



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 29th Legislature  
Second Session

Standing Committee  
on  
Legislative Offices

Child and Youth Advocate Act Review

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**Legislative Assembly of Alberta  
The 29th Legislature  
Second Session**

**Standing Committee on Legislative Offices**

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**Participants**

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Joni Brodziak, Director, Policy, Practice and Program Development, Child and Family Services	
David Goodburn, Barrister and Solicitor, Legal Services	



**9 a.m.****Tuesday, August 16, 2016**

[Mr. Shepherd in the chair]

**The Chair:** All right. It's 9 o'clock, so I guess we will begin, call the meeting to order. I'd like to welcome members, staff, and guests to this meeting of the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices.

My name is David Shepherd, MLA for Edmonton-Centre and chair of this committee. I would ask the members and those joining us at the table today to introduce themselves for the record, and then we'll hear from those on the phone. We'll start to my right.

**Mr. Malkinson:** Brian Malkinson, MLA for Calgary-Currie, deputy chair.

**Mr. van Dijken:** Glenn van Dijken, MLA, Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock.

**Mr. Cyr:** Scott Cyr, MLA, Bonnyville-Cold Lake.

**Mr. Ellis:** Mike Ellis, MLA, Calgary-West.

**Ms Stewart:** Jackie Stewart, executive director for child and youth advocacy with the office of the Child and Youth Advocate.

**Mr. Graff:** Good morning. My name is Del Graff. I'm the Child and Youth Advocate for the province.

**Ms Russell:** Hello. I'm Bonnie Russell, the director of strategic support with the office of the Child and Youth Advocate.

**Ms Brodziak:** Good morning. My name is Joni Brodziak, and I'm a director with policy, practice and program development in Alberta Human Services.

**Mr. Goodburn:** Good morning. I'm David Goodburn. I'm a barrister and solicitor with Human Services.

**Mr. Kleinsteuber:** Good morning, folks. Jamie Kleinsteuber, the MLA for Calgary-Northern Hills.

**Mrs. Littlewood:** Good morning. Jessica Littlewood, Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville.

**Ms Woollard:** Good morning. Denise Woollard, Edmonton-Mill Creek.

**Mr. Horne:** Morning. Trevor Horne, Spruce Grove-St. Albert.

**Ms Sales:** Good morning. Tracey Sales, Legislative Assembly, communications services.

**Ms Sorensen:** Good morning. Rhonda Sorensen, manager of corporate communications and broadcast services.

**Dr. Amato:** Good morning. Sarah Amato, research officer.

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

**Ms Dean:** Good morning. Shannon Dean, Law Clerk and director of House services.

**Mrs. Sawchuk:** Karen Sawchuk, committee clerk.

**The Chair:** On the phones.

**Ms Jabbour:** Debbie Jabbour, MLA, Peace River.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Angela Pitt, MLA, Airdrie, sitting in for MLA Jason Nixon.

**The Chair:** Thank you. Yes, for the record I'll note that, as Mrs. Pitt mentioned, she is substituting for Mr. Nixon, and then Mr. Cyr is here today substituting for Mr. Cooper.

Now, before we turn to the business at hand, a few of the operational items. The microphone consoles are operated by the *Hansard* staff. Please keep cellphones and BlackBerrys on silent and off the table as these can interfere with the audiofeed. Audio of the committee proceedings is streamed live on the Internet and recorded by *Alberta Hansard*. Audio access and meetings transcripts are obtained via the Legislative Assembly website.

A couple of small items to get through off the top. The agenda: would a member move a motion to approve today's meeting agenda? Mr. Horne. All in favour? Any opposed? On the phones? Okay. That motion is carried.

Adoption of the meeting minutes. We've got a set of the draft minutes from the June 22, 2016, meeting. Those have been distributed for consideration. Any errors or omissions? If not, I'd look for a motion to approve the minutes. All right. Ms Woollard. All in favour? Any opposed? On the phones? That motion is carried.

We'll begin with the business of the committee for today. First up, we have some of our work on the review of the Child and Youth Advocate Act. Today we have some guests joining us from the Ministry of Human Services to provide a technical briefing on the Child and Youth Advocate Act from the perspective of the department. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for joining us here today. As introduced earlier, we have here today Ms Joni Brodziak, the director of policy, practice and program development with child and family services, and Mr. David Goodburn, from the Human Services legal team and Justice and Solicitor General.

I'll hand things over to you at this point. You have 20 minutes for your presentation, and then we'll take some time for some questions. I guess I didn't need to introduce you because I'm going to ask you again to introduce yourselves and begin when you're ready.

### Ministry of Human Services

**Ms Brodziak:** Great. This is Joni Brodziak, and I am a director with Human Services in what we call the child and youth services division, which is responsible for child intervention service delivery. The presentation today is a technical briefing related to how child intervention is delivered and then its connection to the office of the Child and Youth Advocate.

Generally speaking, I'll touch briefly on the establishment of the Child and Youth Advocate as the genesis of that office was in the Ministry of Human Services; the current relationship with the OCYA; then some of the work that we do together, including collaboration on individual advocacy, mandatory notifications, death or injury of young people receiving intervention services; and then our responses and accountabilities to the office of the Child and Youth Advocate.

I'm going to talk briefly about child intervention services overall and what they are. Commonly referred to in other jurisdictions as child protection services, child protective services, and child welfare services, child intervention provides a range of supports and services to children, youth, and families in several buckets. Initial assessment work: assessing whether or not there's risk to kids in families. Then, open file work: that could either be kids at home receiving services with their parents or in the care of the department receiving services. What we would call postvention services: that would include supports such as extended supports to

children who've been involved with the child intervention system before 18, and we provide postintervention services up to the age of 24.

These services are delivered through three pieces of legislation. The most commonly known piece of legislation is the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act of 2004. What that does is that it grants the authority for service-provisioned children who are or may be at risk of being abused, neglected, or otherwise in need of intervention. There are several categories under there, including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional injury. Responsibilities under this legislation generally include assessing risk to child safety and well-being, assessing parental capacity, and assuming custody and guardianship when needed. The other two concurrent pieces of legislation that are delivered through the child intervention system are the Protection of Sexually Exploited Children Act and the Drug-endangered Children Act.

Who do we serve? Every year we receive approximately 50,000 to 52,000 intakes. Those are formal intakes. That doesn't include information calls that we receive, referral calls that we receive. These are the kinds of calls that express a particular concern for a child or children and their families. Who do we receive them from? Some of the primary referral sources tend to be schools and police departments.

Of those 52,000 intakes or 50,000 intakes, depending on the year, that we complete, 89 per cent of them do not open to a formal status. That could mean that we've gone out and assessed the situation, talked with collaterals, other partners in the community, that family's network, and either provided a brief service or a referral to community but that they didn't meet the threshold in the legislation for ongoing involvement. Seven per cent of those intakes result in an open to not-in-care status. What that means is that those children and their families are served while those children are still in the home and can be provided a range of services, including parent aid, family support, youth worker, sometimes supports for short-term needs as it relates to housing, food, connection to their communities and families. Four per cent of intakes open to an in-care status. That means that removal is necessary, at least in the short term, to protect the child's safety and well-being.

#### 9:10

This is how the caseload was broken down for 2015-16. There were approximately 9,600 children who received services in 2015 and 2016. Sixty per cent of those children are aboriginal; 2,700 of those children received services while they were still at home with their families, and in 37 per cent of those situations the child and family were aboriginal. Approximately 6,900 children received services while in care, and 69 per cent of those children are aboriginal. Approximately 1,700 of that group were in temporary care, which means that there's an intent for those children to return home when it's appropriately safe to do so, and 5,200 of them are in permanent care, which means that their parents' guardianship rights have been fully terminated. This is a group of children who are being served that accumulates over time. We'll have children there who are three months of age and children who are 18 years of age. These are children who have not been able to be returned home or have other permanent arrangements made.

Who's involved? Really, who delivers services? The ministry has about 1,350 intervention caseworkers. These are workers that do everything from assessment all the way to adoption. They work with kids, they work with families, and are delegated through the authority established in the legislation for a variety of activities.

We also have 350 supervisors who are delegated in service delivery. Supervisors provide a range of approvals for the kinds of status that are taken, so decisions around removal or not removal,

decisions around signing off case plans, decisions to proceed with particular court orders rest with those delegated supervisors.

There are another 140 staff within the department, and they range from doing direct delivery, including adoptions and postguardianship services, to providing for and supporting advancing futures bursaries, which is a bursary that any child who's been in the care of the department is eligible for in terms of postsecondary.

There are also approximately 350 caseworkers in 17 delegated First Nations agencies. What that means is that we have agreements with delegated First Nations agencies throughout the province – some of those agreements are bilateral agreements, and some of them are trilateral agreements – where they're provided the legislative authority to deliver services in those particular First Nations communities and then receive support through federal funding. They are not government employees. Our primary relationship with them is through their delegated authority that they receive.

Last and definitely not least, we have approximately 4,000 full-time equivalents in the contract agency sector, generally not-for-profit but who provide a range of services, including homemaker, parent aide, youth work, agency foster care, group and residential care. They are contracted through the ministry to provide those services when there's a legislative reason for the ministry to be involved.

That's a high-level overview of child intervention in 10 minutes, I guess.

Now I'm going to talk just briefly in terms of some of the touch points between the work that the ministry does and the office of the Child and Youth Advocate. In the very early days, 1989, the office of the children's advocate, as it was known at that time, was established as part of an internal ministry structure. It was intended to do a couple of things for the ministry, and one was to ensure that children in care, children receiving services, had a voice and had a say and had somebody who could speak for them.

The other role that the advocate played while they were part of the internal ministry structure was that of identifying systemic issues that impacted children and families who were receiving services, and those tended to be identified in annual reports at that point.

Some questions around the need for an independent advocate were raised as early as 2008, when the ministry appointed a committee to review accountability and transparency. I think that the commentary at that point in time was that by being part of an internal ministry structure, did that office have the ability, really, to identify systemic issues within the system for which they worked? At that point in time the committee felt that there were enough checks and balances in the system that made that appropriate.

In 2012 the office of the Child and Youth Advocate was made an independent office of the Legislature. I know Del will go more into detail about that during his presentation. The role and relationship to the ministry changed as a consequence of that, and here are some of our current formal touch points.

It was interesting, I would say, to have an internal arm of the ministry become an independent body of government, so we had to ensure that we didn't take for granted how that relationship was going to work. At that point in time determination was made to sign a high-level, principled MOU to say: we understand our obligations under the legislation as a ministry, and we understand the rights and authorities that the office of the Child and Youth Advocate has vis-à-vis access to our system, so how are we going to make this work?

We meet regularly with the office of the Child and Youth Advocate on issues related to that MOU and anything else that arises related to our need to work together on information sharing, file sharing, identification of systemic barriers and challenges,

collaboration on certain tools. As a consequence of the need for this office to have access to detailed file information for a couple of purposes, including individual advocacy but also investigative work, the OCYA maintains full access to what is currently known as the intervention services information system, our internal case management database.

The children and youth who receive services under our pieces of legislation are entitled to services of an advocate basically at any time but certainly when they feel their interests and voices are not being considered in decisions that impact them. This is a role that the office of the Child and Youth Advocate played before they were independent and had their own legislation as well. Individual advocates will quite often meet with caseworkers, read file information, participate in case conferences, have conversations with workers, all with a view to ensuring that a child or a young person's voice is heard in the services that impact them and that they're meaningfully involved to the level that they can be in decisions that are going to have lifelong consequences for them.

We also have a mandatory notification process that we currently have established in policy that creates a bit of a formalized heads-up for the office of the Child and Youth Advocate where we're required to refer certain matters to the office of the Child and Youth Advocate. These are the current matters that have been established: when a young person disagrees with a significant decision that pertains to them, when we or somebody that's involved with them feel that the needs of the child are not being met, when significant persons in the child's or young person's life have competing interests that are not focused on the child, or when there's an allegation of abuse or neglect of a child who is in care. Those are mandatory notifications to the office of the Child and Youth Advocate, who will make their determinations about what role they may play in those particular circumstances, and that will be I think on a case-by-case basis depending on the circumstances. However, these notifications are tracked and are used for sort of ongoing theming of issues that appear to be arising in either clusters or in particular pockets of the province, et cetera.

