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Chair: Mr. Robert Morrissey

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• (1610)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Robert Morrissey (Egmont, Lib.)): Good afternoon, committee members.

As you know, we were delayed for a vote, but the clerk has advised me that we have quorum, and we will call the meeting to order.

Welcome to meeting number 19 of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development, and the Status of Persons with Disabilities.

I'm going to dispense with the rest of the introductory items. I expect everybody to follow the health protocols that have been approved by the House of Commons. I would remind members who are appearing virtually that if you want to get my attention, please use the "raise hand" icon. For those members in the room, simply raise your hand. As you know, please speak clearly and slowly so that the interpreters are able to interpret accurately for the benefit of the committee.

With that, at this time, I want to welcome Tara Collins, the 2018 Centennial Flame Research Award recipient, to begin our discussion with five minutes of opening remarks, followed by questions. For the question period, we will simply be following an informal process, not the normal questioning allocation. Any member of the committee who has a question for Ms. Collins, simply raise your hand and I will recognize you in order so that everybody gets a chance to question Ms. Collins.

Ms. Collins, if you're ready, please begin with your opening statement. Thank you for being patient and waiting while committee members did the business of the House, which was to vote in the commons. Ms. Collins, the floor is yours.

Ms. Tara Collins (As an Individual): Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you very much.

I want to say thank you very much for the award as well.

Normally, I start with a territorial acknowledgement. However, I realize that I have five minutes here, so I just want to say that I am on the Treaty 7 region in southern Alberta. I do want to recognize that in the name of truth and reconciliation.

I want to present in terms of my interest. My interest really came from my own personal PTSD—post-traumatic stress disorder—as well as seeing my children struggle with some mental health issues. There are some gaps in literature, and there are limited services, in particular for children. One thing my daughter said that really

struck me was, "Why are you and dad able to go to an equine therapy program and I'm not able to?" It really impacted her as well. I still see that with her, and I see it with myself, when struggling still at times with my own PTSD, with some nightmares. As well, I'm easily startled.

This award means a lot to me.

I want to start by just saying that there's a large range of PTSD, depending on whether or not somebody's in a war zone. It can range from about 8% to 20%. A really important piece is that it impedes a family's functioning as well.

I looked at how families cope when they live with a military parent experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder. For my findings, I looked at what's called Corbin and Strauss's "grounded theory", which looks at "how do I engage with the literature?" and "how do I engage with the data?".

I had 25 participants. Twenty-one were non-military parents and four were adult children. I conducted interviews that were semi-structured and in-depth. For the findings, what happens with the grounded theory is that we really look at developing a theory: How can you explain and how can you predict coping?

The findings were family-evolving; that was my theory that I developed. I ended up looking at the definition as the process involved in "the modification, adjustment or alteration of family behaviours in responses to changes in the family environment with the aim of overcoming and adapting to adversity posed by military PTSD". Basically what that means is that we're looking at the stressors and available resources. As the stressors become more predominant and the resources deplete, the more challenging it is for individuals to cope.

I just want to really quickly read one of the quotes that I have:

Life changed after he was diagnosed with PTSD. He changed; our family changed. The way we did things changed. We had to be careful not to upset him, so we walked on eggshells and tried not to get him going.

That was a very common theme: walking on eggshells and really trying to protect the family, and not only the family but the military member as well, to protect them from being triggered.

Based on this, I was able to determine that there are six states of functioning. I won't go into the details, just in the name of time here.

One of them was stability and healthy functioning, which occurred prior to the military member's having PTSD. Eleven of the participants knew the military member before PTSD, and that included all four of the adult children, who had known the military member before they developed PTSD. This state was stability and healthy functioning, which doesn't necessarily mean that there aren't any stressors; however, this was when there were not as many stressors experienced without PTSD.

Also, then, there are instability and wavering functioning. That occurred when there were more stressors placed on the family and the family had not as many resources, so they ended up spiralling a bit more into an area where they weren't functioning as well.

Five of the families ended up going into the next state, which was crisis and emergency functioning. What that looked like was really a crisis happening in the family, with risks to themselves or risks to others. Those could be suicide attempts. It could be police involvement. It could include child welfare. This happened in particular when the military system or Veterans Affairs was not providing enough support to them.

