you know". It further stated, "Guilbeault self-congratulated his record on fighting climate change in general and attacked Conservatives for not doing so. More jabs, no insight into how fire mitigation measures were or were not taken as the dry timber piled up."

● (1720)

On October 7, the Jasper wildfire investigation revealed that Minister Guilbeault's department turned away multiple fire trucks and firefighters who arrived on the scene to help. Later that day, the Jasper wildfire investigation revealed that Minister Guilbeault's department handcuffed Alberta from making firefighting decisions as over 30,000 hectares burned. Was Minister Boissonnault aware of these decisions?

A headline in the National Post stated, “Alberta's deputy premier slams 'unified command' snub by feds during Jasper wildfire”. By this time, the Jasper wildfire investigation was proving that the Liberal government was not only incompetent in protecting Jasper; it was negligent.

Another newspaper headline read, “Federal negligence at root of Jasper's wildfire devastation”. Wow.

Another article stated:

...federal Environment and Climate Change Minister Steven Guilbeault claimed that Ottawa could not have done better either before or during the fire.

At any suggestion that Ottawa was lacking, he trotted out climate change as the true culprit. It was clear more than once that a big ugly fire in Alberta is a great boost for his climate agenda.

Focusing on climate also turned—

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sophie Chatel: Mr. Chair, I would like some clarification.

The Chair: Mrs. Chatel is asking for the floor.

Mrs. Sophie Chatel: Can you clarify the speaking order?

The Chair: You're next on the list.

Then I have Ms. Collins, Mr. van Koeverden, Mr. Soroka and Mr. Deltell.

Mrs. Sophie Chatel: Thank you.

[*English*]

Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Chair, I have a point of clarification as well.

The Chair: Yes. Go ahead, please.

• (1725)

Ms. Laurel Collins: It seems that the Conservatives have been filibustering for almost an hour now. If they filibuster until the very end of this meeting, for a full two hours, I'm curious if this debate starts up in the next meeting, or would we have our regular scheduled meeting the following week when the House resumes?

The Chair: That could happen.

Ms. Laurel Collins: I'm just wondering about the procedure. Does this debate continue at the next meeting if they filibuster until the very end? You adjourned the last meeting really abruptly, and I think that is why we're in this situation again, debating this for an entire session and wasting resources. I am feeling frustrated with both the Liberals and the Conservatives right now, so I'm just curious. I would love to know and get some clarity around whether, if this filibuster continues to the very end, we will be debating this again in the next environment committee meeting.

The Chair: It's quite possible.

Ms. Laurel Collins: That's fun.... Okay, thank you.

The Chair: If it is the desire of the committee to be debating this for a long time, then that may very well be what happens.

Go ahead, Mr. Mazier.

Ms. Laurel Collins: I'm sorry, Mr. Chair; I have another point of clarification. I would vote in favour of this subamendment. The Conservatives filibustering their own subamendment really means

that we can't vote. They can't vote in favour of it; I can't vote in favour of it; we all can't vote in favour of it. Is that correct?

The Chair: That's a very good observation.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Thank you, Chair.

Another article stated, “federal Environment and Climate Change Minister Steven Guilbeault claimed that Ottawa could not have done better either before or during the fire.”

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: On a point of order, Mr. Chair, is reading from the newspaper relevant to Bill C-73?

The Chair: We're talking about the subamendment, which is about Jasper, so once you get into that—

Mr. Dan Mazier: Just so you know, it's right in front of you, the subamendment.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: For clarity, though—

Mr. Dan Mazier: You could just read it.

The Chair: The subamendment is about Jasper, so a discussion of Jasper is in order, even if it is repetitive sometimes.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Okay, but is it relevant to Bill C-73 or to Jasper, this article that he is reading from just to fill time?

The Chair: I think the point of the amendment, if I may, is to try to force Mr. Boissonnault to come earlier than December 4. It's intended to be leverage, so I guess you could say it's not really about.... The whole motion is about Bill C-73, but the subamendment that we're discussing is really, I think, intended to put pressure on Mr. Boissonnault to come earlier, so that is basically, I think, the tack that is being taken. As long as we talk about Jasper, I guess it's relevant, because the subamendment speaks of Jasper and Minister Boissonnault.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Thank you, Chair, for that clarification.

Another newspaper headline read, “Federal negligence at root of Jasper's wildfire devastation.”

Yet another article stated:

...federal Environment and Climate Change Minister Steven Guilbeault claimed that Ottawa could not have done better either before or during the fire.

At any suggestion that Ottawa was lacking, he trotted out climate change as the true culprit. It was clear more than once that a big ugly fire in Alberta is a great boost for his climate [change] agenda.

Focusing on climate also turned minds away from serious questions about Ottawa's performance as the power in charge of both prevention and firefighting.

On October 9, the Jasper wildfire investigation heard damning testimony from a forestry expert who warned the Liberals in 2017 that the Jasper wildfire was not a matter of if, but when.

Ken Hodges stated, “Nothing was done to address the landscape of...beetle-killed timber to prevent the megafire”.

He also stated, in a written submission to this committee, “Someone needs to take responsibility and be held to account for this calamity of errors and not blame other parties or climate change for the fire. Government and [P]arks [Canada] screwed up big time, [and] they ignored the issues.”

God bless Ken Hodges.

He then asked, “Was the inaction by [P]arks [Canada], knowing the issue and concerns, that created this catastrophe a criminal act?”

Even the CBC was sounding the alarm over this damning evidence. In an article published on October 10, a CBC headline read, “Wildfire could have been avoided with proper planning, witnesses and experts say”. Shortly after this, the Edmonton Journal published an article with the headline, “Trudeau's wildfire strategy: Permit old, dry, decaying forests and blame climate change”.

Chair, the only ones playing politics with this matter are the Liberals, who want this investigation to end. That's why they shut down a meeting to prevent a vote on our motion to summon the former environment minister, Catherine McKenna. Minister McKenna was warned in 2017 about this deadfall in Jasper. She should be appearing at this committee with Minister Boissonnault.

On October 23, the Alberta Forest Products Association revealed that they also had warned that a fire in Jasper was inevitable if the Liberals did not act. Minister Boissonnault was at the cabinet table. He needs to answer for the government's inaction.

At the same time, at the same meeting during the Jasper wildfire investigation, a local Métis leader revealed that the Liberals did not build a proper fireguard around the town of Jasper. She testified, “There wasn't an appropriate fireguard put in place.” Are the Liberals going to criticize indigenous leaders for sounding the alarm on Jasper? What does Minister Boissonnault have to say about this?

Canadians were shocked to learn that at least one Parks Canada employee was fired for speaking out against the mismanagement at Jasper National Park, according to the former MP for the region. Another headline from a CBC article read, “Parks Canada employee terminated after voicing concern, former MP testifies”.

Day after day, new evidence—

• (1730)

The Chair: Yes, go head on a point of order.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Was the MP Mr. Mazier referred to the former MP for the region, who admitted to lying in his testimony and walked back his comments, or was it a different one?

The Chair: I don't know.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: I'm just asking for clarification. He said “the other MP”. He should be more specific for the analysts.

The Chair: A retired MP, an MP...I don't know.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: There was one who lied during his testimony and had to walk back his comments.

The Chair: That's a point of debate.

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): I have a point of order.

Talking about the testimony of a witness as a lie is not correct as a member of Parliament. I think that we have to be very high profile in this issue, instead of being.... If they want to attack us, go on...but not the testimony of a witness.

The Chair: Mr. Mazier, could you continue?

Mr. Dan Mazier: Another headline from a CBC article read, “Parks Canada employee terminated after voicing concern, former MP testifies”.

Day after day, new evidence emerges at the Jasper wildfire investigation that shows the Liberals were negligent. Minister Boissonnault should be here. He should be testifying at this committee. This committee should not be conducting any business until he testifies.

We just received an email from a local resident in Jasper who wrote to former environment minister, Catherine McKenna, in 2018. She stated in her email that she never got an answer from Catherine McKenna at the time, back in 2018.

Ms. Laurel Collins: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

I'm sorry. I'm not sure I heard that correctly. Did Mr. Mazier just say they aren't going to let any committee business happen until Randy Boissonnault testifies?

The Chair: Not directly. He expressed the view that the committee should not conduct any business until Minister Boissonnault appears. That's his opinion.

Mr. Dan Mazier: We just received an email from a local resident in Jasper who wrote to former environment Minister Catherine McKenna in 2018. She stated in her email that she never got an answer from Catherine McKenna at the time, back in 2018, while she was the minister in charge of Environment and Climate Change from 2015 to 2019. She guessed her concerns were not important enough for the department. She then stated, “If you are willing to have me testifying based on what I know and wrote back in 2018, let me know. I'm terrified, but I'm ready if you have to. My town, my house, my whole life could disappear if we do not do anything to protect the town from the west, and this is the fact.”

It's people like this who understand the importance of the Jasper wildfire investigation. They are the people actually living there. This isn't about politics. It's about accountability and their future. Minister Boissonnault must be held accountable.

In 2018, local Jasper resident Marie-France Miron raised concerns with the mismanagement of Jasper National Park in a letter to the editor. I'm going to read her letter into the record so that Minister Boissonnault better understands the mismanagement in Jasper before he testifies. She wrote:

Dear editor,

Mr. Fehr remained silent and for more than three weeks he ignored not only articles written in the Fitzhugh about Jasper's fire threat but also residents' letters personally addressed to him. It took him however, just 82 minutes to reply to a possible protest to be held regarding this serious issue. I'm very pleased as I also noticed that the Information and Fire Updates web page was updated twice and the first time was on June 1, exactly two days after I sent that email to him. Did you know we now have a link to the current fire danger rating which was updated on June 4? I wonder if it is only a coincidence.

The "Mountain Pine Beetle Jasper National Park Management Plan 2016" recommended by Mr. Rasheed, resource conservation manager and approved by Mr. Fehr mentioned by myself on May 17 states that because the [mountain pine beetle] pose a threat to the national Parks and also Jasper townsite, intervention is necessary:

"Active management is recommended when the structure and function of an ecosystem has been altered and manipulation is the only possible alternative available to restore ecological integrity. Intervention is triggered when there may be adverse effects on neighboring lands, major park facilities, public health or safety will be threatened or the objectives of a park management plan cannot be achieved."

I now therefore know for a fact that Mr. Rasheed and Mr. Fehr proposed and approved, on July 22, 2016 to apply Parks Canada's "Guiding Principles and Operational Policies" (Section 3.2.3). The plan states as well: "Ensure that threats posed by mountain pine beetle to Jasper townsite and visitors coming to Jasper are mitigated to the extent possible." The total failure of Parks Canada to put strategies in place to reduce the wildfire risk on Pyramid Bench as planned for Fall 2017 is simply unacceptable. We most definitely need more than one plan that is ready to go at any given time when you consider the speed with which this disease is spreading around our town and throughout the park.

These two gentlemen also agreed on the importance of "educating", "informing" and "ensuring" that the public understands the state of the [mountain pine beetle] as well as the actions that should be taken by Park Canada to neutralize the situation: "Parks Canada will continue to contribute to visitor, Jasper residents, and adjacent—

● (1735)

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: On a point of order, Mr. Chair, I'm just checking in on the time. For how many minutes have we been in this meeting?

The Chair: It's 70.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: It's been 70 minutes, and the Conservatives are urging us to go faster on the study. Is that right? They would like to get to it as quickly as possible.

The Chair: It's debate.

I don't know if that's exactly what they're saying, but anyway—

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: I just wanted to make sure that Mr. Mazier could catch his voice a bit. That's all.

The Chair: Okay, Mr. Mazier. Continue.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: I hope you've got your finger on where you're reading there.

● (1740)

The Chair: Continue, Mr. Mazier.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Basically, I find it very amusing, Chair, that the Liberals really want to shut down this debate. They don't want to hear from Jasperites. They don't want to hear the facts.

An hon. member: Let's just vote on it.

Mr. Dan Mazier: It continues:

"Parks Canada will continue to contribute to visitor, Jasper residents, and adjacent community understanding and support of the Jasper National Park Mountain Pine Beetle Management Plan."

Well, judging by the fact that only by chance did I find the plan by using the right key words when Googling it, it becomes quite legitimate to wonder whether these two gentlemen have had done their job properly over the last two years.

I am still, as others residents, waiting for Mr. Fehr to coordinate an evening session. Is this not an important part of the plan that he approved to keep, among others, residents informed, to keep people aware? Even though we notice this week some effort to update Parks Canada's "Fire information and updates" web page, we are still far away from what should have been done. Do visitors know what to do in a possible evacuation? Are visitors aware of behaviours to avoid, such as being responsible with their cigarette butts? As suggested by Mr. Ken Hodges, professional forester in his letter on May 30, why not have signage throughout the park regarding fire conditions, the fire ban and behaviour to adopt in relation to the risk?

Furthermore, despite the fact that Mr. Hodges and Mr. Begin (two BC researchers) have never provided any reports only letters and emails to Parks, it is hard to understand why Mr. Fehr does not consider their expertise and recommendations as they wrote letters more than once to express their concerns about the fire threat to the town of Jasper. Between the two of them, they have over 80 years of forest management experience in BC and they think Jasper is due for a catastrophic forest fire.... According to Mr. Hodges in his letter [of] May 30: "Seasoned BC firefighters had never seen the explosive fire behaviour or ecological damage when fighting recent fires in forests exhibiting similar conditions to those in Jasper." Still according to him "Parks actions should include more efforts in protecting the community and infrastructure by setting priorities for logging strategies throughout the park this summer.

As also stated by Mr Allan Carroll, Jasper national park decided to consider the pine beetle a "native disturbance agent" and because of that, was not intending to do much about it.... This article also states that "Foresters along the park's edge have seen a tenfold increase in beetle infestation in just months, and some scientists wonder if Parks Canada could have done more to control the invasion a few years ago". I suppose we can all answer that question.

Not only does Parks Canada have the authority to go on with logging because of their Guiding Principles and Operational Policies, Mr. Fehr has the responsibility to protect the town of Jasper, period. Updating their website is one thing; they have to start logging right now.

Mr. Alan Fehr, Mr. Salman Rasheed, we are giving you the chance to do better by not holding a protest next Saturday since you seem to be taking action as we speak. It is the time for you both to shine, to prove and demonstrate that you have and will have the situation in hand. Are you the two who will be known for having taken the right measures in order to keep our town safe or are you going to be remembered as those who failed and let our town burn?

That is the end of the quote.

