



House of Commons
CANADA

Subcommittee on Canadian Industrial Sectors of the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology

SSIS • NUMBER 001 • 2nd SESSION • 40th PARLIAMENT

EVIDENCE

Thursday, March 5, 2009

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Chair

Mr. Dave Van Kesteren

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• (0915)

[English]

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Michelle Tittley): Honourable members of the committee, I see a quorum. We can now proceed to the election of the chair. I am ready to receive motions to that effect.

Mr. Marc Garneau (Westmount—Ville-Marie, Lib.): Madam Clerk, I would like to propose that Dave Van Kesteren be elected the chair of this subcommittee.

The Clerk: It has been moved by Mr. Garneau that Mr. Van Kesteren be elected chair of this committee. Are there any further motions?

(Motion agreed to)

The Clerk: I'll now proceed to the election of the vice-chairs. I'm ready to receive motions for the position of first vice-chair.

Mr. Mike Lake (Edmonton—Mill Woods—Beaumont, CPC): I would move that Marc Garneau be elected as vice-chair.

The Clerk: Mr. Lake moves that Mr. Garneau be elected first vice-chair of the committee. Are there any further motions?

(Motion agreed to)

The Clerk: I am now ready to receive motions for the position of second vice-chair of the committee.

Mr. Mike Lake: I move Robert Bouchard.

The Clerk: Mr. Lake moves that Mr. Bouchard be elected second vice-chair of the committee. Are there any further motions?

(Motion agreed to)

The Clerk: I now ask Mr. Van Kesteren to take the chair.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Van Kesteren (Chatham-Kent—Essex, CPC): Thank you for this honour bestowed on us. I think we are all eager to do a little bit more, so this means, of course, that we can participate in a few more meetings than we're already accustomed to.

I think at this point it would be wise to suspend until Mr. Thibeault arrives.

• (0915)

_____ (Pause) _____

• (0915)

The Chair: It looks as if we have our final member for our committee, so we can assume this committee again and the work we intend to do. I guess what we need to do at this point is to discuss

first of all when we will meet as a committee, how often, the scope of the committee, and who we should invite. At this point, I would ask members if they'd like to give their input on that. If there's something else they feel should be discussed so we can broaden the scope of this, feel free to do that at this time.

Members, what is your pleasure? Mr. Lake is first up.

Mr. Mike Lake: In terms of the when and how often, I guess we can have a discussion around that. I just put on the record that we committed to Tuesday night from 7 to 11 for the auto sector study. Right now, we're meeting with that committee on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday from 7 to 11. I note that within the timeframe we're going to be meeting with this one, we have our regular committee times as well.

On the "who" side, I would like to throw out an idea right now as we look for... One of the things that came to light as we had our discussion is that each of us has different areas that seem to have more prominence in our area, I think it's safe to say. However, it's probably also safe to say there are easily identifiable areas that have more pressure than others. Before we start committing to specific witnesses, I think it wouldn't hurt us to get a big-picture view of things.

One of the things we could do is have Industry Canada officials come before us at the first meeting to do a briefing and talk about the challenges out there, sector by sector. I think that will help us significantly as we try to plan who to invite when and even structure the entire study, in a sense. The other thing we might look at, I would think, is to have some big-picture organizations—organizations that cover a range of sectors—come before us to give the lie of the land, possibly think tanks that might be able to give us a good picture of everything that's happening. I'll throw that out as an idea as we move forward and get started to frame our study in a way that makes some sense.

The Chair: If I could just interject, it would probably make a whole lot of sense if we first discuss the scope before we decide on the time. Does that make sense to committee members? I'm thinking that only because if we broaden the scope and if there are a number of officials and key elements in the industry that we want to contact, we may need more time.

Just for reasons of throwing this out, if we decide as a committee that there are four or five areas, we may decide we could do this once a week. Does that make sense to the committee? Should we discuss the scope first of all?

• (0920)

Mr. Mike Lake: Again, to the point I was making, though, part of establishing what the scope is going to be is hearing from the big-picture organizations. We won't really know, I don't believe, what the scope of this study is going to be until we hear from Industry Canada officials, who will help set the scope for us. We really don't know what it's going to be.

I think it would be wise for us to have a meeting as soon as we possibly can with officials, or maybe some of these other big organizations, to give us a briefing, at which point our scope then becomes a little bit easier to define. I think it is very difficult for us right now, and we saw this in the discussion we were having.

It can be a big scope. I mean, this could be a huge study. I don't think, though, we want to go down the road of having an eight-month study here. I think there are some things that are critical right now, but I think it's important for us to have officials who can give us a broad overview right now. In Industry Canada there are many, many sectors. They cover virtually everything we would want to cover, and there are a few officials who could come before us, sit at the table, and give us a really good lay of the land.

Mr. Marc Garneau: Mr. Chair, I have no problem with having that quick, upfront overview from Industry Canada officials.

In terms of scope, I would make the proposition that what interests me particularly is to hear from the different sectors that are identified here—some are not named, of course—and to find out what kinds of challenges they are experiencing at this particular time, so that we as government understand whether or not there are things that can be done and what particular difficulties they are facing, in case we're not aware of some of those things.

So in terms of scope, understanding the current particular difficulties and challenges they are facing within their own sectors is what is of utmost importance to me.

The Chair: Committee, we failed to move in camera before we started. Is it the committee's wish to conduct this portion of the meeting in camera?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Proceedings continue in camera]

Published under the authority of the Speaker of the House of Commons

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

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