• (1615)

All of those families who did not have the support they needed ended up going into a crisis, unfortunately, and then they went into rebalancing and rebuilding.

Now, these families don't fit into this little box, so it's important to recognize that it's like an oscillating state of functioning. They go through some phases, but as well, they will not go through other states. They bounce all over the place, depending on those resources. Following the rebalancing are reoccurring instability and deflated hope. Once again, they started feeling hopeless that things would change.

Finally, there is a refocusing and evolving functioning. That point in time is really when they evolve. The military member is likely seeking support and the children are receiving support. Unfortunately, all four of the adult children did not receive any support. Their support often came from recreational activities, which can be problematic, because about 25% of families identify that they do not have the money for being able to attend those recreational activities.

The implications for military families are the recognition that prevention is really needed, and intervention as well, in looking at families oscillating again through those states. My theory was really able to capture the presenting concerns and the family dynamics, as well as coping, whereas most studies look at the presenting concerns and the family dynamics without taking into consideration the holistic piece there, and really recognizing as well that case managers play a role. Unfortunately, a lot of them did not find case managers helpful.

That being said, I do want to say that all of these families were extremely resilient, so my recommendation would be to ensure that multiple strategies are taking place to help families adapt to the

change. Families continually revise and refine strategies and structures, so again, it's often an ongoing kind of process to ensure that families are getting that support as well and that there are proactive supports in place.

I will end there. I think that was about five minutes. That was very quick. I originally had a presentation of about an hour, so I cut it down as much as I could there. Thank you very much, and again, thank you very much for the award.

• (1620)

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Collins.

Yes, you took that extensive report and cut it down. You did well. Some witnesses appearing before the committee could learn from you.

I'm sure committee members have extensive questions for you.

The first person is Mr. Long. As I indicated, we'll keep a balance in the timeline.

Mr. Wayne Long (Saint John—Rothesay, Lib.): Thanks, Mr. Chair.

Good afternoon to my colleagues.

Ms. Collins, thank you for your work and for your report. I was part of the previous HUMA committee, along with MP Chabot, that awarded this to you.

I take your recommendations, and I absolutely appreciate them. I think they're good recommendations. My first question to you would be, was there anything along the road of doing this report that really surprised you, that you weren't expecting?

Ms. Tara Collins: Thank you for the question.

I was surprised by a number of pieces. I was really surprised that none of the adult children were able to access supports, and I was quite surprised that the recreational piece was the main support.

The other piece that I found surprising was looking at the Veterans Affairs website and trying to get a sense of the policies. There was definitely a lot of discrepancy between.... In the description, it talked about the families being "integral" to the well-being of the military member, yet they had to really fight for any kind of support. Those kind of contradicted each other, because it was recognized that their well-being helps the military members, yet at the same time they really had to jump through hoops. All of the families found that it was not an easy process, unfortunately.

Mr. Wayne Long: Thank you very much for that.

I have a last question for you, Ms. Collins. Can you tell us, in your opinion, what we can do as a committee to make the Centennial Flame award better? How can we improve it? How can we make it more responsive to people like you?

Thank you.

Ms. Tara Collins: To be honest, again, I really appreciate the award. I was really grateful. I don't know about doing better, but I think it was amazing that you recognized the invisible disability as well; I don't know that I'd necessarily have recommendations, except to say that I think it was really critical. It sounds like it may have been a unanimous decision, so I was really thrilled to know that the invisible disabilities are recognized. Again, I know that kind of skirts around the recommendations, but I do think that you did an excellent job.

Mr. Wayne Long: Ms. Collins, thank you very much for the report. It's excellent.

Ms. Tara Collins: Thank you.

The Chair: Next we have Madame Chabot.

[Translation]

Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Ms. Collins, bravo to you and congratulations! Thank you for your contribution to this research.

I have two questions for you.

When we talk about strategy, it's difficult to put your finger on the right solution. Are strategies based on a family approach? There is an approach that includes the whole immediate family, the family unit, of course, but the definition of family includes extended family, which can sometimes be more important than immediate family members. Is the notion of extended family part of the considerations in the process?

• (1625)

[English]

Ms. Tara Collins: Thank you. I think I understood that in French. I took French immersion; however, it's rusty.