That was the letter from a local Jasper resident. Are the Liberals going to call Marie-France names? Are the Liberals going to falsely claim that she was lying?

The Liberals continue to say that Conservatives are spreading misinformation by giving voices to experts. These are not our words, though. These are the words of the witnesses who have been brave enough to testify at the Jasper wildfire investigation and to speak truth to power. Every time the Liberals falsely claim that we are politicizing—

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair. I'm sorry about that, Mr. Mazier.

Just a couple of minutes ago, my honourable colleague Mr. Deltell suggested that we not call former members of Parliament or witnesses liars, and I tend to agree, even if they admit to lying or walk back their comments in a committee meeting. However, then Mr. Mazier just did the exact same thing, so do the Conservatives want to accuse former members of Parliament of lying or do they not? It's really up to them.

• (1745)

The Chair: We should stay away from that kind of inference or explicit—

Mr. Dan Mazier: I was inferring that.... I was wondering if the Liberals were going to call the witness a liar; that's all. I was just asking a question.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: When they admit to lying, it's one thing. When they say, "You're right, okay. I was wrong"....

The Chair: You know, I—

Mr. Dan Mazier: I was questioning whether you were going to call more people liars. That's all I was asking.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: I know you're a liar.

An hon. member: Whoa....

The Chair: Let's just try to keep the language as moderate as possible.

Go ahead, Mr. Mazier.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I just proved it again, that every time the Liberals falsely claim that we are politicizing this issue or spreading misinformation, they are insulting the brave witnesses who testify on the mismanagement of Jasper.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sophie Chatel: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

[*English*]

The Chair: Excuse me, Mr. Mazier. Madame Chatel has a point of order.

Mr. Dan Mazier: It's every time.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sophie Chatel: I'm having trouble seeing the relevance of this discussion to the subamendment being referred to. I would remind my colleague to speak—

[*English*]

Mr. Gerald Soroka: There's no translation.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: There is no more interpretation. Wait a second.

Can you hear me now? Okay.

Mrs. Chatel, please start from the top.

Mrs. Sophie Chatel: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I was simply saying that I didn't understand how this debate was related to the proposed subamendment. I would urge my colleague to stick to the subject.

The Chair: Okay.

You heard that right, Mr. Mazier. I would ask you to stick to the subject.

You may continue.

[*English*]

Mr. Dan Mazier: The Jasper wildfire investigation has proven one thing for certain: The Liberals are fake environmentalists. No wonder the Liberals want to shut down this investigation with another motion. They have finally been exposed for their failures, and Canadians are paying attention.

Mr. Shafqat Ali (Brampton Centre, Lib.): I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Mazier and the Conservatives have, for almost the last two hours, been filibustering and proving to be fake environmentalists. They're blaming Liberals. They should stop playing these games and not waste this committee's time.

The Chair: I understand, but it's not a point of order, unfortunately.

Go ahead, Mr. Mazier.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Mr. Chair, to finish up, they have finally been exposed. The Liberals have finally been exposed, and Canadians are watching.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Mazier.

Madame Chatel.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sophie Chatel: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I move that we adjourn debate on this motion.

The Chair: Okay. We'll vote on that.

Mrs. Sophie Chatel: Thank you.

• (1750)

[*English*]

Ms. Laurel Collins: I'm sorry. My Internet was unstable. Can you repeat what we're voting on?

The Chair: It's a motion to adjourn the debate.

Ms. Laurel Collins: I have a point of clarification, Mr. Chair.

If we adjourn debate, does that end the meeting?

The Chair: No, it ends the debate on this motion.

(Motion agreed to: yeas 6; nays 5)

Mr. Branden Leslie: Can I have the speaking list?

The Chair: The whole debate is gone now.

We have Mr. Leslie and Mr. van Koeverden. Does anyone else want to—

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Mr. Chair, Mr. Leslie had an hour, and I was on the speakers list as well.

The Chair: No, you were on the speakers list for the motion, but the motion is gone now. The motion is gone. It's not just that we've adjourned debate on the subamendment; the whole thing is gone. We're starting fresh.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: So Mr. Leslie would like a second hour today.

The Chair: Well, if he's quick—

Mr. Branden Leslie: I would happily be quick with this.

The Chair: —and then it's Mr. van Koeverden.

Just so I can keep this straight, does anyone else want to speak?

Ms. Collins has her hand up.

Mr. Leslie.

Mr. Branden Leslie: Given that the debate has been adjourned at the request of the governing party, I move that we adjourn the meeting.

The Chair: We'll have to have a vote on that.

(Motion negatived: nays 7; yeas 4)

The Chair: Mr. van Koeverden, you are next.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like to get us back on track. I'd like to give notice of a new motion, "That this committee undertake a prestudy on Bill C-73, an act respecting transparency—

The Chair: I'm sorry. You don't have to put it on notice. You can propose it.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Is it because we're in committee business?

The Chair: Yes.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: That's great. I'll do that then. I'll start again.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Mr. Chair, just so you know, my hand is up to be on the speaking list.

The Chair: Yes. Your hand is up, but now Mr. van Koeverden is—

Ms. Laurel Collins: My hand is up on Mr. van Koeverden's motion.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Can we read that back? What does that motion look like now?

The Chair: He's going to read it.

Go ahead, Mr. van Koeverden.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: The motion reads:

That this committee undertake a prestudy on Bill C-73, an act respecting transparency and accountability in relation to certain commitments Canada has made under the Convention on Biological Diversity; that to this end, the committee hold a minimum of five meetings;

(1) that this study begin on November 27;

(2) that the committee invite the Minister of Environment and officials from Environment and Climate Change Canada on November 27, 2024; and

(3) that the committee complete its sustainable finance study on November 25 with a two-hour meeting.

Mr. Branden Leslie: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair. I would be curious to know, perhaps from the clerk or from your experience, Mr. Chair, the substantial difference between the motion that was just put before us and the motion on which debate was just adjourned. Is there a substantial enough difference? Yes, there are a number of different paragraphs. There is an (a), (b) and (c), but to me, the general thrust of that is almost identical, with a small prescription.

I would look to previous decisions from chairs, or perhaps the clerk could advise if there is a substantial difference between the motion on which debate was just adjourned seconds ago and the one that was just proposed.

The Chair: The one that was just proposed also speaks about the sustainable finance study.

Mr. Branden Leslie: Is that substantial?

The Chair: I consider it to be substantial.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Mr. Chair, we would like to have the motion in both official languages.

In addition, we would like the committee to take a short break.

The Chair: Okay.

[*English*]

Mr. van Koeverden, do you have that electronically in both languages?

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: I do, and I also have a point of order, if that's okay.

The Chair: Go ahead with your point of order. Then we're going to pause, and you can give it to the clerk so she can distribute it to everybody.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: It's just a point of order that because we didn't vote on the previous motion, I don't think Mr. Leslie's concerns apply. We adjourned debate on it, and it wasn't voted down or up.

The Chair: That sounds like it makes sense, but anyway, I consider it to be substantially different.

We're going to pause for a few minutes.

Yes, Ms. Collins.

• (1755)

Ms. Laurel Collins: Chair, I have a point of order. I just wanted to tell you that I have an amendment that I'm sending to the clerk as well. It will be in both official languages. Perhaps we could send it out. I'll be moving it once Mr. van Koeverden is done speaking.

The Chair: Okay, thank you.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Mr. Chair, but I'm still....

The Chair: It's just a pause.

• (1755) _____ (Pause) _____

• (1755)

The Chair: Mr. van Koeverden, could you speak to your motion?

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Certainly, Mr. Chair.

Bill C-73 is an act respecting transparency and accountability in relation to certain commitments Canada has made under the Convention on Biological Diversity. Canada is—

Mr. Branden Leslie: I have a point of order, Chair.

I'm confused because I thought transparency would include the minister making his maiden speech in Parliament first.

The Chair: That's not a point of order; it's a thought.

Mr. Branden Leslie: I'm sorry. I apologize. I have many.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Thanks very much, Mr. Chair, and thanks to my—

Mr. Dan Mazier: Just as a clarification—

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: I think the Conservative members would like to ask a question.

The Chair: Go ahead on a point of clarification.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Just to be clear, the minister hasn't even introduced this in the House yet.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Yes. It completed first reading in June.

The Chair: It hasn't moved forward.

Mr. Dan Mazier: He hasn't spoken on it, though, yet. Is that right?

The Chair: Not to my knowledge.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Okay. That's pretty unprecedented.

The Chair: Mr. van Koeverden.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: It's surprising to hear that the Conservative members haven't even looked into where this bill is on the Order Paper, but members can check on parl.ca with respect to where exactly the nature accountability act—

Mr. Branden Leslie: We're not past the green slush fund.

The Chair: Let's have one person at a time, please.

Mr. van Koeverden, you have the floor.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Thanks. I don't think I'll take any lessons on reading from Mr. Mazier—

The Chair: Let's just move ahead with the motion and and what it's for.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Thanks Mr. Chair.

The bill is Bill C-73. It's an act respecting transparency and accountability with regard to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

We've been approached by various stakeholders in this building, as we're coming in and coming out of these meetings, urging us to look into this and do a prestudy. This is an important bill.

First of all, Canada is one of the most biologically diverse countries in the world, not just because of our size, but also because of the diversity of our landscapes. This is a uniquely Canadian issue that I am looking forward to studying.

Canada is facing a triple threat of pollution, biodiversity loss and climate change. All three have an impact on biological diversity. I'm looking forward to looking into Bill C-73.

I'll also say that if we'd passed this in the last couple of meetings, when I gave notice of this motion, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change would have already been here. He would have visited today. That's what the Conservatives seem to suggest they would like. They would like more ministers—

• (1800)

Mr. Branden Leslie: I have a point of order.

The Chair: Is it a point of order?

Mr. Branden Leslie: It's probably not.

The Chair: Okay, we'll let Mr. van Koeverden continue.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: The Conservatives have repeatedly suggested that they would like to have ministers come to this committee. As I speak today, following an hour and a half of filibuster from the Conservatives, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change could have been here. However, they want to listen to each other and themselves speak instead. It was cute while it lasted.

They're still talking.

The Chair: If we could have just one person speaking at a time, it will go much better.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Very good. I'm looking forward to doing this prestudy.

I'm also looking forward to having Minister Boissonnault here. He is indeed travelling to Jasper in the coming weeks, and I'm certain that he'll have insight to share.

With respect to Jasper and the preceding hour of conversation on it, I would just read once again an excerpt from the Jasper Local, which states that fanning the flames of these politically-driven comments sows division, mistrust and hard feelings amongst Canadians in general, but among Jasperites in particular. It states:

The negative rhetoric is wearing on locals, many of whom were involved in the incident, and—

Mr. Dan Mazier: I have a point of order.

I think this isn't really relevant to his actual motion. This is talking about Bill C-73.

The Chair: The motion is about Bill C-73.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Yes it is, but he is talking about Jasper now. I didn't think he wanted to talk about Jasper.

The Chair: Okay. I'm sorry, I missed part of what Mr. van Koeverden was saying.

Mr. Dan Mazier: It's a quote from a Jasper article.

The Chair: Let us let Mr. van Koeverden continue and see what happens.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

The point that I'm getting at is that Jasper's mayor encouraged us all to—

Mr. Dan Mazier: There you go. It's Jasper. It's not relevant.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: —tone down the political rhetoric on this and the Conservatives just spent 90 minutes filibustering on it and pointing fingers. It's shameful and disgusting, and you all ought to be ashamed of yourselves.

Mr. Branden Leslie: I'll point to you every time, Adam.

The Chair: Listen, I'm going to suspend the meeting if this continues. I'm going to suspend the meeting, and it may not work to everyone's advantage.

Do you have more to say on your motion?

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: No.

The Chair: We'll go to Ms. Collins.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to thank Mr. van Koeverden for pushing for a prestudy for Bill C-73, but I am very disappointed that the Liberals have approached it in a way that has resulted in us being here debating something for over an hour—for multiple hours if we include the last meeting—that we could have passed when we were dealing with committee business just a couple of weeks ago.

Mr. van Koeverden had already tabled the motion, but then he chose not to move it in our in camera committee business, where there is no benefit or incentive for Conservatives to filibuster and try to get clips on whatever they want to talk about.

It is also really disheartening to see the Conservatives filibustering a really important bill and a really important motion on an act respecting transparency and accountability for nature and biodiversity.

I am going to table an amendment to this. I really hold the strengthening of this piece of legislation dearly, because while I think it's really important that this legislation has been tabled in the House, it is a weak piece of legislation. Much like the climate accountability act, the biodiversity accountability act has been watered down. It has huge gaps. It needs to be amended and strengthened. It's why I support a prestudy of this bill. However, it shouldn't be used to displace other important work our committee is engaged in, in particular the study on the contamination that's happening in Fort Chipewyan and the fact that these nations have called on us—

The Chair: Excuse me, could I interrupt?

As I read this motion, it's not displacing anything. The only date that is prescribed is November 27, and according to your motion, I think we couldn't begin the dock study until Minister Boissonnault appears. He's not appearing until December 4. Other than Novem-

ber 27, the motion doesn't prescribe any dates for future meetings, so it's not technically displacing....

• (1805)

Ms. Laurel Collins: As it reads currently, I think it would displace, so my amendment would be that the remaining meetings of this prestudy will not commence until the completion of the contaminated transport dock study. I noticed that I didn't actually mean to delete number three. Actually, I'm just not sure.

The Chair: Can I see the amendment?

You didn't mean to strike out number three.

Ms. Laurel Collins: I was hoping to put a number three in there to add....

The Chair: Three would become four, basically.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Yes, to add....

The Chair: Three would become four. Okay. You're not striking out three. You're just adding something in between.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Exactly. If I may speak to that amendment, the three first nations that have called on parliamentarians—

The Chair: I don't mean to interrupt you, but what I have in front of me shows.... Okay. You have it there.

I'm sorry to interrupt you. Go ahead.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Okay, great.

The three first nations that have called on this committee and on parliamentarians to investigate what happened with the contamination give a really clear example of environmental racism, whereby the government has hidden information and, in many ways, has acted in the same way that Canada has acted for years. It didn't give communities the information and the knowledge they need to protect themselves and keep their health and their children safe.