9:20

I'm going to talk about death or injury of young people receiving intervention services, and I'm going to talk about our obligations as they relate to that vis-à-vis the advocate and a couple of other parties. The office of the Child and Youth Advocate is notified when there is a death or serious injury involving a young person receiving intervention services. They're considered designated intervention services, so that's everything from being a child we get involved with at intake all the way to a child who's a permanent ward and young people under the age of 22. Again, Del will likely get into this piece, but his act provides the authority for the OCYA to conduct investigations on the circumstances and release public reports. Our act requires us to respond publicly to those reports with a commitment to action.

The other parties that we're required to notify are the Child and Family Services Council for Quality Assurance, which is a ministry body, and if the child is in care, we have to notify the office of the Chief Medical Examiner, who may refer that to a fatality inquiry board, who may also do a fatality inquiry on that matter. Finally, internal to the ministry the statutory director of our legislation can also complete quality assurance reviews on serious incidents, including death or serious injury of a child who is receiving services.

I just wanted to note that the ministry is currently undertaking a bit of a more comprehensive review of child death review processes overall to create some assurance that we're following leading practice.

The OCYA has also released a couple of special reports that are based on authority under the legislation that impacts the child intervention system, including *Where Do We Go from Here?*, which was a review done in 2013 related to challenges and systemic issues faced by young people who are exiting the care system, and then most recently, a month ago, *Voices for Change: Aboriginal Child Welfare in Alberta*, that set out a bit of a path related to some crossministry work that can happen around tackling the overrepresentation of aboriginal children and families in the child intervention system.

I wanted to sort of profile recommendations that were received. For anyone who's providing formal public recommendations to the child intervention system, we track the recommendations in a database as it relates to our ongoing accountability for making progress. That just at a high level sort of provides an overview of the last five years. We publicly post this information. What you will note is that the office of the Child and Youth Advocate isn't the only body that provides recommendations to the system. However, I think in 2016-17 and '17-18 they will be the primary recommending body just based on the number of reports.

Just a bit of a scoping, high-level view in terms of context, of 158 recommendations received by Human Services over the past five years, 68 were from the office of the Child and Youth Advocate. We've broken it down a bit more in terms of where things are at with those recommendations.

I think I referenced earlier that when an investigative report is released by the office of the Child and Youth Advocate, we are legislatively obligated to post a public response and commitment to the recommendations that have been made.

That concludes our particular part of the presentation.

**The Chair:** Thank you. We appreciate that information.

At this point, then, we will open the floor to any questions from members of the committee for Human Services.

**Mrs. Littlewood:** I'm just wondering: with regard to the Child and Youth Advocate Act how does it interact with the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act?

**Ms Brodziak:** I'll speak on the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act component. We have obligations around reporting that are built in to the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act. We are required to notify of serious injury and death. Our other commitment in our legislation – David can correct me if I'm wrong – is related to ensuring that we publicly post our commitment as it relates to those reports. Those are the two places where the office of the Child and Youth Advocate are particularly noted in the legislation, under the CYFE legislation, essentially.

**Mrs. Littlewood:** Are there any other provisions that the committee should be aware of when it comes to that?

**Mr. Goodburn:** The advocate is also mentioned in section 105.72 as part of the council for quality assurance, so he is a statutory member of that committee.

**Mrs. Littlewood:** Okay. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Any other members with questions? Anyone on the phones? Mrs. Littlewood, you had another question?

**Mrs. Littlewood:** Just one more question. I'm just wondering what authority the advocate has to investigate serious injury or death of children receiving services that are on-reserve.

**Ms Brodziak:** I'm wondering if I should defer that question to the office of the Child and Youth Advocate. Is that appropriate?

**The Chair:** Yes, if you feel he'd best present that information.

Mr. Graff, if you'd like to answer that now or if you'd prefer to wait and include that as part of your presentation: your call.

**Mr. Graff:** Certainly, I can answer it now. We do have the authority to investigate serious injuries or deaths of young people who are in that designated service group on-reserve. Often it's a bit of a slower process because we have to also deal with the political leadership of First Nations communities in the process. So it takes a bit more time, but the authority is there. We have in fact had a number of investigative reviews involving children in those circumstances.

**Mrs. Littlewood:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Any other members of the committee have questions for Ms Brodziak or Mr. Goodburn? On the phones? If not, then, we'll thank you for your portion of the presentation and for the context you provided.

We'll move on to the technical briefing that we're going to receive from Mr. Del Graff, the Child and Youth Advocate, and his colleagues Ms Jackie Stewart and Ms Bonnie Russell. On behalf of the committee I'd like to thank you for joining us today and sharing your expertise on this act as we construct the groundwork for this review.

I'm distributing some materials here that have been provided. We do have the presentation, but we also have some written materials that have been provided by Mr. Graff's office to accompany that. We'll hand things over to Mr. Graff, then, for the presentation.

### Office of the Child and Youth Advocate

**Mr. Graff:** Good morning, Chairperson Shepherd and standing committee members. It's a pleasure to be here to present an overview of the Child and Youth Advocate Act and how we have implemented this important legislation.

Before we proceed, I'd like to introduce you to Jackie Stewart, our executive director of child and youth advocacy, and Bonnie Russell, who is our director of strategic support. Jackie and Bonnie will be assisting me with the presentation this morning. Also before I start, I would like to acknowledge the work of Joni Brodziak with our office. She's worked with us for a number of years and is very effective in her role and in her interactions with our work.

9:30

This morning we'll focus on the history of the Child and Youth Advocate Act, the role of the Child and Youth Advocate, how we have operationalized the act, and we'll introduce some opportunities that we see for changes to the legislation. We will also provide a written technical briefing of the document as additional information. I think that's been distributed to you in your binders.

The office of the Child and Youth Advocate started in September of 1989. We were one of the first children's advocates offices in Canada. Before April of 2012 the office reported to the Minister of Human Services. The Child and Youth Advocate Act was introduced into the Legislature in November of 2011, received royal assent in December of 2011, and was proclaimed as of April 1, 2012.

Since the act was proclaimed, three amendments have been approved. In November of 2013 two amendments were enacted. The first amendment enabled us to provide evidence in an appeal under section 20 of the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act.

The second amendment enabled us to investigate the serious injury or death of a young person over 18 receiving support and financial assistance under the enhancement act. These amendments to the act were made at my request. Then in May of 2014 the act was further amended to enable us to investigate the death of a child who was receiving designated services within the two-year period preceding their death. That amendment was made at the request of the government.

Our office advocates for some of Alberta's most vulnerable young people. The act defines a child as

- (i) a person under the age of 18 years, including a youth, who is receiving or seeking to receive a designated service, or
- (ii) a person... who is receiving support and financial assistance

under the enhancement act. The act defines designated services as services provided to children and youth under the enhancement act, excluding adoption services; services provided under the Protection of Sexually Exploited Children Act, or PSECA – these children are often involved in prostitution or other forms of child exploitation – and, finally, services provided in the youth criminal justice system. Many of these children and youth have backgrounds that are characterized by exposure to neglect, abuse, addictions, and violence.

I want to talk briefly about my role as the Child and Youth Advocate. As an independent officer of the Legislature my role is to represent the rights, interests, and viewpoints of children by leading the development and delivery of individual and systemic advocacy, investigations, child legal representation, community and aboriginal engagement, public education, and research; also by delegating responsibilities to others to perform duties under the act and by ensuring compliance with legislation and monitoring the quality of our services to young people on an ongoing basis. I also issue reports to the Legislature and to the public.

I'll now turn it over to Bonnie.

**Ms Russell:** Thanks, Del. Good morning, Mr. Chair and committee members. I want to share our advocacy practice framework. This framework was developed in 2015 and is key to how we have operationalized our functions. The advocacy practice framework was built upon six principles with young people at the centre of the work. All the work that the OCYA does is with or on behalf of young people, and this work crosses three continuums. Direct to indirect: some work of our office is direct, such as meeting face to face with young people, while other work is indirect, such as research to support advocacy practice. Individual to collective: advocacy can focus on individual young people or on a collective group such as in our special reports. Prevent to intervene: some advocacy is considered preventative, like rights-based education, while much of our advocacy efforts focus on issues identified by young people. The framework is intended to assist staff and stakeholders to have a common understanding of the work of the OCYA. To ensure that the advocacy that we do is effective, we must ensure that our efforts are balanced across these three continuums and are guided by all these three principles.

The advocacy practice framework supports the functions of the OCYA. We'll now focus the presentation on the OCYA functions and how we have operationalized the governing legislation within these areas. The functions of our office can be categorized as individual and systemic advocacy, legal representation, investigations, educational engagement, and our internal organizational support. We have a staff complement of 67 full-time equivalent positions and a budget of \$13.2 million to support the delivery of our mandate.

I am now going to pass it over to Jackie to talk about our operations.



**Ms Stewart:** Thanks, Bonnie. Good morning, Mr. Chair and members of the committee. The Child and Youth Advocate Act addresses our authority to provide individual advocacy in section 9, where it states, “The Advocate is to represent the rights, interests and viewpoints of children” along with communicating with children and participating in processes in which decisions are made with them, including appeals and decision review processes.

I want to provide an overview of how we have operationalized individual advocacy. Advocacy often begins when a young person or someone significant to them contacts our office. An example of when an advocate might get involved is if a young person is unhappy in a foster home or they want to visit their family and their caseworker has decided against this. Advocates also reach out to young people. Our advocates regularly go to the youth justice facilities to meet with young people to see if they need support. An advocate listens to a young person, helps them figure out ways to talk to those in charge, and educates them on their rights. If a child is able, an advocate will empower the child to speak for themselves and to direct the advocacy. It’s important to note that an advocate is there to enhance the support system that the child already has in place rather than replace it.

This chart shows the number of young people we served over the past three years. As you can see, this past year we served 2,535 young people. Although we provide services to young people from birth to early adulthood, the most common age group that we provide services to is 12 to 17 year olds.

Our office is also involved in systemic advocacy. The Child and Youth Advocate Act stipulates that the advocate may provide information and advice to government with respect to any matter relating to the rights, interests, and well-being of children. The act also provides for systemic advocacy under investigation, which Del will be addressing a little bit later. Our systemic advocacy efforts aim to improve the circumstances for young people who are receiving designated services or want to receive these services. Some examples of our systemic advocacy efforts include: with two youth advocates we provided a submission and proposed ideas on how to improve the children’s mental health system at the Mental Health Review Committee in October of 2015, we facilitated an FASD learning opportunity where Human Services staff attended to hear about ways to include FASD-affected people in decision-making processes, we have hosted and co-hosted forums on youth suicide and children’s mental health, and we’ve spoken up on issues affecting young people, for example most recently on the use of pepper spray in youth justice facilities.

Some of the results of our systemic advocacy efforts include: since April of 2012 we’ve issued 16 investigative review reports, two special reports, and semiannual service reports for all child and family service areas and delegated First Nations agencies. Through these reports we’ve made a number of recommendations to influence changes that will benefit young people now and into the future. Our most recent special report, *Voices for Change: Aboriginal Child Welfare in Alberta*, was issued in July. Through consultation with over 700 people we made eight recommendations to the government aimed at improving aboriginal child welfare practice. Our next special report will be on sexual and gender minority youth involved in child intervention and youth justice systems. We will begin planning for this report in September.

I’d now like to provide some information on legal representation for children and youth, which is more commonly known as LRCY. The Child and Youth Advocate Act provides the authority to appoint lawyers to represent children in enhancement act or PSECA matters. LRCY maintains a roster of private-buyer lawyers, and currently we have 68 lawyers on the roster located throughout Alberta. Lawyers work with young people to ensure that their legal

rights are respected and their voices are heard in court proceedings. We have service standards in place for lawyers, and we provide ongoing training for them. In 2015-2016 LRCY made 1,652 legal appointments for children. Over the past 10 years LRCY made approximately 11,000 legal appointments, and in this time we made a number of changes aimed at improving the legal services provided to young and older children.

I’d now like to turn it over to Del to talk about investigations.

**9:40**

**Mr. Graff:** Thanks, Jackie. I’ve appeared before the standing committee on a number of occasions to talk about investigations, and I’m pleased to provide some additional information today. With the proclamation of the Child and Youth Advocate Act the advocate’s authority for investigations was established. The act permits me to investigate systemic issues arising from the serious injury or the death of a child who is receiving a designated service at the time of the injury or death if in the advocate’s opinion the investigation is warranted or in the public interest.

As previously highlighted, the investigations mandate has been amended to include the serious injury or death of a child over 18 years old receiving support and financial assistance and the death of a child who received a designated service within the two years preceding their death. The purpose of our investigative reviews is to determine findings and recommendations that will improve services and supports for young people. The reviews are not fault finding, and the reports are publicly released and are nonidentifying.