With regard to the definition of “family”, I would say that is actually something that would be a limitation in my study. I did have somebody ask whether or not it could be just partners whom I interviewed or if a family had to include children. With regard to that piece, I did not interview partners solely who did not have children, because of the fact that there has been literature and there have been studies done on that “family”.

Another challenge was the different dynamics. In terms of having two same-sex parents, although I would definitely consider that a family, I actually was not able to find anyone in my study who came forward and identified as a same-sex couple. As well, in terms of different cultures, I know that some cultures identify extended family as well. I would say that Veterans Affairs unfortunately at this point in time does not take into consideration some of the additional family members who are integral to families' lives.

As I said, there are certainly no supports for even the adult children. The Veterans Affairs crisis line does not look at allowing people to call in for support after the age of 21. Even that piece was problematic.

In terms of supports, I think what I would recommend as well for families would be ensuring that they have more input into the care and having the case manager being extremely transparent about

what services are out there and what they qualify for. A lot of these participants were really having to dig for what supports were out there and what they qualified for and, as I said, really fight for those supports. For the website to identify that families are “integral” and yet not provide a smooth transition is problematic.

Did I answer all of that?

[Translation]

Ms. Louise Chabot: Wonderful.

[English]

It was nice. Thank you.

[Translation]

I have one last question for you.

The committee will have to consider a strategy to raise awareness of the Centennial Flame Research Award. How did you find out about the award?

[English]

Ms. Tara Collins: On that piece, I might need interpretation.

The Chair: You may be on the wrong channel, Ms. Collins. There is interpretation.

Ms. Tara Collins: Is there?

The Chair: You can go to the icon on the device you're using and look at “Interpretation”.

Ms. Tara Collins: Okay. I apologize.

The Chair: Let me explain. Madame Chabot asked how you became aware of the particular Centennial Flame bursary and how the committee may advance better communications on that.

How did you become aware of it? Do you have any advice to the committee on how we could better promote it?

I believe I'm capturing that correctly.

Ms. Tara Collins: That's an excellent question.

I'm a good “googler”. I tried to figure out which scholarships were out there. I'm not sure if it is on the different university websites, but I would recommend trying to implement it. There is a list of different scholarships that individuals may qualify for.

In the event that it is not, I would probably see about putting it in different universities as well, to help people recognize that it is available. That would be the predominant way to advertise as well.

• (1630)

The Chair: Thank you.

Ms. Collins, do you see a global icon on the bottom of your device? Your interpretation may be turned off. If you click....

Ms. Tara Collins: I think it is on now. It is “English”.

The Chair: Yes, there you go. Madame Chabot may have additional questions, or Madame Ferrada, who will do hers in French.

Next is Mr. Ruff.

Mr. Alex Ruff (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Thanks, Chair.

Thanks, Ms. Collins, for coming and speaking to us today, and thanks for your support. To my understanding, your ex-partner was military.

From personal experience, military people can't do their job without the support of their families. I know that it's so difficult when members are facing this and family members end up dealing with post-traumatic stress and other types of challenges that come with supporting somebody in the military lifestyle.

I know that you were doing this as part of your Ph.D. You indicated on your application that you were in the process. Have you finished your Ph.D.? I ask because the angle here, not just from the academic perspective and your sharing it with us here at this committee and through the award, is whether or not your information been shared with Veterans Affairs Canada already and with others, with the Canadian Armed Forces directly or with the military family resource centres. I'm wondering where the information has gone and what kind of feedback you've received to date.

I have a subsequent follow-up.

Thanks.

Ms. Tara Collins: I graduated in January 2022. I've just graduated. I'm in the process of doing a few different pieces right now. I actually wrote a paper on my own experience, which is going to be published. I'm looking at doing some different publications as well. My goal is also to approach those three bodies, as well as, potentially, some Legions. At this point in time, I have not reached out; however, that is my plan.

I also applied for a presentation with the Canadian Institute of Military and Veteran Health Research, as well as one in the States, actually, in Phoenix, on children's well-being. That's my plan in the future.

Mr. Alex Ruff: That's super. Congratulations on finishing a Ph.D. That's a phenomenal accomplishment that not a lot of people do.

Looking forward, for anything the committee can help with and for anything I can help with personally, feel free to reach out directly so that we can put you in contact with some of the different organizations.

