



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 29th Legislature
Second Session

Standing Committee
on
Families and Communities

Bill 203, Fair Trading (Motor Vehicle Repair Pricing
Protection for Consumers) Amendment Act, 2016

Monday, September 19, 2016
1 p.m.

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Second Session**

Standing Committee on Families and Communities

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Smith, Mark W., Drayton Valley-Devon (W), Deputy Chair

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Shepherd, David, Edmonton-Centre (ND)
Swann, Dr. David, Calgary-Mountain View (AL)
Turner, Dr. A. Robert, Edmonton-Whitemud (ND)****
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* substitution for Karen McPherson

** substitution for Sandra Jansen

*** substitution for Deborah Drever

**** substitution for Annie McKitrick

Also in Attendance

Anderson, Wayne, Highwood (W)
Carson, Jonathon, Edmonton-Meadowlark (ND)

Bill 203 Sponsor

Carson, Jonathon, Edmonton-Meadowlark (ND)

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1 p.m.

Monday, September 19, 2016

[Ms Goehring in the chair]

The Chair: Good afternoon. I'd like to call this meeting to order. Welcome to members, staff, and guests in attendance for this meeting of the Standing Committee on Families and Communities.

My name is Nicole Goehring. I'm the MLA for Edmonton-Castle Downs and chair of this committee. I'd ask that members and those joining the committee at the table introduce themselves for the record, and then I will call on those joining in via teleconference. I will start on my right.

Mr. Smith: Mark Smith, Drayton Valley-Devon, vice-chair.

Ms Sorensen: Rhonda Sorensen, manager of corporate communications and broadcast services with the Legislative Assembly Office.

Ms Sales: Tracey Sales, communications services.

Mr. Orr: Ron Orr, Lacombe-Ponoka.

Mr. Yao: Tany Yao, Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo.

Mr. Carson: Jon Carson, Edmonton-Meadowlark.

Mr. Dach: Lorne Dach, Edmonton-McClung, substituting for MLA McPherson.

Dr. Turner: Bob Turner, Edmonton-Whitemud, substituting for MLA McKittrick.

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

Mr. Hinkley: Bruce Hinkley, MLA, Wetaskiwin-Camrose.

Mr. Shepherd: David Shepherd, MLA, Edmonton-Centre.

Ms Robert: Good afternoon. Nancy Robert, research officer with the Legislative Assembly Office.

Mrs. Sawchuk: Karen Sawchuk, committee clerk.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Rodney: Good afternoon. Dave Rodney, Calgary-Lougheed.

Mr. Gill: Good afternoon. Prab Gill, Calgary-Greenway.

Ms Luff: Robyn Luff, Calgary-East.

Mr. Malkinson: Brian Malkinson, Calgary-Currie.

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

Mrs. Pitt: Angela Pitt, MLA, Airdrie.

The Chair: Thank you.

I'd like to note for the record the following substitutions: Mr. Gill for Ms Jansen, Mr. Malkinson for Ms Drever, Mr. Dach for Ms McPherson, and Dr. Turner for Ms Annie McKittrick.

A few housekeeping items to address before we turn to the business at hand. The microphone consoles are being operated today by *Hansard* staff, so there's no need for members to touch them. Please keep cellphones, iPhones, and BlackBerrys off the table as these may interfere with the audiofeed. Audio of committee proceedings is streamed live on the Internet and recorded by

Hansard. Audio access and meeting transcripts are obtained via the Legislative Assembly website.

We have a number of members participating via telephone conference this morning. A reminder that you can e-mail the committee clerk if you wish to be on the list for questions. Also, for the purpose of any motions, all members must vote, and I will call on those on the phone lines once members in the room have voted.

Moving on to approval of the agenda, would a member move a motion to approve? Moved by Mr. Orr that the agenda for the September 19, 2016, meeting of the Standing Committee on Families and Communities be adopted as circulated. All in favour of the motion? On the phones? Any opposed? Carried.

Approval of the meeting minutes from June 30, 2016. We have the minutes from our last meeting. Are there any errors or omissions to note? Seeing none, would a member move adoption of the minutes, please? Moved by Mr. Shepherd that the minutes of the June 30, 2016, meeting of the Standing Committee on Families and Communities be adopted as circulated. All in favour of the motion? On the phones? Any opposed? Thank you. The motion is carried.

Review of Bill 203, Fair Trading (Motor Vehicle Repair Pricing Protection for Consumers) Amendment Act, 2016, with a presentation by Jon Carson, MLA, sponsor of Bill 203. I'd like to welcome Mr. Carson to today's meeting. He is here to provide an overview of Bill 203 as the sponsor of the bill. I will open the floor to questions from committee members once Mr. Carson has finished his presentation.

Mr. Carson, go ahead, please.

Mr. Carson: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. First of all, I would like to thank the committee for allowing me to present on the Fair Trading (Motor Vehicle Repair Pricing Protection for Consumers) Amendment Act, 2016. This piece of legislation, which also happens to be my first private member's bill, was forwarded to this committee for your review and for their consideration.

Madam Chair, getting a vehicle repaired can be an expensive and sometimes overwhelming process. While it is a necessary investment, consumers want to know that they are getting what they paid for. They also want to be involved with the process, but they also need the tools to better understand their options and, ultimately, their rights. My hope is that after further consultation this bill will strengthen consumer confidence and understanding as well as the relationship between the client and the business which is performing work on their vehicle.

After introducing this bill in the Legislature, I had the opportunity to reach out to many people across this province with varying levels of understanding of the industry, including but not limited to vehicle technicians, autobody shops, parts recyclers, regulators, and consumers. I spoke to each of them of the opportunities as well as the concerns with respect to the Fair Trading (Motor Vehicle Repair Pricing Protection for Consumers) Amendment Act. On March 18, 2016, the day following this bill's tabling in the Legislature, our office posted an online survey to gather additional feedback regarding Bill 203 as it was presented in first reading. This survey was kept online until April 11, 2016, when Bill 203 was referred to the Standing Committee on Families and Communities.

Industry associations also did outreach, which increased the profile of this bill and made it possible to hear from even more stakeholders about how it will affect them. I also had the opportunity to discuss the bill and the details within it with many local media outlets, who took great interest. A local news/talk radio station in Calgary posted the idea to its listeners and hosted an expert to discuss his thoughts and information about how the

industry currently functions. The expert went on to explain the undercover probe undertaken by the Automobile Protection Association in 2011 that took place in Toronto and Calgary, where 22 out of 30 repair facilities were given a failing grade for either not recognizing the real problem on their test vehicle or finding a problem that never existed.

While Bill 203 does not necessarily address all of the issues put forward in that report, it does show the relevance and importance of consumer protection within the industry and the importance of discussing it on a regular basis. Madam Chair, through our consultations industry experts who have a clear understanding of the process brought to light some of the changes that need to be made for this bill to be more aligned with current best practices. I would add that there are additional potential amendments that are not included in my presentation today that you will likely hear during your consultations.

