



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 29th Legislature
Fourth Session

Standing Committee
on
Alberta's Economic Future

Bill 201, Employment Standards (Firefighter Leave)
Amendment Act, 2018

Friday, June 22, 2018
9 a.m.

Transcript No. 29-4-11

**Legislative Assembly of Alberta
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Fourth Session**

Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future

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Friday, June 22, 2018

[Mr. Sucha in the chair]

The Chair: Good morning, everyone. I'd like to welcome members, staff, guests to this meeting of the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future.

My name is Graham Sucha. I'm the MLA for Calgary-Shaw and the chair of this committee. I'd ask that members joining the committee at the table introduce themselves for the record, and then we'll hear from the members on the phone. I'll start with the member to my right.

Mr. Taylor: Good morning. Wes Taylor, Battle River-Wainwright.

Mr. Horne: Good morning. Trevor Horne, MLA for Spruce Grove-St. Albert.

Mr. Piquette: Good morning. Colin Piquette, MLA for Athabasca-Sturgeon-Redwater.

Mr. Carson: Good morning. Jon Carson, MLA for Edmonton-Meadowlark.

Ms Fitzpatrick: Good morning. Maria Fitzpatrick, MLA, Lethbridge-East.

Loyola: Good day. Rod Loyola, Edmonton-Ellerslie.

Mrs. Littlewood: Good morning. Jessica Littlewood, MLA for the beautiful rural constituency of Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville.

Mr. Koenig: Good morning. I'm Trafton Koenig with the Parliamentary Counsel office.

Ms Peck: Good morning. I'm Elizabeth Peck, acting research officer with House services.

Dr. Massolin: Good morning. Philip Massolin, manager of research and committee services.

Ms Rempel: Good morning. Jody Rempel, committee clerk.

The Chair: Excellent. For the members on the phone, I'll do a roll call here.
MLA Coolahan.

Mr. Coolahan: Yes. MLA Coolahan.

The Chair: Member McPherson.

Ms McPherson: Good morning. Karen McPherson, MLA for Calgary-Mackay-Nose Hill.

The Chair: Mr. Schneider.

Mr. Schneider: Good morning. Dave Schneider, Little Bow.

The Chair: Mr. Barnes.

Mr. Barnes: Drew Barnes, Cypress-Medicine Hat.

The Chair: Member Connolly.

Connolly: Michael Connolly, MLA for Calgary-Hawkwood.

The Chair: MLA Anderson.

Mr. W. Anderson: Good morning. Wayne Anderson, MLA, Highwood.

The Chair: Are there any other members that I've missed on this?

Hearing none, for the record I'd like to note that Member Loyola is substituting for Mr. Dach and that Mr. Barnes is substituting for Mr. Gotfried.

Before we turn to the business at hand, just a few operational items. Please note that the microphones are operated by *Hansard* and that the committee proceedings are being live streamed on the Internet and broadcast for the dozens of viewers on Alberta Assembly TV. Please set your cellphones and other devices to silent for the duration of the meeting.

Members, we'll move to the agenda. Are there any omissions or additions that people would like to make to the agenda?

Seeing and hearing none, would someone like to move the approval of that? Moved by Member Loyola that the June 22, 2018, meeting agenda of the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future be adopted as circulated. All those in favour, say aye. All those opposed, say no. And on the phones? That is carried.

Approval of the minutes. We have the minutes from our last meeting, May 3, 2018. Are there any errors or omissions to note?

Seeing and hearing none, would a member like to move adoption of the minutes, please? Moved by MLA Taylor that the minutes of the May 3, 2018, meeting of the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future be adopted as circulated. All those in favour, say aye. All those opposed, say no. And on the phones? Excellent. That is carried.

We'll move to the next item on the agenda, review of Bill 201, Employment Standards (Firefighter Leave) Amendment Act, 2018. Hon. members, the committee received a few written submissions – tentatively the number is 40 – after the June 6, 2018, deadline set by the committee. Sorry. The committee received one submission – my apologies – which was number 40, after the June 6 deadline set by the committee. Therefore, the committee needs to decide whether it wants to include this submission as part of the review. Are there any thoughts?

Mr. Piquette: I think that, you know, considering how close it was and that it's not really impeding our efforts – it's important that we hear from everyone who took the time to respond – I would suggest that we include the late submission.

The Chair: Okay. Any other members wishing to speak?

Mr. Taylor: Yeah. I agree that we ought to bring that submission forward so we have a fulsome discussion with all the ones that are here.

