

Legislative  
Assembly  
of Ontario



Assemblée  
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**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

F-28

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

F-28

**Standing Committee on  
Finance and Economic Affairs**

Selection of estimates

1<sup>st</sup> Session  
43<sup>rd</sup> Parliament  
Tuesday 9 May 2023

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

Sélection des budgets  
des dépenses

1<sup>re</sup> session  
43<sup>e</sup> législature  
Mardi 9 mai 2023

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Chair: Ernie Hardeman  
Clerk: Vanessa Kattar

Président : Ernie Hardeman  
Greffière : Vanessa Kattar

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
FINANCE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS**

Tuesday 9 May 2023

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

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

Mardi 9 mai 2023

*The committee met at 0901 in room 151.*

SELECTION OF ESTIMATES

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Good morning, everyone. I call this meeting of the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs to order. On our agenda today is the selection of estimates for consideration.

The estimates for the following ministries and offices have been referred to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs for selection and consideration:

- Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade;
- Ministry of Finance;
- Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development;
- Cabinet Office;
- Office of the Premier; and
- Treasury Board Secretariat.

All committee members shall have received an electronic copy of the 2023-24 estimates and the corresponding ministry and office briefing books from the Clerk.

The objective of today's meeting is to select the estimates for certain ministries or offices for review by the committee.

Standing order 63 sets out the process by which the committee makes its selections. Each of the recognized parties on the committee shall select the estimates of up to one ministry or office in each turn. The official opposition selects first, followed by the government. If the members of one party decline to make a selection, the selection then passes to the next party in the rotation. The process concludes when either there are no further ministries or offices available to select, or if both recognized parties decline to make further selections.

Pursuant to standing order 63(c), these selections are to be reviewed in the order that they were chosen; however, this order may be altered by unanimous agreement of the subcommittee on committee business, or by order of the House.

Pursuant to standing order 63(d), the time for the consideration of the estimates of each ministry or office shall be determined by the respective committee.

The estimates of those ministries or offices not selected for consideration will be deemed to have been passed by the committee. As Chair, I will report those unselected

estimates back to the House, and they will be deemed to be adopted and concurred in by the House.

In accordance with standing order 66(a), the committee must present a report to the House with respect to the estimates it selected and considered by the third Thursday of November this year: November 16, 2023.

Please look at the list of ministries and offices in the estimates book or as displayed on the screen in front of you and give the correct names of the ministries or offices when you select them for consideration.

Do members have any questions before we begin? MPP Fife.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** The November 16 deadline you mentioned in your comments—can you just clarify that, please?

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** In accordance with standing order 66(a), the committee must present a report to the House with respect to the estimates it selected and considered by the third Thursday of November this year, which is November 16, 2023.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** So we have up until that date to review all the estimates as determined by the committee?

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Yes. Whatever we do between now and then will be reported by that date.

Any further questions?

I'll start with the official opposition for their first selection.

As I said in the prelude, make sure you name the exact ministry that you wish to select.

MPP Fife.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** I select the Ministry of Finance.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** We will go to the government for their first selection. MPP Crawford.

**Mr. Stephen Crawford:** I select the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** MPP Fife.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** The official opposition selects the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** MPP Crawford.

**Mr. Stephen Crawford:** We select the Treasury Board Secretariat.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** MPP Fife.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** We select the Office of the Premier.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** MPP Crawford.

**Mr. Stephen Crawford:** We select the Cabinet Office.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** That's all of the offices. Thank you for your selections.

Are there any motions or questions members wish to raise? MPP Crawford.

**Mr. Stephen Crawford:** I have a scheduling motion I'd like to read out.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Okay.

**Mr. Stephen Crawford:** I move that, pursuant to standing order 63(d), the following time be allotted to consideration of the estimates of the ministries or offices selected by the committee:

—the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade for two hours;

—the Ministry of Finance for three hours;

—the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development for two hours;

—the Treasury Board Secretariat for two hours;

—the Office of the Premier for one hour;

—the Cabinet Office for one hour; and

That the ministers responsible for those respective ministries be invited to appear before the committee; and

That for the review of the estimates of the Office of the Premier and the Cabinet Office, the government House leader be invited to appear before the committee; and

That for the review of the estimates of the Office of the Premier, the government House leader be allotted 10 minutes to make an opening statement, followed by question and answer in rotations of 20 minutes for the official opposition members of the committee, 10 minutes for the independent members of the committee as a group, and 20 minutes for the government members of the committee for the remainder of the allotted time; and

That for the review of the estimates of the Cabinet Office, the government House leader be allotted 10 minutes to make an opening statement followed by question and answer in rotations of 20 minutes for the official opposition members of the committee, 10 minutes for the independent members of the committee as a group, and 20 minutes for the government members of the committee for the remainder of the allotted time; and

That for each ministry and the Treasury Board Secretariat, the minister be allotted 20 minutes to make an opening statement followed by question and answer in rotations of 20 minutes for the official opposition members of the committee, 10 minutes for the independent members of the committee as a group, and 20 minutes for the government members of the committee for the remainder of the allotted time; and

That the committee meet for the purpose of considering the estimates of the selected ministries or offices at the following times:

—on Tuesday, June 6, 2023, from 9 a.m. until 10:15 a.m. and from 3 p.m. until 6 p.m.; and

—on Tuesday, September 12, 2023, from 9 a.m. until 10:15 a.m. and 3 p.m. until 6 p.m.; and

—on Wednesday, September 13, 2023, from 9 a.m. until 10:15 a.m. and 1 p.m. until 6 p.m.; and

That if any invited minister is unavailable to appear before the committee, the parliamentary assistant or parliamentary assistants may appear before the committee in their place.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** You've heard the motion. Discussion? MPP Fife.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** I just want to put on the public record that we were going to propose almost 60 hours of review of the estimates for these respective ministries; the government has tailored it down to a whopping 11 hours. This is following the last estimates progression that we saw earlier in the fall, when we only had 20 minutes on the finance ministry. Clearly, there is a need to review the finances of this province with greater scrutiny and with greater accountability and oversight. Given the lack of transparency, we are unhappy with the 11 hours, and we would like to hear from the government why you think that reviewing the Ministry of Finance is worthy of only three hours of review in the estimates process.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Further discussion? MPP Fife.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Well, seeing no answers, I guess we'll see you on June 6. We only have three days to review these respective ministries, and we need to put on the record that this is an insufficient amount of time to review the finances of the province of Ontario and these respective ministries, especially given the current economic state of the province.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Further discussion?

If there's no further discussion, shall I call the question?

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Recorded vote.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** A recorded vote is requested.

### Ayes

Anand, Byers, Crawford, Cuzzetto, MacLeod, David Smith, Triantafilopoulos.

### Nays

Begum, Bowman, Brady, Fife.

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

With that, I thank everybody. That concludes the business of this morning's committee.

*Interjections.*

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Order.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I thought I was getting at least an hour of you, Ernie.

**The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman):** Before I snap the gavel, I would suggest that, regardless of the comment of the Chair, there's no arguing with the comment of the Chair.

*The committee adjourned at 0913.*



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