The most positively received initiative within Bill 203 was section 57.8, which states that each facility must post visible signs detailing relevant information to be decided by regulations. For example, this sign might explain the rights and responsibilities of both the consumer and business in simple and understandable language as well as information about the regulator, AMVIC. You will likely hear through your consultations that it is important to continue consulting on what exactly is to be listed on the sign. Through my discussions I was told that this is not a place to list prices as it may confuse the customer when comparing between separate shops.

There was also interest around section 57.10, which states that an invoice must be provided on completion of work. Information to be included in this invoice was to be prescribed by regulations. This is an important piece of Bill 203, considering there are currently no regulations surrounding the invoice process aside from what parts are being used, but it is important we consult on exactly what information will be required in such a document.

Section 57.6 discusses authorization not in writing. It explains that regulations would determine what acceptable authorization is if the consumer is unable to be physically present to sign off on the estimate. At the present time some facilities are able to time-stamp electronic and phone authorization in case a dispute were to arise, but systems like these can be costly, and it is important that we find a balance that does not negatively impact the business or the consumer. This is an issue that was recognized by many stakeholders, and they are interested in discussing options for improving the process.

Section 57.3, regarding estimate fees, also needs further consultation. Section 57.3(2) deems a variety of activities to be part of the estimate, and then section 57.3(3) prohibits charging for those activities if the shop carries out the repairs. The confusion arises when further diagnostics are required to identify an unknown problem, which takes time. Stakeholders recommended that we amend the bill by removing section 57.3(3) as well as subsection (4).

1:10

Stakeholders also recommended that section 57.11(9) be amended so that if a repairer uses a subcontractor, the repairer is liable for the work of the subcontractor. The reasoning behind this was that stakeholders thought the Fair Trading Act is established in a way where the primary supplier who enters into a contract with the consumer is completely responsible for the activities of any employees, agents, or subcontractors. If this section is not amended, it would allow the repairer and the subcontractor to blame each other for a loss or failure and to complicate claims, leaving the consumer confused, with little benefit to the process itself.

Through all the consultations on this bill the most discussed section was 57.11, regarding warranties. I heard from industry stakeholders that minimum warranties are an extremely complex discussion that requires much more time to consult. Not only were there questions around liability but also around the fact that certain companies use their warranty as a way to attract customers, and this could negatively affect those businesses that go above and beyond for their clients.

Madam Chair, there are many variables within the warranty process that make it very important to continue consultations around this topic. Going forward, I would like the committee to consider the impact that minimum warranties would have on the industry before making any deliberations on the issue, but I do believe it would be hard to implement and even harder to regulate.

While there is work to be done on this bill, I'm very excited that we have the opportunity to strengthen the current legislation in collaboration with consumers and industry. I know that stakeholders have identified areas within the current legislation that could be strengthened to benefit everyone, and I'm looking forward to continuing this discussion through this committee and beyond.

As I mentioned earlier, through the process of consultation on Bill 203 I've had the opportunity to meet or hear from many stakeholders from across the industry, including the Canadian Independent Automotive Association, the Alberta Independent Automotive Association, the Alberta Motor Vehicle Industry Council, the Alberta Automotive Recyclers and Dismantlers Association as well as many individual business owners in my constituency and across the province. I've also received very positive feedback from the AMA, who have been very supportive of this bill to date and have offered valuable insight throughout this process.

I'd like to point to a quote from an article in *Collision Repair Magazine* that I think really emphasizes what I'm trying to accomplish with Bill 203. It states:

The move to pass bill 203 is a step in the right direction, according to the Alberta Motor Association (AMA) Senior Policy Analyst, Scott Wilson.

"It's an appropriate direction and echoes some of the provisions in other jurisdictions, which is what I think they were [really] trying to achieve . . . I think anytime you can provide a consumer with a little more certainty around a transaction at a collision repair facility, it's a good thing."

As I explained earlier in my presentation, the goal of Bill 203 is to ensure all Albertans are given a transparent repair process and receive the information they need to ensure they are confident with their understanding of the industry. This begins at the estimate process. While the committee must deliberate on the best practices for providing such a document, it is important that the consumer is given adequate notice of costs and has signed off on the estimate before work is to begin. This is simply aligning all players in the industry with best practices. Many businesses do this already. The invoice process must be just as transparent and understandable as the estimate process. Consumers should know exactly what they have paid for, and if they choose, it should be easily comparable to another shop.

A recurring theme that came through consultations with stakeholders was that consumer education is the most effective method to increase consumer protection and confidence. I believe section 57.8, referring to mandatory sign postings, will help to increase the consumer's understanding of the process and would have a positive impact on the overall process for both parties.

In conclusion, I would like to say that I look forward to following the work that will take place in this committee in the days to follow. Consumer protections are important to ensure that the proper

checks and balances are in place to reduce conflicts that arise from misunderstandings between businesses and their clients.

While there is indeed work to do to ensure Bill 203 has a positive impact on both the consumer and the industry, I would like to say that I am thankful to the many expert stakeholders within the industry that worked with me to come up with common-sense amendments and also to the citizens of Alberta who provided their input into this process. I know that there is a willingness from the industry to continue developing stronger protections and best practices to ensure consumer confidence. I know that the companies who provide services in this industry, whether big or small, do this work because they want to help Albertans, and if they don't provide exceptional service, there is a good chance their customers will not return. It is imperative that we create legislation that supports their goals while protecting consumers.

My hope is that through this committee you will be able to accomplish the intent of this bill: to strengthen the consumer protections in the industry, to better educate the consumer, and to ensure transparency through the entirety of the process. I look forward to continuing to work with the stakeholders as well as the members of this committee to ensure Bill 203 is successful for all parties involved.

I look forward to answering your questions. Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Carson.

Do any members have a question? Mr. Anderson, go ahead.

Mr. W. Anderson: Thank you. I appreciate it. Mr. Carson, just a quick question. What was your main motivator behind Bill 203? Is it just about consumer protection? Is that your main motivator behind putting this bill forward?

Mr. Carson: I got the idea about creating this legislation essentially just to better align what's currently in legislation and regulations to the best practices within the industry.

Mr. W. Anderson: Well, now, are you familiar with an organization called AMVIC?

Mr. Carson: Yup.

Mr. W. Anderson: Does not AMVIC cover most of these issues that you currently talk about on consumer protection, or did you look at a gap or a difference between what AMVIC does?

Mr. Carson: AMVIC does currently regulate – that's the regulatory body, of course – and they do work within the framework of the Fair Trading Act as well as the automotive business regulation, yes.

Mr. W. Anderson: Obviously, you consulted with AMVIC.

Mr. Carson: AMVIC was one of many people that were consulted along the way, yes.

Mr. W. Anderson: Now, you mentioned that you have a list of stakeholders with whom you communicated or consulted. Have you provided the committee with a list of those stakeholders?

Mr. Carson: I haven't provided the committee with a formal list of stakeholders, no.

Mr. W. Anderson: Okay. Has your research team put into the potential of looking at the gaps between the Fair Trading Act of 1999 and your current private member's bill, that you're introducing at this time?

Mr. Carson: Not specifically, no.