I don't want to take too much time with this, but I am proposing this amendment in hopes that it might also get the Conservatives on board, because this would likely happen after the completion of the Jasper study. We have a number of things on the docket. It means that we would start a prestudy of Bill C-73 before we start some of the reports and the more granular work that is to come, hopefully, in the new year. However, it would ensure that we honour the requests of these first nations and that there is accountability for the government when it comes to environmental racism and the contamination happening in Fort Chipewyan. It would also mean that we could meaningfully engage in fixing the weak and inadequate piece of legislation the government has put forward on biodiversity accountability and that we could do the hard work of—

The Chair: There's a point of order.

Yes, go ahead.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Has the member been in touch with the transport committee with respect to any of its plans?

The Chair: I don't know.

Ms. Collins, have you been having conversations with the transport committee?

Ms. Laurel Collins: My understanding is that they have not agreed to conduct a study on the contamination in Fort Chipewyan. We've heard from them that they have requested documents, which I think is important. It makes sense for the transport committee to request documents around something to do with the transportation docket. I think it's also really in line with our mandate, especially since we recently passed a bill on environmental racism, that we study what happened when it comes to the information shared or not shared with the nations impacted by this and that we look at the health and environmental impacts.

The Chair: We have another point of order.

Mr. van Koeverden.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: I apologize. I couldn't agree more with Ms. Collins. I should have asked, has the committee received word? That's what is the underpinning of this question. If the committee has received word from the other committee on—

The Chair: I'll tell you what I know. It's not maybe as clear as one would like. I know that the transport committee has been discussing it. My sense is that it's looking pretty good that they will do a study, but no motion has been passed. I'm told that—

• (1810)

Ms. Laurel Collins: My understanding is that there hasn't been a motion tabled.

The Chair: It hasn't been tabled either. I think they're working it out. They're working it out in the corridors of power, as it were.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Maybe you can clarify again, Mr. Chair, that our motion, which we duly passed in committee business, as we normally should with these motions—

The Chair: It was duly passed and quite clear.

Ms. Laurel Collins: It gave a deadline of a week, which has passed.

The Chair: It was quite clear and duly passed, and the transport committee has not passed a motion.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Yes, we are engaging in the study. We've committed to it. My deep commitment to these three nations who are impacted is to make sure that the Liberals don't avoid accountability, that they don't use any tools in this House to avoid an investigation into what happened in Fort Chipewyan.

The Chair: I understand we have your amendment in front of us in black and white.

I assume you're done, Ms. Collins.

Mr. Leslie.

Mr. Branden Leslie: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would say, broadly speaking, I think we agree with the proposed amendment from our NDP colleague. It is to me very disappointing that the parliamentary secretary of environment has no idea what the transportation committee is doing on such an important issue that relates directly to the environment, but I appreciate a bit of an update from you there, Mr. Chair, in terms of what seems to me to be the transportation committee fluffing this off. I think we did pass a motion. When this committee passed a motion, that's, in my view anyway, the main reason that we would support this NDP amendment to this new motion on a prestudy for Bill C-73.

As I was saying a little earlier regarding the prestudy broadly, I think we should follow the proper order of procedures of how this place has worked. My hope is that by perhaps outlining as per the proposed changes from my NDP colleague that by the time November 27 rolls around, hopefully sooner, the government will acknowledge the will of Parliament, the will of their Liberal, now non-partisan Speaker, who has ruled that we have, as members, had our parliamentary privilege breached when we collectively—

The Chair: I don't know how relevant that is to this amendment, Mr. Leslie, to be honest with you.

Mr. Branden Leslie: That's understandable, but let me get there, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Yes.

Mr. Branden Leslie: We as members have privileges in this place, in this committee, in this House, and we decided that we wanted to see documents. The reason that we have not seen a speech from the minister on Bill C-73, I assume my Liberal government colleagues would complain, is that dastardly Conservatives and all opposition members are asking, just like veterans, for more than they can give. In this case it's legal documents that may show potential criminal activity, as outlined by the Auditor General, to the tune of nearly \$390 million.

They may take that position, but my hope is that by the time this proposed new amended motion rolls around, the House may be moving. We may have heard from Minister Guilbeault, the tabling sponsor of the legislation, to better understand the full context.

My concerns remain very much the same, that due to the obstinance of this Liberal government we will not have the documents turned over to the law clerk and then, therefore, on to the RCMP for their consideration as to whether or not criminal activities may have occurred.

Ms. Laurel Collins: I have a point of order.

The Chair: Go ahead, Ms. Collins.

Ms. Laurel Collins: My understanding is that while the amendment talks about the contaminated transport dock study that will come after one session of the net-zero accelerator session, this doesn't seem like it is on topic. I would implore—

The Chair: It's not on topic. I agree.

Ms. Laurel Collins: We could vote on this really quickly, and then he could filibuster the main motion for as long as he wants.

• (1815)

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Leslie, you still have the floor.

Mr. Branden Leslie: The gist of my comments, Mr. Chair, is that while I agree with the general intent of my NDP colleague's amendment to this motion, we can and must prepare ourselves for the high likelihood that the Liberals will continue to hide the documents, and therefore the House will not progress, and we'll not have the main speech from the minister—

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sophie Chatel: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

[*English*]

The Chair: Madame Chatel has a point of order.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sophie Chatel: Mr. Chair, you recognized Mr. Leslie, but my name was on the list. I'm pretty sure that—

The Chair: You had put your name forward to talk about the motion, but now we're speaking to the amendment.

Mrs. Sophie Chatel: I wanted to speak to the amendment too.

The Chair: Your name is on the list of people who want to speak to the motion. As far as the amendment is concerned, your name is not on the list. Do you want me to add it?

Mrs. Sophie Chatel: Yes, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Okay.

[*English*]

Okay, thank you.

Mr. Branden Leslie: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

With all of that said, as I mentioned, we need to buffer against the high likelihood that this doesn't happen, that the gridlock is not relieved unless the government decides to release those documents. Knowing that possibility, I'd like to further buffer this committee against the intentional delay of so many aspects of the work that we have undertaken.

I would propose a further subamendment with the intentional support of the proposed amendment from my colleague from the NDP.

It would involve several pieces, and perhaps, if it would be easier for my colleagues—

The Chair: Do you have anything for us in writing?

Mr. Branden Leslie: Why don't we take a quick break, and I can send it around?

Mr. Gerald Soroka: Mr. Chair, can I get on the speakers list for the subamendment, please?

The Chair: Okay.

Is there anyone else?

Ms. Laurel Collins: Mr. Chair, I'll get on there.

The Chair: Even though we don't know what the subamendment is.... Okay.

We'll take a pause and look at the subamendment.

• (1815)

(Pause)

• (1820)

The Chair: We're back in business. We have six minutes.

Where were we?

Mr. Leslie has a subamendment. Do we have it in writing? Has it been distributed to people by email?

Mr. Branden Leslie: Yes.

I apologize, Mr. Chair. It's slightly more complex. In order to not over-complicate this process, I ask that I not move it as a subamendment. Perhaps, if there's agreement among members, we could move to a vote on the NDP amendment.

However, I would like to retain my spot on the speaking list once that vote is complete, in order to move a different amendment. That's so that it's not overly complex for members to consider all of them together at the same time.

The Chair: You're withdrawing your subamendment, basically.

Mr. Branden Leslie: I haven't actually moved it yet.

The Chair: Okay, you haven't moved it. You have the floor—

Mr. Branden Leslie: Yes, given—

The Chair: —so you can call for a vote on the amendment.

Mr. Branden Leslie: Is there a speaking list?

The Chair: Yes, there is.

If you don't call for a vote on the amendment, I have Mr. Lloyd, Madame Pauzé and Madame Chatel.

Mr. Branden Leslie: On the amendment...?

The Chair: That's right. You can't, because we have to get through the speaking list. Yes, we have a speaking list. I'll put you on the speaking list on the amendment.

Mr. Branden Leslie: If I don't move my motion—

The Chair: Then we'll go to Mr. Lloyd.

Mr. Branden Leslie: Am I not currently still on—

The Chair: I'm sorry, Mr. Longfield. I put your first name down, because we're friends and stuff.

Go ahead.

Ms. Laurel Collins: I have a point of clarification.

If Mr. Leslie calls for a vote, can you—

The Chair: He can't call for a vote, because there's a speaking list.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Can you survey the speaking list to see whether people want to vote on it?

The Chair: There's Mr. Longfield, Madame Pauzé and Madame Chatel, but we have five minutes left in this meeting.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Maybe they would be open to just voting. Who knows?

The Chair: We can't vote unless Mr. Longfield, Madame Pauzé and Madame Chatel decide they don't want to speak. Then somebody can call for a vote. If people want to withdraw from the speaking list and there's no one left to speak, somebody can call for a vote.

• (1825)

Mrs. Sophie Chatel: I'm happy to remove my name, because it was there to ask for a vote.

The Chair: Okay.

Mrs. Sophie Chatel: Keep it, if nobody else is not asking for it.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Longfield, do you want to speak?

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Yes.

I've been listening—

Mr. Branden Leslie: Hold on.

Do I still have the floor?

The Chair: Yes, Mr. Leslie technically still has the floor.

What is it about?

Mr. Branden Leslie: I guess I would seek clarity.

Since we are on the amendment, I have the floor. However, I have not yet moved a subamendment, which—

The Chair: Yes. Therefore, now you have to speak on the amendment.

Mr. Branden Leslie: In the interest of time, I will relinquish the floor with the hope that in the next five minutes, we can vote on this.

However, once that vote is complete, I would also like to add my name to the list of speakers, immediately following—

The Chair: Is that on the motion?

Mr. Branden Leslie: It's on the motion.

The Chair: You're already there for the motion.

Mr. Branden Leslie: That's perfect.

The Chair: Okay. Go ahead, Mr. Longfield.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: I've been listening intently to this discussion for two hours. The discussion we've been hearing is looking at delaying any progress on doing a prestudy. It's a very important prestudy for us to do. The environment committee should be weighing in on the prestudy on Banff. We have done a bit of work on it, but I think we have some unfinished business there. I was hoping to get to that today, but the Conservatives really didn't want to do a prestudy, so they spent two hours talking about other things.

Now, at the end of the meeting, we're being asked to jump ahead of a queue. Right now, the transport committee is looking at a transport issue. Something they're trying to determine is how they can get that study agreed on and put into their schedule. For us to butt ahead of the work the transport committee is doing on this isn't—

Ms. Laurel Collins: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Go ahead, Ms. Collins.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Again, it's a point of clarification.

We passed a motion to do the study on the contamination impacting health and the environment in Fort Chipewyan.

The Chair: Mr. Longfield understands that. He's just commenting on the fact that the transport committee is looking at this too.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: I can see that Ms. Collins wants to get political points for this, but I think it's—

Ms. Laurel Collins: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Is this a point of order or a point of debate?

Ms. Laurel Collins: It is a point of order.

The member should not be assuming motive. My motives are to listen to the three nations calling on us to do an investigation. I take great offence to his putting those kinds of motives into it. I am not trying to score political points here.

Mr. Chair, I would ask that the member apologize.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: Chair, we're in a public discussion, and my reading on this is that we're going around a process the transportation committee is going through right now. If we put our motion—

Ms. Laurel Collins: I'm sorry, Mr. Chair. I have a point of order.

The Chair: Go ahead, Ms. Collins.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: I can't speak, Mr. Chair.

Ms. Laurel Collins: I have a real point of order.

Because of the delay, I wasn't sure whether the member apologized.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: No, I haven't.

The Chair: No, he has not.

Ms. Laurel Collins: My understanding, Mr. Chair, is that as members of Parliament, we're not supposed to impugn the motives of our colleagues. Is that correct?

The Chair: Yes, there's a lot of that going on today, on all sides. I'm afraid it's been going on all day. I don't think there was any malice on Mr. Longfield's part.

Anyway, let's try not to impugn motive.

I have to let Mr. Longfield continue.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: There was definitely no malice intended. We're in a public discussion. We can say things in committee that we can use outside of committee.

I really think this discussion needs to happen at the transport committee. If we take over this study, we're doing the work of the transport committee, which they might not want us to be doing. I think we're waiting to hear back from them, and in the meantime, we're trying to get Bill C-73 onto our schedule, which is a priority bill.

Mr. Branden Leslie: I would like to highlight the independence of each and every unique committee. If we want to do the same thing as they do, we have it fully within our course—

The Chair: Of course. However, we can still talk about it.

Go ahead, Mr. Longfield.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: Something similar happened in the industry committee in the 42nd Parliament. We were both studying something together and never brought the two studies under one roof. Then we had two separate things going back to Parliament from two different committees.

I think it's more impactful for the people of the Chipewyan Nation if we have one study and do it well and completely, and I think we should be doing that in the transport committee.

• (1830)

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Okay.

Ms. Pauzé, you have the floor.

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): I feel like we've gone too far in the debate, and I'd like us to come back to Ms. Collins's amendment.

I would like to move that we adjourn the meeting, Mr. Chair. Can I do that?

The Chair: You can call for a vote.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: In that case, I call for a vote. Maybe by then everybody will come to their senses.

The Chair: Okay, we'll go to a vote.

[*English*]

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: I have a point of clarification, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Madame Pauzé asked to adjourn. It's a dilatory motion, so we have to vote.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Does that suspend the meeting? Does it suspend the debate on this, or does it adjourn us?

The Chair: It adjourns the meeting.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Does it adjourn debate on this subject as well?

The Chair: Yes.

Let's vote.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Mr. Chair, can you clarify that a bit more? What was asked?

The Chair: What happens is this: If this motion—

Ms. Laurel Collins: What will we be doing at the next meeting?

The Chair: We'll be doing the net-zero accelerator.

Let's have the vote.

Ms. Laurel Collins: There is a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: Mr. Chair, I wasn't finished.

The Chair: I thought you were done, Mr. Longfield.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: No. I think we're at the end of the meeting. Maybe we should just suspend the meeting and keep going.

The Chair: To be honest, I thought you were done.

Madame Pauzé has called for an adjournment. We went to Madame Pauzé. I mean, it was pretty clear we were on Madame Pauzé. She had the floor. She asked to do a vote to adjourn the meeting, so we have to do that.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: If we don't adjourn, we suspend.

The Chair: If we don't adjourn, I will suspend the meeting.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: Okay.

The Chair: It's different, but I will suspend the meeting.

Ms. Laurel Collins: I'm sorry, Mr. Chair. Can you explain what each scenario means?

The Chair: If we adjourn, this debate is over until somebody reintroduces the motion. If we suspend, we continue with the debate at the next meeting.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Okay. Thanks.

The Chair: We're voting on whether to adjourn the meeting.

