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Mercredi 13 décembre 2006

**Standing committee on
regulations and private bills**

**Comité permanent des
règlements et des projets
de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair: Andrea Horwath
Clerk: Susan Sourial

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

**STANDING COMMITTEE
ON REGULATIONS
AND PRIVATE BILLS**

**COMITÉ PERMANENT DES
RÈGLEMENTS ET DES PROJETS DE LOI
D'INTÉRÊT PRIVÉ**

Wednesday 13 December 2006

Mercredi 13 décembre 2006

The committee met at 1001 in committee room 1.

PERIMETER INSTITUTE ACT, 2006
CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL
GOVERNANCE INNOVATION ACT, 2006

Consideration of Bill Pr31, An Act respecting the Perimeter Institute, and Bill Pr32, An Act respecting the Centre for International Governance Innovation.

The Chair (Ms. Andrea Horwath): Good morning, members of the committee. I'm going to call the committee meeting to order. We're going to start with Bill Pr31, An Act respecting the Perimeter Institute. The sponsor of the bill is MPP Elizabeth Witmer and the applicants are Frank Volpini, who is legal counsel, and John Matlock, who is director of communications. Thank you for joining us at the end of the table. We'll begin the discussion with a few words from the sponsor, MPP Witmer, if you want to make a few remarks.

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener–Waterloo): It's certainly a pleasure for me to be here today and to sponsor Bill Pr31. The board of directors for the Perimeter Institute has applied for special legislation to exempt certain land from taxation for municipal and school purposes. I just want to tell you that the Perimeter Institute is a not-for-profit corporation. Its purpose is to operate a research institute in foundational, theoretical physics. Certainly, it has made a tremendous contribution to physics and research, not only in the community of Waterloo, but throughout Ontario and Canada. I am very, very proud to be able to sponsor this bill.

The Chair: If the applicants want to make a comment, although we only have two people on our agenda, so you need to introduce yourselves, all three.

Mr. Frank Volpini: Good morning. My name is Frank Volpini. I'm counsel for the applicant. Madam Chair, I was wondering, in the interest of time and given that the two bills are similar in every way, if I can make my submissions on both. I appreciate your practice is to discuss and vote on a bill-by-bill and section-by-section basis. If I can make one set of submissions and then answer whatever questions members may have.

The Chair: Certainly that's fine, but if you could begin by introducing the other people at the table, that would be great. Unless there's a problem from the government or the other side—

Mr. Mario Sergio (York West): We have no problem.

The Chair: If there is unanimous consent for that, that's fine, then. Go ahead.

Mr. Volpini: On my right on behalf of the Perimeter Institute is director of communications John Matlock. On my left from the centre is Mr. Mohamed Hamoodi. He's director of government and public affairs.

Everyone has reviewed the material, I'm sure, but just by way of background—

Interjection.

Mr. Volpini: We could leave it open just to questions if you wish, if that is the preference. The material that's filed with the compendium is relatively self-explanatory. There's a background paper that was prepared by both Mr. Matlock and Mr. Hamoodi that gives you some of the background information with respect to what the operational side of the two applicant corporations is all about. They're here if there are any other questions that any member may wish to pose. If there's something else that you want to get more detail on, they're available for that purpose.

Both corporations, as I said, are non-profit corporations and have a charitable designation. The one matter that will be addressed shortly by way of a motion is the one that I think will be moved at the time that section is going to be debated. For clarification purposes, the reference to upper- and lower-tier will be made clear. That was just as a result of discussions had with the various departments.

The Chair: It's certainly your opportunity to put on the record any particular comments that you like, but if you prefer to go with the question and answer process, that's certainly fine as well. So thank you very much for that.

Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough): Thanks for being with us this morning. We know great things come out of Waterloo: the invention of RIM, Research in Motion. It was actually a Peterborough native, Jim Balsillie. I always like to get a plug in for our local community.

You're doing research in physics. What's the practical application? At the end of the day, what are we going to get as a result of your fine research, which is important internationally?

Mr. John Matlock: Perimeter Institute currently conducts research operations in six areas, quantum

information theory being one of the highly competitive areas that is emerging in Waterloo region—in Ontario, in fact—with direct application in terms of quantum cryptography, quantum teleportation and quantum computing. In fact, through the strategic plan of Perimeter Institute, we were able to help foster the development of the Institute for Quantum Computing. So what you see on chalkboards, coming off blackboards at Perimeter Institute, actually finds its way into labs at the Institute for Quantum Computing for testing.