Mr. W. Anderson: Wouldn't you think that'd be a wise thing to do, to look at the Fair Trading Act? Having myself personally read through the Fair Trading Act and looking at what your bill is, I don't really see areas of the Fair Trading Act that have a gap in them that your bill is actually covering off. Wouldn't it be appropriate maybe for the research team to look into that?

Mr. Carson: My apologies. I will clarify that I did research into the Fair Trading Act, of course, before putting this legislation forward. The main things that I was looking to address are just essentially to expand on the estimate process itself as well as, as I mentioned in my presentation, the invoice process. I thought it was important, on the education piece, for consumers to have information that's relevant to the process posted, which I have put forward in my legislation as well.

Mr. W. Anderson: Okay. That being said, then, did you submit the delta, the gaps between the Fair Trading Act and your bill, to the committee?

Mr. Carson: I did not, but as I went through my presentation, that is what I found.

Mr. W. Anderson: Okay.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Anderson. I'm just going to go through some of the other speakers, and if you want to ask future questions, you can get back on the speakers list.

Mr. Shepherd.

Mr. Shepherd: Thank you. Well, thank you, Mr. Carson, for coming in and presenting on this bill. I do think your intentions are good here to protect consumer rights in the province, and of course I think it's reasonable to try to align best practices with the legislation to ensure that we're covering all our bases and make sure that, in what can be admittedly a complicated and confusing process sometimes for consumers, we're providing the best protection for them that we can. I appreciate the work you've done on this so far.

You mentioned in your presentation that you've done some significant consultation, and of course Mr. Anderson was just asking a little bit about whether a list had been submitted. I recognize that you haven't had that opportunity yet, but I was wondering if you could just perhaps give us a sense, then: who are some of the agencies, regulators, industry partners, any of the folks that you've spoken with so far?

Mr. Carson: Sure. I did name some of the major industry players in my presentation, including the Canadian Independent Automotive Association, the Alberta Independent Automotive Association, the Alberta Motor Vehicle Industry Council as well as the Alberta Automotive Recyclers and Dismantlers Association.

Some of the independent or smaller businesses that did send feedback that informed some of the amendments that I'm calling for include – and these were people that were included in my online survey – Schwabe's Automotive, Tolley Tire Centre, Sandy Lane Auto, Sam's Solution Auto, Midas tire and auto, Tirecraft St. Albert, Derrick Dodge, J & R Automotive, the Garage, Cetus Automotive, Smitty's Automotive, Subaru City, Spruce Grove Hyundai, Carstar, LAD's Auto, Power Chief Auto, Harold's Auto Service, Speedy Apollo service centre. That was the extent of online submissions that I received.

1:20

Mr. Shepherd: Okay. Well, thank you.

So it sounds, then, like you had the opportunity to consult with a number of industry groups – again, the regulators and agencies – but also several independent businesses and owner-operators.

Mr. Carson: Yes, I did have that opportunity. My hope is that through further consultation in this committee you'll be able to expand on any ideas that they had. Yeah. Hopefully, we can make this better.

Mr. Shepherd: Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Dach.

Mr. Dach: Thank you, Chair. I wanted to direct our attention towards some of the communications that we use to advertise the bills to the public. I'm absolutely aware of the need to reach out extensively to stakeholders to receive feedback on this piece of legislation, but given the economic times that we're in, I wanted to be prudent about how much we've spent on advertising but do the advertising effectively as well. So I wanted to explore if this budget can be streamlined slightly. The communications plan shows \$10,000 to advertise in the big dailies, in the newspapers.

The Chair: Mr. Dach, is this a question for Mr. Carson, or is this for later on in the agenda when we speak to the communications piece?

Mr. Dach: I thought we might be speaking about that right now, but I'll save that for later.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Yao: Mr. Carson, you talked about a lot of consumer feedback and responses. Are you able to table all those documents for us?

Mr. Carson: I don't have a document ready for you today, but I would be willing to table something with some of the feedback that we heard from the smaller industry players as well as some of the consumer feedback that we did receive.

Mr. Yao: A follow-up?

The Chair: Yep.

Mr. Yao: I'd like to see all the responses tabled, not just some.

Mr. Carson: My apologies. To clarify, I will table all of the feedback that I received.

Mr. Yao: Yeah, certainly. The feedback I have received seems to be of a different nature than what you're receiving, so certainly I'd like to understand a bit more.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Malkinson.

Mr. Malkinson: Thank you very much, Chair. You know, I'm just going to start off by saying that it was really good to hear that that list of stakeholders you listed off earlier seemed to include a lot of independent businesses, not just the big players, the dealerships or chain businesses. I think that as we go through this, it's very important to make sure we engage those smaller, independent shops as well.

Going on to my question, you know, in that stakeholder feedback you were alluding to in your presentation, were there any particular points of your legislation that were particularly positively received

and any particular areas where they were specifically, really on board that you could share with the committee?

Mr. Carson: Well, thank you very much for the question. I would say that some of the most supported feedback that I received was around the posting of information and visible signs, and that's section 57.8. I heard a lot of feedback that any information that we can provide to the consumer to help their educational process will, you know, really help them understand the process better and potentially reduce the opportunity for conflicts to arise based on consumers' understanding of the process.

Other than that, I would say that the invoice piece was a big one. It's important that consumers understand what they're paying for exactly, but it is important that we continue consultations to ensure that what is to be included in that invoice is fair and strikes a balance between the consumer as well as the industry.

Mr. Malkinson: Thank you very much, Mr. Carson.

Chair, could I ask a follow-up?

The Chair: Go ahead.

Mr. Malkinson: Thank you, Chair. You also mentioned that something that was brought up repeatedly was how to handle repairs related to warranties. You know, I guess those are reflected in section 57.11(3), (4), (6), (7), (8). Now, I kind of realize that the current legislation leaves some room for confusion around repairs and warranty, and I understand that under the current legislation defective parts or errors in repairs are not covered under warranty. I was wondering if you could outline for us how you would like to see the committee explore this particular topic.

Mr. Carson: Thank you very much for the question. As was mentioned in my presentation, the warranty piece was one of the biggest talked-about sections within the legislation, and I think it would be good, really, to just start from the beginning in terms of consulting on that piece. I know that the industry feels very strongly about the way warranties are taken care of right now in terms of it being based on the shop itself deciding if they would provide a warranty or not. As mentioned in my presentation, this is an extreme, competitive advantage for some companies, and they go above and beyond what's required within the legislation to ensure that consumers or their customers return to them. So I think that that, as I mentioned, is a very complex issue, and it's important that the market is able to, you know, do things like that, to go above and beyond for consumers. That is at the will of the committee, to further consult on that piece.

Mr. Malkinson: Thank you, Mr. Carson.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Orr.

Mr. Orr: Thank you, Madam Chair. A couple of questions. Section 57.8: the issue of signs seems to be a fairly high-priority focus, so I guess my question is on a couple of things related to that. Will the government be templating the content of those signs exactly? Furthermore, is it your intent that the government will provide the physical signs themselves so that they're all the same, and if so, what's the budget for that? Or are you going to expect every business to pay for the costs of templating and publishing signs as an additional business cost?