My final comment is more for the whole committee and everybody listening, but is for you as well, Ms. Collins. I don't know if you're aware that there's the Sam Sharpe breakfast next Tuesday morning from 7:30 to 9:30 here in Ottawa. It's supposed to be virtual, but we're having some technical difficulties. It's the ninth annual one. It's hosted by the Honourable Erin O'Toole and retired Lieutenant-General the Honourable Roméo Dallaire. It's all about mental health.

The guest speaker is retired Lieutenant-Colonel Christian Lillington. He's speaking this time around. He's retired and has just

published his own book as well, but from a family perspective, and it's some great research. There will be a number of organizations participating in that. You'd likely benefit from attending.

Again, feel free to reach out. I will pull whatever strings I need to make sure you get a personal invite.

Ms. Tara Collins: Thank you. Yes. I would definitely be interested.

I would be interested for sure in your connecting me with anyone. As you know, I'm very passionate about this. I definitely think families need more recognition, so please do. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Ruff. I'm sure you'll follow up with Ms. Collins on that particular point.

Madame Martinez Ferrada, please go ahead.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada (Hochelaga, Lib.): Ms. Collins, thank you for your opening remarks.

I wasn't on the committee when you received this award, but I wanted to congratulate you on all the work you've done. I have a family member who just got his PhD. I know how long and how hard that journey is. So congratulations on what few people do in their lives. Well done!

I'm going to ask you a question that seems to be outside your study. You know that the current war in Europe is going to have an effect here because we are going to welcome a lot of families. I know that the study you did looked at military service and how it affects the family living with someone who has served in the armed forces.

We have welcomed Afghan and Syrian families, and we will be welcoming Ukrainian families. How do you think the study you've done can be beneficial in understanding what families will experience? How are these families going to overcome these traumas once they get here?

• (1635)

[*English*]

Ms. Tara Collins: Thank you for the question.

I think this study has a huge impact in recognizing that coping is not a linear process. A number of different factors will impact families. It depends on their presenting concerns and what they come with at that time, while also recognizing that there are those shifts in family dynamics.

I don't want to say that it's only for the families who are coming in, as this could also apply to civilian families, but obviously there are more complex dynamics. I do want to acknowledge that I think it's really important to look at multiple levels. It's not just about looking at the micro level and looking at families; it's also about looking at the external bodies. What are the policies? What's the culture? It might be looking at the Canadian culture. How does that influence the families?

Actually, interestingly enough, I know that some of the research suggests that immigrants who come here experience a higher level of mental health issues. I think that's important as well. It's about just recognizing that multiple levels take place. Making sure that we implement supports prior to their even developing any mental health issues would be very important.

In terms of recommending, obviously you can't force people to access supports, but I think we should be implementing as many supports as we can, and recognizing as well that people are essentially having to relocate. Look at the relocation of Canadian military members. They are facing a number of different losses in terms of the lack of support systems and having to look at different employment and medical care. All of those pieces need to be considered. Obviously, it's oftentimes hard to find a doctor. How do you connect these people with all of these different resources so that they're not experiencing additional stress? I think it has a lot of relevance there as well.

The Chair: Good.

Ms. Collins and Madame Martinez Ferrada, I need unanimous consent to continue. As you hear, there are 30-minute bells.

I will take direction from the committee. Do we have unanimous consent?

Okay. Thank you. We will continue.

Madame Martinez Ferrada, have you concluded?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada: I had a quick question about the scholarship you received and the money required to do this study. Was it a scholarship that supported you well? Was the amount adequate, given the scope of your study?

Considering your personal funding for this study, is the amount sufficient?

[*English*]

Ms. Tara Collins: Doing a Ph.D. is very expensive. I did actually receive an award from Wounded Warriors. That one was quite extensive. I mean, every little bit helps, for sure. I didn't have to tap into any savings, though.

I do appreciate, as I said, any amount. Obviously, the more, the better for people, but that \$5,000 really supported a lot of my own travelling to visit families and to sit down with them. In terms of time as well, it saved me resources, for sure.

• (1640)

The Chair: Thank you, Madame Martinez Ferrada.

I have a question, if I could take the liberty, as chair, to pose a question.

Okay? Thank you.