Beyond the technical applications in the burgeoning area of quantum communications, which is multifaceted, the institute has also attracted some 65 resident researchers to Ontario, and that is fostering all kinds of activities among graduate students, post-docs—cross-pollination among 30 universities across Canada. So in fact the complement of research in terms of the basic foundational issues that we endeavour to pursue is raising the level across Ontario and Canada in terms of applied research as well. It's a combination of the application and, frankly, the brain trust that we're developing here in Ontario.

Mr. Leal: Just a short follow-up: What's the lag between once you've completed your applied research and it goes to the commercial stage for a product or a service?

Mr. Matlock: If I might clarify, we're in foundational research. We're in basic, pure research. We publish in the public domain. We have 600 scientific findings in areas of basic research where we've extended existing theories that are then published in the public domain. These are 49 online peer-reviewed journals. From there, it moves into applied locations, again all across Ontario and Canada, where it's then developed and modified further and different researchers take that to the next level.

Giving you an exact timeline on areas of application from cosmology to particle physics to quantum information theory is a little difficult without going into a much, much longer discussion. But the fundamentals are all in place. Our information is put into the public domain for the next level of researchers in applied to pick up and pursue in labs.

Mr. Leal: Thanks very much.

Mr. Dave Levac (Brant): I appreciate the opportunity to congratulate both proponents. The bill in its simplicity is to seek tax exemption status as any other institute would. Up to this point you have not and that money has been going toward paying taxes. The implication would be that those taxes then would be going back into your foundations or back into your work, which then benefits us as a whole. So in terms of rationale, it would be very easily explained that the taxes paid will go back into it and then complement and add to what you're already doing. Is that a simple way to say it, in terms of this particular bill?

Mr. Matlock: In the case of Perimeter Institute, we would like to maximize all resources toward the scientific research and the educational outreach activities.

Mr. Levac: Absolutely. I fully endorse that.

Madam Chair, our parliamentary assistant probably has comment at the end in terms of where we are and stuff, but as far as I'm concerned, I congratulate you on your work on both. If I have clarity, once this round is finished, then we would do both bills at the same time and move through each one, but get them done?

1010

The Chair: Yes. Once we're finished with the comments from members and the parliamentary assistant, we'll do each bill in its entirety.

Mr. Levac: Okay, thank you.

I would thank Liz Witmer, the member, for bringing this forward; I know you have strong support from her. The fact is that Waterloo has such diverse educational institutions and they have good reputations. So it's my chance to put myself on the record as a Laurier alumnus, and the fact that Laurier Brantford exists now—we are sisters or brothers or persons in arms with the educational field. I congratulate you on all the work you do and wish you success and good luck.

The Chair: Any other comments from members?

Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins–James Bay): You talked about quantum teleportation. What is that?

Mr. Matlock: I'm not a trained physicist; I can certainly get you documentation. That's the movement of information.

Mr. Bisson: I'm just curious. I have no problem supporting the bill, but the work that you do is the base research for the technologies or the theory that goes into the development of technologies around the information around computers and stuff?

Mr. Matlock: Yes. It's the basic fundamental understanding of how nature works at a fundamental level. So for example, in the area of quantum information, the basic understanding of how the atom works; how particles work and have a fundamental capacity to store and compute information; and how researchers and experimentalists can develop and evolve that understanding into new applications and new technologies.

Mr. Bisson: So you're talking about storage mediums other than silicon, like biological?

Mr. Matlock: We're talking about the ability of particles and basic properties within that subatomic world that can be harnessed to manipulate information.

Mr. Bisson: Which would mean, in the end, you would be able to have smaller storage mediums, I would take it, if that technology—

Mr. Matlock: Absolutely.

Mr. Bisson: And also an ability to speed up the process as far as the—

Mr. Matlock: In terms of computational horsepower, absolutely.

Mr. Bisson: So my question is, as far as people who do this type of research, is this fairly unique in Ontario, or are there others other than at the university level?

Mr. Matlock: Right. In terms of the fundamental understanding of information theory at the quantum level, Perimeter Institute is the pre-eminent centre for this pursuit—

Mr. Bisson: In Ontario or in North America?

Mr. Matlock: —in Ontario and, in fact, in all of Canada. We're one of a handful in the world who are pursuing it as aggressively as we are, with incredible results.

Mr. Bisson: So this is really extremely cutting-edge stuff?

Mr. Matlock: Absolutely.

Mr. Bisson: When I used to watch those Star Trek shows back in the 1960s, you guys are going down that road.

Mr. Matlock: We're into areas where it's—it depends what you consider information. This is a long conversation.