Mr. Carson: Thank you very much for that question, and that is a very important question. I do believe that the signs should have a

template. In terms of the costing piece I haven't been able to explore that far enough. I thought that it would be a relatively small cost, but it is important that we do look at what that cost would be.

Thank you for the question.

Mr. Orr: Okay. A related question. Invoices, especially, I think, for the chain stores, might be a more substantial issue in terms of: will there be some kind of a phase-in period, the opportunity to use up existing invoices, or do they have to throw them all away? How do we break that one to businesses?

Mr. Carson: That is also something that will definitely have to be consulted on. I don't necessarily know the true answer, but I would say that the invoices that they currently have – it would just essentially be changing how they're writing the invoice themselves. But if there are new documents to come, then that's something that would have to be consulted on.

Mr. Orr: Okay. Just one last question on the cost factor. Have you been able to do any sort of projection, analysis, calculation in terms of the overall cost of the bill to businesses that is going to get passed on to the consumer? I guess the real question is: how much will compliance end up costing the consumer?

Mr. Carson: Once again, that is something that I don't have a definitive answer for. Really, through the consultations the big piece in terms of costing was the warranty piece, and that's why I think it's definitely important to continue consultations on that. But other than that, pricing in terms of the invoice section as well as the posted signs didn't come up too often, but it is important that we continue to look into any potential cost to the business or consumer as well.

Mr. Orr: Okay. Thanks.

The Chair: Thank you.

I don't have anybody else on the questions list. Is there anyone on the phones wishing to ask a question?

Mr. W. Anderson: Yes, Madam Chair.

The Chair: Go ahead, please.

Mr. W. Anderson: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just a quick question, Mr. Carson. You've stated that you're looking at continued consultations or future consultations. What format would these consist of? Would it be in-house presentations, written consultations, or written submissions? Is that what you're anticipating? Could you answer that, please?

Mr. Carson: The continued consultations that I described in my presentation would proceed through this committee, but I think it's important, I mean, above and beyond this committee, that we continue to consult. Whether there's a bill in front of us in the Legislature or not, I think it's important to always review the consumer protections that we're putting forward or that are in place already and always look to strengthen the legislation to ensure that best practices are being met.

Mr. W. Anderson: Just further to that, Madam Chair, if I may.

The Chair: Go ahead.

Mr. W. Anderson: Are you making a recommendation to the committee today regarding the format of those future or continued consultations?

Mr. Carson: No. That would be the will of the committee.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Shepherd.

Mr. Shepherd: Thank you. Mr. Carson, we've had a good opportunity here, I think, to discuss some of the concerns that have been raised through the consultation, some of the issues there. I'm just curious: through the consultation process, as you spoke with some of these stakeholders, were there any positive aspects that came out? Is there anything that you've heard is a strength of the bill that we could maybe be building on as we look at some of the other issues?

Mr. Carson: Yeah, for sure. As I mentioned before, the invoice piece is something that could benefit, I believe, from further legislation. As well, the signs posted was another positive piece that came out. Once again, it's important that you continue to consult on this bill to find a fair balance and ensure that best practices are being met. Once again I would just say that industry has been incredibly supportive in the process of consultation, and I'm happy that we will be able to continue those conversations at this committee.

1:30

Mr. Shepherd: Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Orr.

Mr. Orr: Thank you. Just a couple more quick questions. You mentioned that in the feedback that you had received, education was sort of I think you said the most effective suggestion to improve the relationships between consumers and providers. I just wonder how this is going to contribute toward actually creating goodwill between those two protagonists, if I can put it that way. And is there any kind of consumer rating website out there already that would help sift the quality of service providers? It seems to me, actually, that consumers are pretty good at sifting quality, and the guys who are bad don't stay in business very long. So I just wonder about the ongoing propensity of culture to continue to try to legalize every breath that people take and if it actually contributes to a better society or just makes people more conflicted.

I'm reminded of the real estate industry, where a few years back they started requiring these declarations of past use, and they found that it created so many lawsuits that, in fact, they quit doing it. I don't know. I guess I would just like your response and your sense on how continually trying to legislate, as I said, almost every breath actually creates goodwill amongst consumers and providers.

Mr. Carson: Well, thank you for the question and comments. In terms of the industry being able to be rated, I guess I could say that the Better Business Bureau has a piece in the rating system. But in terms of, you know, legislating, as you might say, red tape, I would say that it's important that we once again focus on best practices that are happening in the industry. I don't think that it's ever a bad thing to look at the consumer protections in place and try and build on best practices.

Mr. Orr: Okay.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Malkinson.

Mr. Malkinson: Thank you very much, Chair. I've just been listening to the conversation, and just a quick comment before my question about what the previous speaker was saying. I'm always a big fan of, generally speaking, more information is better. For a lot

of people, you know, having a car repair is something that could be traumatic and at an inconvenient moment, so I always think more info is better.

I was just going to ask Jon. There were some concerns that were brought up around the table regarding the invoices and changing the format. You know, I was thinking back to my time – I think everyone in the room knows I'm very much an automobile enthusiast, and I worked in the field. Jon, I was wondering if you sort of had an idea from your consultations whether it would just be a simple process or if you're imagining that for the info that would be available on that invoice, if that was something the committee decided to do, you'd have to hit these certain points of information that would need to be on the invoice. You wouldn't necessarily be going down and regulating a certain format: the price of the part goes here; the hours of labour go here. I don't know if you were planning to get into the weeds quite that much. Would that be correct?

Mr. Carson: That is correct. I believe that the committee does need to continue consultation around the invoice process. I think that it can be strengthened, but it's important that you hear feedback from all parties involved to ensure that it is fair for both business and consumers.

Mr. Malkinson: Okay. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Yao: Just feeding off the previous questions, what is your experience? What was your inspiration for this particular bill? As Mr. Anderson stated earlier, a lot of this is covered already. Is it just simply a matter of enforcement of a lot of these things or expanding the powers of AMVIC or something, as an example, or encouraging them to provide more inspections and reviews and provide more public education as opposed to putting in an entire bill?

Mr. Carson: Yeah. I appreciate everything that you just said. I would say: not necessarily any of the things that you just said except for the last piece, on education. That is really one of the most important pieces of this legislation. And as I mentioned earlier, it's just about strengthening the existing legislation and regulations that are in place, expanding on some of the processes just to ensure that consumers, most importantly, fully understand the process itself.

Mr. Yao: So doing legislation for the sake of doing legislation.

Mr. Carson: Not necessarily. Like I mentioned earlier, I think it's important that we continue to consider all pieces of legislation, no matter what field or industry it's in.

The Chair: Thank you.

I have exhausted my speakers list. Are there any other members wishing to ask questions of Mr. Carson? None in the room. Any on the phone? Thank you.

On behalf of the committee thank you for attending this afternoon, Mr. Carson. Thank you for your presentation and for responding to the committee's questions. Please feel free to stay for the balance of the meeting if your schedule permits.

Mr. Carson: Thank you.