I’ll now briefly describe the investigations process. There are three phases. At the examination phase we review all serious injuries and deaths reported to our office. An investigator reviews the report of serious injury or death, reviews the electronic records that we have access to as a result of the MOU, and makes at least one collateral contact. If systemic issues are identified or there are further questions, the report moves to the assessment phase. During the assessment phase the investigator reviews the work done in the examination phase, reviews additional file information, and makes additional collateral contacts.

If systemic issues are identified, the assessment then proceeds to the investigations level. During the investigative review phase we interview individuals, we access records, and we conduct research on best practice. We consult with the Child and Family Services Council for Quality Assurance with respect to our terms of reference, and we engage a panel of subject matter experts to help shape recommendations once the report is drafted. We review the report for privacy and legal considerations. We discuss the report with the ministry staff involved, with our own OCYA staff, and with the family. The report is then released to the Legislature and to the public.

From April 1, 2012, to March 31, 2016, our office received 179 reports of serious injuries and deaths of children; 156 were deaths, and 23 were serious injuries. We’ve issued 16 investigative review reports involving 22 children and in these reports have made 59 recommendations to government for systemic change. We expect to release about five more reports this fall.

As well with the act, our mandate expanded to promote the rights, interests, and well-being of children through public education. Public education focuses on helping young people to learn about their rights and how the OCYA can assist them. We also engage stakeholders about how to help young people realize their rights and how to advocate for them. This strengthens our presence in the community and creates strong networks and raises the awareness of our office. We do presentations, use social media like Twitter and Facebook, and attend events to provide education about advocacy.

As well, engaging youth is a priority for the OCYA. One way we do this is through a youth advisory panel, which is a group of nine young people from across the province who meet quarterly to provide input and advise us on a number of issues. Another way our office engages youth includes friends of the advocate, which is designed to support young people interested in the work of the OCYA. We also provide quarterly newsletters which include information, activities, et cetera, about young people's rights, and we involve young people in interviews for hiring OCYA staff, assessing LRCY roster lawyers, et cetera.

In 2015-16 we held 240 engagement and education sessions ranging from focus groups to forums and many other events. This allowed us to reach out to over 11,000 individuals attending events. Through feedback and evaluations we've heard from attendees. Here are some of the comments we received: "I like knowing the fact that I have someone in my corner." "I like the fact that I have someone who will be a voice for me."

I'll now turn it back to Bonnie, who'll provide some highlights on the internal operations of our office.

**Ms Russell:** Thanks, Del. The final functional area that we will touch on is the internal workings of the organization. The Child and Youth Advocate's office is responsible for providing direction, guidance, and oversight to the office. The strategic support division is responsible for ensuring that appropriate financial and human resources are available and that systems and supports are in place to maintain the daily operations of the office. Our quality assurance area evaluates the effectiveness of our services and provides supports for continual improvement through research, data analysis, and program evaluation.

We have focused our efforts on evolving the OCYA from an organization embedded in a government ministry to an independent office. We have established a strategic leadership team within our office to provide strategic direction, promote integration and collaboration across the office, and ensure that policies and practices are in place to enable and support accountability. With our office's expanded mandate, we have increased our staffing complement by 22 positions, bringing our total FTE count to 67 since we became an independent office.

To support our operations, we relocated our Edmonton offices in 2014, and just last month we moved our Calgary office. We've also established a shared IT environment in order to provide cost-effective IT delivery to the OCYA along with other legislative offices who partner with us.

In 2015 we began the process of strengthening our quality assurance efforts through dedicated resources, greater objectivity, and more rigorous evaluations of results, thus leading to improved services for young people.

I'll turn it back to Del.

**Mr. Graff:** Thank you, Bonnie. I just want to touch quickly on some of the other authorities covered in the act. These include: establishing that the office of the Child and Youth Advocate is part of the Alberta public service and operates under the Public Service Act; as well, permitting the advocate to delegate any power, duty, or function under the act except the power to delegate and the power to make a report under the act; entitling the advocate to information necessary to enable the advocate to perform duties under the act; providing to the advocate the powers of a commissioner under the Public Inquiries Act in conducting investigations; treating information provided in an investigation as privileged; and ensuring that information provided by a child to the advocate in confidence is privileged as well.

It's hard to believe that it's been just four years since the Child and Youth Advocate Act came into force and that it's already time to be reviewed. By and large the Child and Youth Advocate Act in its current state works well, providing a strong statutory basis for us to fulfill our mandate. The act ensures authority for us to work independently, and at the same time it enables and affords us the flexibility needed to address the rights, interests, and viewpoints of vulnerable young people.

There are areas of the legislation where we believe changes should be considered. I'd like the opportunity to meet with this committee again to provide our input on where we believe changes to the act would benefit young people.

A few areas we'd like to introduce now. Clarity of definitions: for example, a clearer definition of serious injury would assist in the investigations process. As well, the act does not define systemic advocacy, which can be interpreted differently by our office, by the government, and by the public.

Current limitations on the scope of designated services does not ensure that all of Alberta's most vulnerable young people have their rights affirmed and acted upon. In particular, our experience suggests that many young people struggling with mental health need advocacy support.

Currently we are not able to provide grants to support research. Providing small grants would increase our capacity to work with research organizations.

**9:50**

In closing, I want to say that I am very proud of the work of our office and the young people that we are involved with every day. We are committed to continuing to assess and improve our services to ensure that the rights, interests, and viewpoints of Alberta's vulnerable children and youth are at the centre of all that we do.

Chairperson Shepherd, I want to thank you and the standing committee for the opportunity to talk with you this morning about the Child and Youth Advocate Act. I hope that I have conveyed the importance of the act and how this legislation and the work of my office supports young people so that they have the best possible chance of improving their lives. I look forward to continuing to work with you through this review process.

I would be happy to now respond to any questions that you have.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Graff.

At this point, then, I will open the floor to any members who may have questions for Mr. Graff or his support staff.

**Ms Woollard:** Thank you very much for your presentation, Mr. Graff, Ms Stewart, Ms Russell. That was wonderful.

The advocate has a mandate to investigate systemic issues arising from a serious injury or death of a child receiving services under the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act, under the Protection of Sexually Exploited Children Act, or through the youth criminal justice system. To date what kind of work has the advocate done in relation to children receiving services under the Protection of Sexually Exploited Children Act or through the youth criminal justice system?

**Mr. Graff:** With respect to the child death reviews, in particular as related to youth justice, the requirement for us to review the circumstances of death of children involved in the youth justice system is that they be in custody, either open or secure custody, at the time of the event. So for young people who are not in a custody circumstance but are involved with youth justice either through probation or through some other community-based justice involvement – if a young person were to die in those circumstances, we would not provide a child death review.

I think Jackie can speak a bit to the advocacy work that we provide.

**Ms Stewart:** We are routinely involved with young people that are in the youth justice system in terms of providing them with individual advocacy. As we are also involved with young people that fall under the PSECA legislation in Alberta, we often are involved in providing services to them through the work of the advocates that we have located both in Edmonton and Calgary but that provide services throughout the province.

**Ms Woollard:** Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Any other members with questions for Mr. Graff or any of the others from the OCYA? Any members on the phones?

All right. Well, if there are no further questions, we'll thank Mr. Graff, Ms Stewart, and Ms Russell for their time today. Thank you for providing us with this context. I'm sure that we'll have the opportunity to meet you further and hear some further thoughts as we progress with this review.

Moving on, then, I guess, to some of the decision items that are listed in the agenda. First of all, communication services. At our last meeting we talked about having an open call for submissions on the Child and Youth Advocate Act, and we had some discussion about the manner in which those submissions could be invited, including advertising and possibly written requests to stakeholders that may be identified during this process.

Before I ask communications services to address the draft communications plan, I suggest to the committee that the usual text for committee advertisements as well as the subsequent processing of submissions received may require some adjustment for the purposes of this review, just keeping in mind that the submissions in this case may be made by a guardian or a foster parent in reference to a minor in their care or may even be made directly by a minor. So those may involve, then, some differences in privacy concerns or in how people may be identified. We need to be careful about whether they are identified in these considerations.

With those comments in mind, I'll turn things over to communications services to address and give us a sense of the draft plan they've developed for us so far. Please, go ahead.

**Ms Sorensen:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. If I may, before I turn the floor over to my colleague Tracey Sales, I just wanted to address one of the overarching assumptions that we had in our minds when we were drafting these strategies. As the committee begins its review of the Child and Youth Advocate Act, we will of course be seeking input from a number of audiences, both directly and indirectly. We're well aware of the sensitivities that could apply. Because of that, often a large part of our strategies focus on making the process as public as possible. However, in this instance, in this review we're aiming to balance the provision of public transparency with the need for privacy in order to ensure the most meaningful input possible.

Following the presentation of the communications plan, we're going to be seeking some direction from the committee not only on the strategies within the plan but also on how the committee wishes to proceed in terms of protecting the privacy of minors and/or those advocating on behalf of minors. Following that direction, we can certainly adjust any of the strategies that we outline accordingly.

Now I'll turn it over to my colleague Tracey Sales.

**Ms Sales:** Thank you, Rhonda. In developing this plan, we did work closely with the office of the Child and Youth Advocate. We also worked with committee research. Any groups specifically covered within the stakeholder list will not be touched on in the

comms plan, but we did take this into consideration when developing the plan.

The goal of the plan, of course, is to raise awareness of the Child and Youth Advocate Act review being conducted by the committee and encourage those interested members of the public to provide input through written submissions. Some of the strategies that we've included in the plan are to target communications for those members of the public who have sought the services of the OCYA or family members of those who have experience with child intervention services, to streamline the submission process in order to remove barriers to youth involvement and to protect the privacy of minors who submit, and to liaise with the OCYA and stakeholder groups to explore free communications avenues.

The timeline that we're suggesting would have the campaign begin around September 6 and run through to October 14, so the deadline for submissions would be October 14. That gives you roughly about a six-week campaign, which is fairly consistent with what we've done in the past.

Given the narrow scope of the Child and Youth Advocate Act it is recommended that we target groups who are most likely to have worked with or sought the services of the OCYA or have experience with intervention services, as I mentioned. In accordance with the act the OCYA provides services to youth and children under the age of 22. The strategies within this plan include initiatives to target various groups, including this youth demographic as well as specific indigenous communities, which have a greater incidence of children and youth in care. There are also initiatives within this plan meant to target indigenous communities and the extended family members of children and youth who may have experience with the OCYA. It's worth noting, as Rhonda mentioned, that if we do target input from those who would be considered minors, we do have a responsibility to protect their privacy.

Now I'm just going to move on to the initiatives within the plan. We are suggesting something that we've not done previously with a committee. We're talking about an e-mail based submission form. We're hoping that producing an e-mail based submission form will not only streamline the process and make it easier for anyone who'd like to submit and specifically youth who would like to submit; it will also provide a mechanism for us to identify youth who are submitting. That will be at no cost to the committee.

We're also looking, of course, at stakeholder notices, as was mentioned, and the groups identified within the stakeholder list will be presented by research. We're recommending a province-wide newspaper campaign at \$30,000. In the interest of providing adequate notice province-wide, it is recommended that we run advertisements both in Alberta's weekly and daily papers. We're also recommending an advertisement in *Alberta Sweetgrass* – it's a digital newspaper that is distributed across the province specifically to indigenous communities – at a cost of \$500. We're recommending an advertisement with CFWE radio at \$2,000. This would provide 64 spots as well as 16 free PSAs, so we will be recommending that the advertisement be designed as a PSA so that we can take advantage of all cost-free opportunities. The station broadcasts to 75 Alberta communities, reaching an estimated audience of approximately a hundred thousand.

**10:00**

We're also recommending an online ad on the AMMSA website. AMMSA is the Aboriginal Multi-Media Society. We're looking at a \$1,000 commitment there. We have the opportunity for about 27,000 impressions at that cost.

As well, a Google AdWords campaign. This is something that we've done with many of our campaigns simply to facilitate traffic

to the website, to make it easier for people to access us through various search engines such as Google.

**Social media options.** What I'm recommending is both paid and organic or unpaid social media. The Legislative Assembly has Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram accounts, so we're recommending that we make use of all of those avenues. We're looking at a \$2,000 commitment. One of the advantages of paying for social media is that it does allow you to reach an audience beyond those who follow or like you. It also allows us to geotarget, in which case we can actually ensure that our messages are being received by those people to which they matter most. What we would be recommending is primarily a cost-per-click campaign as that would encourage traffic to our website, which is the ultimate goal, so that people go to the website and then submit.