Mr. Bisson: As far as the capacity to be able to store information in smaller—

Mr. Matlock: Yes. We're trying to understand the world at the atomic level and then find ways to use the strange principles in the weird world of the atom called superposition and entanglement to store information and calculate information.

Mr. Bisson: Just a last question. I find this fascinating, and I know this is off the bill, but the last question: How far away are we from any major leaps in understanding of this stuff?

Mr. Matlock: Presently, between Perimeter Institute and the Institute for Quantum Computing, Ontario is the world record holder in controlling what are called qubits, or bits of information. That happens to be 12 qubits. This did not come without a lot of research and experiment. It's very hard to predict in the short term what the next big breakthrough will be. I can just tell you that the next big direction in information processing is in quantum theory, and that's one of the exact areas of several that Perimeter Institute is leading the charge in.

Mr. Bisson: If the committee will indulge, I tried to read a book by a scientist on quantum theory. I got to about page one and a half.

Interjection: His name was Spock.

Mr. Bisson: Yes, something like that.

The Chair: Thanks very much. Mr. Delaney, I think, has some questions.

Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West): More, I think, in the realm of the same type of curiosity, you mentioned subatomic particles. Would these be of the type—mesons, leptons, pions, kaons? Could you elaborate?

Mr. Matlock: Perimeter investigates a whole spectrum of science, right from super string theory to cosmology. Within the area that we've been talking about, in terms of quantum theory, we're talking about electrons, protons, nucleus.

Mr. Delaney: Okay. So not the subatomic, but in fact the atomic particles.

Mr. Matlock: Right, and how the particles dance.

Mr. Delaney: Thank you.

The Chair: Are there any other comments from members? Then I will ask for comments from the parliamentary assistant.

Mr. Sergio: Thank you, Madam Chair. It's good to get back to the application hearing, leaving science behind for a moment and speaking on both bills.

First of all, I'd like to compliment the member for Kitchener–Waterloo for bringing not only one but both bills—frankly, both identical, Madam Chair. The bills have been reviewed by both ministries—the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing—and they are pleased to see that any concern they may have had with the application has been resolved to the satisfaction of both ministries. Therefore, they have no concern with the application.

Therefore, I compliment the member for bringing it forth. I can see that she came with a lot of support here, supporting her bills. It's good to see, and we move both bills along, Madam Chair.

The Chair: Thank you very much. I don't suspect there are any further questions of the parliamentary assistant, so we're going to go through the process of the bill. Are members ready to vote, then? Okay, that's great.

We're going to start with Bill Pr31, An Act respecting the Perimeter Institute.

Shall section 1 carry?

Mr. Gerry Martiniuk (Cambridge): I still have an amendment to that, Madam Chair.

The Chair: I'm sorry?

Mr. Martiniuk: Madam Chair, I have an amendment which deals with section 2.

The Chair: Yes, I believe it's in section 2.

Mr. Martiniuk: I'll leave it till then. Thank you.

The Chair: Section 1 is as is. Shall section 1 carry? Carried.

On section 2, Mr. Martiniuk.

Mr. Martiniuk: I move that section 2 of the bill be amended by adding the following subsection:

"Exemption applies to lower-tier and upper-tier taxes

"(3) For greater certainty, a bylaw passed under subsection (1) or (2) exempts the relevant property from both lower-tier and upper-tier taxes for municipal purposes, other than local improvement rates."

I think it's clear that this just clarifies the original drafting to ensure that the mechanism applies to both local and regional governments.

The Chair: No further comments on that; it's pretty clear.

Shall the amendment carry? Carried.

Shall section 2, as amended, carry? Carried.

Shall section 3 carry? Carried.

Shall section 4 carry? Carried.

Shall section 5 carry? Carried.

Shall the title of the bill carry? Carried.

Shall Bill Pr31, as amended, carry? Carried.

Did I miss the preamble? Shall the preamble carry? Carried.

Shall I report the bill, as amended, to the House? Carried.

That's great. Thank you very much. Congratulations. One down, one to go.

Bill Pr32, An Act respecting The Centre for International Governance Innovation, as sponsored by Ms. Witmer: Again, we'll have a similar amendment, but section 1 is not amended, from what I can see.

Shall section 1 carry? Carried.

Mr. Sergio: Madam Chair, I believe there's an amendment as well.

The Chair: On section 2? Mr. Martiniuk?

Mr. Martiniuk: I have an amendment. I move that section 2 of the bill be amended by adding the following subsection:

"Exemption applies to lower-tier and upper-tier taxes

"(2) For greater certainty, a bylaw passed under subsection (1) exempts the specified property from both lower-tier and upper-tier taxes for municipal purposes, other than local improvement rates."