The Chair: Moving on in the agenda, we're at research services and the draft list of prospective stakeholders. As members are aware, a motion was passed at the June 30 committee meeting directing research services to prepare a draft stakeholders list for

the committee's review. I'd ask Ms Robert from research services to provide an overview of the draft stakeholders list, and I will then open the floor to questions from committee members.

Ms Robert: Thank you, Madam Chair. Okay. Last week we would have posted on the internal committee website a draft list of prospective stakeholders for the review of Bill 203. I'm not sure if anybody has it in front of them, but I'll just briefly go through it. Of course, this is the committee's list. This is just a starting point. The committee can add, delete, do whatever it wants with this list. This is just a starting point. Basically, what we tried to do is cover industry: independent shops, franchise shops, new vehicle dealers that for the most part, I think, have service components to their dealerships. We also tried to gather some consumer advocate stakeholders, business and economic development organization stakeholders, and regulatory bodies.

Just to give you a little bit more detail, the first section is automotive industry associations, so we've suggested the Motor Dealers' Association of Alberta. That association represents over 90 per cent of Alberta's franchise, new vehicle, and heavy truck dealerships, so I think the bulk of those service groups are covered there. There's also the Recreation Vehicle Dealers Association of Alberta. There's also the Alberta Automotive Recyclers and Dismantlers Association. In addition to that, there's the Automotive Industries Association of Canada, which is an automotive aftermarket association.

Also, as Mr. Carson referred to, we have on our list the Canadian Independent Automotive Association. Now, with that association, there's a national association and then an Alberta chapter. It's fairly Alberta concentrated, I would say. I've spoken to the executive director, and I've also spoken to a member who is a member of the Alberta chapter, that is represented on the AMVIC society board, so those are a couple of people we thought would be perhaps good to reach out to. Now, what you should know is that the CIAA, the Canadian Independent Automotive Association, told me that they represent about 120 shops.

Now, in talking to AMVIC – AMVIC is the regulatory body, of course, that licenses shops, whether they're franchised, independent, whatever. I know I have in my list that there are 5,300 licensed automobile service and repair businesses in Alberta, but they've confirmed that that number is significantly higher. There are over 6,700 licensed service and repairers in the province. Now, we were trying to figure out the best way to reach all of those groups, and what we've managed to do is that AMVIC has given us their Excel spreadsheet with contact information for every one of them, so should you go ahead with that, a stakeholder letter will and can be sent to every one of them. They'll all be reached.

1:40

Very briefly, with respect to consumer advocates we've listed, you know, automobile-related advocates like the Alberta Motor Association, the Automobile Protection Association, which is based in Toronto, but we've also listed some suggested advocacy groups that are just general advocacy groups like the Better Business Bureau, the Consumers' Association of Canada in Alberta, and the Public Interest Advocacy Centre.

With respect to business and economic development organizations we have the Canadian Federation of Independent Business and the Alberta Chambers of Commerce. Of course, AMVIC, the Alberta Motor Vehicle Industry Council, is a prospective stakeholder and then possibly Service Alberta, the consumer and registry services division.

That's basically how we put the list together. I'd be happy to try to answer any questions.

The Chair: Thank you.

Do any members have questions of our research staff? I'll start with Mr. Orr.

Mr. Orr: Thank you. Yeah. Actually, a very extensive list. I had no idea there were so many associations – like, I'm not in the auto industry – but the one I notice that's not in here anywhere is anything to do with autobody.

Ms Robert: Well, I spoke with the CIAA and AMVIC about that, and anyone who is an autobody shop is covered under those 6,700 names in AMVIC.

Mr. Orr: Okay. Thank you.

Ms Robert: They don't have an association, though, that I'm aware of.

Mr. Orr: All right. Yeah. Okay. Thanks.

The Chair: Thank you.

Dr. Turner.

Dr. Turner: Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you to research services. This list is very comprehensive and detailed. Just following on some previous discussions on other items, the Alberta Motor Vehicle Industry Council has a board, and I was wondering if the members of that board had had an opportunity for input into this.

The Chair: Go ahead.

Ms Robert: Thank you. I spoke with – like, the CIAA is an industry member on the board, and the other industry members on the board save for the Auctioneers' Association are all represented in this list. Now, individual board members: I mean, AMVIC has been listed as a prospective stakeholder, so their executive director would get the letter should you approve it, and they could decide who from AMVIC they want to include. Does that help?

Dr. Turner: Yes. That's very helpful. Thank you very much.

The Chair: Any other questions in the room? Mr. Horne.

Mr. Horne: Yeah. I was just wondering if it would be possible, at least as a good practice, to ensure that the members of the board of AMVIC receive the package as well even if they're already included.

The Chair: Go ahead.

Ms Robert: So apart from the executive director, you'd like a letter to go to each of the board members of AMVIC. Is that what you're suggesting?

Mr. Horne: Yeah, just to make sure that AMVIC is completely covered as well.

Ms Robert: Okay. Well, the industry members will be getting letters because they are stakeholders save, of course, the auctioneers because the auctioneer group doesn't have anything to do with service, but for the other sort of at-large board members, is that what you're ...

Mr. Horne: I suppose what I'm getting at is more: would it be possible to add AMVIC as a board to the stakeholder list and make sure that they're included in the discussion?

Ms Robert: I'm sorry. I'm just a little bit confused. AMVIC is considered a stakeholder. The executive director works for the board. I mean, perhaps we could send it to the chair and the executive director.

Mr. Horne: Yeah. That should be okay.

Ms Robert: Certainly. We can do that.

The Chair: Thank you.

Anyone on the phones?

Mr. W. Anderson: Madam Chair, it's Mr. Anderson.

The Chair: Go ahead.

Mr. W. Anderson: Thanks, Madam Chair. Just a note to the committee. Thanks to the research staff. It's a fairly comprehensive list. Thank you very much.

For the other members – Mr. Horne, I think, was questioning – AMVIC works under the jurisdiction of Service Alberta. You might recall that the legislation was changed in our spring session to give Service Alberta much more jurisdiction over AMVIC, so they can themselves include AMVIC in any of the presentations. My point to the chair: I hope the committee would consider either in-house presentations and written submissions when they request further consultations to the members on the stakeholders list.

Also, if I may ask the chair: are you willing to take additional names or additional organizations to add to this list?

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Anderson. Absolutely. When we get to the point of hearing from our stakeholders, we will be discussing as a committee what types of presentations on top of what receive we would like to have, so that feedback is definitely appreciated. Absolutely, if you have additional members or lists of stakeholders that you would like to see on this list, that's what we're doing at this point in the committee. Please go ahead.

Mr. W. Anderson: Thanks, Madam Chair. I appreciate it.

The Chair: Do you have any additional stakeholders that you would like to include, Mr. Anderson?

Mr. W. Anderson: Not at this time, but our research team will submit something when it's appropriate to the committee.

Thank you.

The Chair: At this time is when we're discussing the stakeholders list, so it would need to be submitted today.

Mr. W. Anderson: Okay. Thank you. I don't have that list in front of me.