(Motion negated: nays 10; yeas 1)

The Chair: The meeting is suspended.

[*The meeting was suspended at 6:34 p.m., Wednesday, November 6*]

[*The meeting resumed at 12:13 p.m., Friday, November 15*]

• (22810)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC)): I call the meeting to order.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: I'd like to speak to this as soon as possible, Mr. Chair.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Okay.

Mr. Deltell.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I want to acknowledge that your role suits you quite well.

I am very happy to see all of us gathered here on this Friday.

Pursuant to Standing Order 106(4), which allows for urgent meetings to be held when the need arises, I move that we deal with the subject raised in the November 12 letter received by the chair and signed by five members of the committee.

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Okay. That's a motion and it's dilatory. We move on this motion. Is that correct?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Yes.

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Who's in favour of the motion?

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: It's not dilatory.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): It's not dilatory, but we're going to move this motion that he just read out.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Do you have a speaking list?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): According to the clerk, he moved a motion pursuant to Standing Order 106(4), which is for an emergency meeting. That is a dilatory motion, so we will be voting on whether to go to the emergency meeting or not.

• (22815)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Louis-Philippe Sauvé (LaSalle—Émard—Verdun, BQ): Mr. Chair, I want to make sure I have the right motion because I would like to move an amendment.

Are we talking about the three-point motion to invite Mr. DeMarco, the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development?

Mr. Gérard Deltell: If I may, Mr. Chair, I would like to acknowledge the new member in the House of Commons and officially welcome him to the committee. I also want to acknowledge Ms. Pauzé, who serves her party so well on this committee.

No, we're not talking about the motion. I'm going to clarify the situation for you. I moved that we commence the debate under Standing Order 106(4), which allows us to do that. After that, we can talk about the substance of the debate.

I'm asking whether we want to talk today about why we're here. Afterwards, we can have a discussion on the substance, on the motion itself.

Mr. Louis-Philippe Sauvé: I thank the member for Louis-Saint-Laurent for his procedural clarification.

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Now we have all that straightened out, I call for the vote.

There is a tie vote, so I vote in favour.

(Motion agreed to: yeas 6; nays 5 [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): That motion has carried.

Mr. Deltell shall kick off the debate.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I move the following motion:

Given that Canada's Commissioner of the Environment released an audit that revealed:

- 1) The government is not on track to meet Canada's 2030 targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- 2) Canada has the worst record in the G7 for emissions reductions.
- 3) The government is using "unreliable emissions reduction—

[*English*]

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: On a point of order, I had my hand up. I'm curious what your speaking order and list might be. I thought I would have the floor following the commencement of the debate on the motion.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): I have Mr. Leslie and then you.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Do you have Mr. Leslie on the list to speak before me? I spoke before Mr. Deltell, and I now seem to be third on the list.

I'd like to question that order, please. I had my hand up first.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Are you challenging the chair, then?

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: If I need to—

Ms. Laurel Collins: Mr. Chair, on a point of order, when the debate was opening, Mr. Sauvé mentioned before the vote that he was intending to put forward an amendment. My assumption is that he would be on the speaking list as well.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Yes, you are correct. His hand is not up, but that is true.

Go ahead, Mr. Deltell.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Mr. Chair, with all due respect to my colleague Mr. van Koeverden, I would like to remind you that, once the vote was over, I immediately asked to have the floor and you recognized me.

[English]

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: On a point of order, Mr. Chair, I recognize that's how it happened. I had my hand up and I spoke into my microphone. I'm not in the room, so I'm at a disadvantage.

However, at the outset of this meeting, Mr. Deltell and I both expressed interest in speaking, and when the vote concluded, I did again.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): You are on the speaking list.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: As I requested with my point of order, what is the order?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): It's Mr. Leslie, and then you.

Mr. Shafqat Ali: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Yes, sir.

Mr. Shafqat Ali: I'm online as well, so I could see Mr. van Koeverden. He raised his hand before Mr. Leslie. I just wanted to bring that to your attention.

● (22820)

[Translation]

Mr. Louis-Philippe Sauv : Mr. Chair, I'd like to speak on the same point of order.

I believe the committee elected you, so I trust you implicitly about the speaking order. You had recognized the member for Louis-Saint-Laurent. In any case, I could not propose an amendment to a motion that had not been moved. My intention was to move an amendment.

I think that, to ensure that the committee runs smoothly, it would be preferable to simply let the member for Louis-Saint-Laurent finish reading his motion. Then we can talk about the substance of the motion.

I don't think it's in the interest of our fellow citizens to waste endless time on procedural considerations.

The committee trusts you entirely to conduct the debate properly.

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): I completely agree.

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, Lib.): I have a point of order as well, Mr. Chair.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Okay.

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: I had put my hand up clearly, and I know it was before Mr. Leslie. I put it up immediately after, and I also was looking at the screen, so I'm not sure how his name came up before mine on the speaking list.

I understand that there's only one person in the room, but I think someone needs to be helping you, perhaps to look at when people's hands go up so that they can be recorded as they go up.

On the point of wasting time, I might suggest that this emergency debate is not in fact an emergency and could have been dealt with at a regular time, saving the House a great deal of money.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): That's not a point of order.

We'll have Mr. Deltell finish his motion, as he hasn't even finished it yet, and then we have Mr. Sauv , Mr. Leslie and Mr. van Koeverden. Then we'll have Ms. Collins, and then Ms. Taylor Roy. That is what we have right now.

Away we go, Mr. Deltell.

[Translation]

Mr. G rard Deltell: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

To ensure that it is clear to everyone, I will reread the motion we are debating today from the beginning.

Given that Canada's Commissioner of the Environment released an audit that revealed:

- 1) The government is not on track to meet Canada's 2030 targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- 2) Canada has the worst record in the G7 for emissions reductions.
- 3) The government is using "unreliable emissions reduction estimates" and is lacking "transparency on emissions reductions and projections".

The committee hold a minimum of three meetings to investigate the Liberal government's emission reduction policies; invite (a) Commissioner DeMarco for a two hour meeting, (b) the Minister of Environment & Climate Change along with departmental officials for a two hour meeting, (c) Canada's Climate Change Ambassador for one hour, and (d) witnesses submitted by recognized parties for the remaining hour; the meetings take place only after the completion of witness testimony on the committee's study on climate impacts related to the Canadian financial system; and that these meetings be completed by December 13, 2024.

We will have the opportunity to get into detail during the debate, but I want to emphasize that we each have our own view of how to reduce emissions and meet Canada's targets for reducing emissions and pollution. The paths we advocate are different. That's what Parliament and democracy are for.

We wanted the committee to hold a meeting today to make sure that we were going to debate the substance of the issues of climate change, the policies put forward by the government and the proposals from the other opposition parties. The commissioner of the environment concluded that we were not on the right track. This is not a political party, a think tank or a lobby group saying the government is getting it right or not; it's the commissioner. He is sounding the alarm about the effectiveness, and even the transparency and truthfulness of the facts cited by the government.

He says, among other things, that the government is not on track to meet our targets and that Canada has the worst record in the G7. That is reminiscent of Canada's sorry record over the past nine years. It ranked 62nd out of 64. According to scientists around the world, Canada is one of the laggards when it comes to effectively reducing emissions. The Liberal government has lectured everyone non-stop in the nine years it has been in power. The audit also mentions that the government uses estimates that can be very subjective. It makes numbers say what it wants them to say.

Given that it is the commissioner of the environment issuing these very harsh warnings to the government, we believe that a debate must be held as soon as possible on a highly sensitive topic that resonates with all Canadians, namely climate change and finding solutions to address it.

• (22825)

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Thank you.

Mr. Sauvé.

[Translation]

Mr. Louis-Philippe Sauvé: Mr. Chair, I move an amendment to the motion.

I propose replacing the period after “2024” with “, provided that the Committee has considered and adopted the draft report on the Committee's study of the climate impacts of the Canadian financial system before that date, failing which the meetings on this study shall be completed after the holiday season.”

Basically, it is so we can continue our work. I think everyone here is concerned about efficiency and wants to continue the studies we've started. I think this study is particularly important to my colleague, the member for Repentigny, and I'm sure all parliamentarians want to find solutions. We need to use finance and the financial system to help ensure that we live in a healthy environment and are able to fight climate change.

[English]

Ms. Laurel Collins: Mr. Chair, can I get on the speaking list for the amendment?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): You bet.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: I would also like to be on the list for the amendment, if that takes precedence over the current debate.

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: As would I, please.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): We have Ms. Collins, Mr. Deltell, Mr. van Koeverden and then Ms. Taylor Roy.

Ms. Collins.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I first want to ask the analysts about the feasibility of drafting the report and getting it to us. Can we just get a little bit of information from the analysts about the timelines and about what's possible between now and what the amendment proposed?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): What we're hearing is that the report will take well into the new year to get completed.

Ms. Laurel Collins: If the analysts could map out for us.... If we wrap up witness testimony by, say, November 25, when would be the earliest we could get a first draft of the report?

• (22830)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): We're just going over that now.

For a draft report, it would be three to four weeks after the testimony comes in.

Ms. Laurel Collins: I'm just reading through the amendment right now. Maybe I can hold the rest of my comments, but I just want some clarification from Mr. Sauvé. If we are waiting three or four weeks, if we wrap up the witness testimony by, say, November 25, that is going to bring us to the very end of our session, if we're still sitting—December 17 or so. It seems like it might not be completed by December 13.

I just want to check in with the mover of the amendment to see if there's some flexibility, given what the analysts are telling us.

[Translation]

Mr. Louis-Philippe Sauvé: Should I respond, Mr. Chair, or should I wait for my turn to speak?

Sorry for asking the question. I'm learning to navigate the parliamentary procedure.

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): In talking to the analysts here, I will tell you that it would take longer. The sustainable finance study would actually take longer than the three to four weeks, because it would take that long for them to compile it, and then they would have to bring it back to the committee to see what we prioritize for the drafting instructions. You're looking at a good six weeks just to get the report, when all is said and done.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Mr. Chair, is there any way we could have some kind of pre-drafting instructions for the analysts? Oftentimes, before they start writing the report, we make time to give them some pre-drafting instructions, and I'm kind of curious if we could do that again for this.

Maybe we could amend this amendment to take into consideration what the analysts are telling us.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): I'm just going to take a short recess here, and we'll get back to you.

• (1230)

(Pause)

• (1235)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): We got some clarification from the analysts, and basically it comes down to the will of the committee.

We'll go back to the debate. The motion stands as it is. The timeline is basically up to how the analysts...and whether we want to take priorities is for future conversations. For example, if we want to set the water study to the side and make this one a priority, that is all after the motion passes.

Right now, we're just debating whether this motion can pass today or not.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Mr. Chair, I just have a point of clarification.

I see that, at the end of the amendment, it says, "failing which the meetings on this study shall be completed after the holiday season." Really, this amendment is just prioritizing the drafting of this study, which I'm in support of. I just want to make sure that we aren't directing the analysts to do something that is impossible for them.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): That's good, and that is exactly what I got clarified. It's basically the will of the committee. Then, if the analysts need help with clarifying what their priorities are, that comes back to committee. We decide on that.

That's good. Thank you, Laurel.

Mr. Deltell.

[Translation]

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would say that you're taking the words right out of our mouths. We don't see any issue with the amendment moved by our Bloc Québécois colleagues. However, we must consider the reality of the situation. There are many traffic jams. This is a good thing. That's what we do. That's our job. We were elected to analyze a number of issues, including taxes and finances related to the environment. Of course, this includes the report of the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development. This report concerns all Canadians, especially the government.

We support this amendment. Of course, we want everything done within the rules and time frames.

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Thank you.

Mr. van Koeverden.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the opportunity to speak to this.

I would just start by saying that emergency meetings are to be used in emergencies. While we are 100% in a climate emergency—and I think some of the members of this committee agree with me on that—calling this meeting does not fall into the category of that requirement, especially given that we have the environment commissioner appearing at this committee—agreed to by all members—on Wednesday of next week at our second meeting. To have an emergency meeting to discuss whether or not the environment commissioner is going to appear seems a little bit presumptuous, or at least a little bit premature, especially given that in less than one week we'll have an opportunity to discuss these with him.

I'd also just question the genuineness—if I can use that word, if it's a word—of some of the members to actually hear from the Min-

ister of Environment and Climate Change when, instead of filibustering two of the previous three meetings, we could have had the minister here. He wanted to come to talk about Bill C-73, so I welcome the friendly amendment from MP Sauvé to add the Bill C-73 study.

I have an amendment to that, as well, because I would like, for the Bill C-73 study, to be a little bit more rigorous and to include, perhaps, multiple days to look at Bill C-73 specifically. I'd also say that, five times in the last two or three weeks, I've tried to pass a similar.... I'm sorry. I think I was confused.

I will be moving a motion to add Bill C-73, if Mr. Sauvé's amendment doesn't already include it. Again, despite opposition from the Conservatives and the NDP, I've been trying for weeks now to move a motion to look at Bill C-73 and have been blocked. It's disappointing, because I don't think that biodiversity is such a contentious or partisan issue. I think we all agree that we need to protect species that are endangered by the triple threat of pollution, climate change and the loss of biodiversity.

I also call into question.... I know that Mr. Deltell is sincere when he talks about his desire to lower emissions and fight climate change. He will repeatedly say that Canada is not on track. However, by many measurements, we are indeed on track, and we are only on track because of the over 100 measures undertaken by this government to reduce our emissions. Indeed, it is irrefutable that our emissions are now lower than they've been since 1997 and that they would have been 41% higher than they are today had we not undertaken these over 100 measures.

These over 100 measures have been voted against by Conservatives every step of the way for the last eight or nine years. When asked pointedly if they have alternative measures that they'd like to propose to lower emissions, to hold oil and gas to account, to electrify, to decarbonize and to reduce our impact on the environment, they use one word: "technology". In some ambiguous way—

● (22840)

Mr. Branden Leslie: I have a point of order, Chair.

I would like clarity. Are we currently debating the amendment?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): I haven't heard an amendment yet.

Mr. Branden Leslie: Is the friendly amendment from Mr. Sauvé what we're debating currently?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Yes, it's Mr. Sauvé's amendment. That's correct.

Mr. Branden Leslie: I'd be curious as to the relevance of the previous speaker.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: I was discussing whether or not we're on track to meet Canada's greenhouse gas emission reduction targets for 2030, and that's number one in Mr. Sauvé's amendment.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Are you in favour of the amendment? Where are you at?