The Chair: I guess it's exactly the same situation. I don't believe there are any comments on that.

On the amendment, all those in favour? Any opposed? That carries.

Shall section 2, as amended, carry? Carried.

Shall section 3 carry? Carried.

Shall section 4 carry? Carried.

Shall section 5 carry? Carried.

Shall the preamble carry? Carried.

Shall the title of the bill carry? Carried.

Shall Bill Pr32, as amended, carry? Carried.

Shall I report the bill to the House, as amended? Carried.

Thank you very much.

Mrs. Witmer?

Mrs. Witmer: Just one comment: I would like to thank the committee for passing both of these bills. I would also at this point in time like to extend an invitation to the committee. I sensed there was some interest when we discussed Perimeter and the activities that were ongoing. There are wonderful sights to see and there are wonderful sessions that are held. I know my husband, who wishes he was involved in physics—often the community has the opportunity to participate; our schoolchildren do. I hope that you'll be able to visit.

I didn't have a chance to speak to the Centre for International Governance Innovation, but I would just say to you that, again, this is a research institute. It brings people from around the world. People from the United Nations have had weekend sessions there, conferences, and just the dialogue that takes place—it's truly a world-renowned centre. It talks about being so, and it is. Again, I hope that sometime you will receive invitations to participate and listen to some of these outstanding speakers and really get involved in finding some of the solutions in the area of world governance. Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you very much, and congratulations. That's great.

Members of committee, our next group was going to be here for 10:30. I don't expect them to be much earlier than that, so if we could do a five- or seven-minute recess until they arrive, that would be great.

The committee recessed from 1021 to 1028.

SHEENA'S PLACE ACT, 2006

Consideration of Bill Pr29, An Act respecting Sheena's Place.

The Chair: We're starting the meeting back to order. Thank you, members, for letting us have that quick recess.

Our next bill is Bill Pr29, which is a bill sponsored by Rosario Marchese. I think he's got the wrong nameplate up there—not that I don't know who he is, but nonetheless, just in case anybody else around here might forget. So we'll start off with a few comments, please, by the sponsor of the bill.

Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity–Spadina): Madam Chair, I forget: Do I have to move this bill?

The Chair: No, it's already on the agenda, so you don't have to move it.

Mr. Marchese: We've been through this a couple of times, as some of you know: Rosario Marchese, MPP Trinity–Spadina; Donna Shoom-Kirsch is the executive director. We're happy to be here today again talking about this particular bill.

As you know, it's a hospice for eating disorders. It's a community-based, non-profit organization that provides support services at no cost to people with eating disorders and their families. There are many volunteers who obviously lend their services to this hospice. I've been there a couple of times. I think most of you are familiar with the issue.

Rather than go through the particular matter, they are trying to get an exemption for property taxes for the last eight years. The city needs the approval of the provincial government to be able to do that, and so we come back to this committee seeking the government's approval.

In this regard, I want to thank the minister for the work that he has done to be helpful to us. We're looking forward to the parliamentary assistant saying as much, and then we can just approve it and move on.

The Chair: All right, then. Are there any comments from the applicant?

Ms. Donna Shoom-Kirsch: No.

The Chair: None? Okay, then. First I'm going to ask the parliamentary assistant to make any comments, and then I'm going to do the rounds.

Mr. Sergio: I compliment again the member for Trinity–Spadina for his perseverance and persistence in working with this bill and in support of Sheena's Place. We've had this bill at our committee level a couple of times before, so considerable work has gone into it. I know that it's not only of interest but it's of great importance to Sheena's Place.

We have had the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing as well express some concern previously when the bills were in front of the committee. However, this concern has been resolved; it has been allayed now. There has been some correspondence with the city of Toronto, and both ministries no

longer express any concern with the bill. So we would like to move it along.

Again, thanks to the member for Trinity–Spadina and the applicant for the presentation of their bill.

The Chair: Are there any comments from committee members?

Mr. Leal: I note in the background—I'm interested. Could you provide a little more detail on the proactive, preventive programs you're into? Outreach to schools: I'm very fascinated with that side of it.

Ms. Shoom-Kirsch: Yes. We have a volunteer group, and most of them are recovered from an eating disorder. We take requests from teachers, we go into the schools, and we do presentations for prevention purposes. On our website, we have developed curriculum that can be downloaded by people in the community, and they can use it in their presentations, whether it's a Girl Guides group or any other type of community group. We would support them if they wanted, if they had questions. I would say that we reach close to 8,000 people every year in terms of our outreach activities.