**The committee website.** We're suggesting that we include, of course, links to the legislation, a discussion guide, which research will speak about later, as well as a link to the OCYA website so that people who are interested in the topic can find out more information about the organization that way. The OCYA has also agreed that they would be willing to provide a reciprocal link on their website. It's obvious to us that anyone who's receiving their services or interested in their services might first go to their website, so this way it actually directs them back to ours if they're interested in providing input on the legislation review.

As well, we're always suggesting media relations. This could include media releases as required. We're suggesting a media release on September 6 to begin the campaign. Of course we will liaise with media to set up interviews and those sorts of things for the chair, who is the spokesperson of the committee.

**The e-card.** The e-card is something that we did with the mental health review. We provided an e-card to stakeholders to forward to their groups. We're looking to communicate with stakeholders directly but also to use the stakeholders as a way to get to their user groups and the people that they communicate with. The e-card is a great way to facilitate that. We also will provide the e-card to members of this committee to pass on to anyone that they think might be interested.

As Mr. Graff had mentioned, they have various ways in which they communicate with youth, so we're suggesting that we write an article that can be featured in the OCYA newsletter, thus reaching their youth audience.

The only other additional item that we're going to be looking at is that once the stakeholder list is approved, any opportunities, of course, to communicate through those stakeholder groups will also be explored.

The cost of the plan is \$37,500.

That's about all I have to say.

**The Chair:** Excellent. Thank you.

Members, do you have any questions or any discussion, then, on the draft communication plan that's been presented? Any comments? Mr. Kleinsteuber.

**Mr. Kleinsteuber:** Thank you. Yeah. I think the communications plan is a very comprehensive document. It makes good use of the existing resources for no cost or low cost. A few questions and comments for clarification purposes. Just for the purpose of refreshing our memory, what is the communication budget for this committee to review the CYAA in its entirety? Is it \$37,000, that you mentioned there, or \$37,500?

**The Chair:** Okay. Mrs. Sawchuk is just going to check on that information to find out sort of what the committee has in terms of its total resources for this budget. We recognize that this particular

task that we've been given is a unique one for this committee. We're not often asked to review legislation, so I think it would be helpful to get that perspective, to see what sort of resources in total we have available to us to do that work.

In the meantime, while Mrs. Sawchuk is retrieving that information, I'll allow Mrs. Littlewood, if you said you had a question, and we'll come back to Mr. Kleinsteuber.

**Mrs. Littlewood:** Yes. Thank you. My question is just around the confidentiality of the submissions, being that we're trying to engage youth that have potentially been involved in the system, and to clarify kind of what the processes are regarding publishing. I mean, I know that we get those submissions internally to the committee during the actual handling of the review, but there might be some publishing afterwards of public submissions. How are we going to be handling or what are the different methods of handling the confidentiality?

**Ms Dean:** It's entirely up to the committee how they want the submissions treated. The history of these committees and public consultations has been that the submissions have been posted publicly. In some cases, depending on the subject matter, there has been redaction of personally identifying information, et cetera, but it's entirely the purview of the committee to decide whether or not to make these submissions public and to post them on the external site. For instance, the committee could consider, as it's soliciting submissions, making a clear indication that submissions will be kept confidential if that's the will of the committee.

**Mrs. Littlewood:** I'm open to other thoughts around the table, but I think that in order to get good uptake from people that might not be ready to – just to share your story with anyone can be a step forward that a lot of people aren't ready to take. But knowing that they can take that step but not be public, just protecting the safety of that, so that they feel that there is still a measure of confidentiality with their story, I think, is important. But I'm open to the rest of the committee's thoughts. Sorry; when it comes to minors, just to be clear about that.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mrs. Littlewood.

Mrs. Sawchuk, have we retrieved the information?

**Mrs. Sawchuk:** Mr. Chair, we have. Under other labour and services we do have funds available. It could be used for advertising. This committee has not traditionally advertised, so it doesn't show as a separate line item, but funds are available.

**The Chair:** Okay. Do we have a total amount of the funds that are apportioned to the committee?

**Ms Dean:** Well, under other labour and services there's \$36,000. However, there are funds available in the larger committee budget envelope for this type of request should the need arise.

**The Chair:** Right. Mr. Kleinsteuber, does that provide the context that you were looking for?

**Mr. Kleinsteuber:** It does, and I was just kind of wondering what happens if we don't use the money allocated for communication. Can it be spent elsewhere, or is it because it's out of the budget in general that it's just redesignated?

**Ms Dean:** Well, funds that the committee doesn't utilize are returned to the general revenue fund at the end of the fiscal year. There are certain line items, that are identified in the committee's

budget, that are approved by Members' Services. It's, you know, prudent fiscal management to keep in mind that you should be spending the money as it's designated under that line item.

**Mr. Kleinsteuber:** I see. Thanks.

**The Chair:** Members on the phone, do we have any questions, comments regarding the draft communications plan? Do any other members of the committee have questions? Mr. Kleinsteuber.

10:10

**Mr. Kleinsteuber:** Thank you. I've got another one over here. The province-wide newspaper campaign: as noted on page 4, there is a good tool to reach out to some communities. I'm aware that we need to reach out to communities and affected people, but given the tough economic situation I would also want to be pretty fiscally prudent. My question is: are we reaching out to smaller weeklies and the biweekly papers as well in the plan in places such as Pincher Creek, Lesser Slave Lake, Wetaskiwin, Ponoka, Edmonton, and Calgary, for example? Where and how specifically among these papers would that \$30,000 be spent?

**Ms Sales:** Okay. I can speak to that. As far as the weekly campaign we would book it through the Alberta Weekly Newspapers Association, and they have about a hundred newspapers in their association. That would include weeklies.

Then, of course, the dailies. We have not made any inclusion of biweeklies or other newspapers in addition. If you would like additional newspapers to be added to the list, of course, we can, but, yes, that would be an additional cost.

It's important to keep in mind that the cost provided is an estimate, and we have definitely estimated to allow, let's say, depending on what the content of the ad is, that it might be a little bit larger than we might typically expect. This cost is based on a quarter-page ad, black and white, single run.

**Ms Sorensen:** If I could add to that, Mr. Chair. Just to answer your question, it does go into a lot of the smaller communities. We can certainly provide the committee with a list of those communities if you wish, but the Alberta Weekly Newspapers Association does have a membership that blankets the province to ensure that the smaller communities are being reached.

**Mr. Kleinsteuber:** Through previous experience, too, what is the response rate, I guess, basically, when we do go to the newspaper campaign? Do we receive a lot?

**Ms Sales:** You know what? That's a great question. Actually, to be honest, we haven't yet been able to include a lot of initiatives where the public would provide feedback on how they heard of the review. One of the things that we're hoping we can achieve through the e-mail based submission form is actually a question asking the public just that: how did you hear about the review? We do agree that it's important to know what is effective as far as the initiatives that we send out there.

**Mr. Kleinsteuber:** Okay. Thanks.

**The Chair:** Back to our members on the phones. Any questions, concerns, clarification? Okay. Any further questions, then, from any members regarding the draft communication? Mr. Kleinsteuber.

**Mr. Kleinsteuber:** Yeah. Another one over here. I think you touched on it a little bit through some of the campaign with the AMMSA, I think you mentioned. Would the outreach also be

through radio or some means there to be able to reach some of the communities that might be a little bit more rural in nature?

**Ms Sales:** Right. CFWE would be the radio station that we are suggesting we run ads with. They would reach about 75 Alberta communities across the province. Does that answer your question?

**Mr. Kleinsteuber:** Yeah. Thanks a lot. CFWE.

**Mrs. Littlewood:** Just in terms of the communication, being that the plan is being decided upon today, I just wanted to see if there was any input about making sure that we're letting the youth respondents know that their submissions would be confidential.

**Ms Sales:** I can speak to that. Once the committee has decided what approach they will take regarding the submissions, we will ensure that that information is provided in all communications, whether it be the print ad as well as the online submission form, so that when people are choosing to submit, they know whether or not their private information will be protected. But until we know what the decision by the committee is, we don't have any direction on that.

**The Chair:** Yes. So it's my understanding, then, that basically we've got two items that we need to consider as a committee today, the first being the draft communication plan that we have in front of us and whether or not we choose to approve that. Then once we've made that decision, we would be looking at the language that would be included, and that would include, then, our decision on the confidentiality aspect.

That being the case, are there any further questions, then, before we look at entertaining a motion regarding the acceptance of the draft communication plan?

Hearing none, is there a member that would like to make a motion, then, with respect to the communication plan as presented today?

**Mr. Kleinsteuber:** I move in favour of that.

**The Chair:** All right. We have a motion, then, from Mr. Kleinsteuber that we

accept the draft communications plan for the review of the Child and Youth Advocate Act as has been distributed to the committee.

Any discussion on the motion? No? Members on the phones? Okay.

Seeing no hands and no one showing interest in further discussion, I will call the question. All those in favour of the motion to accept the draft communication plan as proposed? Any opposed? That motion is carried. Thank you.

As I mentioned at the outset of this agenda item, the committee also does need to address the confidentiality of the submissions, as was asked about by Mrs. Littlewood, and we had some information shared on that as well. This is in terms of both the advertisement as well as with respect to how we will process these submissions once they are received.

Could we just perhaps, then, ask for some clarification on, I guess, what some of the options are before the committee in terms of how we handle this confidentiality?

**Ms Dean:** Just to follow up on my earlier comments, Mr. Chair, I would say that, depending on which way the committee wants to go, if there's a decision that the submissions remain confidential, then that would be clearly communicated as part of the solicitation for public submissions. If it was to go the other way, then, again, if committee members wanted to make sure that all submissions were made public, that would be indicated on the advertising. If

submissions are deemed to be confidential, they would be confidential committee documents, and they would not be released.

**The Chair:** My understanding, then, is that if the committee were to choose to make the documents public, there would be the appropriate redactions to protect the identity of minors and others involved.

**Ms Dean:** That's correct, and we would seek specific direction from the committee on that point.

**The Chair:** All right.  
To the committee, then.

**Mr. Ellis:** We might also want to consider parents as well, especially when we talk about mental health reviews and acts and stuff like that, just to, you know, again, get the parents to participate but also to protect the child as well. We might want to consider that as well when we talk about confidentiality.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Right.  
Okay. Any other further comments?

**Ms Woollard:** I would assume you mean parents or guardians.

**Mr. Ellis:** Yeah.

**Ms Woollard:** Okay.

**The Chair:** All right. Then we have the question before us of which direction the committee would like to go, whether we wish to make all submissions confidential or whether we wish to make submissions public with the appropriate redactions. We'll open that to further discussion from the committee. Any members have thoughts or comments?

**Ms Woollard:** When we're talking about making them confidential, we're talking about providing statements without any identifying information as to the person providing the statement. Is that correct?

10:20

**The Chair:** Dr. Massolin.

**Dr. Massolin:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think one of the ways of doing this in terms of protecting confidentiality is to not post the submissions on the public website and to just keep the submissions confidential and for committee use only.

**Ms Woollard:** Okay.

**The Chair:** We have two potential motions that could be moved, then, one being a motion, basically, that the advertisement that we put forward include a notice that the names of submitters and any third-party personal information included in a written submission will be redacted before those submissions are posted to a public website, or we could have a motion that the advertisement indicate and include a notice that written submissions from the public will be kept completely confidential.

If there is no further discussion, is there a member that would like to move either of those motions?

**Mr. Malkinson:** I was just going to add a point to the conversation. For the purposes of protecting confidentiality, the point Mr. Ellis brought up, it would seem to me that it would make sense that having it be confidential would be the way to go because I could

potentially imagine scenarios where the story or the concern that would come up in submissions, even if identified information was blocked out, could perhaps, you know, still identify the minor or identify the family making the submission. I'm willing to be swayed by the committee either way, but when I was first hearing about this in the committee, that's kind of where my first thought went, that the safest way to go would be to have the submissions be confidential to the committee. However, I'm willing to be swayed either way on this one. I don't have a particularly strong way to go either way, but that was kind of where my gut went originally.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Malkinson.

Any further comments, questions? Members on the phones? Okay.

Is there a member that would like to move a motion?

**Mrs. Littlewood:** I would move a motion that would protect the confidentiality of minors, making the submissions of the minors confidential.

