



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 31st Legislature
Second Session

Special Standing Committee
on
Members' Services

Thursday, November 27, 2025
10:32 a.m.

Transcript No. 31-2-1

**Legislative Assembly of Alberta
The 31st Legislature
Second Session**

Special Standing Committee on Members' Services

McIver, Hon. Ric, Calgary-Hays (UC), Chair
Yao, Tany, Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo (UC), Deputy Chair

Armstrong-Homeniuk, Jackie, Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville (UC)*
Bouchard, Eric, Calgary-Lougheed (UC)**
Eggen, David, Edmonton-North West (NDP)
Getson, Shane C., Lac Ste. Anne-Parkland (UC)
Gray, Christina, Edmonton-Mill Woods (NDP)
Metz, Luanne, Calgary-Varsity (NDP)
Petrovic, Chelsae, Livingstone-Macleod (UC)
Sabir, Irfan, Calgary-Bhullar-McCall (NDP)
Singh, Peter, Calgary-East (UC)
Wright, Justin, Cypress-Medicine Hat (UC)

* substitution for Chelsae Petrovic

** substitution for Shane Getson

Support Staff

Shannon Dean, KC	Clerk
Ketsa, Tammy	Executive Assistant to the Clerk
Trafton Koenig	Law Clerk
Hillary Cleminson	Chief of Staff to the Speaker
Aaron Roth	Committee Clerk
Terry Langley	Sergeant-at-Arms
Dave Ludwick	Executive Director of Corporate Services
Darren Joy	Senior Financial Officer
Lyndsay Tischer	Director of Human Resources
Amanda LeBlanc	Managing Editor of <i>Alberta Hansard</i>

10:32 a.m.

Thursday, November 27, 2025

[Mr. Yao in the chair]

The Deputy Chair: I would like to call this meeting to order.

I'm Tany Yao, the MLA for Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo and co-chair of the committee. I'll now ask members and those joining the committee at the table to introduce themselves for the record, and I'll call on members joining the meeting remotely to introduce themselves. I'll start to my right.

Mr. Roth: Good morning. Aaron Roth, committee clerk.**Mr. Bouchard:** Good morning. Eric Bouchard, Calgary-Lougheed.**Mr. Wright:** Morning. Justin Wright, MLA for the charming constituency of Cypress-Medicine Hat.**Mr. Langley:** Good morning. Terry Langley, Sergeant-at-Arms.**Mr. Eggen:** Good morning. My name is David Eggen. I'm the MLA for Edmonton-North West.**Mr. Sabir:** Irfan Sabir, MLA for Calgary-Bhullar-McCall.**Ms Gray:** Good morning, everyone. Christina Gray, MLA for Edmonton-Mill Woods.**Dr. Metz:** Hello. Luanne Metz from Calgary-Varsity.**Ms Tischer:** Good morning. Lyndsay Tischer, director of human resources for the Legislative Assembly Office.**Mr. Koenig:** Trafton Koenig, Law Clerk.**Mr. Joy:** Darren Joy, senior financial officer.**Dr. Ludwick:** Dave Ludwick, executive director of corporate services, LAO.**Ms Dean:** Good morning. Shannon Dean, Clerk.**The Deputy Chair:** I also wish to note for the record the following substitutions: Mr. Bouchard for Mr. Getson and the hon. Ms Armstrong-Homeniuk for Mrs. Petrovic.

At this time I'm going to ask that we put our meeting on hold for a few minutes while we wait for the chair to arrive. With that, thank you so much. We should be expecting him in about five minutes or so. Thank you.

Ms Armstrong-Homeniuk: Should you introduce the people online? Not that I want you to do it, but . . .**The Deputy Chair:** Oh, good call. Thank you.**Ms Armstrong-Homeniuk:** You don't have to.**The Deputy Chair:** With that, please introduce yourself.**Ms Armstrong-Homeniuk:** Jackie Armstrong-Homeniuk, MLA for Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville. Good morning, everybody.**The Deputy Chair:** Mr. Singh, sir.**Mr. Singh:** Good morning, everyone. Peter Singh, MLA, Calgary-East.**The Deputy Chair:** Thank you both so much for that.