If I'm correct, Ms. Collins, in your opening comments you made reference the fact that part of your study is on how to "predict coping". Do I have that correct?

Ms. Tara Collins: A theory is about predicting and explaining something, so yes, it is.

The Chair: Could you expand on that? I'm curious, because to predict coping.... I mean, everybody copes differently. Every situation has a different context. I'd be curious to know what your understanding is and what your research led you to conclude.

Ms. Tara Collins: As I said, nobody fits in this very tight box. It's a constantly shifting piece. It's constantly evolving. What I did find, though, out of all of the participants, was what the process looked like for their going through these different states.

I wish I could show you the diagram. It really goes all over the place—think of little swirls—between the different states. It's not a matter of being stuck in one of those states. I broke it down into presenting concerns, family dynamics and coping in each of those states. That was the most talked about during the different states. It's not that it necessarily 100% happens. However, that's what I found most predominantly.

Normally with qualitative research, and in particular with developing a theory, you test it afterward quantitatively or through numbers. Currently, these are the voices, and the voices are telling me that this is predominantly what happens in each of these states that the families go through.

The Chair: Did you uncover a common thread?

Ms. Tara Collins: Oh, for sure. Yes. The common thread would be going through each of those different states. The common thread was that military families who knew of them prior to the PTSD that developed had more resources. They had that ability to go back—to go back to their friendships before, to go back to being able to reassure them that they're more than the PTSD. All of the states had themes that came up that were quite regular for each of them.

For the crisis state, as I said, every single one of those families found that the barriers and policies associated with trying to get supports were way too much for them. All of those families, as I mentioned, went into that crisis that was very severe, to the point where, for example, in one family, the gentleman had a couple of kids who had to call their mom and tell her that their dad wanted to kill himself. He didn't have those resources and coping tools.

I would say that there is a theme that happened in each of those categories, the states I had mentioned, but of course nobody fits in a tightly knit box.

The Chair: Thank you.

Go ahead, Mr. Van Bynen.

Mr. Tony Van Bynen (Newmarket—Aurora, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

This is really good information. The presentation is great.

It leads me to the next step with this, namely how we're going to advertise the program. I see that some of the communication tools involve a web page. I'm wondering if this interview, this discussion and this presentation could form part of that web page so that people who are interested in the grant can see exactly what has come out of that. It might be a good place, as we distribute knowledge of it, for people to be able to reach in, take a look at the presentation and get the benefit of this interview. I think that would be very helpful, showing that we don't shelter or keep what was learned under a basket.

How do we get that out?

• (1645)

Ms. Tara Collins: Please do put this on your website or anywhere. As for me personally, I've had a number of families reach out to me afterward and say that this was really beneficial to their knowing that the secondary trauma, or this trauma, happens to families and that families are impacted. Feel free also to send them my phone number and email. I get messages all the time—actually, a fair bit—from different people.

As I mentioned earlier on being able to connect me to different sources, that's fantastic, and I'm certainly willing to get that information out as well. I really do strongly believe that this information and this study can help people to recognize what might be needed to get to those healthier states of functioning. By all means, please advertise and please connect me with different people.

Mr. Tony Van Bynen: Mr. Chair, if I may, can we ask the staff when they're going through the communication side of this program to give some consideration to doing something like that so we can get the maximum benefit out of what was learned?

The Chair: Certainly Ms. Collins has made the offer, and we'll ensure that is taken into consideration.

Ms. Tara Collins: Thank you so much.

The Chair: On behalf of the committee, Ms. Collins, thank you for reaching out to apply and for participating in the study.

The study you did is certainly very current in the world we live in. The challenges and demands on individuals and families continue to grow. Again, thank you for coming in and explaining your study and what the Centennial Flame award meant to you.

Ms. Tara Collins: It did mean a lot to me. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

The Chair: It is a fascinating field that you were delving into, Ms. Collins. Again, on behalf of the committee members, thank you for participating and thank you for taking the time to be here with committee members today to answer their questions.

Ms. Tara Collins: You're very welcome.

Thank you so much again for the award. Take care, everyone.

The Chair: Take care.

Committee members, we may take some time for committee business. If it's okay with the committee, we'll remain in public so we don't have to Zoom in and out. For those members who are here

virtually, just stay with the link you're in. If that's agreeable to the committee, we will stay in public.