The Chair: Would the committee like to discuss the opportunity of extending the date from today's meeting for a few days to have additional submissions that weren't provided today?

Mr. Yao.

Mr. Yao: Yeah. Agreed. Seeing as we just received this list a couple of days ago, it would be appropriate if we could just have a couple of extra days to submit anything if we do identify any issues, but I think Ms Robert did a fantastic job.

The Chair: Any discussion on Mr. Yao's suggestion?

At this time we would require a motion on how that final list would be approved. If the committee is in agreement, I would suggest that myself and the deputy chair review the list and then approve it at that time. Is there any concern on that or any comments? Is anybody opposed, I guess, to that process?

Mr. Orr: I'm not opposed to that process. I think I would like to ask – and I guess this goes back to my question about autobody. These individuals may be covered, but just to make sure we have autobody representation, I'd like to add Peter Lokstadt of Southern Auto Body, Doug Bychuk of Doug's Place, and Dean Wetzlaugk of Modern Auto Body. If they're already on the list of what's covered, then maybe it's not so important, but I do think that we need to make sure we have some coverage there, and these guys, I think, are aware that we would ask to add them to the list.

The Chair: I'll ask Ms Robert for her opinion as to whether or not they're included in the current list.

Mr. Orr: Yeah, that's tough to answer.

Ms Robert: Thanks, Madam Chair. I haven't looked at the 6,700 names, but certainly we will have our staff have a look to make sure those three names are on the list of 6,700. Is that satisfactory?

Mr. Orr: That would be satisfactory. Thank you.

Ms Robert: Is there any chance I could have your list in writing just so that I...

Mr. Orr: I can get it to you after.

Ms Robert: Okay. I didn't catch it all. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

I would ask the committee: is everyone okay if we extend the date for submission to the stakeholders list to September 22? Is that enough time? Is there anybody opposed to that date? It's this Thursday.

Mr. Orr: In deference to my colleague beside me here, I don't see the value of extending it. I think the intent here is to get this out to give people time to respond. If we cut it too tight, we defeat some of the purpose of it and also some of the cost of spending to accomplish it. So I don't know. I don't see the point of extending it, personally.

1:50

The Chair: Any other comments?

Mr. Rodney: Madam Chair, Dave Rodney in Calgary-Lougheed.

The Chair: Go ahead.

Mr. Rodney: Okay. Thank you. I'd like to speak to the motion. It sounds very much like a motion we had from a while ago that didn't really end well. I was supportive of the motion to have the chair and the deputy chair convene in addition to someone from the third party last time, and I'm happy to support your motion this time even if it doesn't include us. No hard feelings. It's a motion that makes sense to me now. It made sense to me then. The only thing I'd want to make sure of – I heard CIAA listed, and I'd just want to make sure, since we wouldn't be on the committee, that the Motor Dealers' Association of Alberta is on there.

I really look forward to both written and oral submissions. The only thing I want to add is along the lines of Mr. Anderson's comments, which I really appreciated. We've just got to make sure that everybody is heard, for one thing, as we all, I think, would agree. We also have to make it manageable for the committee. We just can't see everyone.

Thanks.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Rodney.

At this point there isn't a motion on the floor, but I'm going to propose that the clerk read out a suggested motion at this time.

Mrs. Sawchuk: Thank you, Madam Chair. That additions to the draft list of prospective stakeholders be submitted by Thursday, September 22, and that the chair and deputy chair be authorized to approve the final list with respect to the review of Bill 203, Fair Trading (Motor Vehicle Repair Pricing Protection for Consumers) Amendment Act, 2016.

The Chair: Thank you.

Any discussion?

Hearing none, is someone able to move the motion? Dr. Turner. All in favour of the motion, please say aye. Any opposed? On the phones I only heard one person respond. If you could please indicate your vote. Thank you. Motion carried.

Correspondence will be sent out within the next week inviting stakeholders to make a written submission on the review of Bill 203.

The next portion of the agenda is communications services' draft communications plan, decision on written submissions from the public. Our next item of business is a draft communications plan, and I would ask Ms Sales to address this item. Go ahead, please.

Ms Sales: Thank you, Madam Chair. In preparing this plan, I consulted the discussions from the June 30 committee meeting. As directed by the discussions, I did refer to the plan that was produced for the Mental Health Act review, particularly in looking at the budget. As far as the initiatives in the plan, of course, those were recommended based on what I felt would effectively reach the target audience, which in this case is quite different than that for the Mental Health Act review.

The goal of the plan is to raise awareness of the Bill 203 review being conducted by the Standing Committee on Families and Communities in a way that encourages interested members of the public to provide input through written or online submissions. The timelines that we're suggesting: the advertising would begin the week of September 26, so a week from today, and end around October 28, with October 28 being the deadline for submissions.

Strategies within the plan combine both traditional and online advertising methods to spread the word of the review to a fairly wide demographic. We're looking at providing notice both to consumers as well as those in the automotive industry wishing to provide input. Of course, research and committees will be taking care of the stakeholder letter, and then we're recommending a daily newspaper campaign. It would cost about \$10,000. That would run ads once, black and white, in Alberta's nine major dailies. That would hit the major urban centres within the province.

We're also recommending a radio advertising campaign at an estimated \$8,000. Many people who commute to work on a daily basis will listen to the radio. We're suggesting that we run the ads through 630 CHED, iNews 880, and News Talk 770. The \$8,000 will get us approximately 94 radio spots.

We're also recommending advertising through Google AdWords simply to help people who are searching the topic to find our website and more information on how to submit.

We're also recommending advertising through Kijiji. Kijiji has over 4 million unique monthly visitors. We're suggesting advertising specifically in the parts and services section of the automotive section of the website. We feel it would very effectively target those who are actively looking to service their vehicles. The estimated cost would be about \$5,000. This could yield an estimated 870,000 impressions. We would be targeting, of course, those in Calgary, Edmonton, Grande Prairie, Fort McMurray, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, and Red Deer.

Social media options. We're suggesting both promoted tweets as well as boosted posts on Facebook. These as well will allow us to target people related to the topic. We're looking at about \$3,000 for that.

As well, of course, we will ensure that information is on the committee website and provide media relations support as needed. We're also suggesting that an e-card be produced. In the past we found this to be effective. We can send the e-card to stakeholders, who can then pass it on to their membership.

The cost of this plan is estimated at \$27,000.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Dach: Thank you very much, Ms Sales, for your presentation on the communication plan. I've done a fair bit of advertising in my past life as a real estate agent, and one of the things I found is that black-and-white newspaper ads were being left behind as a prominent method of advertising, so I'm just wondering if indeed we could streamline the budget on the comms plan by maybe considering dropping the largest expense, the black and white, the daily newspaper advertising, from that budget as a less effective means. Now, I'm obviously not an advertising expert other than that experience I had over the years, but it just stands out as a very large item for a one-day advertisement. In the interest of saving some money, I'm wondering if that perhaps could be dropped as an item, considering the others that are more targeted to our market.

The Chair: Go ahead.