The Chair: Okay. Excellent. I do have a motion prepared if someone wants to move it. Moved by MLA Piquette that all written submissions received by the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future by June 21, 2018, in regard to its review of Bill 201, Employment Standards (Firefighter Leave) Amendment Act, 2018, be accepted and included in the review process.

With that motion on the floor, I'll open that up for discussion.

Seeing and hearing none, I'll call the question. All those in favour of the motion, please say aye. All those opposed, please say no. On the phones? Excellent.

That is carried.

Members, we'll move on to subsection (a), consultation, the review of written submission summaries. Our next item of business is to discuss the written submissions made to the committee from both stakeholders and the public in relation to the committee's review of Bill 201, Employment Standards (Firefighter Leave) Amendment Act, 2018. To assist us with that task, the Legislative

Assembly Office research services has provided a submission summary document to members.

At this point I'll turn the floor over to Dr. Massolin to explain the summary.

Dr. Massolin: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will turn it over to Ms Peck, actually, to do the summary, but I thought if I could just beg indulgence from you and the committee to introduce Ms Peck to you because she's new here at the Legislative Assembly Office. She's in fact covering off for Sarah Amato, who's been with the committee, as committee members may recall from previous reviews. Ms Peck has a background in anthropology with a specialization in archaeology, a bone specialist, in fact, but she's also had experience at the Legislative Assembly in the parliamentary context with *Hansard* and more recently with bills and *Journals*. She's been here for nine years, and we're fortunate to have her covering off in a secondment position until Sarah is back.

With that, I'll turn it over to Ms Peck.

Ms Peck: Thank you. Good morning again to everybody. I'm pleased to be presenting the results of the submissions regarding Bill 201. As previously stated, there were 40 submissions, and out of this total, six were from stakeholders and 34 were from the general public, the latter of which includes both volunteer and part-time firefighters who responded.

The six stakeholders who made submissions were the Rural Municipalities of Alberta, the Alberta Fire Chiefs Association, Barrhead Fire Services, the fire chief for the city of Fort Saskatchewan, Lacombe County Fire Services, and PetroChina Canada. Three stakeholders are willing to make an oral presentation, one was willing to be contacted to discuss the issue further, and two did not indicate if they would or would not be prepared to do an oral presentation.

With respect to the responses from the general public the majority were from part-time and volunteer firefighters. A more detailed breakdown of these responses is as follows: 20 submissions were from the firefighters, two submissions were from employers of volunteer or part-time firefighters, and 13 submissions were from the general public such as rural landowners. The number of submissions in favour of Bill 201 totalled 28. This number includes three stakeholders, 14 volunteer or part-time firefighters, and 11 from the general public. It should be noted that these numbers represent submissions that, based on the wording of the submission, were either completely in favour of Bill 201 or looked to be in favour just based, again, on the phrasing of the submissions.

The number of submissions not in favour of Bill 201 totalled seven. This number includes three stakeholders, three volunteer or part-time firefighters, and one from the general public. Again, these represent submissions that, based on the wording of the submissions, were either completely not in favour or looked, based on the wording, to be not in favour.

Finally, there were three submissions that could be categorized as either in favour or not.

To go to more specifics on the submissions in favour of Bill 201, two main areas they were in favour of. The bill would provide firefighters employment flexibility and job security. It would ensure that employers will allow firefighters the time and flexibility to perform the firefighter duties without fear of reprisal. Secondly, the bill would allow more firefighters to respond during the day, especially between traditional workday hours, which are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Many firefighters responded that they were unable to respond to a fire during these hours because their employer would not allow them to leave.

9:10

Secondly, the submissions that were opposed to Bill 201. The bill would cause employers to "feel forced to comply with imposed legislation," and it would "create an adversarial working environment" between the employer and the volunteer firefighter. Secondly, "the Bill may be detrimental to the recruitment of new volunteer firefighters." If Bill 201 is enacted, some submissions suggested that employers would be hesitant to hire volunteer firefighters for fear of human resource issues.

Related to section 2(3) of the bill, if an employer cannot prevent an employee from being absent from work to fulfill their obligations, several submissions implied or suggested that a business could suffer loss of productivity or loss of profit due to one or more employees being absent from work. This was particularly pertinent to the small businesses of fewer than five employees.

Finally, there were some comments with respect to specific provisions of the bill. They related only to section 2(2). The first one was that there was a suggestion that the employment time period be changed from 90 days to 180 days. Secondly, there was a request to clarify terminology specific to "occasional unpaid leave" and "assist in fire services."