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: I'll get to it, Mr. Chair. I think I'm entitled to a few minutes of preamble.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Are you going to amend it while you are talking about this or...?

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: I'll continue. I am talking about this.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Okay. Go ahead.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Thank you for the point of order, Mr. Leslie.

As I was saying, over 100 measures have been undertaken by this government to lower our emissions and, in every step of the way, the Conservatives have tried to block them. They voted against these measures, while not proposing any alternative measures to lower our emissions. It's pretty rich to hear from the Conservatives that they feel as though we're not on track, despite evidence to the contrary—that we are on track to lower our emissions to the proposed 40% to 45% mark by 2030.

They are lower than they've been since 1997. The year Connor McDavid was born was the last time our emissions were this high. That's good news and something that we can all celebrate. Innovations—from transport to construction, agriculture and even oil and gas—have allowed them to be this low. I would say that the innovations put forward by the oil and gas sector and the energy sector more broadly have not been sufficient, because they continue to go up, but the sector has been innovating and lowering its emissions to some degree, or at least its hypothetical ones. They could be a lot higher.

Among the over 100 measures undertaken by this government that the Conservatives have continually stood against and voted against are ones that have earned a Nobel Prize in economics, such as carbon pricing, but also our clean fuel standard; our phase-out of coal—it's astonishing that the Conservatives should stand against that—our plan to have net-zero emissions by 2050 with our Federal Accountability Act; our clean growth program; our zero-emissions vehicle initiative, which has seen record growth, particularly in provinces that also have a zero-emissions vehicle standard; our investments in renewable energy; our investments in carbon capture, utilization and storage; industrial carbon pricing in the oil and gas sector; our investments in green buildings and energy efficiency; our home retrofits; and our efforts to reduce plastic waste pollution.

In fact, this one draws particular ire, given that the Conservatives have brought forward a private member's bill entitled the “bring back the plastic bag” bill, because they just can't seem to remember their cotton bags when going to the grocery store, I guess. Also, their boycott of Tim Hortons and its plant-based lid experiment was another hilarious move by the Conservatives.

There are also nature-based solutions for climate change, subsidies for green innovation, working towards international leadership

and developing those relationships, commitments in collaboration with other jurisdictions, funding for climate adaptation, our work on green energy and green job creation, electrification of public transit, sustainable agriculture, hydrogen strategies and our work on environmental, social and governance initiatives, an acronym that the Conservatives just love to hate—ESG. I don't know why they keep bringing witnesses here to suggest that ESG is a bad thing. We should focus on the environment, sustainability, better governance and social programs that support people.

Once again, Mr. Chair, we have the commissioner of the environment coming to this committee on Wednesday. We did not need to have this emergency meeting to discuss this. We have time in the committee to discuss it.

It's particularly disappointing that the prestudy on Bill C-73 for biodiversity—to ensure that we have accountability in that regard—has been continuously blocked by the NDP and the Conservatives. I don't know why it needs to be so contentious. Instead, the opposition has been filibustering these meetings, wasting time and then calling an emergency meeting on a Friday of a non-sitting week—

● (22845)

Ms. Laurel Collins: I have a point of order.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Go ahead, Ms. Collins.

Ms. Laurel Collins: I'm just wondering if Mr. van Koeverden can clarify what he means by the NDP blocking this study. I'm very curious.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Sure.

The NDP voted against discussing commencing the meeting on Bill C-73. We were set to have the minister last Wednesday, but the NDP decided that they were not in favour of looking at the prestudy on Bill C-73.

Ms. Laurel Collins: That is inaccurate.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: If we'd had more than one party's support, we would be studying Bill C-73 right now instead of having an emergency debate.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Okay. You're way off. We'll bring this discussion back around.

What we are talking about—

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Mr. Chair, I'm not done yet. The floor is still mine.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): I thought I'd intervene, since you were starting to debate Ms. Collins.

Could you please bring it back in and talk about what the actual amendment is?

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: I was responding to a point of order.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My amendment to the motion as we've heard it is under the first section, where it says, "The committee hold a minimum of three meetings to investigate the Liberal government's emission reduction policies". Under (b), I would request that we have a two-hour meeting, with one hour dedicated to the commissioner's report and one hour on Bill C-73. Under (d), I would like to add at the end, after the date, December 13, 2024, "that the committee begin its prestudy of Bill C-73, an act respecting transparency and accountability, within seven days of the minister's appearance." Once again, I'll add that it could have been more than one week ago, and we will be hearing from the commissioner of the environment in five days.

Thank you. That's it. That's my amendment, Mr. Chair.

• (22850)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): This is going back to the main motion, so it's out of order.

We have to finish the discussion on the subamendment first, and then we'll go back. Once we go back to the main motion, Mr. van Koeverden, if you want to bring this forward at that point in time, it's totally up to you.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Okay. Thank you.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): We're back on the subamendment, and we have Ms. Taylor Roy.

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I'd like to start by questioning the subamendment we're talking about right now.

The impact of the subamendment, given the logistics of all the meetings that would have to take place first, is to push the meetings into the new year. If that's indeed the case, I question why we are having an emergency meeting today to discuss a study that's going to start sometime in the new year, probably toward the end of January. It seems to me that if, in fact, this is an emergency—I would debate whether or not it is—adding an amendment that pushes this into the new year is not consistent with an emergency meeting. I question why the Conservatives are supporting this amendment if they are calling for this study as though it is an emergency.

I'd also question, on the emergency front, why the study they want to do is to investigate the Liberals' policies. We heard from Mr. Deltell, who said—I wrote it down—that he wanted opposition suggestions to meet our goals, yet the study that's being recommended, which won't start until sometime at the end of January, is proposed to investigate the current policies.

I'd be quite happy to propose a subamendment to the amendment—

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Excuse me, Ms. Taylor Roy. I'll repeat the motion with the amendment so we're all clear on what we're actually debating.

It is:

The committee hold a minimum of three meetings to investigate the Liberal government's emission reduction policies; invite (a) Commissioner DeMarco for a two-hour meeting—

We all know he's coming on Wednesday.

—(b) the Minister of Environment and Climate Change along with departmental officials for a two-hour meeting, (c) Canada's Climate Change Ambassador for one hour—

She's never been to this committee at all.

—and (d) witnesses submitted by recognized parties for the remaining hour; the meetings take place only after the completion of witness testimony on the committee's study on climate impacts related to the Canadian financial system; and that these meetings be completed by December 13, 2024.

This is where the amendment has happened: "provided that the committee has considered and adopted the draft report on the committee's study of the climate impacts on the Canadian financial system before that date, failing which the meetings on this study shall be completed after the holiday season."

We then decided that it is within the committee's purview. We can demand all we want, and we can set the analysts on a path and prioritize as we see fit.

That is the discussion we're having on this study.

Ms. Laurel Collins: On a point of clarification, maybe the confusion comes from the words "this study" in the last line of the amendment. I read "this study" to be talking about the writing of the report and the study on the sustainable finance piece. Maybe Ms. Taylor Roy is reading "this study" to be talking about the Standing Order 106(4) study, in which case it would be pushing all of the meetings and the study on the commissioner's report, including inviting the minister and the ambassador after the holiday season.

Maybe we should get some clarity from Mr. Sauvé on whether "failing which, the meetings on this study shall be completed after the holiday season" refers to the meetings that would invite the Minister of Environment and the ambassador, or to wrapping up the writing of the report on sustainable finance.

• (22855)

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: Mr. Chair, I believe I still have the floor. I wanted to make a subamendment to the amendment.

Ms. Laurel Collins: I'm sorry. That was just a point of clarification to make sure that we're all talking about the same thing.

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: Okay.

Mr. Sauvé, was the idea to complete Ms. Pauzé's study before going on to the study being recommended by the Conservatives?

[Translation]

Mr. Louis-Philippe Sauvé: Exactly.

I think that it's clear enough in French. The purpose of the amendment is to change Mr. Deltell's motion, which seeks to launch a new study. The amendment proposes that, before beginning the Standing Order 106(4) study, we complete the member for Repentigny's study on green finance. That's my interpretation.

[English]

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: Thank you. That's what I understood as well.

My point in the debate is that it is hardly an emergency motion if we're now talking about an amendment that puts the study brought forward by Standing Order 106(4) into the new year. My question is this: Is this really an emergency debate? Why couldn't this have been done next week, especially when we already have the commissioner coming on Wednesday? Also, why are the Conservatives wasting House resources and time, once again, to put forward a motion that, other than Mr. Deltell, they clearly have no interest in?

I say that because we know the increase in emissions.... If anything, our shortfall in reaching our goals has come from the oil sands. Every time we talk about any policies that curb pollution from the oil sands, most members of the environment committee try to change the debate and don't want to talk about it. They want to talk about other things. In fact, they even opposed the cap on pollution, which addresses the biggest cause of what's happening, which is pointed out in the commissioner's report.

I would like to make a subamendment to the amendment, Mr. Chair. We currently have a motion, and then we have an amendment. I'd like to make a subamendment to the amendment that was made. After "provided that the committee has considered and adopted the draft report on the committee's study of the climate impacts on the Canadian financial system before that date", I would like to add the words "and that the meetings be focused on ways to meet our targets", and then continue on.

I'm sure everybody on this committee is very concerned—I know the NDP and the Bloc are—about meeting our emissions targets. This emergency is really about meeting those targets. This should be focused on ways to do that, not simply investigating the policies the Conservatives would like to say are not working.

I'd be very happy to have members of the Conservative caucus give us some ideas on how to curb emissions from the oil sands.

Ms. Laurel Collins: On a point of order, Mr. Chair, could we get that subamendment in writing?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Yes. You're up next to speak on it.

Can we get that in writing?

Ms. Taylor Roy, could you forward that to the clerk, please?

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: Yes. I'll do that right now.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): As a time filler and for clarity, Ms. Taylor Roy, I think this will answer a lot of your questions about this subamendment.

The way our preamble for this motion starts is this:

Given that Canada's Commissioner of the Environment released an audit that revealed:

- 1) The government is not on track to meet Canada's 2030 targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- 2) Canada has the worst record in the G7 for emissions reductions—

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: Excuse me. I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Hang on. I'm the chair, and you asked—

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: It's a point of order.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): You wanted a point—

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: No. It's a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Sure.

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: We have that motion in front of us. You've read it twice. It's in front of us. I can read it. With all due respect, we don't need to have you read it to us again. I'm quite capable of reading. I've read it many times.

• (22900)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): You asked about targets.

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: I didn't, Mr. Chair. I asked about the Conservatives contributing to meeting those targets.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Go ahead, Mr. Deltell.

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Just on that point, Mr. Chair, what you're saying is that the issue we are here to talk about today is a motion based on Standing Order 106(4). This is a very important point. A few days ago, we saw that the environmental commissioner tabled a report. It's not very funny for the government, which I can understand and recognize, but we want to hear from them and we want to go deep into it.

This is the motion we are tabling. This is the motion we are talking about. Go on with the targets, please.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Ms. Collins.

Ms. Laurel Collins: This is just another point of clarification. I want to make sure we're all very clear about what we're talking about.

While we're waiting, could we get this kind of mapped out? Let's say Mr. Sauvé's amendment passes. We would wrap up the witness testimony. I believe we have only one more meeting of witness testimony on sustainable finance. Is that correct? Then we would be waiting for the report to be drafted, which would take four weeks, the analysts said. In that four-week period, we would be able to get to some of the testimony that this current motion is calling for.

Is my understanding correct?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Yes. You are correct.

Ms. Laurel Collins: So the point that Ms. Taylor Roy made, that this wouldn't start until the new year, isn't actually accurate. This would actually start in November or early December, while we're waiting for the sustainable finance report to be drafted.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Yes. The committee will keep on rolling ahead with whatever study it prioritizes, which will be this one. There are still other holes to be filled up, which I'm sure the committee is well aware of. This is just bringing in another motion, an emergency study on the reports. So I think we're going ahead with this as planned.

[Translation]

Mr. René Arseneault (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I would like to clarify one thing.

[English]

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: I have a point of clarification.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Mr. Arseneault.

[Translation]

Mr. René Arseneault: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Since I'm new to this committee and I'm replacing one of my colleagues, I don't want to impose anything. I'm also a committee chair. I read in the notice that we're holding an emergency meeting today.

I'm listening to all the comments made around the table. My colleagues from all the political parties are making legitimate points. It seems that we're talking about agendas and schedules in order to proceed properly in the committee. Given that we're using expensive House of Commons resources when the House is on a break this week, I wonder whether it would be better to hold this discussion in the subcommittee.

I'm not imposing anything. I'm not moving a motion. I'm saying this to bring order or efficiency back to the committee—

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): That's not really a point of order. It's not really relevant to the discussion of what's going on.

[Translation]

Mr. René Arseneault: Mr. Chair, as my colleague, Ms. Collins, was saying, I wanted to clarify something. I wonder whether we're getting off track and whether it would be more effective for the committee to adjourn the debate now and discuss this matter in the subcommittee. I'll make a suggestion and leave it at that.

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): We'll take that under advisement.

Ms. Collins—

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: I have a point of clarification.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Sure.

Ms. Taylor Roy.

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: Thank you.

I just want to clear up something that was said, because I think there's confusion in the committee right now as to when this emergency motion the Conservatives have brought forward would actually commence. I've heard something different from Mr. Sauvé than I've heard from Ms. Collins. Mr. Sauvé has put forward the amendment. I want to be sure, because I know that Ms. Pauzé was very

clear about what she wanted done, that we are all on the same page in terms of what this amendment means.

Perhaps we could ask Mr. Sauvé, who has put forward the amendment, to once again reiterate, for Ms. Collins, what his understanding is and what this means for this emergency motion.

[Translation]

Mr. Louis-Philippe Sauvé: Mr. Chair, I would like to say again that—

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Hang on. I have to add Ms. Collins in there as well.

Is this relevant to what you asked, Ms. Collins, or do you want to continue on with the debate?

• (22905)

Ms. Laurel Collins: I was just going to say that I spoke to Madame Pauzé right before this meeting about the fact that there would be time between when the witnesses wrap up and when the analysts would be able to give us a first draft that we could dig into. She expressed that she was comfortable with our continuing on with this business of Standing Order 106(4) and other things—like the Jasper fire and the net zero accelerator—in those meetings in between while we're waiting for a draft report.

I'm also very curious. I just want to make sure that this amendment is in line with that understanding.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Okay.

Mr. Sauvé, do you have anything else to clarify?