On this particular part, we have a couple of items of committee business that we'd like to deal with.

First, what's your direction on setting the award for the coming year, for the coming award? That is part of what we have to establish. What we need is the deadline for submitting an application, recognizing that usually this is circulated earlier in the year.

Madam Clerk, can you speak to this?

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Danielle Widmer): I'm just going to add a quick insert about this.

Normally we give applicants about five weeks from the date we actually publicize it to submit an application. Just looking at the time frame and understanding that many of the applicants, like Tara Collins, are often in education, in school and post-secondary education, in looking at the time, you have from September until April.

Ideally, we'd like to circulate this and give enough time to get everyone involved. So maybe a deadline of September might be agreeable. That way, we would capture people who come back to school in September, and they could submit an application then.

Maybe some time at the end of September if the members are agreeable...? That way, they take a look at it when they come back, translate everything and circulate it to the members, if that would that be agreeable.

• (1650)

The Chair: What's your direction?

Mr. Wayne Long: That's a good recommendation: the end of September.

The Chair: Okay. We've set the amount at \$6,700 and we've set the deadline.

The one part you had circulated was, as I recall, that at one time we were considering doing a video from the Centennial Flame. The advice was that we cannot do that, so you have in your package a recommendation on how we promote the award.

Mr. Wayne Long: Chair, I think that even as MPs we can promote this through our own social media networks, and not just as a one-off. I think we can really spread that web, if you will, if we really promote it ourselves.

The Clerk: I'm just going to quickly—

Go ahead, Mr. Ruff.

Mr. Alex Ruff: I was just wondering what the recommendation was. What was the logic behind not doing the video?

The Clerk: One of the challenges with the video is the timing of the video: to make sure the video comes out quickly enough. It's also a matter of our usually doing low-cost options, to make sure that the funding for the award goes to the applicants themselves, and not to the video production. It's also a matter of accessibility, the accessibility of the video, to make sure for people who have hearing or visual impairments that are also accommodated in the video. Hence, it might be quite resource-consuming to do a video.

When we talked to the communications people, lots of the options.... As Mr. Van Bynen said, having the applicants' documents get posted on the website could be an option to better publicize it. For mass emails, we're looking more at a strategy for emailing individuals: creating lists for universities, cultural groups and visible minority groups to make sure we get them to the groups themselves, and then have a staggered approach. Quite often in the past, we just did one email. We're looking more at a staggered approach, so the moment the news release comes out, we can do multiple emails throughout the months of May and June, and do a second bombardment of communications in September when people come back.

On top of that, we can also do news releases and infographics. Infographics will allow us to have text-based materials, which we can also share with the members to put in their constituency emails and mailouts. We're looking more at a more print-based option that would probably be more accessible than video. It's also a matter that maybe not everyone would be comfortable appearing in a video and being on the website forever too. We're really looking more at text-based approaches, visual approaches, and that's where we're leaning for communications.

Mr. Wayne Long: I'll bet you, Alex, that 80% of HUMA members last time didn't even have it in their households. I think we can get it out there a lot more effectively, too, me included.

Mr. Alex Ruff: Just to build on that, really, the issue is doing the video as a House of Commons sponsored sort of paid-for thing. That's the issue. I get all that for the hoops that we have to jump through, but there's nothing stopping us as MPs. We could all literally walk over there ourselves and shoot our own video if we want to, just based on our own resources.

Mr. Wayne Long: We should do something together—

Mr. Alex Ruff: That's it. That answered my question.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Ruff.

I have Madame Chabot.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Louise Chabot: I think these are good avenues for communication strategies. Where I agree with you is that most of the money should go to the stock market and not to promoting the stock market. Costly strategies should be avoided.

We listened to the winner. She started by mentioning university websites. A list of available scholarships should be published. In their ridings, committee members can publicize the scholarship, but their involvement is limited. We have to reach out to groups of people with disabilities. It's a scholarship for them; we need to find a way to make them aware of it.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you, Madame Chabot.

Before we go to that, I want to get some clearance from the committee. Is everybody staying here? Does anybody need time to return to the chamber to vote in person? If everybody is staying here, we can vote virtually.