That's all.

The Chair: Well, thank you, Ms Peck.

I'll open it up for questions. Before I begin, just to make life easy for the members on the phone, you can e-mail our committee clerk, Jody Rempel, if you'd like to be put on the list. Otherwise, I'll routinely check in with members on the phone.

I have MLA Fitzpatrick.

Ms Fitzpatrick: Yes. Good morning. Thank you for your submission. Some of the submissions that are labelled as public or private citizen, in my opinion, are clearly stakeholders, yet they are not included in the stakeholder category or labelled as stakeholder submissions. For example, the submissions from volunteer firefighters are not categorized as stakeholders, but they certainly are definitely some of the stakeholders that we want to hear from, and I have heard down in Lethbridge from a number of the firefighters who were involved in the Kenow fire last summer. So if you can tell me: why is this?

Ms Peck: My understanding is that there was a list of stakeholders prepared by Dr. Amato. The terminology for stakeholders is quite different, is it not?

Dr. Massolin: Well, I'm not sure if the question is referring to the categorization of stakeholder versus member of the public in the document. I think that some of the members of the public are certainly members of the firefighter community and therefore, yeah, are obviously very well engaged in this issue and could be considered stakeholders, if that's what you mean. But they submitted under the header through the form and not as a stakeholder pertaining to the stakeholder list. There's no problem, of course, with the committee considering them as such because, as you say, they're obviously stakeholders.

Thank you.

Ms Fitzpatrick: Yeah. And they've certainly told me that they're stakeholders.

Okay. My second question. I think that the stakeholder category should also include anyone who is a firefighter as well as those who are business owners and employers, but some of these types of submissions are not included as stakeholders, and it may be similar to what you just answered. An example would be submission 3,

from Hour Zero business owner Donna Gingera; submission 20, from the CAO of the town of Okotoks; and submission 30, from Henry Thomson, the deputy fire chief of St. Paul. Can you clarify what the different categories of submissions are and how it was determined?

The Chair: Dr. Massolin.

Dr. Massolin: Yeah. Thank you. As you alluded to, Ms Fitzpatrick, it's very much, you know, a similar answer to my first one, just the manner in which it was received and the difference between the stakeholder list versus receiving a submission through the form or through e-mail, through regular mail. But, I mean, Mr. Chair, I think it's for the committee to determine who's a stakeholder here and who's not, especially when anticipating what's going to go on a bit later on this morning with respect to your invitations. It's, I think, for the committee to decide who is actually a stakeholder. As you've alluded to, there's an obvious group of stakeholders here that have submitted sort of separate from the stakeholder list.

Thank you.

Ms Fitzpatrick: Okay. Thank you.

The Chair: Excellent. Any other questions? Any members on the phone?

Thank you very much, Ms Peck.

We'll move on to the next item here, decision on handling of submissions. The committee should now decide on whether or not to make submissions it has received public. Hon. members, as per the motion of the committee on May 3, 2018, all advertising asking for public submissions indicated that the identities and contents of the submissions could be made public. In previous reviews, as members know, the committee has typically elected to make the submissions they have received public after redacting personal contact information and sensitive personal information, if any.

I would now open the floor for discussions on the topic of whether or not the committee wishes to make submissions it has received public. Member Loyola.

Loyola: Thank you. It's quite clear. I mean, in every committee that I've participated in, we always say that the submissions will be made public. However, in this particular case I'm just concerned about some of the firefighters that work for other businesses and things like that. I just want to be very clear on what contact information will be provided if we were to move in this direction. If you'd just highlight that for the record, please.

The Chair: Ms Rempel.

Ms Rempel: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It really is just generally personal contact information. For any submission that would appear to be coming from a private citizen, their name is still available and if there is a city or a town, but direct contact information such as phone numbers, addresses, e-mail addresses is normally removed from the submission. Of course, if it appeared to be from an organization or a business, then all the information is available.

The Chair: Member Loyola.

Loyola: Yeah. That being the case, I'm a little concerned. I mean, I'm not from a small town although Mill Woods could be considered small town enough in that, you know, everyone knows each other, right? I'm just a little concerned that although we said that they would be made public, some of the people who did make submissions could be concerned about their names being associated with particular opinions. It could be an issue for them in their town.