[Translation]

Mr. Louis-Philippe Sauvé: Mr. Chair, I apologize. I didn't know that I had to wait for you to give me the floor.

As I said earlier, I think that it's quite clear. The purpose of this amendment is to prioritize Ms. Pauzé's study. If there isn't any suspension, the goal is to complete the study before the holiday season.

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): I have an English copy of Ms. Taylor Roy's subamendment. Do you folks want it read out here, or do you want it in your email inbox? It's only in one language.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Mr. Chair, could we maybe just get clarification from the clerk on the point that we're kind of going back and forth about? Given the wording in the subamendment as it's put forward right now, would it be the clerk's understanding that in the time between when the witness testimony wraps up on the sustainable finance study and when we receive a draft report that we can then dig into, we are able to continue with our regular committee business, including the witness testimony from the environment commissioner, the Minister of Environment, and the ambassador etc.? Would there be time for that while we're waiting for the report to be drafted?

Could we just get clarity from the clerk that this is all possible while we are waiting for the analysts to provide us with a first draft report?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): The clerk is telling me that it's the committee's decision. If we so deem it, that's the way it'll happen.

Now, I would think, just in listening to the committee members, that that's the way we expect it to happen. We'll have to be working on something, so whatever we pick as a priority is the way we go. By the sound of it, by this debate on this motion, I would say that this is going to be one of the priorities. However, this is yet to be seen, I guess.

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: I have another point of clarification, Mr. Chair.

I was under the impression that scheduling meetings and the logistics of this is the business of the subcommittee. It's actually committee business and shouldn't be the essence of an emergency debate, especially when it's taking up such valuable resources. I'm wondering if we could just refer this to the subcommittee to look at the committee business and the scheduling and to then get back to us at our next regularly scheduled meeting so that we can actually figure out when to do these different meetings.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): The fact is that we are debating a motion right now, and that is what's on the floor. I guess that's that.

We'll go back to the debate on this motion.

[*Translation*]

Mr. René Arseneault: Mr. Chair—

[*English*]

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: It's a subamendment to the amendment.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): I'll read it, just so we're all on the same page:

provided that the committee has considered and adopted the draft report on the committee's study of the climate impacts of the Canadian financial system before that date and that such study focus on ways that we can reach our emissions target, in particular ways in which we can reduce emissions from the oil and gas sector, which is the sector which is preventing Canada from meeting its goals, failing which the meetings on this study shall be completed after the holiday season.

That's the subamendment to the amendment.

I have Mr. Arseneault and then Mr. Sauvé.

• (22910)

[*Translation*]

Mr. René Arseneault: Mr. Chair, you quite rightly said that this was a debate and that we needed to debate.

I would like to add that, unless I'm mistaken, the committee is in control of its own destiny. Should people around the table think that it's much wiser to discuss all this and to prepare the schedule for the return after the holidays in the subcommittee, the committee can do so, even though a debate is under way. I wanted to point this out. You wisely said we were having a debate. You could also suggest to the committee that it would be wiser to hold the debate in the subcommittee.

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Thank you, Mr. Arseneault.

Mr. Sauvé.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Louis-Philippe Sauvé: Mr. Chair, I would like to receive the subamendment in writing in both official languages so that I can fully understand the purpose of the vote and the debate.

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): We are working on that currently.

We'll suspend for just a bit to get this straightened out.

• (1310)

(Pause)

• (1320)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Okay. Everybody should have a copy of the translated subamendment from Ms. Collins.

Mr. Sauvé, I'll give you a couple of minutes to have a look at it.

I'll recess again, just very quickly.

• (1320)

(Pause)

• (1320)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): I'm going to gavel us in right now.

Mr. Sauvé, you're next on this, and then we have Mr. Deltell and Ms. Taylor Roy.

Go ahead, Mr. Sauvé.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Louis-Philippe Sauvé: I'm a bit ambivalent about the subamendment at the moment. The motion that led to this study should be reread. Unlike other people here, I'm not a committee member. I just want to make sure that it doesn't contradict the purpose of the study.

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Okay.

Mr. Deltell is next.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

We'll be voting against Ms. Taylor Roy's subamendment. With all due respect to Ms. Taylor Roy and my colleagues, I think that this shows the utter desperation of this government and its members in the face of the current situation.

Remember that the Prime Minister proudly attended the Paris climate change conference and announced with great fanfare that "Canada is back".

The issue is the following.

[English]

After nine years of this government, Canada is not back: Canada is way back. That is the reality of this government after nine years of taxing people, lecturing people—

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: On a point of order, Mr. Chair, is this debate on the subamendment or is this debate on the study as a whole?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): It's on the subamendment.

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: I just question the relevance of the Liberal record to the subamendment

Mr. Gérard Deltell: It's because in my mind... Maybe some members can disagree, but I think people who are watching us today understand it, because the subamendment is just to change the channel, to put our eyes elsewhere while you have in hand a document that has been tabled not by the Conservative Party of Canada, not by a group of interests and not by an oil and gas sector; it's coming from the commissioner of the environment, the most objective guy in this country to evaluate the performance of Canada. Are we on the right track right now? Are we achieving the goal that we have fixed many years ago? The truth is not there.

[Translation]

The people tuning in today can see that this subamendment clearly shows how desperate government members feel when faced with reality. Nine years ago, Canada was promised a comeback. However, it isn't back. It's at the end of the line. We aren't the ones saying this. The commissioner of the environment and sustainable development studied the effectiveness of government measures. He concluded that, despite all the talk, rhetoric and taxes imposed on Canadians to reduce emissions, the targets aren't being met.

The government boasts about its lofty principles and figures. It says that we're on track to meet the targets. However, the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development is quite critical about this. He says that these emission reduction estimates remain unreliable. The Conservative member of Parliament isn't saying this, and neither are representatives of the oil industry. Canada's commissioner of the environment and sustainable development objectively states that the emission reduction estimates remain unreliable and that the emission reductions and projections lack transparency—

• (22925)

[English]

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: I'm sorry, Mr. Chair, but I have a point of order once again, because this does not seem to be focused on the subamendment at all, unless you can tell me how it is.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: It looks like another filibuster to me, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Gérard Deltell: I don't think that I can receive any lesson from the government about filibusters today. That's my point.

This is what debate is all about. The debate is based on the facts, and the facts are coming not from the Conservative Party members of Parliament, but from the commissioner—

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: Excuse me, Mr. Chair.

I didn't hear a ruling on my point of order. I was wondering if you could rule on whether this current debate is on the subamendment or whether it is on the main motion.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): It's not a point of order.

The debate is on the subamendment.

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: My question is about the relevance to the debate. It is relevance to the debate on the motion at hand, and the motion at hand is the subamendment.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): It is.

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: I don't believe this subamendment—which you could perhaps read out, as you've read out the whole motion several times—has anything to do with the subamendment I made.

Mr. Gérard Deltell: If I may, Mr. Chair, the point is that the subamendment of the Liberal Party members talks about the oil and gas industry. I'm sorry, folks, but it is not the oil and gas industry that has not achieved the target; it is the federal government, after nine years, that has failed to achieve the goal.

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: On a point of clarification, Mr. Chair, the subamendment is not about the oil and gas industry. The subamendment is asking that this study be focused on the very issues Mr. Deltell is talking about, which is how we can meet our targets. That is the emergency.

In Mr. Deltell's preamble, he stated that he wanted to hear opposition parties' ideas on how we could do that. In fact, the oil and gas industry is the only sector that has increased—

Ms. Laurel Collins: Mr. Chair, this seems like debate.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Agreed. It's debate.

Mr. Deltell, you still have the floor.

[Translation]

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Mr. Chair, at the risk of repeating myself, I'll conclude with the following remarks.

The current attitude of government members is unfortunate. However, it shows how much the government is out of touch with people's reality. The government feels so desperate that it's angry about the environment commissioner's report, which unfortunately contains some stark facts. The report finds that rhetoric doesn't help to achieve objectives. Above all, the Liberals make the figures say what they want. As the environment commissioner pointed out, emission reduction estimates remain unreliable and emission reductions and projections lack transparency.

After nine years of lecturing everyone, the Liberals have this to show for their record on the environment.

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Thank you, Mr. Deltell.

I have Ms. Taylor Roy, and then Mr. Leslie after her.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Hang on. I'm just reading the order. We have Ms. Taylor Roy, Mr. Leslie, Ms. Collins, Mr. Longfield and Mr. Sauvé.

Go ahead on the point of order.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: There are two points of order, Mr. Chair.

One, I would like clarity [*Technical difficulty—Editor*] I believe we all agreed on November 20.

Also, my friend and colleague seems confused. He keeps implying that the emissions are from the government. They are actually from the oil and gas sector, not [*Technical difficulty—Editor*].

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Someone at bigger play... Half of it was cut out. You may want to check on your connection, Mr. van Koeverden, if it comes down to a vote.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Would you like me to try again on my point of order, Mr. Chair?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): No. That's good. You brought up two points.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: I'd like to make sure that my points of order were on the record.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Neither was a point of order, by the way.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: The first one was indeed a point of order. I asked for clarity on the November 20 meeting.

• (22930)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): That didn't come through at all.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: For November 20, we all agreed that the commissioner of the environment would appear.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Yes.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Thank you for that clarification.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Ms. Taylor Roy, do you still want to talk?

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I do.

Apparently the scope of the debate on this subamendment is fairly broad, so I'd like to refer to the commissioner's report that was put out. I'm sure everyone has it in front of them, since that's the subject of this motion.

You can see that emissions have come down, especially when you look at emissions intensity and the growth in our economy, other than the recession in 2008, which was during the Conservative administration and which took quite a while to recover from. There was a drop in emissions, but then they started to come back up again.

It's only since this Liberal government's policies have been put in place that you've seen a reduction of any sort, and this is with a growing economy, which obviously has an impact on emissions.

With all due respect, Mr. Deltell, if your concern is truly about meeting our emissions targets and the emergency is that we are not going to meet our emissions targets....

I know the NDP would agree with this, because they're very concerned about the oil and gas sector's emissions. We know from this report that the oil and gas sector is the only sector that is continuing to increase emissions, and they're coming primarily from the oil sands. I'm sure the NDP would also be in favour of making this a very focused effort, because the emergency is the climate crisis. What we should be focusing on as members of Parliament and what we should be using this time to do is working collaboratively to come up with suggestions for how we can confront that climate emergency.

I would be very interested to hear Mr. Kram's and Mr. Leslie's suggestions for how we could fight climate change and what more we could do to actually meet our emissions targets. I think putting this small subamendment into the amendment, which simply says we should focus on the problem here and not continue to politicize things....

Our problem is meeting our emissions goals, and yes, I agree that we have not made enough progress. It's in the report, and I agree, but we are making progress. It is the first time in our history that we've done that, and it's certainly something that would not have happened if we had listened to the Leader of the Opposition, who's suggesting right now that the only thing we should be doing is investing in technology. In fact, we are investing in technology and we are doing other things.

I know Ms. Collins and the NDP have abandoned making polluters pay through our price on pollution program, but trying to make sure that the oil and gas sector is actually held to account and that we find creative solutions and ways of working together so that we can reduce emissions is very important. I would even say this emergency meeting may be justified if, in fact, that's what we're trying to do. If we're trying to work collaboratively to come up with ways to expedite the reduction of emissions, this is probably a good thing, but it's not the sense I get from the committee.

I hope the Bloc and the NDP can see through what's being done. I agree 100% with the Bloc that the important study we're doing on sustainable finance, which Ms. Pauzé put forward, should be completed first. We're in the midst of that, and it is an incredibly important part of aligning the financial sector with our climate goals. I'm all in favour of that.

In addition to that, I think we should specify—if we're going to move forward with this motion—that the work we do here in committee is actually to find solutions and not just to point fingers, because this government has done the best job of any government in reducing emissions.

Is it enough? No, it's not enough. Ms. Collins reminds me of that often. I'm happy to have her here supporting us, knowing she also wants to fight pollution.

I hope all of us can come to the consensus that the emergency is truly the climate emergency and that what we should be doing in this study that the Conservatives have brought forward is working together to find ways to meet our targets. That would be worthy of study, and I think it should be done after this study on sustainable finance.

This subamendment simply says we should put a focus on this study and make sure that we're talking about what matters here and what we all want to see, which is having the polluters pay and reducing our emissions in order to make Canadians healthy. Let's agree on that. Clearly, that's what this motion is talking about, and it's what Mr. Deltell clearly said in his preamble, which we can go back and look at.

I think Mr. Deltell is on board with this as well. I think we can all move forward in a direction to show the Canadian public that we can work together and that what we want to do is make sure our planet is healthy and that we take care of the health of Canadians and the health of our environment as well as the economy. We can do that by all coming forward with really great ideas to reduce emissions, to fight pollution, to make polluters pay and to ensure that Canada does excel as one of the best in the G7.

• (22935)

I am obviously speaking in favour of the subamendment, which adds that component to this motion, and I hope that all of those here on this committee, virtually or in person, who want to do the same, who want to ensure that we have progress, will support the subamendment.

Thank you.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Thank you.

Mr. Leslie is next.

Mr. Branden Leslie: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I was anticipating that this meeting could be relatively short and I'm a bit bewildered as to why the government is so inclined to talk about this at such length, but I suppose it does make sense, because it's the typical effort to distract, to look the other way, to say, "Look, there's something shiny over there." This is what they do.

It's a continuation, I would say, of a lack of respect from the government for this committee. We've seen this with the as yet fully unredacted documents for the net-zero accelerator fund and with the appearance someday soon, hopefully, of the minister for Jasper recovery, Mr. Randy Boissonnault. One of the Randys will show up here, hopefully, but of course, engrossed in yet another scandal, perhaps he could be dropped before we get that opportunity. We don't seem to want to have—

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): We have a point of order.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: That's completely irrelevant to both this committee and this study.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Go ahead, Mr. Leslie.

Mr. Branden Leslie: Sure.

Again, I think this is clearly an effort to delay and to distract, to maybe get us into the new year and hopefully just change the channel. It seems as though we, as members of this environment committee, are just a bit of an inconvenience and we'd rather kill time than address some really important things.

The environment commissioner's report was stark. It stated that we are not on target for our emissions reduction goals. While the government may have all sorts of bluster to say that they are on target and they are doing it, I'm going to believe the independent environment commissioner, who has real skin in the game, and not the Liberal Party government. I'm going to go with the objective observer, who said that the government is using "unreliable emissions reduction estimates" and is lacking "transparency on emissions reductions and projections". It's a pretty damning statement.