**The Chair:** To be clear, Mrs. Littlewood, are you moving that all submissions be kept completely confidential or that submissions be appropriately redacted and made public?

**Mrs. Littlewood:** Confidential for minors. Is that possible?

**The Chair:** Mrs. Sawchuk has just identified that we may have difficulty identifying specifically when someone submitting is a minor.

**Mrs. Littlewood:** Okay. Then I would say confidential.

**The Chair:** Confidential in general?

**Mrs. Littlewood:** In general.

**The Chair:** That all submissions be kept confidential?

**Mrs. Littlewood:** Yes.

**The Chair:** We have a motion on the floor, then, from Mrs. Littlewood that all submissions made to the committee on the part of this review would be kept confidential. Let's just read the motion as submitted. Moved by Mrs. Littlewood that

the advertisement for the review of the Child and Youth Advocate Act by the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices include a notice that written submissions received from the public will be kept confidential.

That's the motion on the floor. Any discussion? Mr. Cyr.

**Mr. Cyr:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess my question – and we have dealt with this in the Ethics and Accountability Committee – is: does that mean that every time we discuss anything at all, we're going to have to be in camera? That would be my concern with this, that we're going to be doing all of the committee meetings from that point forward in camera.

**The Chair:** Could we get some clarity on that from the staff, on how that would affect our discussions, and if we're considering submissions in committee, would we be required to go in camera?

**Ms Dean:** Well, it's up to the committee what it wants to do in terms of whether it stays on the record or goes in camera, but certainly there's a lot of work associated with this review that pertains to the legislation that I'm sure would be on the record, that you wouldn't feel the need to go in camera about. I think that there can be a general discussion about issues with perhaps no personal

identifying information coming forward. I think we just have to see what comes in with respect to the submissions and take it from there.

Dr. Massolin, do you have anything further to offer?

**Dr. Massolin:** Thank you. Mr. Chair, I would just underline the point that was made by Ms Dean. I mean, the committee can get around some of these issues by talking about issues and not identifying information in their discussions, but if there's a true need to get into those issues and talk about details, that's the point at which the committee may wish to go in camera.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Mr. Cyr.

**Mr. Cyr:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. So you'd create, like, an issues document, a research document, and then you would go and discuss the issues? That is kind of what I'm understanding. Then there would be, like, the number of submissions that had advocated for a specific issue on hand, where seven letters came in saying that this was a good idea, that kind of thing? That's kind of the way the direction is going?

**Dr. Massolin:** Mr. Chair, depending upon what the committee directs, of course, typically our research services will summarize the submissions and highlight the issues that are pertinent to this committee's current review. Those are the issues pertaining, of course, to the act and the office as well. Then down the road, after that, an issues document, again on the direction of the committee, will be prepared to assist the committee in its deliberations process.

Thank you.

**Mr. Cyr:** Will the committee have access to all of these confidential submissions, or is this something that will be filtered? This is kind of what happened at other times; we didn't actually get access until we went and made decisions that it was going to be done in camera. It was quite the process the last time we dealt with this.

**Ms Dean:** Mr. Chair, the submissions of the committee are always made available on the internal committee site to members and staff that have authority to access that site. The submissions are the property of the committee. You know, there's nothing being withheld from this part to you; they're posted upon receipt.

**Mr. Cyr:** Thank you.

**Dr. Massolin:** I'd just add, just in case there's any doubt: in full. The committee will see every aspect of those submissions.

**The Chair:** All right. So all submissions will be made fully available to the committee regardless of the direction that we choose to take in terms of their confidentiality. Understood.

Thank you.

**Mr. van Dijken:** The question, I believe, is that all submissions will be received by the committee but within confidentiality with this motion. I would suggest that with professionals, organizations, associations, those types of bodies that are submitting, it would be helpful for the committee to be able to understand where these submissions are coming from.

In terms of transparency to the public, you know, I understand the concern with confidentiality for those people that need their privacy protected, but I also do believe that we need a certain amount of disclosure here to be able to be seen in the public as not operating in a cloud of secrecy. Is that a risk, like, going completely confidential in these submissions?

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. van Dijken.

**Ms Dean:** Mr. Chair, I'd offer this in response to Mr. van Dijken's comment. Perhaps the committee would like to provide instruction whereby submissions from individuals are kept confidential; however, submissions from organizations that are formal stakeholder groups would be made public.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms Dean.

**Mrs. Littlewood:** That would have been the intent of my motion.

**The Chair:** All right. Is it the opinion of staff, then, that we would need to amend the motion to clarify that point?

**Ms Dean:** Well, I think, Mr. Chair, that if it's the consensus of the committee that that's the will of the committee, we can take that as direction and move forward.

**The Chair:** All right.

**Ms Jabbour:** Can I just make a comment here?

**The Chair:** Certainly. Please go ahead.

**Ms Jabbour:** Yeah. I just wanted to comment. I echo the concern about openness and transparency in the operation of the committee, and I'm really uncomfortable with the idea that everything should be confidential. I'm trying to recall what past practice with sensitive information had been. Could we not just say that information would be published except on request? Like, the individual submitting could request that their information not be published.

10:30

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms Jabbour.

Any comment from the LAO staff on that, anything beyond what's been said?

**Dr. Massolin:** I mean, you could, but I don't think that's the motion that's on the floor.

**The Chair:** So the motion is currently that all submissions from the public, by which I'm understanding that committee members mean individuals, would be held fully confidential. Are there any further questions, I guess, or concerns regarding that?

**Mr. Horne:** My only thought on it is that if individuals are held confidential, does that include academics? They would be held confidential as well? Certainly, there are a lot of academics identified on the stakeholder list. It's entirely conceivable that we would get others.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Horne. I do note that we will be discussing the stakeholder list upcoming. In that respect, we could certainly have a separate motion as to how we handle the submissions that may come from stakeholders in that regard.

**Ms Woollard:** Just briefly, it would seem to me that usually if a person is being reported on as speaking for themselves as an individual, that's one thing. If they're speaking for an organization or an association or an employer, that's different. People – professionals, academics – usually identify themselves as one or the other. Just for information.

**The Chair:** Thank you. I appreciate that perspective, Ms Woollard.

Any further thoughts, comments, questions, concerns regarding the motion that's currently on the floor?

If none, then I would call the question. Let's just reread the motion so that we're entirely clear what it is that we are considering at this point. Moved by Mrs. Littlewood that the advertisement for the review of the Child and Youth Advocate Act by the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices include a notice that written submissions received from the public will be kept confidential: that's the motion before us.

Any further questions, clarifications? Any further comment? Mrs. Littlewood and then Mr. van Dijken.

**Mrs. Littlewood:** Is there a means of amending it to try and sync it around, you know, that we're talking about minors and potentially parents and guardians that could be talking about those that they're in the guardianship of?

**The Chair:** I believe that it's fully within the rights of any member of the committee to propose an amendment to any motion that's on the floor. Certainly, if someone wished to move a motion to clarify any aspect of this, if they would be willing to do so, they are able to do so.

**Mr. van Dijken:** I'll propose an amendment. I believe that the motion could read "from individuals of the public."

**The Chair:** Okay. Mr. van Dijken is moving an amendment, then, with the preceding, then "include a notice that written submissions received from individuals of the public will be kept confidential."

Is that correct, Mr. van Dijken?

**Mr. van Dijken:** Yes. Does that cover it?

**Mrs. Littlewood:** Mr. Ellis, does it cover that?

**Mr. Ellis:** Well, as long as the people that are making their submissions are aware, so as long as it's clear to them . . .

**The Chair:** So this is concerning the wording that would specifically be put in the advertisement looking for submissions, so to speak, to make it clear to folks.

**Mr. Ellis:** I like the word "individual."

**The Chair:** Okay. Excellent. Any further discussion on the amendment to the motion?

If not, I'll call the question. All in favour of the amendment to the motion? Any opposed? The amendment is carried.

Now we have the amended motion before us. Any further discussion or comment on the amended motion?

If not, I will call the question. Oh, sorry. Mr. van Dijken.

**Mr. van Dijken:** Just a question with regard to how this fits in with the concern from Member Horne with regard to academics. Academics could be considered individuals of the public, yet I do feel that it's important that submissions received from academic professionals as individuals as opposed to associations and professional groups are not necessarily falling under the intent of this motion.

**The Chair:** Dr. Massolin, do you have comment on that?

**Dr. Massolin:** Maybe I can provide clarity. At least, I hope to do that. I think the committee is going down the path of dividing and dealing currently with members of the public, and in some cases that'll catch, quote, unquote, stakeholders as well who will submit after having seen the advertisement. But I think that they're readily identifiable under that because of their, you know, academic designation and so forth and even just the nature of the submission.

I would also add that I see on the agenda that the committee's next item is to talk about a stakeholders list. Assuming that the committee approves a stakeholders list and goes down that path, that letter to stakeholders can indicate that submissions may be held in confidence or just have different language, in other words, from the notice that's being sent out to members of the public . . .

**Ms Dean:** May be made public.

**Dr. Massolin:** Or, rather, may be made public. That's what I meant to say. Thank you, Ms Dean.

So the committee can then post the stakeholder submissions on its public site and hold back the submissions from individuals from the public according to this current motion. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Dr. Massolin.

Mr. Horne, did you still wish to make a comment?

**Mr. Horne:** I was just going to clarify my comment previously. I was referring specifically to people above and beyond the stakeholders that this committee identifies, but I believe Dr. Massolin already addressed my concerns.

**The Chair:** Any further comments, questions, or concerns, then, on the amended motion that's before us?

If not, then I will call the question.

**Ms Jabbour:** Sorry. I was just unmuting my phone.

**The Chair:** Yes. Please proceed.

**Ms Jabbour:** I keep forgetting to unmute my phone.

I just wanted to make a comment again. It feels very much like we're starting to make these divisions and these lines where if somebody is putting in a submission as part of a group and then doing a submission as an individual, we're trying to arbitrarily say: well, this one will be confidential, and this one won't be. I'm not sure we're really accomplishing what we're trying to accomplish here. I think the dialogue was around protecting sensitive information particularly related to minors, and I don't know that we've reached that with this motion. I'm still kind of inclined to say: could we not, you know, make it that the person submitting could request if they want the information kept confidential? Then it would be kept confidential as opposed to trying to make a blanket rule. That's just kind of what I'm thinking on this one.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms Jabbour.

Mr. van Dijken.

**Mr. van Dijken:** Yes. I understand the concern. I do believe that we could do a different motion. It would probably then be up to the committee's discretion at some point that when there is a request for confidentiality, the committee would have to decide if they would receive that submission under those terms. It will lengthen the process, which is not necessarily a bad thing. Transparency in committee work is essential towards public acceptance of the committee's work. If it appears that the committee is doing anything that possibly is being done in secret for the purposes of the committee, then it makes me nervous. I think what's being proposed here can function without getting into a quagmire of, well, that we're not being completely transparent with the public.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. van Dijken.

Mr. Malkinson.



**Mr. Malkinson:** Thank you. I was thinking back to – I believe Ms Dean was saying earlier that part of the problem we have is that if somebody is making the request for it to be confidential or somebody, for example, doesn't make the request for it to be confidential, we have no way of determining if the individual who made the request is indeed a minor or not. So we potentially, despite our best intentions, might miss and post something that is indeed from a minor, which – I think there seems to be consensus around the table – we don't want to do. To me, it feels like it would be simpler and safer, with what we discussed as the intended goal, to protect the privacy of minors and that of caregivers and guardians, that those submissions from individuals are kept confidential to the committee.

**10:40**

However, I also agree with Mr. van Dijken's point that, you know, to have maximum public engagement and transparency, for those submissions from our stakeholders list that would be various organizations and academics, it would make sense that those submissions would be public as the concerns that I would imagine that would get mentioned in those submissions would be general in nature and, unlike submissions that would most likely come from individuals, wouldn't have personally identifiable information. They would be talking about systemic issues in a more general sense as opposed to specific occurrences.

It is my belief that the motion on the floor sort of addresses both of those, and as we move through the agenda and we talk about the stakeholders – I think Dr. Massolin pointed that out as well, that anyone who's on the stakeholders list would automatically have their submissions be public, which I think seems to have a balance.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Malkinson.

With that, then, are there any further comments, questions, concerns regarding the amended motion?

**Ms Jabbour:** Can I just make a comment about this? We talked about redacting information. Would that possibly be a solution? I'm a little concerned about the openness and transparency and, you know, hitting that. As Mr. van Dijken says, committee work really needs to be as transparent as possible to increase confidence in what we're doing.