So I'd like to open up a discussion on how we would deal with this sensitive matter.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Taylor: I'm from a small town and from a small community and was a firefighter in my past. I don't see this being as sensitive an issue as you're making it out to be. The people I've talked to have no problem talking about the issue that we've had thus far. I've talked to various firefighters, and it's not been an issue for them to be able to communicate, at least to me. They're willing to go on record. The ones that have submitted to us, I believe, are willing to go on record and would have no problem. It's going to be broadcast anyways, so people are going to find out, as long as we broadcast it, what's going on. I have no issue with having their name and everything else redacted to be able to have this thing properly done.

The Chair: Member Loyola.

Loyola: Yeah. For me, again, going back to that, I assume that these individuals would be willing to put their names forward, but may I suggest that we take the extra step of just double-checking with the individuals who submitted and just making sure that that's a hundred per cent, that they know that at least their name will be associated with the opinions that they submitted? Is that something that we'd like to entertain?

The Chair: Excellent. Any members on the phone? Member McPherson, go ahead.

Ms McPherson: Thanks very much. I agree with Mr. Taylor in terms of concerns about the sensitivity of the conversation, and I would like to know or confirm that when submissions were made, people were made aware of what the circumstances would be concerning publishing information.

9:20

The Chair: I'll turn this over to Ms Rempel as she may be able to discuss when we advertise these submissions.

Ms Rempel: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It is quite standard practice, and has been for a long time, with the Legislative Assembly that in any advertisements or, you know, on the committee's website itself, where it talks about making a submission and so on, it does include the statement that the name of the submitter and the content of their submission may be made public. We are now using the web form as well, and I'm sure committee members noted that a lot of the submissions did come through using the web form set-up. That statement is also included. When you access the web form, it advises you that your name and the content of your submission may be made available to the public.

Ms McPherson: Thank you.

Could I ask one more question? Actually, I just have a little bit more to say. In the context of how quickly we're able to deal with matters in committee and also in the context of how there are a number of stakeholders that would like to make presentations to the committee outside of the work that we're doing reviewing legislation, I'm really not in favour of delaying unnecessarily any procedures that we have to go through. Because we have already let people know what the rules and expectations of doing this are, I'm really not in favour of reaching out to the submitters again and further delaying the process.

The Chair: Okay. Any other questions or comments?

Loyola: Respectfully to our committee clerk, I'd like to ask: how much time could it potentially take to contact these individuals and just double-check with them to see if it's okay?

Ms Rempel: Well, because we only received 40 submissions, an initial attempt at contacting them would not likely take all that long. However, very often there are those who are harder to reach or who may not respond so quickly. I guess that if you choose to go down this road, whatever direction you give will have to be very clear for staff as far as, you know, if someone doesn't want their submission made public – are we going to pick them off one at a time, or are we just going to remove their names from their submission, anything like that? – so that it's quite clear going forward.

Loyola: I'll be honest. Because I'm subbing on this committee, I don't have all the information. I haven't reviewed all the submissions in great detail. I'm just concerned that some of the volunteer firefighters may have been highlighting specific issues that they have with their specific employers, and that could be quite sensitive. I mean, I don't want to delay the process by any means. I'm in agreement with Member McPherson that we want to move forward on this.

If you don't mind, I'll make a motion.

The Chair: Okay. Please proceed.

Loyola: Okay. I'd like to move that the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future make all written submissions accepted by the committee as part of its review of Bill 201, Employment Standards (Firefighter Leave) Amendment Act, 2018, available on the public website with the exception of personal contact information and sensitive personal information.

The Chair: We have a motion on the floor. I'll open that up for discussion. Ms Rempel.

Ms Rempel: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess that, based on the comments, you know, that we were just having, to ensure that if this motion passes, we follow it as intended, when you say "sensitive personal information," we would normally be looking at things like people's health issues or if they were talking about a third party. Are you meaning something else in this case – like, you've referenced employment relationships and so on – or would it just be kind of the standard third-party information, discussion about minors?

Loyola: No. My specific concern, as I mentioned before in previous comments, is items or opinions shared about specific workplaces, that we be sensitive about that moving forward. I would even go so far as to say: the person's name as well. We just want to be very careful. But it's, as for all motions, open for discussion, right, Mr. Chair?

The Chair: Absolutely.

We have a motion on the floor, so I'll open that up for discussion. Mr. Taylor.

Mr. Taylor: Yeah. I seem to almost be a little bit confused as to: are you suggesting that we redact all the names or just the names of the people that want to have this information redacted? I'm not quite clear, Mr. Loyola.