We already have two carbon taxes in this country. The plan is to quadruple those, and yet, if that's not enough, Minister Guilbeault has been exposed as trying to get a new global carbon tax on international shipping to drive up the cost of everything even further.

It's like the best effort ever to try to drive Canadians into poverty. They're already doing a very good job of that. We have two million individuals going to food banks each and every month. Clearly, the intention is to just simply make us poor. They're getting there.

That's why I think it's so important that we have a carbon tax election and stop them. We know that Canadians are worse off under the carbon tax. It is clear to anybody and everyone who is paying it. We won't hit the targets—

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Go ahead.

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: The member is now talking about the carbon tax and a carbon tax election. Again, this is a point of order regarding relevance. We are supposed to be debating the subamendment, and I see no connection between the subamendment and what the member is now debating.

I'd like you to rule on that, please.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): I'll allow it. It's within the scope of the amendment and the main motion.

Go ahead, Mr. Leslie.

Mr. Branden Leslie: Thank you, Mr. Chair—

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: Mr. Chair, we're debating the subamendment. Would you consider it in the scope of the subamendment?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Well, it had better be, because it's all relevant to the main motion, and yes, I'll allow it.

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: We're debating the subamendment, not the main motion.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Just again, for clarification again, Madam Taylor Roy, I've ruled. Thank you.

Mr. Leslie, please go ahead.

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: I'd like to challenge the chair on that, please.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Okay.

This is to allow Mr. Leslie to keep on speaking. Is that what you're asking?

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: No. I'm challenging the chair.

Ms. Laurel Collins: On a point of order, just to clarify, when someone challenges the chair on relevancy, it would just mean that Mr. Leslie would have to get back on track. It wouldn't end his speaking.

• (22940)

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: That's what I was asking for.

Thank you, Ms. Collins, for clarifying that.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Mr. Leslie, go ahead.

Mr. Branden Leslie: Chair, I will happily bring it back. I am glad to hear that Ms. Taylor Roy is as excited as I am for a carbon tax election.

[Translation]

Mr. René Arseneault: Mr. Chair, I have a point of order.

[English]

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: There's a challenge on the floor. It's non-dilatory.

[Translation]

Mr. René Arseneault: I want to understand the situation. I think that the chair's decision on the relevance of the comments was challenged. Is that right?

I would like to know what we're doing right now.

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): As this is my second time chairing, I interpreted that as being challenged by Ms. Taylor Roy. Meanwhile, Ms. Collins clarified that normally what we do is that I deem it either relevant or irrelevant. I asked Mr. Leslie to bring it back into relevancy. I thought it was all right. I was allowing some latitude there. Mr. Leslie got the message, so I was going to allow the debate to go forward.

If you want to challenge the chair, what are we actually challenging the chair on?

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: To be clear, Mr. Chair, I did challenge the chair. I challenged on the relevancy of the debate on the carbon tax and cost of living to the subamendment that we are supposed to be debating at this time.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Mr. Chair, on a point of clarification, if you change your decision at this point, do we have to vote on it?

Can we as a committee all be adults and agree that the chair's ruling has changed and that he's asking Mr. Leslie to bring it back to relevancy?

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: Absolutely, we can.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Well, she called the vote, so I guess we have to vote. It's non-dilatory.

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: Who called the vote?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): You challenged the chair. You did.

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: I know that I'd already challenged the chair, but Ms. Collins just asked if it could be a friendly outcome. I said yes. If you agree that Mr. Leslie was off track and you asked him to bring it back on track, I'm fine with that. That's all I was trying to ask for.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Does that mean you're not challenging the chair now?

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: As long as the chair changes his ruling to agree that Mr. Leslie was not on track with the subamendment and asks Mr. Leslie to get back on track, I am fine. I don't need to challenge you. You've changed your ruling. It was the ruling I was challenging.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Okay.

Mr. Leslie, I guess we'll make it official. Can we please keep it on track? Thank you very much.

Please continue.

Mr. Branden Leslie: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

As it relates directly to the subamendment, this is obviously yet another opportunity for the Liberals to attack our oil and gas sector. Again, distraction is the best tactic that this government could come up with, because their tax plan is not an environmental plan. The environment commissioner has clearly shown that it is failing. It is all pain and no gain. That is why it is so vital that as soon as possible we do the right thing, the honourable thing. Let's have a carbon tax election.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Thank you, Mr. Leslie.

Ms. Collins is next.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to say thank you to Ms. Taylor Roy for some of her comments about the climate crisis generally. I think we are in a climate emergency, and the oil and gas sector is the sector that is driving up our emissions. As much as the Conservatives might not want to admit it, that is a fact.

That said, the government is the one responsible for regulating this industry and putting in place the policies that would drive down our emissions. A strong emissions cap and all of these things are vital if we actually want to drive down our emissions generally, and specifically in the oil and gas sector.

I'm not sure how I feel about this subamendment. Honestly, I think the report from the environment commissioner is damning. It is heartbreaking. As much as the government wants to claim that it is a climate leader, we are not on track to meet 40% to 45% by 2030. We have six years, and the report lays this out very clearly. We have six years to do the majority of the reductions that we need to meet our 2030 targets. This is an emergency.

I'm hesitant, honestly, to support the subamendment, mainly because I think there's a bit of redundancy. The report talks about emissions reductions, and I think there will be an opportunity to talk about the things that we can do to reduce our emissions. I think the report itself is something that we do need to focus on, and we do need to, ideally, have the government come to terms with the fact that it's not on track, that Canada has the worst record in the G7 for emissions reductions, and that we've had unreliable emissions reductions estimates. There have been transparency issues. All of these things are really important for us to cover. I'm hesitant to have a government that wants to try to avoid those conversations.

That said, I think it's really clear that the oil and gas sector is responsible for the bulk of our emissions. It is the sector that is emitting more than any other sector. The government, unfortunately, with the emissions cap, has decided to give them a watered-down policy that allows them to continue emitting. It doesn't actually force them to bring down their emissions in the way that we are relying on other sectors to reduce their emissions. These are companies that are making record profits right now.

I have to say that in part I am also a little bit hesitant to support what the Liberals are bringing forward because Mr. van Koeverden and Ms. Taylor Roy said false things about my positions on Bill C-73. I fully support a study on Bill C-73. I've been reaching out to Liberal members, asking that we try to work together to get this motion passed, to stop the Conservatives from filibustering. I've been trying my best to get this committee to function. I am feeling a little bit frustrated with Liberal members, as I have been reaching out and trying to figure out a way to actually dig into these really important issues.

I hope that on Monday, if we have committee business, we can pass a motion on Bill C-73. It is a prestudy. That bill is not coming to committee any time soon, but I would like us to dig into it.

I think part of me is wary of this subamendment because I see the Liberals trying to avoid accountability so often, but I am still mulling it over, to be honest.

● (22945)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Mr. Longfield is next.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: Thanks, Mr. Chair.

I would like to say that I like the idea of the study. I really like the amendments that are being brought forward.

Mr. Sauvé, welcome. You can see that this isn't an easy committee sometimes, but it's good to set the parameters of our studies and what we're going to be focusing on.

I think that accountability of the government is definitely something that this committee needs to focus on. I also think the com-

mittee needs to continue its focus on the oil and gas industry as the major contributor.

I don't think it's in any way avoiding responsibility. I think both amendments clarify what we want to study. I don't think that leaving either of those out would help us with our parameters.

I also like the amendment that was mentioned earlier by Mr. van Koeverden, which was to make sure that Bill C-73 is also included in this agenda item that we have in front of us. I would like to see us get to that amendment.

I would love to support both the amendment and the subamendment as they're written. I'd like to see another amendment come forward that we could support on Bill C-73. Then we're set up for our schedule. We would know what we're doing and we would make sure that we hit our goal of getting these studies all done.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Thank you.

Go ahead, Mr. Sauvé.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Louis-Philippe Sauvé: Mr. Chair, before commenting on the subamendment, I want to reassure my colleague from Portage—Lisgar. I heard him say “kill time”. We aren't the ones killing time, but time will eventually kill us. The committee members should keep this in mind.

I'll address the subamendment. I want to comment on its admissibility. We're holding an emergency meeting today under Standing Order 106(4). This order stipulates that, if five committee members request a meeting on a topic, the committee will meet to study that topic.

The subamendment of my colleague, Ms. Taylor Roy, changes the nature of the study proposed by Ms. Pauzé, which was adopted under Standing Order 108(2). Of course, nothing prevents the committee from changing the nature of a study in progress under Standing Order 108(2). Please correct me if I'm wrong, Mr. Chair. However, we aren't meeting here today under Standing Order 108(2). Instead, we're debating a motion, an amendment and a subamendment moved in a meeting requested under Standing Order 106(4). As a result, I don't think that Ms. Taylor Roy's subamendment is admissible.

● (22950)

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): I guess that's a question. The committee allowed it. It's up to us to debate whether we allow a vote on the amendment or not. Ultimately, it comes down to us. We have a debate on it, and if we decide as a committee that it's not admissible or that we're not going forward with it, it will ultimately get voted down at that point in time. That's how it would work.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Louis-Philippe Sauvé: Okay.

In any case, regardless of whether the subamendment is admissible, the committee must—

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Just for verification, though, you hit on many main points. You're exactly right in what you're thinking. To the extent that it takes away from the main motion, it takes away from your motion. That's 100% right.

Continue.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Louis-Philippe Sauvé: In that case, I will no longer comment on the admissibility of the subamendment. However, for a number of months, the committee has been conducting a study with an already-defined purpose. As this study, proposed by the member for Repentigny, draws to a close, we're trying to change its nature.

My concerns aren't about the need to focus on emissions. Instead, my concern is that we aren't looking at the same thing at all. I think that it would be highly unwise to change the nature of the study that this committee began many moons ago.

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Ms. Taylor Roy is next.

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Sauvé, I will reiterate that I am in support of the amendment you made and Ms. Pauzé's position. The study we have been doing on sustainable finance is very important, and I believe we should finish it. Aligning our finance with our climate goals is part of how we can meet our emissions targets.

What I tried to do in my subamendment was to not change the study we are doing but to add to it so that it can be positive and so that we can look at other ways in which we could, in fact, meet our climate targets. After looking at the commissioner's report, we're acknowledging that there are shortfalls. We're not denying that.

Ms. Collins, to your point, we have the report from the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development. We know that there are shortfalls. We know that there are issues. We want to address those just as well. I think you have some great ideas to add to what we can do.

I welcome your comments on the cap on pollution. We're in a bit of a quandary because of the provincial jurisdiction on this. I would love to hear from you and from members from the Conservative Party on the ways in which we can actually put this in place in such a way that it's not interpreted to be a cap on production and therefore enters provincial jurisdiction. I think it would be a really fruitful discussion.

I'm not saying that we not look at what the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development has said. I'm saying that we look at it, but let's make this useful and not just criticize. Let's talk about how we actually solve those problems. That's what we're here to do. We're here to work collectively to make this a better place.

I want to clarify as well, Ms. Collins, a point you raised earlier on this subamendment with regard to my comment on the NDP

now not supporting the price on pollution program. It is factual that the NDP did reverse their position on making all polluters pay by saying that you do not want the price on pollution, or the carbon levy, to be applied to consumers, so you have changed that position. I'm not making something up. I was simply saying that you have changed your position on that.

I know that on biodiversity we're both concerned. We know that biodiversity goes hand in hand with climate change. I think Mr. van Koeverden's amendment to include a reference to that, which hopefully we'll get to and at some point be looking at, is also important. I'm putting this forward because I want us to be focused on results and not just on politics and laying blame. If the Conservatives are truly concerned with the Government of Canada's position on reaching our emissions targets, I am sure they would want to work with us to come up with solutions.

I know that's what the NDP does want and what the Bloc wants. I know that there are members of the Conservative Party who also want that. Let's use our time wisely to actually look at what's happening in that report. We've all seen it. We can all read it. We've seen that and we all accept it, but let's also move forward and actually make real progress, especially for the young people of Canada who desperately want to see us address this issue.

I'd appeal to you that I'm not trying, in any way, to change the focus to some shiny new target or to do whatever Mr. Leslie said. I'm actually trying to say that we should use our time, if we're going to focus on this, to move forward and find solutions. I think all of us have good ideas. I would welcome them.

Thank you.

• (22955)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Thank you.

Go ahead, Ms. Collins.

Ms. Laurel Collins: I will quickly respond to Ms. Taylor Roy's comments.

I have said and will continue to say that carbon pricing is an essential tool in our tool box when it comes to tackling the climate crisis. My New Democrat colleagues and I have continued to support carbon pricing, but we are committed to a plan that would make the biggest polluters pay the most, to bring down costs for Canadians, to meet our emissions targets and to unify people when it comes to taking on the climate crisis.

Despite being in power for nine years, the Liberal government has failed to do this. Unfortunately, the Liberals have fixated on their own specific design of consumer carbon pricing as the best and only way to fight the climate crisis. For some reason, when anyone dares to criticize that plan, they try to use this as a political wedge. It is a disservice to climate action. It is a disservice to Canadians. When we have industrial carbon pricing, which makes up 40% of the emissions reduction plan between now and 2030, and when we have methane regulations, and when we have the emissions cap, all of these are doing the huge bulk of our emissions reductions.

I know that Ms. Taylor Roy genuinely wants to talk about these things because these are critical policies in our fight to tackle the climate crisis, but using consumer carbon pricing as a political wedge is doing a disservice to everything you think you're fighting for. It is too bad.

It also makes me very wary of the disingenuous Liberal rhetoric when it comes to actually holding the biggest polluters accountable.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Thank you, Ms. Collins.

Seeing no other debate, I will call the question on the subamendment.

• (23000)

Just to give you a heads-up, once we get done with this, Mr. Leslie, you're back on for the amendment.

Clerk, please go ahead with the vote.

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Natalie Jeanneault): It's yeas 5; nays 5, Mr. Mazier.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): To break the tie, I'll vote against.

(Subamendment negatived: yeas 6; yeas 5)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Now we go back to the amendment.

Mr. Leslie, you are the first up, and then we'll go to Mr. Deltell.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Mr. Chair, I would like to—

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Did you have a...?

Go ahead, Mr. Deltell.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérard Deltell: I would like to add my name to the list of speakers.

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Okay. We'll go back to Mr. Leslie.

Mr. Branden Leslie: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Can you hear me?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Yes, we can hear you.