Ms Sales: I can speak to that, Madam Chair. One of the things that I was looking at when I was doing research for this is that the largest demographic for drivers or people who own automobiles ranges from 22 to 64 years of age. If we do remove the traditional advertising, that being primarily the newspaper, we might be missing out on the ability to target an older demographic that may not be as inclined to use the online avenues that we're suggesting. That would be my only worry.

Mr. Dach: Thank you. I understand the rationale. It is a large piece of the budget, the item. I'm just wondering if that could be pared in some way given that newspapers are a decreasing method of preferred advertising in many industries. I'll deign to your expertise on that.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Yao: I'm really impressed by Mr. Dach recommending some savings because I didn't think that you guys were savvy on that aspect. Perhaps we could cut back on some of the advertising in other areas of the government, like the carbon tax and whatnot. That's in the millions of dollars whereas we're talking thousands.

The Chair: Mr. Yao, I would request that you keep the conversation to the task at hand.

Mr. Yao: All right. I'm fine with our advertising.

The Chair: Thank you.

Any other members wishing to be added to the list?

2:00

Mr. Orr: I just want to say thank you to the media team. I think they've done a really good job, and I do appreciate the fact that they've looked back at our approach the last time we did this as a committee.

You know, \$27,000 isn't anywhere near the – what was it? – \$48,000 or \$49,000 that we started out with for our last committee advertising campaign, so I think it's within reason. I do question the newspaper a bit, but I think it's probably appropriate.

One little, tiny question: my text says 70 radio spots; I think you said 94 spots?

Ms Sales: Yes. That was a typo in the version that came to you. I'm sorry.

Mr. Orr: Okay. Otherwise, I'm fine with the package. I think it's good.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Shepherd.

Mr. Shepherd: Thank you. Yeah. Absolutely. I think this is a well put together plan and, yeah, it's good to see a mix of sources here. I was intrigued to see the advertising on Kijiji included. Having had some conversations with Mr. Malkinson, who is, of course, quite involved in the car culture in the province, he identified that, yeah, that is a very popular forum for people that are looking into this. I imagine we're going to be able to get some good information through there.

I was just wondering, being as we do have that really targeted opportunity, I guess, online to be able to reach out to that particular area, if we might then be able to realize some savings with the social media options. Since we're getting that bigger bang for the buck through Kijiji, if we could perhaps look at – I don't know. I was just curious if you thought that might be a direction we could look at.

The Chair: Go ahead, Ms Sales.

Ms Sales: Thank you for the question. Do you know what? There are so many possibilities, and I guess what I would look to the committee for direction on is: what would you like the budget to be? I can juggle some of the numbers. The dailies, I would suggest, are fairly fixed, but as far as the advertising on Kijiji, if the committee is comfortable with that cost, we can leave it as is. If the committee is comfortable with less exposure, we can lower that cost, the same with the social media. We can play with whatever numbers we're given. Just keep in mind that the exposure, of course, would go down.

Mr. Shepherd: Fair.

Ms Sales: Right now the plan is \$27,000. If you said to me that you want me to bring it in to \$25,000 or you want me to bring it in to \$22,000, which was the estimate for the Mental Health Act review, I can do that and then just juggle the numbers accordingly.

Mr. Shepherd: I appreciate that additional perspective. So in terms of making that kind of an adjustment, then, if we were to say – like,

we're at \$27,000 now. Say we were to look at a reduction to \$25,000 or \$24,000. On the social media aspect can you give me a general idea of what kind of reduction we'd be looking at then in terms of outreach, what kind of impact that might have?

Ms Sales: That's a very good question.

Mr. Shepherd: I recognize it can be difficult to measure.

Ms Sales: Do you know what? I'm not quite certain. I could get back to you on that. I would think that if we lowered the social media costs slightly, we would still get fair exposure and could still suggest that it was effective, if that's what your concern is. But as far as specific amounts I don't have those for you.

Mr. Shepherd: I understand. That's fine. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.
Mr. Yao.

Mr. Yao: Hi. The question is to Tracey, with communications from the government?

Ms Sales: No. The Legislative Assembly Office, sir.

Mr. Yao: Oh, sorry. All right.

Scratch that question – well, I guess, no. Can you provide a comparative analysis of the spending that we're doing here for advertising versus some of the other government advertising that's currently going on?

Ms Sorensen: I can speak to that, Madam Chair.

The Chair: Thank you. Go ahead.

Ms Sorensen: Sorry, Mr. Yao. We don't actually have any information on the government advertising.

Mr. Yao: Me neither.

Ms Sorensen: The advertising that we do is just for the all-party committees or the multiparty committees.

The Chair: Thank you.
Mr. Smith.

Mr. Smith: Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess one of the questions that I had – and maybe it's just my own ignorance here again. I see radio pieces. You know, we're talking about Kijiji, Google. We're talking about social media. Was there any thought or consideration given to any trade journals or magazines and stuff like that?

Ms Sales: Absolutely, there was. Because of the tight deadline between this meeting date and when the review would have to begin, I didn't feel that those would be an option. Often those sorts of things you need to book far in advance, and I wouldn't have direction from the committee in time. That was my concern.

Mr. Smith: Would it be possible to make a few phone calls to some of the major trade journals or magazines and just find out if we could meet their dates?

Ms Sales: Absolutely. I could look into that. That would, of course, incur an additional cost to the budget that's been presented. Would the committee like me to do that? I'm not certain.

Mr. Smith: Yeah, I'm thinking. You know, I guess what I'm thinking is that we're trying to make sure that we get the people that

need to be consulted here. I don't know if that means that we have to have advertising. Maybe it could even be letting those trade journals know that this is coming down the pipe, and maybe they could interview Jon.

Ms Sales: Can I speak to that?

The Chair: Yeah.

Ms Sales: We could definitely look into that. Again, my concern would be that they're not quite as timely as, say, a daily publication or even a weekly publication would be, but absolutely we could look into that, and I could let the committee know.

Mr. Smith: I'd be appreciative if what you could do is maybe see if there are any trade journals, magazines, and stuff like that that are available and then – I don't know – maybe let them know that Mr. Carson has proposed this private member's bill. I'm sure you would be open to having a discussion with them, and then they would be aware of the dates and the times and that kind of thing. Would that work?

The Chair: No. At that point she's in charge of finding out how much it would cost to reach out to those people. She's not actually responsible for reaching out to those people. Are you asking her to get us a cost on what that would be to include those in our outreach?

Mr. Smith: Yeah, I guess. Okay. I'll put that motion forward. If you could come back to us with if it's even possible and then with what the cost would be.

The Chair: And timelines.

Mr. Smith: Yeah.

Ms Sales: Absolutely. Should they actually write an article, or should we submit an article? Is that kind of what you were looking at?

Mr. Smith: Okay. Let's just separate that. You're just responsible for trying to get the advertising out there, correct?

Ms Sales: Actually, if the committee would like an article submitted, it would be communications that would assist with that, but, of course, it would be on behalf of the committee. It would be the chair who would be the one handling any media relations because it's the committee who's conducting the review.

