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**Journal
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(Hansard)**

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**Standing Committee on
Finance and Economic Affairs**

Committee business

1st Session
43rd Parliament

Tuesday 15 November 2022

**Comité permanent
des finances
et des affaires économiques**

Travaux du comité

1^{re} session
43^e législature

Mardi 15 novembre 2022

Chair: Ernie Hardeman
Clerk: Michael Bushara

Président : Ernie Hardeman
Greffier : Michael Bushara

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CONTENTS

Tuesday 15 November 2022

Committee business.....	F-15
-------------------------	------

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON
FINANCE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS**

Tuesday 15 November 2022

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

**COMITÉ PERMANENT DES FINANCES
ET DES AFFAIRES ÉCONOMIQUES**

Mardi 15 novembre 2022

The committee met at 0902 in room 151.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Good morning, everyone. I want to call this meeting of the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs to order.

Committee members, pursuant to standing order 63(e), no estimates shall be considered in a committee while any matter, including a procedural motion, related to the same policy field is being considered in the House.

That's why we are waiting for the finance minister to get up to start this morning's proceedings, which will be Bill 36. An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various statutes is currently being considered in the House. As this bill relates to the Ministry of Finance, I rule that today's meeting would contravene standing order 63(e). This morning's meeting is therefore cancelled.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Chair, we have such limited time as a committee to explore the various ministries. Is it not possible for us to have the Ministry of Economic Development, for instance, come in?

Clearly, the House and the government knew that the finance minister wasn't going to clone himself and be here and in the House at the same time. So, given the fact that the estimates were tabled so late, given the new truncated process by which we're supposed to have an opportunity to question the minister on the expenditures, is it not possible for this committee to look at another ministry and to explore other options, so that we don't waste our time and that we're able to do our job?

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Thank you very much for those comments.

Committee members, standing order 63(c) states: "The estimates of ministries and offices shall be considered in the order in which they were selected. The subcommittee on committee business of each committee may, by unanimous consent agreement, alter the order of consideration."

Therefore, unless there is unanimous agreement from the members of the subcommittee or an order of the House to alter the order, we are required to proceed with consideration of the estimates in the order in which they were selected by the committee at its meeting on October 26, 2022.

Ms. Catherine Fife: As a follow-up to that, will this mean that we will get another opportunity to question the

finance minister? Or, because our time is so truncated, does this actually prevent us from having some time to ask these pertinent questions around expenditures? That's a question of clarification.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): I'll draw the members' attention to this afternoon's Orders and Notices paper, which indicates that Bill 36 is due to be called again for debate during orders of the day this afternoon.

I look to the committee for how you wish to proceed with the schedule for the consideration of estimates. Otherwise, we will recess until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Just to clarify, because the fall economic statement is going to be debated all day today and all day tomorrow, SCOFEA's official parliamentary responsibilities are not going to be able to be followed through—because estimates are going to be tabled on Thursday. Is that true, Chair?

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Yes, that's the way that it's set up and how it would appear to be, unless the committee, through the subcommittee, wanted to change the order of the proceedings.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Maybe this is a question for the Clerk. Even if we agreed, as a subcommittee, and even if government members were amenable to sitting till midnight tomorrow so that we can actually do our job, if the fall economic statement is still being debated, then we still wouldn't be able to question the minister. Is that correct?

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): I'll have the Clerk speak to it.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Michael Bushara): Standing order 63(c) requires that no estimates of the same policy field be considered in the committee while a matter of the same policy field is being considered in the House, and the committee could not override that standing order regardless.

Ms. Catherine Fife: That's a very good clarification. Thank you very much for that.

So this continues the pattern of the government of having less transparency around finances and estimates in this process—

Interjections.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I have the floor.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): She has the floor.

Ms. Catherine Fife: So this continues. The government knew that this was going to happen. You knew that the fall economic statement had been moved to November 14. You knew that the schedule of this committee had

already selected finance, Treasury Board, the Ministry of Economic Development. So all of this could have been avoided, but it was actually done intentionally on behalf of the government.

This is really a kick at democracy, in my opinion, Chair. And while the standing orders are such, I think every member—if the Liberals had done this, if we had done this, this committee would be up in arms.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): I would ask everybody to speak to the issue of the proceeding.

Mr. Deepak Anand: Thanks to the Clerk for clarifying.

Considering that because we are debating the same bill and we will not be able to have the minister here and there, I at this time move a motion that the committee meet at 3 p.m. on Thursday, November 17, 2022, for the purpose of organizing committee business.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): There's a motion on the floor. Is there any debate on the motion?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Is the motion not out of order? The Clerk has just said to us that regardless of if the fall economic statement is currently being debated—MPP Anand has just recommended that on Thursday, the day that estimates have to be tabled, we meet to discuss—what? Because it's already done.

Mr. Deepak Anand: Organizing committee business.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Committee business is being sidelined by the government today.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): The motion is not out of order; in fact, it does not refer to what committee business will be on that day.

Further discussion on the motion?

Ms. Stephanie Bowman: I'd just like to understand what the implications of that motion are as it relates to the

date being November 17, on which these would have to be tabled.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): For the help of the committee, it is now on the screen: "That the committee meet at 3 p.m. on Thursday, November 17, 2022, for the purpose of organizing committee business."

Further debate? If not, are the members prepared to vote? All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

Mr. Anand?

Mr. Deepak Anand: At this time, I move that the committee now adjourn.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): An adjournment motion is in order. All those in favour—

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): There's no debate on an adjournment motion.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Recorded vote.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Recorded vote on the adjournment. I'd ask the Clerk to call the roll.

Ayes

Anand, Cuzzetto, Dowie, McGregor, Sabawy, David Smith, Thanigasalam.

Nays

Bowman, Fife, Kernaghan.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): The motion is carried.

The committee is adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 0912.

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