**The Chair:** That certainly was one of the options that was made available to us in terms of moving a motion. It's not part of the motion that's currently before us, but I appreciate your comment on that, Ms Jabbour.

**Mrs. Littlewood:** I'll ask for

unanimous consent to withdraw the motion.

It doesn't really seem to be achieving the goals of what we're setting out to do to protect the identities of the minors, which is really what I was aiming for, so I'll ask to withdraw it.

**The Chair:** Okay. Mrs. Littlewood has asked for unanimous consent to withdraw her motion. Do we have any opposed to the withdrawal of the motion currently before us as amended? Any on the phones? All right, then. That's carried. The motion is withdrawn.

At this point, then, we continue on this issue, so we have the opportunity for another member, if they wish, to move a motion considering the direction the committee wishes to take in terms of handling the confidentiality of submissions from the public.

Again, to be clear, the options that have been presented to us so far, one of which was just withdrawn, that being that the advertisement include a notice that written submissions from the public be

kept confidential, and the other, which has been presented to us by the LAO staff, being that the advertisement include a notice that the names of submitters and any third-party personal information included in a written submission will be redacted prior to submissions being posted to the external committee website – to be clear, all submissions would be made public, with any personal or third-party information having been redacted.

**Ms Woollard:** I'd make that motion.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Any discussion, questions, concerns about the new motion on the floor?

**Ms Jabbour:** I'm quite happy with that motion.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms Jabbour.

Hearing and seeing no further comments, at this point, then, we will put the question on the motion. Again, moved by Ms Woollard that

the advertisement for the review of the Child and Youth Advocate Act by the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices include a notice that the names of submitters and any third-party personal information included in a written submission will be redacted prior to submissions being posted to the external committee website.

I'll put the question.

**Ms Jabbour:** Can I just jump in here before we call the question?

**The Chair:** Yes, Ms Jabbour.

**Ms Jabbour:** I had forgotten about the piece on if we could also add a line saying "will be kept completely confidential on request," just to, you know, give that provision if somebody is really concerned.

**The Chair:** Ms Jabbour is proposing an amendment to the motion put forward, then, by Ms Woollard including language that, if requested, a submission could be kept confidential.

Any comments, questions, concerns regarding the amendment?

**Mr. van Dijken:** I don't have the motion in front of me, but it appears to me that all submissions, those from individuals as well as those from organizations, associations, and professional organizations, are going to be at this point kept from publication as opposed to just protecting the individuals from the public.

**The Chair:** Yes?

**Mrs. Sawchuk:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The original motion as it stands is that the advertisement for the review of the Child and Youth Advocate Act by the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices include a notice that the names of submitters and any third-party personal information included in a written submission will be redacted prior to submissions being posted to the external committee website. That's for public access, Mr. van Dijken.

The amendment to the motion is that submissions will be kept confidential on request.

**The Chair:** We are currently, then, considering the amendment as proposed by Ms Jabbour that submissions can be kept confidential on request.

**Mr. van Dijken:** Would it, then, be up to the committee whether they receive that? We get a submission that's requesting confidentiality. Does it, then, come to the committee to decide if we

even receive that, or is it received under confidentiality outside of the committee's decision?

**The Chair:** Can we offer any clarification on that point? Dr. Massolin.

**Dr. Massolin:** Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I can speak to it. The mover of the proposed amendment here could correct me if I'm wrong, but I think the intention here is that the confidentiality provision would be made on request, and that request would be honoured, but I suppose, you know, again, that would have to be confirmed.

The second thing is the confidentiality for the purposes of posting on the external site as opposed to just simply being received by the committee. That is what I understand you might be saying, Mr. van Dijken.

Thank you.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Chair, may I offer a comment?

**The Chair:** Yes, Mrs. Pitt. Go ahead.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Should we perhaps add a provision that says, "Confidential submissions may or may not be considered by the committee," only with the intent being that confidential submissions in some cases may not – how do I phrase this? – be as true to the point as if they were publicly disclosed, just for the sake of the quality of submissions? We certainly don't want to discourage anybody, but adding a provision might ease some of the concerns for that.

10:50

**The Chair:** If I understand correctly, Mrs. Pitt, you wish to move a further amendment to the amendment. My understanding is that we have the current amendment, so we would need to have a vote on that amendment. Then we could consider further amendments unless we want to do a subamendment to the amendment.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Could we do it as a subamendment?

**The Chair:** Okay. Mrs. Pitt, you'd like to move a subamendment. Could you just phrase that for us, please?

Sorry. Ms Dean.

**Ms Dean:** Sorry, Mr. Chair. I wanted to check with Mrs. Pitt just in terms of her intent. Is your comment relating to the fact that if the amendment passes as it's currently worded, the point is that when somebody is requesting that their submission be kept confidential, then the content in that submission may be far different than what it might otherwise be, so it might be more beneficial to the committee to have that honoured? I don't necessarily think there is an amendment required here, but perhaps Mrs. Pitt can respond to that.

**Mrs. Pitt:** I think that to put in the provision "may or may not be considered by the committee" if there is a request for confidentiality allows the committee some room for discretion with the submission that it's confidential.

**Ms Jabbour:** If I could just jump in here.

**The Chair:** I have Mr. Malkinson, and then am I hearing somebody else that wants to be on the speakers list? Ms Jabbour and Mr. van Dijken. Okay. We'll start with Mr. Malkinson, then Ms Jabbour, then Mr. van Dijken.

**Mr. Malkinson:** You know, in hearing the suggestion, my inkling would be that I would be opposed to that. I think that in this

committee, whether somebody for whatever reason decides to make a submission that they would like to keep confidential – perhaps they might have some fear of retribution or that somebody might find out about it, or maybe they're within the system and don't want to affect their current status within it. I would be opposed to having anything that would suggest to somebody who wishes to make their submission confidential that the committee would have the option to not consider it. I think the intention that we've had up until this point would be that all submissions, whether somebody wishes to make them confidential or not, are going to be available to the committee to consider. I think, you know, in the spirit of going through this process and getting the most information possible, I would not be in favour of this. I don't think that makes sense.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Malkinson.

Ms Jabbour.

**Ms Jabbour:** Yeah. I think I get a sense of where Mrs. Pitt is going with this. You know, it's kind of that in social media, where it's not confidential, people will say all kinds of things inappropriately, and certainly we'd want to avoid that. But I think we're talking about sensitive information, and I think most people understand that there is a certain level of need to protect sensitive information. I think that if somebody does request that their information be kept confidential, we could trust that there's a good reason for it, and I don't think we should necessarily give any lesser consideration to their submission for that reason.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms Jabbour.

Mr. van Dijken.

**Mr. van Dijken:** Yeah. Speaking to the subamendment, I don't believe the subamendment could work in the fashion that it's worded, but I do believe that the committee still has the prerogative of whether they will receive that submission and in confidence. If the committee would make a decision not to receive the submission in confidence, then the submitter has the option to remove that submission. It's a matter of whether the committee feels comfortable in receiving all submissions in confidence or making a decision whether or not they will receive it in confidence.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. van Dijken.

**Mrs. Littlewood:** I just want to speak to the subamendment.

**The Chair:** To be clear, at this point we don't officially have a subamendment on the floor, though there's been discussion about introducing one, but please proceed.

**Mrs. Littlewood:** Okay. I would not be supportive of an idea of putting out there that we would somehow not utilize the experience of someone who wanted to remain confidential. Being through the experience of having a whistle-blower be a part of the Ethics and Accountability Committee, I would not have wanted that person to think that because they had come forward to share with us, we would have somehow decided whether or not to actually take what they had to share, that we would have discounted it somehow.

**Mr. Cyr:** I'd like to reiterate what my colleague Mr. van Dijken had said. When we're going through the submissions, there's the opportunity to make a decision not to accept the submission. That's what we've done in the past. I don't think that putting that out there, that we won't accept submissions, is helpful. I would say that in this case we have the opportunity. It's just that it would be at a committee level and possibly in camera.

**The Chair:** Mr. van Dijken again.

**Mr. van Dijken:** Yeah. I think it pretty much covers it off. With the case that has been cited with the whistle-blower confidentiality, the committee made a decision to receive a presentation in confidence, and the committee could have made a decision to not receive the presentation in confidence. It is the committee's prerogative whether or not it's in the best interests of moving forward and the goals of the committee.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. van Dijken.

Given the discussion, Mrs. Pitt, were you still interested in moving a subamendment?

**Mrs. Pitt:** No. There are some fair arguments all around. I will not move forward with a subamendment.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mrs. Pitt.

That being the case, then, we have before us the amendment to the motion, that amendment being the inclusion that submissions will be kept confidential on request. Is there any further discussion?

**Mr. van Dijken:** I would just ask of Member Jabbour if that amendment covers the intent of her concerns.

**The Chair:** Ms Jabbour.

**Ms Jabbour:** Yes. I think it does cover it. I just have this nagging sense that there's something still that we've missed, but I think we're good.

**The Chair:** Okay. That being the case, let's put the question. On the amendment to the motion, again that amendment being that prior to submissions being posted to the external . . .

**Mr. Malkinson:** We have another speaker yet.

**The Chair:** Sorry. Do we have another speaker? Mr. van Dijken.

**Mr. van Dijken:** Thank you, Chair. I do believe it's important to note that Ms Jabbour had a nagging there. I've got a little bit of a nagging here also, and I think it needs to be discussed with regard to whether the committee is prepared to receive all submissions that are being presented and requested as confidential or whether the committee will hold the prerogative on the request for confidentiality, if the committee would like to continue to hold that, whether they receive those submissions or not. I don't know if I'm clear on that.

**The Chair:** Perhaps, members of the staff that we have here, could you clarify for us just once more what the privilege of the committee is in terms of making these decisions?

**Dr. Massolin:** Well, Mr. Chair, I think the mover of the amendment should clarify the intent, but the way I read it is: upon request. The request is to keep the submission confidential, meaning that it would not be public, not posted to the public website, upon request. So as a matter of course that submission would not be made public. That's my understanding of the intention of this, but perhaps Ms Jabbour could clarify.

11:00

**Ms Jabbour:** Yes. That was my intent. I'm just thinking, further to Mr. van Dijken's comment: is it not possible to just do an extra blanket kind of line that the committee reserves the right to accept or reject any and all submissions? There are legal terms, I suppose, that could cover that. I'm sensing that there are some being

uncomfortable about the committee's role in this and about whether they have the right to consider the submission or not.

**The Chair:** Could the staff provide us, perhaps, with some understanding? Is this anything that's been addressed previously in this sort of a circumstance, or is this simply the nature of the privilege of committee?

**Ms Dean:** The committee has the ability to accept or reject submissions. That is within its powers right now. It's really a matter of how you want to handle these submissions and whether the way you communicate out to the public will affect the quality of the submissions that you're going to be receiving. We have not encountered this type of dialogue at the committee level with respect to this issue. The way that previous committees have handled sensitive subject matters such as mental health is that the staff have come to the committee with requests for redaction, and if there are any questions, then we seek direction from the committee.

I would just caution members. I can't speak to what kind of submissions will be received, but just given the subject matter I would suspect that some of the individual submissions will be very testimonial in nature. As a staffperson that is going to give direction to redaction, there may be a very large part of those submissions that would be redacted.

**The Chair:** My understanding from your comments, then, Ms Dean, is that the type of language that was just mentioned has never previously been included in any advertisement for a committee.

**Ms Dean:** And that's because that's presumed to be within the committee's discretion already.

**The Chair:** Thank you for that clarification.

**Dr. Massolin:** May I just add to those comments that it's a pretty rare occurrence that a committee does not consider a submission. That has happened on the occasions where the submissions themselves were completely irrelevant to the committee's review in one instance and/or they have material that's inflammatory, that's really not on topic as well as being laced with profanity and not appropriate for this type of review.

Thank you.

**Mr. van Dijken:** I just missed it. Who makes that decision on receiving those types of submissions or rejecting those?

**Ms Dean:** Mr. Chair, the committee makes those decisions. The staff brings those issues to the committee for a decision.

**Mr. van Dijken:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** That being the case, we have the amendment before us. Again, that amendment being that

the language "and that submissions will be kept confidential on request" be added following the words "external committee website."

If there is no further comment, I'll put the question. On the amendment to the motion, all those in favour? Any opposed? Mr. van Dijken opposed. That amendment is carried.