Mr. Smith: Okay. Really, then, in my mind I'm seeing two things here that sort of developed out of my maybe muddled question. One is that I would appreciate it, anyway, to see if there is an opportunity with appropriate timelines to be able to put something in one of the trade magazines or journals. Then, I guess, maybe the committee would have to make a decision on whether we could fit it into our budget or not. The second one would be, if that is an option, that maybe we could have the chair in concert with Mr. Carson work together to put some sort of a brief communications piece out there for them. I don't know. Is that how it works?

The Chair: Perhaps Ms Robert can respond to that.

Ms Robert: The only thing I would say is that, of course, the chair is the impartial chair of the committee, and the committee has not made any decisions about the bill. The chair can transmit information about what is in the bill or, rather, what the committee is doing, the committee's process, but I would caution that that

would probably be at the end as obviously she doesn't want to presuppose a decision of the committee.

Mr. Smith: Oh, of course not.

The Chair: Thank you.
Mr. Shepherd.

Mr. Shepherd: Thank you. I appreciate the idea that Mr. Smith has brought forward. In terms of further advertising, personally I'm not sure that I'd see benefit in going to trade journals or those sorts of things, which, to my understanding, would largely have a national scope, when we have the opportunity, I think, to do much more targeted advertising, much more timely and focused right here within the province. I'm not sure that we would achieve any further reach within our target audience with a national publication than what we've already identified with what we have here.

I can certainly appreciate, though, the value of looking for opportunities, I guess, for an article or something along those lines if that was possible. Certainly, I do see that we have the media relations section here, where we are going to be sending out news releases regarding the work of the committee and what's going to be happening here. Certainly, any of us as members would have the opportunity to write an editorial, and certainly Mr. Carson would have that opportunity as well, maybe considering that as the bill moves forward. I know that as the chair of the Legislative Offices Committee I did have the opportunity to speak with the local paper who reached out to me after receiving our press release to talk about the review of the Child and Youth Advocate Act.

Those are just my thoughts on it. Personally, I don't see a large advantage in trying to pursue that, but I'm certainly open to the committee's opinion.

2:10

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Shepherd.

I would ask Ms Robert to provide some clarification about the proposal of Mr. Smith's.

Ms Robert: Thank you, Madam Chair. All I really wanted to clarify is that until this communications plan is approved, no communications can occur. So if time frames are an issue, you might want to consider that. If communications is going to go away and come back with additional information with respect to advertisements in trade magazines, that, I believe, might delay the process of approving the communications plan, although I, of course, defer to the committee to decide how it wants to handle that. I just wanted to bring that to your attention.

The Chair: Thank you for that feedback.

Mr. Smith: It seems like – okay. My question was probably answered. You said that you didn't want to go forward on that because you thought the timelines wouldn't fit, so maybe I'll just withdraw that because it seems like it's creating an issue, and we can move on.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Smith.
Mr. Orr.

Mr. Orr: Yeah. I think I heard Ms Sales say that the mental health campaign that we did a while back cost \$22,000. So my question is: do you feel like with this particular group – and I realize that the field may be a little bit different here – it would be reasonable for us to expect that we could receive comparable responses for a \$22,000 budget, comparable responses to what we received last

time? I thought the response last time was quite good. If we could get the same response for the same budget, I'd be inclined to move that we should just go with what we did last time.

The Chair: Go ahead, Ms Sales.

Ms Sales: Okay. I'm going to ask for clarification. When you say, "Go with what we did last time," you just mean with a budget of \$22,000 . . .

Mr. Orr: Correct.

Ms Sales: . . . but including the initiatives in this plan?

Mr. Orr: Sorry. Yes.

Ms Sales: Okay. Absolutely, I can do that. I could bring the budget down to \$22,000. Do I think that the communications would still be effective? Absolutely. We estimate costs based on what we think will bring the highest yield – I guess that's the best word that I can come up with – but there is no guarantee on anything. Absolutely, I could change the budget if that's the will of the committee.

Mr. Orr: So you don't see a significant difference in the field that would necessitate additional funding to make this one as effective as the last one.

Ms Sales: It's a very difficult question to answer because, again, I just estimate costs based on what I think is going to be the most effective and on discussing initiatives, of course, with the people who work at the various organizations such as Kijiji, for example. But, yes, I do think that we could lower the budget slightly and still get a good return on investment. Do I think that it would be exactly the same as this? No, I cannot say that.

Mr. Orr: Yeah. Okay.

The Chair: Thank you.
Mr. Shepherd.

Mr. Shepherd: Thank you, Chair. Just my observation. This budget being \$27,000, the mental health having been \$22,000, and then the amount for advertising on Kijiji here being \$5,000, that's essentially the difference between that and this. Not many mental health advocates, I guess, make use of Kijiji. But in this case, we've got that specific amount additionally here because that's a newly targeted community compared to the other review. That said, if there's the possibility to still target all of the groups that we have here and successfully do so for a lower amount, I would certainly consider that to be, I think, reasonable for us to consider.

The Chair: Thank you.

Any other comments or questions? On the phones? Thank you.

The draft communication plan addresses the issues of advertising the committee's review of Bill 203, which does require a decision on whether the committee wishes to invite written submissions from the public. What are members' thoughts in this respect? I will open the floor to discussion.

Mr. Yao: I believe that that would be a good idea, to provide the venue for the public, the consumers to provide their responses and their experiences. Certainly, I think that's a great idea, Chair.

Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Yao.
Anyone on the phones?

Okay. We've had a brief discussion on this point in respect to this, and it appears that the members are in support of an advertising campaign inviting written submissions from the public. Would a member be prepared to move a motion in this respect? Mr. Yao.

Mr. Yao: Yes. I trust Mrs. Sawchuk to write something really good.

The Chair: I would ask that the clerk please read that.

Mrs. Sawchuk: I'm going to try, Madam Chair. Thank you. Moved that

the committee approve the communications plan for the review of Bill 203, Fair Trading (Motor Vehicle Repair Pricing Protection for Consumers) Amendment Act, 2016, as revised, such that the costs not exceed \$22,000 and that written submissions be invited from the public with a submission deadline of October 28, 2016.

The Chair: Any discussion? On the phone?

Mr. Shepherd: Sorry. Just to clarify, Mrs. Sawchuk, the amount you read there was \$22,000?

Mrs. Sawchuk: Correct.

Mr. Shepherd: Thank you.

The Chair: Hearing no further discussion, all in favour of the motion . . .

Mr. Orr: We need a motion.

Mr. Yao: I did the motion.

Mr. Orr: Oh, you did it? I'm sorry. I missed that.

The Chair: That's okay.

All in favour of the motion, please say aye. On the phones? Any opposed? On the phones? Thank you. This motion is carried.

We move on to section 5 of the agenda, other business. Are there any other issues for discussion before we conclude our meeting? Seeing none in the room, any on the phones?

Hearing none, we'll move on to item 7, adjournment. I'll call for a motion to adjourn. Moved by Mr. Horne that the meeting be adjourned. All in favour of this motion, say aye. Any opposed? Thank you. This motion is carried.

[The committee adjourned at 2:18 p.m.]