Mr. Leal: Thank you very much. You do a very important service.

Mr. Levac: First, Rosario, thank you for bringing this bill forward and sponsoring it. Obviously, I know you enough to know that this is very important to you on a personal level and to your community, so thank you.

A question: It's a hospice. Under my understanding of the definition of hospice, there are some sad news stories involved in your organization.

Ms. Shoom-Kirsch: Yes, but hospice—I think, when it was founded and incorporated, there was some thought that they may have some beds. I think that's why it was incorporated with that name. In fact, our service is mostly hope and support through a group format, so in fact we don't have beds. But yes, this is a disorder that has a mortality rate: 15% of those who are affected die. In the year that I've been with the organization, I've seen two clients die.

Mr. Levac: Yes, that's an unfortunate circumstance that we need to get in front of, and I compliment you for your work. I have a sister who's recovering, and the saving grace there was programs that were available to her to get her on the right track. I compliment you on your work. I fully endorse it, fully support it and thank you for the good work that you do. Make sure that you spread to the staff—it takes a very hard toll on them—my compliments and full support. And I thank the city of Toronto for supporting. We're in the process in Brantford of struggling and continuing to help our hospice survive in that manner. Eating disorders is an extremely important issue to bring to the front, because it was hidden before. I'm glad to see that we're bringing this into the open. I appreciate it very much.

Mr. Martiniuk: I just have one question. I did not find it in the material. I assume this corporation is registered under the federal Income Tax Act as a charity.

Ms. Shoom-Kirsch: Yes.

Mr. Martiniuk: Yes? Thank you very much.

The Chair: Any other comments from members? No? Are the members ready to vote?

Mr. Sergio: Yes.

The Chair: Bill Pr29, An Act respecting Sheena's Place, sponsored by Mr. Marchese, MPP:

Shall section 1 carry? Carried.

Shall section 2 carry? Carried.

Shall section 3 carry? Carried.

Shall section 4 carry? Carried.

Shall section 5 carry? Carried.

Shall section 6 carry? Carried.

Shall the preamble carry? Carried.

Shall the title carry? Carried.

Shall the bill carry? Carried.

Shall I report the bill to the House?

Interjection: Absolutely.

The Chair: Excellent. Thank you very much. Congratulations.

Mr. Marchese: One last note, to thank the committee members, the parliamentary assistant and Mr. Sorbara, because he did do the work to help to solve the problems that we had with respect to this. I'm very thankful for the work you've done.

Like Dave Levac, I'd like to thank not just the executive director but all the staff and the volunteers for the very difficult work that they do and the good work that they do.

The Chair: Excellent. Congratulations, Ms. Shoom-Kirsch.

REVIEW OF REGULATIONS REPORT

The Chair: Members of the committee, we have just one small piece of business that wasn't on the agenda. It's just in regards to the way that we had dealt with our report on the regs. The issue is that the motion was not specific enough, and we need to determine whether or not we wanted to move the report on the regs as an adoption of the recommendations and the report, or just an adoption of the report. I can get the clerk to explain as well—

Mr. Sergio: Say that again?

The Chair: My understanding is that we couldn't report it to the House because the motion that we had wasn't clear. We need to determine specifically whether it's a motion to adopt the report—

Mr. Sergio: As amended?

The Chair: No, just adopt the report, or adopt the report and the recommendations.

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Susan Sourial): The report had recommendations at the end of it.

Mr. Sergio: Yes. The report and the recommendations.

The Clerk of the Committee: So you want the recommendations? Okay, that's fine.

The Chair: So just for clarification, it will go to the House with the report and recommendations? Excellent. The difference is, I guess, it stays on the order paper if it's got the recommendations included, and it doesn't.

Mr. Sergio: Perhaps the clerk can advise: Has this been done before? How is it done? Is this the proper way?

The Clerk of the Committee: I went through journals, and in the past it's just, "Shall the report be adopted?"—period—without the recommendations. On occasion, there's been, "Shall the report be adopted?" and then a request that a response be given. Normally, it's just, "Shall the report be adopted?" but you can also put in, "Shall the report and the recommendations be adopted?"

Mr. Sergio: The report and the recommendations?

The Clerk of the Committee: You can put that in.

Mr. Sergio: I think that's fine.

The Chair: We had some fulsome discussion on the recommendations, so it's probably appropriate.

Thank you very much, committee members. Seeing no other business, this committee is now adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 1038.

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