Loyola: Sure. I'd be happy to respond to that, Mr. Chair, through you to the member. I think it's important that we make sure that we redact in any way that the person could be identified through their

submission. For example, if within their submission they specifically stated who their employer is, that would be redacted.

The Chair: Mr. Schneider.

Mr. Schneider: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think the conversation has moved past where I wanted to speak. Could I ask Parliamentary Counsel to just fill us in again on what the submissions actually stated? For the people that were filling out those submissions, did they realize that their name may be used publicly as we move forward? I just wanted to hear that if I could.

The Chair: Ms Rempel.

Ms Rempel: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We do note that both the name and the content of the submission may be made available to the public.

Mr. Schneider: I just wonder if Mr. Loyola could explain why, then, for the people that made a submission, he's now concerned that they may not want their names to appear on their submission. I'm just a little confused. I'm something like Mr. Taylor and something like Ms McPherson, and I'm just a little lost.

Loyola: Sure. Mr. Chair, through you to the member on the phone, I'd just like to state that my concern is that if they specifically highlight who their employer is and any problems that they have with their employer, it could potentially lead to reprisal. I'm not suggesting that it will. I'm suggesting that it could potentially lead to some kind of reprisal against the person who made the submission. That's my immediate concern.

I've travelled throughout this province. Being a union president, I've had a number of conversations with employees that have stated to me a number of times that they're a little bit concerned about coming forward with specific issues because of fear of reprisal. Whether that fear of reprisal is legitimate or not, it's still something that we need to acknowledge, and we need to be sensitive towards that. So this is the reason why I'm bringing this forward. I wouldn't bring it forward out of jest. It comes from experience, having been a union president, and I think that it's something that this committee should be concerned about.

The Chair: Mr. Schneider, do you have any follow-up?

Mr. Schneider: I'd like to hear from Mr. Anderson on that same point, through you, Mr. Chairman. It was my understanding that we're talking about volunteer firefighters here. The person who actually wrote the bill may have a comment about the comments that Mr. Loyola just made.

9:30

The Chair: Mr. W. Anderson.

Mr. W. Anderson: Well, thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for the kind invitation to speak to this. I'm a little confused by Member Loyola's comments. From most of the people we've spoken to and as I understand from Parliamentary Counsel, people were aware that their names would be part of the submission, and I'm not sure I've heard from anybody that anybody has been concerned about any repercussions, so maybe this is a bit of a tempest in a teapot, if you will. I leave it to the committee to address the situation. I'm merely an observer in this and the sponsor of the bill.

Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Horne.

Mr. Horne: Yeah. Thank you, Chair. First, I'd like to commend my colleague Member Loyola on the care he's putting into ensuring that employees and employers maintain a strong relationship. You know, it appears to me that we have a bill that is hoping to ensure that employees have the right to be a volunteer firefighter, and while I don't have the written submissions in front of me right now, I seem to recall that there were a few that indicated who their employer was or some information about that. It seems to me that with an amendment where we're talking about employees not being given leave to be a volunteer firefighter, it would be prudent for us to ensure that people can make submissions to this committee without facing repercussions from their employer. I don't know if we have to go so far as redacting all of the names but certainly the names of the employers, I believe.

The Chair: Mr. Taylor.

Mr. Taylor: Yeah. With all due respect, we already have the submissions. Is that not correct? What we've got: is that a complete list for the most part?

The Chair: Yeah. To provide clarification for the members of the committee – and I'll allow Parliamentary Counsel to step in if I'm incorrect on this – the committee members have the ability to view the submissions in their full form. When items are redacted, that's just what's released to the public, not to the committee members.

Mr. Taylor: Yeah. You know, in principle, I don't have a problem with redacting the person's name if it feels like it's going to be a sensitive issue. We can move on if that's the will of this room.

Ms Fitzpatrick: Certainly, for me, when I looked at the submissions, it's the issues that I want to look at, not who sent them or who the employer is. A couple of people who spoke to me were a little concerned that, in fact, their employer may say: see you later, because you're opening up stuff that I want to keep inside the business. It was all about whether they were volunteer firefighters or not, and these people stepped forward to be volunteer firefighters, not expecting to be out at a fire for months on end. However, we all know the possibilities with wildfires. I think it's the issue that we have to look at, not who provided the information or who the employer is. So I'm absolutely fine with redacting that information to the public.

The Chair: Member Loyola.