We have, then, before us the amended motion, which I will read in full. Moved by Ms Woollard that

the advertisement for the review of the Child and Youth Advocate Act by the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices include a notice that the names of submitters and any third-party personal information included in a written submission will be redacted prior to submissions being posted on the external

committee website and that submissions be kept confidential on request.

If there's no further comment or question on the amended motion, I'll call the question. All those in favour of the motion as amended? Any opposed? The amended motion is carried.

**Mr. van Dijken:** Just for recording purposes, in the vote on the amendment it was recorded by the chair that Mr. van Dijken opposed. I don't necessarily agree that that should be recorded as such.

**The Chair:** I apologize.

**Mr. van Dijken:** It will be in *Hansard*.

**The Chair:** Yes, my comment. I apologize, Mr. van Dijken. It was an oversight and inappropriate on my part, and I apologize.

Moving on, then, to research services, we have before us the stakeholder list. At our last meeting we asked research services to prepare a stakeholder list regarding the Child and Youth Advocate Act. We've already agreed to a broad public call for submissions, so this list is basically an additional tool that we could use to reach out to specific groups and organizations who already have significant experience with the act.

Dr. Amato, could you give us a quick overview of this document, please?

**Dr. Amato:** I can. Good morning. This is an overview of the draft stakeholder list for approval of the committee. Hopefully, people have a copy. A couple of notes about this list: it was compiled with input from both Human Services and the office of the Child and Youth Advocate, and the organizations and individuals that appear on this list are people who have interacted with the office of the Child and Youth Advocate and/or with the legislation.

If I can turn your attention to the table of contents, you can see the categories of organizations that appear on the list. There are a series of organizations affiliated, for example under 2.0, with Human Services.

Section 3.0 is a very particular section. This is the advancing futures bursary program, and there's information on that on page 5. As was just discussed, part of the committee's mandate may be reaching out to youth who have accessed the services of the office of the Child and Youth Advocate. One way in which this can be achieved is through this advancing futures bursary program. This is approximately 2,000 youth who have received bursaries for postsecondary education, and many of these youth have access to services of the office of the Child and Youth Advocate. Because of concerns related to anonymity, Human Services has agreed, should it be the will of the committee, to reach out to those youth, and of their own volition, then, they can respond to the committee. So that's one feature of the list.

You'll also notice a number of aboriginal organizations, amongst them the DFNAs.

The Education sector is an umbrella organization encompassing the school boards of the province.

External participants in OCYA processes are approximately 60 individuals who have been consulted either as experts or community members in the various investigation processes and focus groups and forums of the office of the Child and Youth Advocate.

Under Health there are various organizations that provide services to children and/or participate in various processes, again, to do with the Child and Youth Advocate.

Justice has to do with the youth criminal justice system.

Legal services are the variety, again, of legal services that interact with the office of the Child and Youth Advocate, including several mentor lawyers under the LRCY process from that roster.

There are a number of service providers supporting children, youth, and families.

Finally, research centres and academics.

I'm very happy to answer any questions you might have on this list and to receive any input you might have on it, too. Thank you.

**11:10**

**The Chair:** Mr. Ellis.

**Mr. Ellis:** Thank you. During our previous presentation by Human Services it was noted, you know – I'm sorry to beat this horse – that the police are the primary contact with, especially, children in need and families in need, especially in crisis situations, but I don't see any police representation on the stakeholder list. I'm certainly happy to talk about this or even to make a motion that would have maybe a designate, a representative of the Alberta chiefs of police be a part of the stakeholders.

[Mr. Malkinson in the chair]

**The Deputy Chair:** Trevor.

**Mr. Horne:** Thank you. That's certainly one thing that didn't jump out at me, but it's a good point nonetheless. I did notice that the southern part of the province was a bit weak on representation, and I'm sure there are many other groups that we could find. So perhaps in the interest of time – I note we're starting to run up against the clock here – the committee might entertain a motion to add a timeline, to submit additional stakeholders by, perhaps, next Monday. I believe it's the 22nd.

**The Deputy Chair:** Absolutely. So, Mr. Horne, you would like to make a motion to that effect?

**Mr. Horne:** If that's fine with the committee.

**The Deputy Chair:** For discussion.

**Mr. Ellis:** Just for discussion. You mentioned southern representation. That's fine. Do you have anybody in mind, or are you just broadly thinking that there might be somebody else?

**Mr. Horne:** I don't have anybody in particular in mind. I'm just sure that there are likely some perhaps smaller or more recent groups that some MLAs might be aware of.

**The Deputy Chair:** Mr. Cyr, followed by Mr. van Dijken.

**Mr. Cyr:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. When we were going through the presentation there, they said that the majority of the children were coming from schools. I see that we've got the ASBA on there. I am curious about exactly this: does the ASBA respond on behalf of all of their school boards, or do they reach out to all of their school boards and get input and then respond? Do we know?

**The Deputy Chair:** Dr. Massolin.

**Dr. Massolin:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, it's hard to speak on behalf of the ASBA, but we can tailor that particular stakeholder letter to indicate that they disburse or distribute the letter to their constituent parts if that's the will of the committee.

[Mr. Shepherd in the chair]

**The Chair:** Mr. Cyr.

**Mr. Cyr:** May I continue, Mr. Chair?

**The Chair:** You have a follow-up?

**Mr. Cyr:** Yeah, I do. It appears that this is the biggest source that we've got for children in need, being identified through the schools. It would only make sense that we would go to the different school boards within Alberta. Right now there are 42 public and 17 Catholic and four francophone boards that are underneath the ASBA, but there are also a bunch of charter and First Nation schools and private schools that we might want to reach out to as well.

I'm looking at Alberta Education, and it looks like there's quite an extensive list. I'm not sure we need to go to all of them, but it does seem that if they seem to be our front-line people, that are actually facilitating a lot of the need for the Child and Youth Advocate, then it only makes sense that we would go to where the identification is. I would like to add the school boards, and I'm willing to discuss how many we need to add to the submission.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Cyr.

Mr. Ellis, I have you on the list.

Mr. van Dijken, you're up next.

**Mr. van Dijken:** Do we have a motion on the floor?

**The Chair:** At present we don't have a motion.

**Mr. van Dijken:** No? Okay.

**The Chair:** We are making notes of suggestions.

**Mr. van Dijken:** Okay. There are a couple of suggestions that I would like to present with regard to the stakeholder list. Under the government of Alberta, Human Services: I don't see the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities identified there. I think there is an opportunity to reach out to that organization and get their perspective on the office. Also under the health organizations: Alberta Adolescent Recovery Centre, I believe, could be added to the list. Under service providers supporting children, youth, and families: the Little Warriors association has been quite involved with helping children and those in treatment and with awareness and prevention of sexual abuse. I think that that organization should be added also.

I also have questions with regard to external participants in OCYA processes. What we received under item 7 there was that the list includes 62 individuals, with no names, and I guess I just need an understanding of how that list was developed. How were these individuals selected, and will we get a chance to review that list at some time? Will we have an opportunity to present more individuals as possible witnesses?

**Dr. Amato:** I received that list from the office of the Child and Youth Advocate. It's a list of people, some of whom are elders, some of whom are subject matter experts, who have participated both in their investigation processes and, in some cases, in focus groups and various public forums. The rationale behind the inclusion of them on the list was that they were familiar with both the workings of the office and its various processes, and the suggestion was that they may choose to make submissions to the committee. You know, certainly, if they make submissions to the committee, then I'm sure that they will speak to the capacity of their involvement with the office, but, again, I can't speak for them in that regard.

**Mr. van Dijken:** Right. Thank you for that clarification. I just wasn't sure where the list was developed, but that's good clarification.

With regard to the proposed possible motion, I would make a motion that this committee receive additions to the list possibly till next week, Friday or so. That makes it August 26.

**The Chair:** Okay. Mr. van Dijken is making a motion, then. Let's see here. Okay. Moved by Mr. van Dijken that the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices adopt the draft stakeholder list as distributed and that the committee members submit the names of any additional stakeholders to the chair and committee clerk by August 26, 2016, for inclusion in the list and that the chair invite written submissions from stakeholders with respect to the review of the Child and Youth Advocate Act.

Does that capture the intent of your motion, Mr. van Dijken?

**Mr. van Dijken:** Yes, Chair.

**The Chair:** Any comments, concerns, questions, then, regarding the motion? Any on the phones?

Just to clarify with our support staff that we have here, would having a deadline for these submissions of August 26 in any way impact our ability to, I guess, conduct the consultations within the timelines we've looked at previously?

11:20

**Dr. Massolin:** I can speak to that, Mr. Chair. I don't think so. I think the committee has identified a mid-October sort of deadline for submissions, so that would work within that time frame.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Dr. Massolin.

Any further comments, questions on the motion? On the phones?

Hearing and seeing none, I will call the question. Again, the motion moved by Mr. van Dijken is that

the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices adopt the draft stakeholder list as distributed and that the committee members submit the names of any additional stakeholders to the chair and committee clerk by August 26, 2016, for inclusion in the list and that the chair invite written submissions from stakeholders with respect to the review of the Child and Youth Advocate Act.

All those in favour? Any opposed? And on the phones? That motion is carried. Thank you.

As noted, in the stakeholder correspondence we will include the information we provided regarding confidentiality respecting individuals' and third-party information that may be mentioned in any submissions.

Moving on, then, to the discussion guide. As requested, the research support team has also prepared a discussion guide, which was posted on the committee website, to assist with our review. Dr. Amato, could you give us a quick summary of that document, please?

**Dr. Amato:** I certainly can. Hopefully, everyone has a copy of the draft discussion guide. This, once again, was developed in consultation with the office of the Child and Youth Advocate. Its intention is to guide but not restrict the submission process. The target audience for this discussion guide is both stakeholders and members of the public. It functions by asking a series of questions, which are on page 5 of the document. These questions are intended, as I said, to guide the submission process but are not in any way restrictive. You'll note that the last question in particular opens up the discussion to any other suggestions or comments about the Child and Youth Advocate Act, requesting that both stakeholders and members of the public comment on any aspect or topic related to the act that is not addressed by the discussion guide.

The intention of the guide is to go through the various aspects of the act, to provide an introduction to the act and to some significant questions that may arise in consideration of the act. I'm very happy to answer any questions with regard to the discussion guide.

**Mrs. Littlewood:** I just have a question. Is it possible to have something that is a bit easier to understand for the youth that we're reaching out to, like a one-pager that could be added or something like that? I see that the discussion guide is at a really high level. It's 16 pages, which is a lot to try and get a young person to engage with. Is that possible?

**Dr. Amato:** Again, this is something that's entirely – of course, we can do that – at the will of the committee, but part of the strategy is that the questions will appear on the e-mail form as an abbreviated document. But, yes, it's also possible to have a briefer document.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you, Mrs. Littlewood.

Any other comments, questions, concerns regarding the discussion guide? Members on the phones?

Okay. Mrs. Littlewood had just asked, I guess, about a briefer summary. Just to clarify my own understanding, you're saying, then, that the e-mail response form itself will contain the questions and everything that is in the discussion guide?

**Dr. Amato:** Separated out, right? The e-mail response form will just list the questions.

**The Chair:** Just the questions?

**Dr. Amato:** Yeah. Therefore, you're not burdened with the high-level summary.

**The Chair:** All right, then. Seeing no further comments, concerns, or questions, I'll call the question. Pardon me. I will ask if a member would like to move a motion, then, that we accept the discussion guide as presented and approve it for public release online. Do we have a member to move that motion? Ms Woollard. Thank you. Moved by Ms Woollard that

the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices adopt the discussion guide for the review of the Child and Youth Advocate Act and approve it for public release online.

Any comments, questions, concerns on the motion? Members on the phones?

Seeing and hearing none, I will call the question on the motion. All those in favour? Any opposed? Those on the phones? Thank you. That motion is carried.

Moving on, then, to our discussion of the audit of the office of the Auditor General, the report on the 2015-2016 audit results for the office of the Auditor General. At the end of June the deputy chair and I had the opportunity to attend a meeting that was on June 30, 2016, with the Auditor General and senior staff from his office as well as the audit team from St. Arnaud Pinsent Steman, the firm who was under contract to conduct the annual audit of the office of the Auditor General. For the committee's information the 2015-16 audit was completed without any issues identified, and the auditor's report was included for information with today's meeting materials.