Okay. We have agreement to stay. We'll suspend for a few minutes whenever members need to vote.

• (1655)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Louise Chabot: Will we suspend for five minutes when the time comes?

The Chair: Yes.

[*English*]

Some members have to leave, so we will be adjourning around 5 or 5:40.

We have Madame Zarrillo.

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I have a motion that I would like to move to the table. I'm not sure if we'll have time for a discussion on it today.

I sent a notice of motion a couple of weeks back. Just let me know when it's a good time for me to move that to the table.

The Chair: Well, we're in committee business, Madam Zarrillo.

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo: So you're okay with my doing it?

The Chair: If it's had the necessary timeline....

Has it been 48 hours? Yes.

Madam Zarrillo, you have the floor, if you want to move it.

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I circulated a few weeks ago, on March 31, a notice of motion that asks the following:

That the House of Commons' Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities call upon the government to codify all people who receive provincial support for their disability as People with Disabilities in order to facilitate the ease of payment of a future benefit for a disabled person, and that the government table a comprehensive response thereto.

Mr. Chair, this is related to some of the testimony we heard from the ministry that, at this point in time, there is not an easy way to identify in any kind of federal database those persons who receive provincial disability support.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Madam Zarrillo.

Before we go to that, there is an agreement amongst the party whips that we will suspend 10 minutes before the vote. I will suspend now until the vote is concluded, and then we will resume.

• (1655)

(Pause)

• (1720)

The Chair: We'll resume the committee meeting.

Madam Zarrillo, you had the floor and you were introducing your motion.

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo: I did, Mr. Chair, and I don't have any other comments at this time.

The Chair: Madame Chabot.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Louise Chabot: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

These are more questions than comments.

I understand the purpose of this new disability benefit and what it might look like, and I'm not questioning that. Rather, I'm wondering how it would be possible to codify all the people who receive provincial support. I'll give the example of Quebec. I don't know how things work in the rest of Canada, but in Quebec, there are allowances for disabled adults or children, and these allowances are independent of what happens at the federal level. How can the federal government get information on these people, since this comes under Revenu Québec?

I'm trying to look at that possibility, and I'm wondering if it's feasible. I imagine that if officials are unable to obtain this information, it's because something is preventing them from doing so, either a problem with minimal information or differences between the provinces. I'm wondering about that, not the substance of the motion.

Is it feasible?

[*English*]

The Chair: Next we have Madame Martinez Ferrada, who had her hand up, and then we'll go to Ms. Zarrillo.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada: I'll wait for Ms. Zarrillo to answer the question, and then I'll speak.

[*English*]

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo: Thank you.

I think that's a really good question by Madame Chabot. One of the things that the government is going to need to figure out is how they identify it. I don't know the workings behind the scenes at CRA or how information is transferred, but I do know that there's an opportunity for us to understand who gets a provincial benefit that could potentially be recorded federally. I would leave that to the bureaucrats to figure out.

The Chair: Madame Martinez Ferrada.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I will support my colleague's motion.

I do think it would be very beneficial to know who is receiving support, particularly at the provincial level, so that it can be considered.

To answer Ms. Chabot's question, in the motion, instead of asking the government to codify people, we could ask the government for the ability to codify people.

We need to find a way to do this. I think that would give the motion some flexibility. I would also add something to the motion. I don't have the text in French, but I'll read it in English, and I think everyone will understand.

• (1725)

[*English*]

It's that pursuant to Standing Order 101 the committee request that the government table a comprehensive response.

[*Translation*]

I would add that the committee must report to the House.

Ms. Louise Chabot: What are we adding? Is it the demand for a comprehensive response?

Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada: That's right, Ms. Chabot. It says that the committee must report to the House.

[*English*]

The Chair: Before we get to that, Madame Chabot, you had your hand up.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Louise Chabot: I had noted much the same amendment. I wrote "if possible", but "the possibility" works as well. That said, no one is required to do the impossible.

So I'm in favour of the amendment.

[*English*]

The Chair: For clarification, Madame Martinez Ferrada, you made an amendment to the motion.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada: The amendment seeks to add the words "the possibility". We would ask the government to codify all people who receive support.

Is this correct?

I would also add an amendment to have the committee report back to the House.

[*English*]

It's pursuant to Standing Order 101.