Loyola: Yeah. The motion as I've stated it is for "personal contact information," so there we're good with the names. Like, the names can still go forward. My immediate concern, as I've been stating all along, is that when I said "sensitive personal information," I would deem that to be, for example, the employer, if they happened to have mentioned their employer in their submission. That would be my main concern. As Ms Fitzpatrick has just mentioned, I mean, what's most important here are the issues that these people have brought forward, right? We wouldn't be losing anything from that.

The other thing that I would like to stress is that a lot of times when submitting to committees, people are assuming that they're submitting to committees. I mean, I know that we stress that, yeah, they may be made public, but I'm not too sure if they are a hundred per cent clear on how much of their information will be put out there. So I'm going to let my motion stand, with the idea that "sensitive personal information" would mean if they identified their employer. That would be my immediate concern.

The Chair: Yeah. For clarification, just from the context of the conversation, you would remove the employer's name.

Loyola: Yeah.

The Chair: Okay. Excellent. And you are right, Member Loyola, that this does not negate the committee members having full access to all submissions that are there as well.

Member McPherson.

Ms McPherson: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just want to clarify. It sounds, from the conversation I've heard so far, like the concern is any kind of retribution against volunteer firefighters from their employers. I understand that. Now, in terms of what the common practice is, we've already established that the common practice is to let people know that their names or personal information may be used, but what about in publishing information? Do we not already redact personal information from published reports?

The Chair: Dr. Massolin, do you wish to supplement?

Dr. Massolin: Mr. Chair, may I just ask for clarification? I think that part of it I understand to mean that, like, the standard motion would redact contact information for individuals; however, for organizations, that information is usually included in the public posting of submissions.

In terms of the report part of Member McPherson's question I'm not too clear on what the intention behind that is.

Ms McPherson: I was just asking – oh. Sorry.

The Chair: No. I was just going to bring it to you, so that's okay.

Ms McPherson: Okay. I was just grasping for a word. Like, with any information that we're publishing through the committee to the public, do we not already redact people's personal information?

Dr. Massolin: I would say that if the committee passes this type of motion, which it typically does, then the staff would go and redact the contact information, as I've said, but also there is that sensitive information part, that Ms Rempel mentioned a few minutes ago. That has been taken to mean: in cases where there's medical information, you know, if the committee is, obviously, undertaking a medical or health issue, or financial information. There was one committee that looked at pensions, for instance. That information would be redacted. The sensitive personal information, you know, is context specific. It could also be about minors, information about minors that might be inadvertently disclosed in one of these submissions.

Thank you.

Ms McPherson: Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Yeah. Please proceed, Member McPherson.

Ms McPherson: Thanks. I'm not trying to belabour the point, but I'm still really unclear. I think what I heard was that unless the committee passes a motion to say otherwise, then by default people's names or contextual information are published. Is that correct?

Dr. Massolin: It's a committee decision whether or not to make these submissions public. As the chair has indicated, the submissions are always available to members of the committee and their staff and LAO staff. What the committee is doing right now is deciding whether or not to make the submissions public, and the

issue at hand is what types of information to include or to redact from these submissions.

Thank you.

The Chair: Excellent.

Ms McPherson: Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Go ahead.

Ms McPherson: I understand what we're speaking about, and my question is: is it strictly up to the committee to decide the level of information that is being shared publicly, or is there a default or a go-to in terms of what information is normally shared publicly?

9:40

Mr. Koenig: If it's helpful for the committee, I can maybe just provide a bit of background. Of course, committees of the Legislative Assembly aren't subject to FOIP the way the government would be, but typically when information is being collected or disclosed under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, the requirement is that you explain what personal information is being collected at the time of its collection and what will be done with it. That's usually the suggestion that we provide to members, that it's a good practice to implement when you're collecting personal information and doing something with it.

Now, of course, in this case people who have submitted information from the public have been advised at the time of submission that that information may become public, and they're aware that that information is being submitted in the context of the review of this legislation. Really, again, it's up to the committee how they wish to deal with that, but, I mean, that's generally the suggested approach, to ensure that members of the public are aware of what's being collected and what will be done with that information.

The Chair: MLA Littlewood.

Mrs. Littlewood: Thank you. Right. My understanding of the motion is just that we are making the submissions public as it's written. We're not saying that the submitters' names are being redacted. It says that "personal contact information and sensitive personal information" would be redacted. So it'll have all of the names, and the intent, as I understand from MLA Loyola, is that the employers' names are not relevant to the submission. The content of the submission does not need to have the employer's name to have the intent of what the submitter is speaking about. All that is being asked is that the employers' names would be included with the sensitive personal information aspect of it, so I support this motion as it is.