As I stated previously, we'll just wait about five minutes before we continue on. Thank you so much.

[The committee adjourned from 10:32 a.m. to 10:39 a.m.]

[Mr. McIver in the chair]

The Chair: My severe apologies for keeping you waiting. It wasn't my intention, and I know we're all busy, so thank you for your patience. My name is Rick McIver, the Speaker and the chair of this committee.

Before we turn to the business at hand, a few operational items. Please note that the microphone and phones are operated by *Hansard* staff. Committee proceedings are live streamed on the Internet and broadcast on Alberta Assembly TV. The audio- and videostream and transcripts of meetings can be accessed via the Legislative Assembly website. Those participating remotely are encouraged to please turn on your camera while speaking and mute your microphone when not speaking. Members participating virtually who wish to be placed on a speakers list are asked to e-mail or send a message in the group chat to the committee clerk, and members in the room are asked to please signal to the chair. Please set your cellphones and other devices to silent for the duration of the meeting.

Are there any proposed revisions to today's meeting agenda? Seeing none, do we have a mover, then, for the agenda as written? MLA Wright. All in favour of the agenda as proposed? Any opposed? Hearing none, that is carried. Pardon me, and the online folks, any opposed? Okay. That's carried.

Any amendments to the minutes from the last committee meeting? If not, would a member move adoption of the minutes, please? MLA Sabir. All in favour, including online? Any opposed? That too is carried.

Okay. We'd like to introduce our next item, the budget parameters for the Legislative Assembly, by providing the committee with an overview of the Legislative Assembly fiscal year 2026-2027 budget. I will then invite Clerk Shannon Dean to make further comments regarding some specific elements of the budget parameters, after which I will open the floor for discussion.

By way of background, the Legislative Assembly's current fiscal year budget is approximately \$89.6 million, consisting of three main components: MLA administration at \$39.9 million; the Legislative Assembly Office branch budgets of \$39 million, which includes funding for the Electoral Boundaries Commission; and the caucus budgets of approximately \$10.7 million. I have had preliminary discussions with the Legislative Assembly administration to plan for a number of budget adjustments based on compensation, special projects, inflation, and operational requirements. These items were summarized in the budget parameters document that was provided to you in advance of today's meeting.

I would like to start with an estimate of the number of hours the House is expected to sit during the fiscal year. It is assumed that the House will sit for 75 sessional days, with an average of 25 hours per week. That is a total of 20 weeks estimated and 85 committee meetings averaging three hours per, or 255 hours in total. Inflation will continue to impact the cost of doing business for the Legislative Assembly. Thus, we propose to apply an inflationary factor of 1.6 per cent to operational costs across the Legislative Assembly's budget. That is for constituency office funding, MLA administration, and the Legislative Assembly Office branch budgets. This is based on the Conference Board of Canada's projected consumer price index for Alberta for 2026.

In addition, compensation adjustments for staff will be made that will mirror recent changes in the Alberta public sector's compensation plans for opted-out and excluded nonmanagement and

management employees. Members' remuneration will also be adjusted based on the formula set out in section 1(2) of the members' allowances order. Caucus and branch budgets will be adjusted to reflect the 1.6 per cent inflation factor as well as a 3 per cent merit increase for eligible managers and a 4 per cent adjustment for eligible staff. This, of course, is all contingent upon the budget being supported.

The parameters also propose special funding requirements for two operational initiatives. The first one is the Chamber upgrade project. As you know, members, this past summer the LAO completed year 2 of the Chamber upgrade project to modernize the visual and audio systems in the Chamber from its prior 20-year-old technology. In fiscal '26-27 the Legislative Assembly Office will complete its work. Shannon will provide more detail about the project.

The second operational initiative is the enterprise resource planning project. As outlined in the previous year's budget parameters, the Legislative Assembly Office is currently completing an update to the HRS payroll, financial, and accounting systems to provide a contemporary integrated enterprise resource planning system. Shannon will present the fiscal year '26-27 budget impact, which includes completing this project.