Mr. Branden Leslie: I'm sorry. I seem to be frozen on my end.

I will be brief. With all the talk of the emergency regarding our nation's and the world's climate, I am rather appalled by this hypocrisy. When it comes to a report that highlights failure, the government members are ragging the puck. They refuse to acknowledge that it is an emergency to identify why they're failing and the cost in real persons' lives and on livelihoods that it's having on Canadians.

Let's get this done. Let's get to work. Let's have the commissioner, the minister and the ambassador come to explain why and how we are failing, and let's do it immediately.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Thank you, Mr. Leslie.

Next is Mr. Arseneault.

[*Translation*]

Mr. René Arseneault: I'll pass, Mr. Chair.

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Okay.

We have Mr. Deltell.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Mr. Chair, I would like to move an amendment. After “and such meetings shall be completed by December 13, 2024,” I move to add the following:

provided that the committee has considered and adopted the draft report on the Committee's study of the climate impacts of the Canadian financial system before that date, failing which the meetings on this study shall be completed after the holiday season,

The motion then continues with “provided that the study on...”

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Okay.

I'm getting some messages here: Some people have frozen up.

Who is up first?

Mr. Gérard Deltell: If I may...?

Mr. Adam van Koevorden: I'd like to speak to this, Mr. Chair.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): We'll just recess for a couple of seconds here to get all the wording straight.

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: I'd like to speak to this as well. Is it okay to ask a question during a pause?

It wasn't clear to me from Mr. Deltell's amendment whether it was a subamendment to the amendment that's currently there or whether it was a separate amendment. Could you clarify that?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): I see you there now.

Thank you. We'll just recess for a second.

• (1400) _____ (Pause) _____

• (1405)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): The subamendment has been sent around to your inboxes.

Mr. Deltell will clarify what Ms. Taylor Roy was asking about. Then Mr. van Koeverden is up next.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Once again, I want to thank my colleague from the government party for allowing me to clarify the situation.

The committee members listening to us now have a copy of the proposed amendment in both official languages. The amendment concerns the end of the motion and reads as follows:

[*English*]

“provided that the study on the gas emissions reduction target be dealt with while the report on sustainable finance is drafted.”

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Thank you.

Mr. van Koeverden—

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: Mr. Chair, I'm sorry to interrupt. If that is an amendment, then don't we have to vote on the other amendment first before we move to a new one?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): This is a subamendment.

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: I'm sorry. I heard Mr. Deltell say “amendment”.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): I'm sorry about that. For clarification, it's a subamendment.

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: It is a subamendment. That's what I was trying to clarify.

Thank you.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Mr. van Koeverden, go ahead.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Thanks, Mr. Chair.

Perhaps while I'm speaking to this, the clerk could check, because it seems that the amendment and the subamendment might be in conflict. One says that it must be done, and the other says it must be drafted. We're just going through what we're being asked to consider to vote on here, and it doesn't seem to be completely in order.

I will once again point out that we have been doing this de facto committee business meeting as an emergency, and in our last couple of meetings, the Conservatives filibustered so that we wouldn't be able to move on to discussing whether or not we could have a pre-study on Bill C-73. They filibustered a meeting where the Minister of Environment offered to come and discuss these issues.

These are very real challenges that we're facing. The commissioner very clearly pointed out that the increases in emissions are due to the oil and gas sector, most notably the oil sands industry in Alberta. The Conservatives want to continually suggest that these are the government's emissions, that these emissions are a result of

government action or inaction, while we've been actively encouraging the oil and gas sector to decarbonize, modernize and become more efficient. We've enacted regulations. We've enacted over 100 measures to lower emissions, to decarbonize and to reduce the emissions that are related to oil and gas exploration and production in the oil sands.

Indeed, we've heard from those companies. We've delved into some of their results, and we can very clearly see that the only sector that hasn't reduced its emissions is the oil and gas sector, most notably the oil sands.

Before us, we have a pollution cap that we would like to put in so that the oil and gas sector needs to consider investing some of its astonishing \$60 billion in revenues and profits into a more efficient process so that its sector isn't the dirtiest and most carbon-intensive oil product in the world. That's something we shouldn't tolerate as Canadians. We should ask the oil sands to innovate and join the rest of the world in decarbonizing their energy products. They're important products for all of us.

Next week, most of us will fly to Ottawa. Some of us will drive electric cars and others will take trains, but all of that transportation, at some stage, requires fossil fuels. We should be demanding that those fossil fuels be produced with the lowest carbon intensity possible, and that's not what we've been seeing.

I would very much welcome a study on how Canada should and will achieve these goals. We are on track to meet our 2030 goals. Much more must be done, such as a pollution cap on the oil and gas sector—something that the Conservatives are against and something that Premier Danielle Smith has spent \$7 million on for an ad campaign in Ottawa, driving trucks around—

Mr. Branden Leslie: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Yes, Mr. Leslie. Do you have a point of order?

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Once again, we see the Conservatives stepping in to ensure that I don't get to finish my sentence on the oil and gas sector.

• (23010)

Mr. Branden Leslie: Just as my colleague on the other side previously asked for clarity on relevance and asked you, as chair, to ask the member to return to some semblance of relevance on the amendment, I would ask for the same.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Your point is taken, Mr. Leslie.

Thank you, Mr. van Koeverden. If you could bring it back on track and talk about the subamendment, that would be great.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Certainly.

Can I ask if the conflict between the amendment and the subamendment has been established by either you or the clerk?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): It has not.

That's not correct, actually. If anything, it clarifies it. That is not actually an accurate statement.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Could I ask for clarity as to whether or not any of these amendments have indicated that we might have an additional visit from the commissioner? Can I ask if we're asking the minister to still come on Wednesday, or if Wednesday's pre-established visit from the commissioner of the environment would be in line with this new study?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Yes.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Am I correct in understanding that we would be replacing the pre-established visit from the commissioner of the environment with this one? Is it novel witness testimony from the commissioner of the environment for this study?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): The commissioner is coming in on Wednesday. That's the way it is.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Yes, it's because the committee collectively decided that we would.

However, what does this motion or amendment determine? Is it that he's going to come again?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Yes.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Okay.

I'm concerned that we're bumping all of this important committee business, whether that's the completion of our sustainable finance study or the meeting on Bill C-73 on biodiversity, which I've been asking for for weeks and which members of this committee claim to support, yet here we are debating other things. When are we going to find time to do this, given that we have a short window ahead of us?

I'll just say again that members on the Liberal side of this committee have been in favour of a visit from the environment commissioner, and we've encouraged a visit from the minister. However, Conservative members have filibustered throughout that process and have not allowed that process to come to fruition. As we've stated, we welcome a visit from the commissioner to discuss more thoroughly how Canada will meet its climate objectives.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Thank you.

Ms. Taylor Roy.

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'm just trying to clarify that we are actually now debating the clause that was added, which says, "provided that the study on gas emission reduction target be dealt with while the report on Sustainable Finance is drafted". Is that correct?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): That is correct.

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: Okay.

With regard to a study on the gas emission reduction target.... In fact, in the subamendment that was voted down, I suggested that

we actually do look at gas emission reduction targets and how to achieve them, and that was voted down. I'm wondering whether this one can now stand, given that it's saying a similar thing.

The other thing I just want to point out is that the subamendment I put to the amendment—which asked us, as a committee, to collaboratively work together to come up with recommendations on how we can meet our emissions goals—was voted against by the NDP and the Bloc, who both say that their main concern is meeting our emissions targets and that we're not doing enough. I'm perplexed as to what is going on right now in this committee. Perhaps the agreement that has been made between the Conservatives and the NDP could be made clear so that the public can understand what's happening. This is certainly not in line with the NDP that I know and with how Ms. Collins has voted in the past on trying to make progress on this. I'm just really quite confused, and I don't understand.

The amendment that this subamendment is amending basically says that we have to adopt the draft report. This one says that we can do it just while the report on sustainable finance is drafted. Are we supposed to adopt it, or are we supposed to just be in the process of drafting it? To me, it says two different things here.

I am wondering if I could get clarification on that, as well as clarification on what the deal between the NDP and the Conservatives is regarding this, so that we can be transparent and actually understand what's happening here so that we can address it. I don't understand right now what's going on at all.

• (23015)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Okay.

It's pretty clear what's in front of you as far as the amendment to the main motion is concerned. I don't know. I guess we'll see if Mr. Sauvé can offer some clarity for you.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Louis-Philippe Sauvé: Unless I'm mistaken, we're talking about the subamendment.

My comments were along the same lines as the remarks made by the member for Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill.

I would like my colleague, the member for Louis-Saint-Laurent, to provide some clarification. I'm not a committee member, so I'm not asking for my own benefit. I find it difficult to see how the committee can both continue the member for Repentigny's study and carry out the Standing Order 106(4) study. It's important to specify how this will be done.

In principle, I don't have any objections. However, I find that these two studies are difficult to juggle unless you have the gift of ubiquity.

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Mr. Deltell.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to thank my colleagues from the other political parties again for giving us the opportunity to clarify our position.

In this case—

[*English*]

Mr. Shafqat Ali: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Go ahead.

Mr. Shafqat Ali: I just wanted to have clarity on one thing. As you know, today is Friday. We called this emergency meeting for 12 o'clock for two hours. Normally, this is my Friday prayer time. I go from one o'clock to three o'clock for my Friday prayers. I still have a chance. I just want to find out whether or not I can catch my prayers.

What is the hard stop for this meeting?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): The hard stop is eight o'clock tonight.

Mr. Shafqat Ali: That would be an eight-hour meeting.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): If that's what it takes, we have resources until eight o'clock tonight.

Mr. Shafqat Ali: Wow.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): We'll get on with the debate. Maybe if we get the debate done, we can be done here in five minutes.

Mr. Shafqat Ali: Okay. Thanks, Chair.

Mr. Gérard Deltell: May I continue, Chair?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Yes.

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Thank you so much, Mr. Chair.

[*Translation*]

I want to thank my colleagues from the other parties for giving us the opportunity to clarify the situation, as we did earlier for Ms. Taylor Roy. I would like to respond directly to Mr. Sauvé's relevant and legitimate concern. Once again, I want to welcome him to the House of Commons and thank him for his participation in our committee today.

We believe that the committee can carry out both studies at the same time, without any issues. The report on finance and the environment is currently being prepared. I don't want to reveal any secrets about internal operations. However, we know that the task of analyzing and drafting the report for committee discussions is quite cumbersome. In short, while the analysts work and prepare the substantial report, we can start the work concerning the commissioner of the environment. We can do both. That's why we're providing this opportunity. It supports both the work launched by your colleague and backed by the entire committee and our request today. We want to discuss the current situation, the objectives and, above all, the commissioner's reports.

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Thank you, Mr. Deltell.

I have Ms. Taylor Roy and Mr. Longfield next.

I was just talking to the clerk. Since this has gone on beyond the two hours, we'd like to take a health break to give everybody a reset here.

I'll suspend for 10 minutes.

• (1415)

(Pause)

• (1550)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): I call the meeting back to order.

Mr. Deltell.

• (23155)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like the committee's unanimous consent to withdraw the motion that I moved earlier.

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Do we have unanimous consent for that?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Mr. Deltell.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Mr. Chair, I would like to move the following motion.

Given the recent reports by Canada's commissioner of the environment, the committee agree to the following schedule:

- 1) The meeting on November 18, 2024, be dedicated to [one hour to hear from department officials and one hour to hear from witnesses from recognized parties on the sustainable finance study];
- 2) the meeting on November 20, 2024, be dedicated to [the commissioner of the environment's fall reports for two hours];
- 3) the meeting on November 25, 2024, be dedicated to [the briefing on the net zero accelerator for two hours];
- 4) the meeting on November 27, 2024, be dedicated to [hearing from the Minister of Environment for one hour on emission reductions policies and one hour on Bill C-73];
- 5) the meeting on December 2, 2024, be dedicated to [one hour to hear from Canada's climate change ambassador and one hour to hear from witnesses submitted by recognized parties on emission reductions policies];
- 6) the meeting on December 4, 2024, be dedicated to [hearing from Minister Randy Boissonnault on the Jasper wildfire study for two hours];
- 7) the meeting on December 9, 2024, be dedicated to [hearing from the commissioner of the environment on emission reduction policies for two hours];
- 8) the meeting on December 11, 2024, be dedicated to [hearing from witnesses from recognized parties on Bill C-73 for two hours].
- 9) And the meeting on December 16, 2024, be dedicated to [reviewing the draft report of the sustainable finance study].

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Thank you very much.

Is there any discussion? I see Madame Pauzé and Ms. Taylor Roy.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to make sure that the motion put to the vote sets aside the meeting suspended last time. Will passing this motion eliminate everything said last week? Normally, if the meeting is suspended, it must carry over to the next meeting.

Are we sure that there isn't any ambiguity?

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Yes.

Ms. Taylor Roy, did you have your hand up, or are you in agreement with this?

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: I had my hand up. I have just one brief question.

I just wanted to clarify with Madame Pauzé that this list has one more hour of witnesses for the study on sustainable finance, and then we're going to have a meeting to look at the draft report. That was all that was left to be scheduled. Madame Pauzé, was the one hour of witnesses for the study on sustainable finance? Okay. Thanks.

It is wonderful that everyone has agreed to this. The emergency motion.... Is this now the emergency motion that we're voting on, because we had the Standing Order 106(4) meeting? Is that right? Is this an emergency meeting?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): It replaces it, but this is what we're debating during our emergency meeting. That's correct.

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: This emergency meeting was called—

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): It was called, and then we ended up coming to a conclusion on this motion. This is the motion that's on the table right now. We've had quite a bit of discussion, and there's pretty well total agreement on it right across the board.

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy: I just wanted to comment that this looks to me like committee business. What we have here is a scheduling of meetings. I'm still perplexed about why we had an emergency meeting for four hours, using House resources and time, to come to, basically, what the subcommittee should have done for committee business.

However, yes, I will be supporting it, because I love the collaboration and that we all got together and came to a conclusion.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Thank you.

Ms. Collins.

• (23200)

Ms. Laurel Collins: I just wanted to respond to Ms. Taylor Roy.

Really, in large part, this is because the Conservatives were filibustering. Our committee business wouldn't have gone forward without this and we wouldn't be able to tackle the climate emergency. Also, they were filibustering Bill C-73, which should have been proposed in committee business, and it was the choice of the Liberals not to do that.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): Do we have agreement on this motion?

(Motion agreed to)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Dan Mazier): The meeting is adjourned.

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