The Chair: Excellent. Any other members wishing to speak to the motion?

Seeing and hearing none, I will call the question. Ms Rempel, if you can read it into the record, just because it's been a while.

Ms Rempel: It has. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Member Loyola has moved that the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future make all written submissions accepted by the committee as part of its review of Bill 201, Employment Standards (Firefighter Leave) Amendment Act, 2018, available on the public website with the exception of personal contact information and sensitive personal information.

The Chair: Having heard the motion, all those in favour, say aye. All those opposed, say no. On the phones? Excellent.

That motion is carried.

Ms McPherson: Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Yes, Member McPherson.

Ms McPherson: Twice now you haven't asked for any opposed on the phone.

The Chair: Apologies. I asked a generic question on the phones, so typically people were saying aye or opposed, but I can also ask for opposed, or you can seek a recorded vote if you'd like.

Ms McPherson: No. I just would like to say that I am opposed.

The Chair: Okay. Did you want a recorded vote, Member McPherson?

Ms McPherson: No. Just the opportunity to say it.

The Chair: Okay. Excellent.

All right. Moving on to the next item of business, oral presentations, hon. members, as the next step of the consultation process committees in the past have opted to receive more detailed information from specifically identified stakeholders in the form of oral presentations. Committee members were reminded to come to the meeting prepared with a list of any potential presenters they wish to put forward for consideration.

I'd like to open up the floor to discussion as to whether members would like to invite participants and organizations to make oral presentations to the committee.

Mr. Taylor: I would, yes, encourage that we open up to oral presentations so that we can have that as well, and then we'll still be able to use that last motion that you put forward to redact that certain information so there's no fear of reprisals if there's something that comes up from the oral presentations. So I would encourage all presentations to go forward.

The Chair: Okay. Excellent. Any other members? Mr. Piquette.

Mr. Piquette: Yeah. I'd agree. I think that firefighters, employers, and business stakeholders that indicated that they would be willing to present orally should be invited. So I'd be happy to forward that list to the committee clerk when required, or I can read it into the record now if you prefer that.

The Chair: Are you wanting to move a motion? If you want, what we can do before moving a motion – you know, this is obviously at the will of the committee – is that we can start discussing and bringing forward all the members that we wish to see publicly, and then once we've determined all those members, we can move a motion with all the listed ones that the committee members have discussed.

Mrs. Littlewood: I would just like to know: will we be giving the list of people that we're asking to come and present after this, like, just forwarding a list, or are you asking us to name them on the record now?

The Chair: It's really at the will of the committee as to what the context of the motion says. You know, in past practices we have listed the members we want to present at this moment. The biggest challenge that you would have and that any members would have is that if you direct the committee after the fact, there would be no discussion over who the members could be, so you wouldn't be able to zero in on who you'd want to be presenting.

Mr. Piquette, for the context of those on the phone, if you'd just like to explain the list of members that you have.

Mr. Piquette: Okay. You want me to read it out, then, to be clear?

The Chair: Yeah.

Mr. Piquette: Okay. For organizations: the Alberta Fire Chiefs Association, Rural Municipalities of Alberta. For businesses: PetroChina Canada, Hour Zero. Then for individuals: Shawn McKerry, Drayton Bussiere, John Whittaker, Patrick McLaughlin, Dallas Kiezik, Nicole Thomson, Jason Power, Carson Sargent, Lyle Birnie, Brayden Willard, Delaney Bugiera, Nancy Weigel, Keane Martin, Ray Gradwell, Jordan Storey, Colton Renschler, Rebecca Laramee, Nick Frank, Henry Thomson, Jason Albert, Chris MacLennan, Marco Vanderburg, Justin Graham, Jason Curry, and Dean Dumbeck. I'd like to apologize if I mangled any of those names.

The Chair: Mr. Piquette, just because this is a very thorough list, would you consent to us e-mailing this to members who are on the phone, including Mr. W. Anderson?

Mr. Piquette: That was kind of what I was originally thinking. Yes, I would, certainly.

The Chair: Excellent. The committee clerk, for members on the phone, will be e-mailing all members the list of potential submissions from Mr. Piquette.

Mr. Taylor: Could I add to that list at this time?

The Chair: Yeah. Absolutely. Go ahead, Mr. Taylor.