Before we open the table for discussion, I would like to call on Shannon Dean, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, to provide further information on the proposed budget. Madam Clerk.

The Clerk: Thank you, Speaker McIver. I'm going to talk in detail about the three cost drivers that will impact next year's budget. First, as the Speaker mentioned, is the Chamber upgrade project, and we're proposing a \$2 million provision for that project. As you know, significant work has been done to modernize the Chamber visual and audio systems. This \$2 million envelope would cover the cost of the final year of the three-year project, and it will include millwork upgrades to the Speaker's dais, the Clerk's table, the Sergeant-at-Arms' desk, and of course we'll need some additional member desks. With respect to equipment and software there will be improvements made to the communication system, the broadcast cameras, and the crow's nest clock, and we expect this work to be completed next summer.

10:45

Secondly, funding will be required for the ERP project. We have surpassed significant milestones this past year. We rolled out the new accounting system in June. Then in October the LAO transitioned MLA pay to the new payroll system. This spring we will be transitioning staff to the new system and also transitioning salaried staff from a monthly pay cycle to a biweekly pay cycle. The budget impact for the ERP project for next fiscal year will remain the same as it was in the current fiscal year, and that number is \$1.3 million.

Finally, the third cost driver for next year's budget is the compensation adjustments for staff, and these adjustments parallel what has taken place in the Alberta public service for management and opted-out, excluded nonmanagement employees. I'm sure committee members are aware that the Alberta public service recently announced a 3 per cent general pay increase for staff. There are also market adjustments to the pay grids. Appropriate adjustments will also be made to reflect changes relating to the employer portions of statutory deductions and benefits.

With respect to MSA and caucus budgets, factors will be applied to the labour component of these budgets. This includes the staffing component of your member's services allowance as set out in section 1(3)(a) of the constituency services order. Pay and merit adjustments will also be applied to the caucus budget staffing

components, which represent approximately 70 per cent of caucus budgets.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will turn it back to you.

The Chair: Thank you, Madam Clerk.

With that, I will open the table for discussion, and again I'll remind the folks that are online to send a message if you want to be put on the list. Is there any discussion? MLA Gray.

Ms Gray: Thank you. I think we have a few different questions. I will just start off asking about the interparliamentary relations branch request only because last year there was the request for \$50,000 in one-time funding for the Canadian Presiding Officers Conference, which is being hosted in January, so I'm curious about budget and how that works. This year's request is for \$70,000, so 40 per cent more, for hosting the delegation from the Partnership of Parliaments program, and I just wondered why the second one, which is the fall of 2026, is more expensive, if there are more attendees. If you can just tell us more about these two requests.

The Chair: Madam Clerk.

Ms Dean: Sure. Happy to provide some detail. The conference that's taking place in Edmonton in January is a two-day conference for Deputy Speakers and Speakers from across the country. It's situated in Edmonton only. The Partnership of Parliaments program, as you may be aware, is a different format where we host a delegation of 10 to 15 parliamentarians from Germany and Austria, and there is some travel involved with that. We've done this since 1998. The program went into abeyance for about 10 years over that COVID period, but recently a delegation went to Germany and Austria in September this year. A part of the arrangement is a reciprocal hosting situation, and that's the anticipated cost because usually there's travel: Calgary, Edmonton. Sometimes we've gone to Fort McMurray. Typically we go to one or both of the mountain areas as well.

Dr. Metz: I have a question about: in Bill 11, which is now under debate in the Legislature, there are proposed changes to how health benefits will be handled. The bill proposes that private plans will become the first payer. As a large employer has the LAO reviewed the potential impacts of these changes on the budget? As I understand, there will be additional costs as private benefit plans will now become the first payer in order to make all those savings that are claimed in the budget.

The Chair: Sure. Dr. Metz, you and I and all of us in the committee know, but I'll say for the benefit of people who might be watching at home, that while we can never assume that a piece of legislation will pass until it passes because that would be against all the rules, your question was, properly: have we made plans in case the legislation passes? Did I understand that right?