The Chair: We'll deal with the Standing Order 109 one after we deal with the amendment.

Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada: Well, it's a whole amendment. Can I present that as one amendment?

The Chair: No.

Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada: Why not? It's one amendment and then the other? But it's.... I just presented an amendment.

The Clerk: Oh, most definitely the amendment...if the committee would like to do it that way.

Normally, we would do a report. We would usually have Standing Order 109 at the end, following—

[*Translation*]

Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada: Do you want to do one at a time?

[*English*]

I don't mind. It's however the committee wants to do it.

The Chair: For clarification, committee members, just so that you're clear on this, we're voting first on the amendment put forward by Madame Martinez Ferrada.

Go ahead, Madam Kusie.

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): I'm sorry. Just to clarify, are there two parts to the amendment or just one?

To my understanding, just the one part is about “the possibility”.

Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada: Yes. It's my understanding that I have to present them separately.

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: Oh, okay. Your first amendment is to add the words “the possibility”.

Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada: Yes—“the possibility”.

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: So we're voting on that one amendment.

Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada: Yes.

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: All right.

Thank you.

The Chair: Okay, everybody, you've heard the amendment by Madame—

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: Is the amendment a friendly one to Ms. Zarrillo?

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo: Yes.

The Chair: Yes. She accepted it.

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: Okay. Thank you.

The Chair: Yes. I'm sorry. Madam Zarrillo had agreed to that.

Madam Martinez Ferrada, is the amendment to add the word “possibly”?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada: The amendment is “call upon the government for the possibility to codify”.

[*English*]

The Chair: Okay.

All those in agreement with the amendment, please signify by putting up your hand.

I see a consensus.

(Amendment agreed to [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: On the motion as amended, all those in agreement, please signify with your hand.

Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada: I have an amendment, Mr. Chair.

• (1730)

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: That's what I thought. Yes. That's—

Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada: The second amendment is “That, pursuant to Standing Order 109”—

The Chair: We have a second amendment on the floor from Madam Ferrada.

Clerk, could you give the proper terminology?

Ms. Ferrada wants to add “That, pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee request that the government table a comprehensive response to this report.”

This is your amendment, Madam Ferrada?

All those in agreement will signify by saying “aye”.

(Amendment agreed to [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: Now we will vote on the motion as amended.

All those in agreement with the motion of Madam Zarrillo as amended?

We have unanimous consent.

(Motion as amended agreed to [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: In the few minutes we have left, there's one more item.

On April 27 a study budget in the amount of \$26,750 was circulated for consideration and adoption. We need approval of the budget for the housing accelerator study.

Do we have agreement? Do we have approval?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Good. The budget is approved.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Louise Chabot: I have a question.

The Chair: Ms. Chabot, the floor is yours.

Ms. Louise Chabot: Yes, I have one more question. I'm in favour of the budget proposal. Correct me if I'm wrong, but my understanding is that we can now invite witnesses in person. We no longer have to limit ourselves in this respect.

If we were to invite witnesses in person, would this budget and subsequent budgets be enough?

[*English*]

The Chair: I will ask the clerk to address that, Madame Chabot.

[*Translation*]

The Clerk: Yes, it's enough, because we did some calculations before proposing the budget. We allocate amounts for witnesses who appear virtually and in person.

Ms. Louise Chabot: Thank you.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you.

Go ahead, Mr. Van Bynen.

Mr. Tony Van Bynen: Mr. Chair, I have a question before we deal with this motion. I don't want to interrupt the process with the motion. My question relates back to advertising and the communications piece for the award that we just heard today. If you want to finish the rest of the business, I would just like to speak to that.

As I said, I didn't want to interrupt, because the motion was introduced.

The Chair: Okay. That's fine.

The budget was carried.

A news release was circulated for consideration and adoption. You have the news release. Do we have approval of the news release for the housing study that's coming up? I see no objections, so the news release is finished.

The third item is—

Mr. Ron Liepert (Calgary Signal Hill, CPC): Mr. Chair, I believe we're over time. I would like to move the adjournment of the meeting.

The Chair: Yes, Mr. Liepert. A motion for adjournment is always in order. I see it has been seconded, so thank you, Mr. Liepert.

The meeting is adjourned.

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