Mr. Taylor: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to add Ken Thevenot, Len Zebedee, Jon Koroluk, and Cliff Bethune. I can send you that information with their names.

Ms Rempel: Sure. Then I'll e-mail it all together.

The Chair: Excellent. As the committee clerk prepares that, are there any other members who have any additional presenters that they would like to propose? Members on the phone?

I think what might be prudent at this time is that we actually recess for five minutes while the committee clerk prepares that. Then we will resume five minutes from now just so that members on the phone and all of us have an opportunity to see the list of proposed submitters. We will recess for five minutes.

[The committee adjourned from 9:49 a.m. to 9:55 a.m.]

The Chair: All right. We'll call the meeting back to order.

An e-mail has been sent out to the committee members who are joining us on the phone or who aren't present in the room with us. Was everyone able to have a chance to receive those?

With that being said, because we have the proposed presenters, we do have a motion prepared if someone wants to move that. Mr. Horne. I can read a draft motion for you if you're willing to move it. I apologize if I mispronounce names. Moved by Mr. Horne that the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future invite the following individuals and groups to make an oral presentation to the committee as part of its review of Bill 201, Employment Standards (Firefighter Leave) Amendment Act, 2018: Alberta Fire Chiefs Association, Peter Krich; Rural Municipalities of Alberta, Al Kemmere; PetroChina Canada, Murray Casault; Hour Zero, Donna Gingera; Shawn McKerry; Drayton Bussiere; John Whittaker; Patrick McLaughlin; Dallas Kiezik; Nicole Thomson; Jason Power; Carson Sargent; Lyle Birnie; Brayden Willard; Delaney Bugiera; Nancy Weigel; Keane Martin; Ray Gradwell; Jordan Storey; Colton Renschler; Rebecca Laramee;

Nick Frank; Henry Thomson; Jason Albert; Chris MacLennan; Marco Vanderburg; Justin Graham; Jason Curry; Dean Dumbeck; Ken Thevenot, fire chief of the town of Okotoks; Len Zebedee, retired fire chief, High River; Jon Koroluk, fire chief of the village of Edgerton; Cliff Bethune, retired fire chief, town of Wainwright.

Ms Rempel.

Ms Rempel: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just before that motion may or may not be confirmed by the member, for clarity, most committees, when they invite an organization to make a presentation, direct the invitation to the organization and not necessarily a specific individual as there may be someone else that the organization, you know, feels is more appropriate to handle the subject matter. So if that's the will of the committee, just to make the motion clearer.

The Chair: Excellent. Okay.

Mr. Horne, would that motion meet your . . .

Mr. Horne: Yeah. I'm happy with that motion in terms of the list of people we're inviting for an oral presentation.

The Chair: Excellent. I'll open that motion up to the floor for discussion. Any members on the phones?

Seeing and hearing none, I will call the question on the motion on the floor. All those in favour, please say aye. All those opposed, please say no. Members on the phone?

That motion is carried.

Hon. members, we'll move to other business. Is there any other business that members wish to discuss at this time? MLA Littlewood.

Mrs. Littlewood: Sorry. I just wanted to ask about when we would be scheduling these meetings. Is it too late to discuss that?

The Chair: We have date of next meeting. We can also tie that in with other business if you want to discuss that right now.

Mrs. Littlewood: Okay. I guess I just would want to mention that, you know, it's a busy season for firefighters, obviously. Being that it's peak fire season right now in the province, I'm assuming that we're not going to be scheduling these until September.

The Chair: That can be done as long as I don't really hear any opposition to that. Then that also gives Parliamentary Counsel ample time to proceed.

Mrs. Littlewood: Okay.

The Chair: Any other members wishing to comment on that?

Excellent. We'll move on to the date of the next meeting. Hon. members, just to recognize the comments from MLA Littlewood about the busy fire season and the summer season as well, we'll aim to have the stakeholder meetings scheduled for the beginning of September. Does anyone oppose that or have any comments in relation to that?

Seeing and hearing none, I will poll some dates in the near future for that time.

Other than that, we'll move to the next item. Would someone like to move a motion to adjourn? Moved by MLA Layola that the meeting be adjourned. All those in favour, please say aye. All those opposed, please say no. On the phones?

Loyola: Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Sorry?

Loyola: Mr. Chair, just for the record it's Loyola, not Layola. You know, just a clarification.

The Chair: Fair enough. Fair enough.

All right. That motion is carried. The meeting is now adjourned.

[The committee adjourned at 10:02 a.m.]