In regard to the contract to audit the office of the Auditor General, this audit completed the contract of St. Arnaud Pinsent Steman with the committee. That concluded their contract with us, so we took this opportunity to confirm with them that they would consider renewing their contract as the auditor of the office of the Auditor General. They do have an interest in continuing. For our members' information the firm was selected originally through an RFP

process, and they have completed the last seven annual audits of the office of the Auditor General.

Now, before determining whether or not we wish to extend our contract with St. Arnaud Pinsent Steman, there are a few things that committee members should be aware of. First, the firm contracted to audit the office of the Auditor General is restricted from taking on any other contracts with the office of the Auditor General. The contract for auditing the OAG is quite small – it's worth approximately \$34,000 – whereas contracts for audit work through the office of the AG can potentially result in much higher revenue. Accepted best practices suggest that an organization's auditors should be changed every eight years. However, this does not necessarily require a change in the auditing firm but could also include a change in which partner within a particular firm is responsible for conducting the audit.

Finally, we are already into the second fiscal quarter for 2016-17, so it's important and time-sensitive that we, in fact, contract an auditor at least for the current fiscal year. We have two options in front of us as a committee. We have the option to choose to extend the contract with the current auditor, just simply offer an extension of that contract, or we may choose to conduct an RFP, to conduct a search. Having spoken with the current auditor, St. Arnaud Pinsent Steman, they have indicated that they would be happy to participate in an RFP process, if we wish to conduct one, to choose who we would wish to appoint. In the event that we choose to go with an RFP process, then we would need to look at appointing them on an interim basis for one further year to cover the current fiscal year.

These are the options that are before us as a committee. I'll open the floor now to discussion. Mr. Cyr.

**Mr. Cyr:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I missed: how many years have we used this specific auditor?

**The Chair:** This particular auditor has conducted seven audits of the Auditor General.

**Mr. Cyr:** Can I follow up, Mr. Chair?

**The Chair:** Absolutely.

**Mr. Cyr:** Mr. Chair, this document that was posted on the site there: reading through it, it looks pretty standard except for point 2.

**The Chair:** Okay. I apologize. I don't have the document in front of me. I can pull it up quickly on the website, but could you provide a bit of detail?

**Mr. Cyr:** The major issues discussed with management in connection with initial or recurring retention: now, what we got here is an answer that they put as none, but they also have, "However, we would like to use the closing meeting with the Committee to briefly discuss the consequences of the Sunshine Reporting Act." Now, I guess my concern here is that it seems to be quite out of the scope of a normal auditing engagement to be going down this direction with the auditor unless there's a specific separate engagement involved.

**11:30**

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Cyr. Just give me one moment while I review some of it.

**Mr. Cyr:** Definitely, sir.

**The Chair:** Just to clarify, Mr. Cyr, is your concern that the audit that was conducted went outside of scope in considering the issue of the impact of the sunshine list?

**Mr. Cyr:** It shows familiarity, possibly, of the Auditor General's office with the auditor. Normally when you go outside of the scope, that concerns me. What your auditor is here – I believe that when you start looking at these discussions, that's fine, but now they're posting these as something that is, I guess, a concern potentially for the auditor to themselves. I don't see how the two are related in any way, shape, or form between the sunshine list and the current audit of the Auditor General's office. I would prefer that we go to an RFP with this and maybe seek a different auditing firm outside of the current one, that we're using.

**The Chair:** Okay.

**Mr. Malkinson:** Mr. Cyr, just to clarify, it's your intention to make a motion to that effect, that the committee put out a request for proposal for an auditor of the Auditor General. It's hard to say three times fast, I know.

**The Chair:** Are you putting forward that motion?

**Mr. Cyr:** That is the motion I'd like to make.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you, Mr. Cyr.

We do have that motion on the floor. Just to clarify, it has been pointed out to me that in the requirements for the auditor of the Auditor General is that they conduct an annual audit of the financial statements, including the performance measures. So in looking at the impact of the additional responsibilities that could potentially fall to the auditor as part of the requirements under the sunshine act – in other words, looking at when the Auditor General is auditing a particular area or department – if they have to additionally consider, then, their operations in terms of how they encompass a sunshine list, if that includes, then, additional responsibilities for the Auditor General, that's being, I guess, considered under the performance measures, though I appreciate the concern that you're raising, Mr. Cyr, and your reasoning, then, for why you're requesting the RFP. You feel that this is a concerning step for you.

**Mr. Cyr:** It seems – and I agree – that there are expectations that the Auditor General's office is following all those requirements put on it by the government of Alberta, but I'm still not clear that they are within their scope to be going down the road of discussions on the sunshine list. I guess why I'm bringing this forward as a concern is that, in the end, this would normally be something you would do as a separate engagement outside of your normal audit process. I would love to have the Auditor General here. Unfortunately, he's not here to be able to discuss this. But I don't think that it's a bad thing to every once in a while, like you said, make a decision to possibly go out and get a different auditing firm.

**The Chair:** All right. Thank you, Mr. Cyr.

We have the motion, then, on the floor. Let's see here. Let me make sure that I have the correct one here. Right now we are discussing the RFP process itself. Moved by Mr. Cyr that the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices issue a request for proposal to independent accounting firms inviting proposals to conduct an annual audit of the financial statements, including the performance measures, of the office of the Auditor General as set out in the Auditor General Act and that submissions be brought before the committee for review and selection of the successful proposal.

Does that capture the spirit of your intent, Mr. Cyr?

**Mr. Cyr:** Absolutely, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

**Mr. van Dijken:** Just to be clear, the motion doesn't necessarily entail changing auditors, but the motion would also allow the current auditor to submit a proposal?

**The Chair:** Yes. My understanding is that that's correct. The current auditor would have the ability to apply in the process.

Any further comments, discussion, concerns regarding the motion before us?

Seeing and hearing none, I will call the question. All those in favour of the motion before us to conduct an RFP process for an accounting firm to audit the Auditor General? Any opposed? On the phones? That motion is carried.

We also need, then, to consider that we have the current year, which is already in the second quarter. Is there a member that would like to make a motion that we continue with the current firm of St. Arnaud Pinsent Steman for this year and that we offer them a one-year extension to complete that? Mrs. Littlewood. So moved. I will read the motion, then. Moved by Mrs. Littlewood that

the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices approve the reappointment of St. Arnaud Pinsent Steman Chartered Accountants as the auditor of the office of the Auditor General for a one-year term to perform the 2016-17 audit and that the chair be authorized to enter into a letter of engagement on behalf of the committee.

Any comment, questions, concerns on the motion?

Seeing and hearing none, I will call the question. All those in favour of the motion before us? Any opposed? On the phones? That motion is carried.

Lastly, we have two points of discussion regarding officers of the Legislative Assembly.

**Mr. van Dijken:** Just for clarification on item 5(a) we had received a report for information. Will we be discussing that at a later date? There's a closing meeting that's been suggested by the auditor.

**The Chair:** From the staff, what is the usual protocol and process? I know that the deputy chair and I met with them and sort of went through the report.

**Mrs. Sawchuk:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I can speak to the process. The practice has been that the chair and the deputy chair attend the audit exit meeting. It includes the auditor of record, in this case St. Arnaud Pinsent Steman, along with the Auditor General and senior staff from their office. Then the chair and the deputy chair bring forward the final audit report. This report will in fact be included in the Auditor General's year-end report. I believe it's his report that's generally released in October.

**The Chair:** So the discussion of the report, then, would be at that time?

**Mrs. Sawchuk:** Right.

**The Chair:** Do you have any further questions on that, Mr. van Dijken?

**Mr. van Dijken:** At that exit meeting, was that covered off? With regard to the sunshine reporting act, was that item addressed?

**The Chair:** They did discuss with us the potential implications of that with the Auditor General's office, yes.

**Mr. Cyr:** How did that discussion go, and what was decided with that discussion, Mr. Chair?

11:40

**The Chair:** There was no decision to be made. It was simply a matter of them providing basically a heads-up, just sort of saying that depending on what is assigned to the Auditor General in terms of those requests, it could require additional resources for him to complete that work. Largely it was just a heads-up that depending on what committee and government should decide they wish to assign to the Auditor General with respect to handling reviews of the sunshine list, there could be associated implications as to his workload. Aside from that, there was nothing further discussed. There were no decisions made by myself or the deputy chair. We're not authorized to do that. We were simply there to receive information. Then, as I've sort of passed on to the committee, again, we have the opportunity for discussion on that directly with the Auditor General this coming October.

**Mr. Cyr:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Excellent.

If we can move on, then, we have two items regarding the officers of the Legislative Assembly. First off, regarding the Ombudsman and the Public Interest Commissioner, whose contract is expiring, as committee members are aware, an e-mail was circulated to us that Mr. Peter Hourihan has indicated that he will not be seeking reappointment as Ombudsman and Public Interest Commissioner following the expiry of his contract this October. However, he has indicated that he is willing to continue in these roles for the additional six months permitted by legislation in order to help accommodate the search process. In order to begin the search process, it falls to us as a committee to advise the Government House Leader of the need for a search committee to be struck once the session resumes this fall. Do we have a member who would like to make a motion to that effect? Basically, we need a motion to refer this to the Government House Leader so that a committee can be struck to begin the search.

**Mrs. Littlewood:** I just have a question. Is there a standard protocol that the LAO has in place for that?

**Ms Dean:** This is the standard procedure. When the chair receives indication that an officer is not seeking reappointment, then obviously a search committee has to be struck, so this committee will be advising the Government House Leader, requesting that a motion be brought forward in the House to strike that committee.

**The Chair:** Essentially, yes, we are fulfilling the function that's required of us to allow the House to move forward to strike the search committee so we can begin to seek a replacement for Mr. Hourihan.

**Mrs. Littlewood:** I would make that motion, then.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mrs. Littlewood.

We have the motion on the floor. Moved by Mrs. Littlewood that the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices recommend to the Government House Leader that a motion be introduced in the Assembly to establish a select special committee to search for a candidate for the position of Ombudsman and the position of Public Interest Commissioner.

Any discussion on the motion? On the phones?

Seeing and hearing none, I will call the question. All those in favour of the motion? Any opposed? On the phones? The motion is carried.

Our last item of discussion today: the Ethics Commissioner. Now, this next item deals with the Ethics Commissioner position.

It's customary for this committee to go in camera when discussing matters of this nature, so of course we need a motion to move in camera. Is there anyone who would like to make that motion so we can proceed with this discussion? Mr. Horne. Thank you. All in favour of the motion to go in camera? Any opposed? On the phones? The motion is carried.

[The committee met in camera from 11:44 a.m. to 12:10 p.m.]

**The Chair:** All right. Everything is in place. We are back on the record.

Mr. Cyr, you wish to move a motion?

**Mr. Cyr:** Yes, I do, Mr. Chair. I would like to move forward the motion that the office of the Ethics Commissioner move the position of Ethics Commissioner salary up from .7 to .8 starting on September 1, 2016.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Cyr.

The motion, then, moved by Mr. Cyr, that the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices designate the position of Ethics Commissioner as 80 per cent of full time effective September 1, 2016.

Any discussion, comment on the motion? Mr. Cyr.

**Mr. Cyr:** Yes. I'd like to point out that I am very happy to see that our Ethics Commissioner, Marguerite Trussler, has been doing a very excellent job, but I do know that her workload has increased significantly. This isn't a raise. This is to compensate her for the time that she is putting into this position, and moving her from 70 per cent of pay to 80 per cent of pay is just to compensate her for that extra time. I am glad to see that we make sure that we compensate our elected officials appropriately, and I hope that, going forward, we continue to treat all of Alberta's civil servants fairly.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Cyr.

Any other comments, questions regarding the motion in front of us? Mr. Ellis.

**Mr. Ellis:** Thank you. I'd like to just build upon what Mr. Cyr said. You know, given the current economic conditions I certainly wouldn't advocate for a raise, but I believe that the hon. Marguerite Trussler, Ethics Commissioner, has provided a very reasonable and articulate argument to really compensate her for the current work that she is doing.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Ellis.

If there is no further comment, I will call the question. All those in favour of the motion? Any opposed? That motion is carried.

Thank you to the committee members for your patience today. I know we've gone a little bit over time. Are there any other items for discussion, then, under other business?

If not, the date of the next meeting will be at the call of the chair, which time, I believe, will be after we have concluded the communications outreach. We'll have the opportunity at that point to begin to consider the information received under submissions.

With that being the case, would a member like to move the motion to adjourn? Mr. Malkinson. All those in favour? Any opposed? This meeting is adjourned.

Thank you.

[The committee adjourned at 12:13 p.m.]









