



House of Commons
CANADA

Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development

AANO • NUMBER 035 • 2nd SESSION • 39th PARLIAMENT

EVIDENCE

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

—
Chair

Mr. Barry Devolin

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• (1535)

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Nancy Karetak-Lindell (Nunavut, Lib.)): We will come back to the public meeting. I am not sure if Mr. Bruinooge was finished with his presentation.

Mr. Rod Bruinooge (Winnipeg South, CPC): In light of the fact we are out of camera, I will again voice my motion and speak to it briefly in relation to our travels into Nunavut, of course.

In relation to the knowledge that many of us have of northern communities, it is a wise task, on behalf of this committee, to study the impacts a carbon tax would have on the very susceptible economic conditions of the north. Premier Okalik voiced these concerns to me directly, and I think it is a legitimate action of this committee to undertake what might occur should this country impose the carbon tax on fuel supplies in our country.

I will leave it there. I'm not sure if anyone else wants to speak to it, but I'd be glad to call the question after that.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Nancy Karetak-Lindell): I have Ms. Crowder on the speaking list.

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Unfortunately, I wasn't available to go on the trip up north, but my understanding is that in the context of economic development, it was a much broader issue than a carbon tax. I have a copy of a press release saying that Nunavut's fuel bill is catastrophic. I think the premier is quoted in this.

Forgive me, but this appears to be a highly partisan motion. I would be prepared to amend the motion so that it would allow the committee to come together and work in a non-partisan nature around an issue that is very important for the north in terms of the very high cost of living up there.

I would propose that we amend this motion. Where it says "study on the impacts of a carbon tax upon rural Aboriginal and Northern communities", I would suggest that we remove the word "carbon tax" and just talk about this—"study on the impacts of the high cost of living upon rural Aboriginal and Northern communities as it relates to the committee's broader study of northern economic development". And you could say, "including the high cost of fuel".

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Nancy Karetak-Lindell): I don't know if anyone else would like to speak on that.

In your motion it sounds like you are just reverting back to the study we're doing anyway. At the meeting we did talk about the impact of food mail. We talked about the high cost of living up there.

So it's pretty well reverting back to the original study we were doing, the initial focus being on strategic northern investments.

• (1540)

Ms. Jean Crowder: Is there actually a motion?

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Nancy Karetak-Lindell): I would have to get the clerk to remind us of that one.

I have Mr. Lévesque.

[Translation]

Mr. Yvon Lévesque (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, BQ): Madam Chair, the topic of discussion is a carbon tax. Unfortunately, we don't have any details about this tax. I see no reason to be having this discussion without knowing the specifics of this tax and what its impact might be. Until we know more, I don't think this motion is in order. The vote should be on whether or not the motion is in order.

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Nancy Karetak-Lindell): Okay. The information I have is that 48 hours' notice be required for any substantive motion to be considered by the committee, unless the substantive motion relates directly to business then under consideration. That is the basis on which we would put forth the motion.

I'm not sure if there is anyone else who wishes to speak.

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Are we speaking to the amendment, Madam Chair?

Ms. Jean Crowder: I'm not clear that you ruled my amendment out of order. I didn't hear a ruling out of order. What I heard was that you thought it was similar to the study that was put forward. I still think we can talk about the study, the impacts of the high cost of living, including fuel costs, if you wish.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Nancy Karetak-Lindell): Actually, I was just asking the clerk if there was a motion relating to the study we were doing. So I will get clarification on that; one moment.

• _____ (Pause) _____

• **The Vice-Chair (Ms. Nancy Karetak-Lindell):** Ms. Crowder, I said what I did in relation to your motion because the agreement was that the committee continue its study on economic development challenges in the northern territories, which I think already covers your amendment and makes it redundant.

So it's already covered by what we had agreed at committee before—unless you want to challenge me on that one.

Ms. Jean Crowder: I don't want to challenge you.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Nancy Karetak-Lindell): Mr. Albrecht, are you speaking to the motion?

Mr. Harold Albrecht: Yes.

Madam Chair, I think it was very clear for those who were able to go—it indeed is unfortunate that Ms. Crowder and Mr. Warkentin weren't able to go—that the focus of the concern at the economic forum was the issue of fuel costs. The carbon tax would directly impact fuel costs. We can say that we don't have the details, but the details will be in place long before we get to the study.

I think we should move ahead with this motion, in the interest of time.

• (1545)

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Nancy Karetak-Lindell): Ms. Neville.

Hon. Anita Neville (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Quite frankly, I think this is a very mischievous motion. We heard when we were up north that fuel prices increased by \$85 million under the current government. We're talking about a carbon tax here,

and I am not aware that a carbon tax has been introduced into the House of Commons, that it's part of the discussion. I don't know what the parameters of the carbon tax are. What are we talking about?

I agree totally with Mr. Lévesque; I think this is politically motivated, mischievous, frivolous. When we are doing our study of northern economic development as we move forward, we can integrate issues into the study as they become known to us, but I'm not prepared to support this motion.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Nancy Karetak-Lindell): I now have had each party speaking. Since it's 3:45 and we have people waiting in the other room, I will call the question.

Mr. Rod Bruinooge: Madam Chair, can we have a recorded vote on this?

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Nancy Karetak-Lindell): A recorded vote is requested.

(Motion negated: nays 6; yeas 5)

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Nancy Karetak-Lindell): The meeting is adjourned.

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Publié en conformité de l'autorité du Président de la Chambre des communes

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