Dr. Metz: That's correct.

The Chair: Okay. Just for the folks at home. They need to understand that's the context in which you're asking because none of us are allowed to assume that legislation will or will not pass.

Ms Dean: I believe that bill was just recently tabled, so in preparation for this meeting we haven't specifically dived into those details. You know, we typically have a bit of a cushion in our budget to accommodate these sorts of changes, but I can't speak to what the forecast would be.

The Chair: MLA Wright.

Mr. Wright: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm just wondering: could the LAO elaborate on the \$2 million request for the Chamber audio-video broadcast upgrades? I'm specifically going to focus on: you know, we're in phase 3 components, and they're being completed, but there were certain items from phase 1 that were deferred. Why were those items deferred? Also, why do we have a \$782,000 increase from the original budget?

Ms Dean: I'm going to provide a few comments, and then I'm going to pass it over to my colleague Dr. Ludwick. In the first year of the project we weren't able to spend the complete budget envelope just because of timing, so that money didn't get spent. In terms of the increase this year my understanding is that the millwork costs were higher than what we anticipated, which is the key driver.

I'm going to turn it to Dave to see if he's got any more information.

Dr. Ludwick: Shannon has summarized it perfectly. That's exactly what drove the changes from phase 1, just timing and cost of millwork, so we're seeing that in phase 3.

The Chair: You will see that almost every year – not every year but almost every year – in budgets for ministries like transportation and Infrastructure, that are heavy on building. If you don't get something done in one year for whatever reason, because of weather or because the company doing the construction couldn't complete it, whatever, then typically that amount of the budget rolls over to the next year because the work rolls over, too.

Mr. Wright: Okay. I appreciate that, Chair and folks. My worry is that if we kick the can too much further down, based upon inflationary costs, are we going to continue to see a constant overflow or overrun on budgets that may lead to problems in the not too distant future years?

The Chair: I'll ask the staff to add in, but I would say that I wouldn't call it an overflow or an overrun. It's a matter of money saved last year. The money that was saved this year will be spent next year, so it's just a matter of rescheduling of that expenditure.

In terms of your question about inflationary pressures, I'll ask Dave.

Dr. Ludwick: MLA Wright, I would say that the heavy year in question was year 2, which is the summer we've just come out of. The project is at a place in its maturity that there's a high amount of confidence that this coming summer the project will come to an end. It'll complete its work, so not too concerned of any further work after this year.

Mr. Wright: Okay. Thank you.

The Chair: MLA Armstrong-Homeniuk, I think I saw an indication that you wanted to speak.

Ms Armstrong-Homeniuk: Yes, Chair. Thank you. I think this may have been touched on already, but I'm going to ask it anyways. My audio was fading in and out. Chair, through you to the LAO: can you explain the operational pressures or service requirements that led to the request for additional funding in interparliamentary relations for hosting the 2026 Partnership of Parliaments delegation?

The Chair: I'll invite the staff to add to this, but what it comes down to is that different parts of the country host this each year, and

it's Alberta's turn. There are some costs that are involved when it's our turn to host.

Ms Armstrong-Homeniuk: Awesome. Thank you.

The Chair: MLA Eggen, I think you wanted to speak, sir.

Mr. Eggen: Yes. Thanks, Chair. I mean, Members' Services: we deal with compensation for MLAs. You know, we've had quite a number of compensation requests coming through this committee. I know we increased the MLA pay in general by 2.5 per cent. We increased the living allowance by 14 per cent. Now I see we have Bill 12 coming forward. It's looking to change compensation for parliamentary secretaries. So I'm just wondering: what are the next steps in the role for our Members' Services Committee? I just was a bit surprised that this didn't come before this committee first since we are responsible for MLA compensation.

10:55

The Chair: I guess, first of all, let me say, which is consistent, I think, with what I said earlier, that you can never assume a piece of legislation will pass unless it passes.

Mr. Eggen: Yeah.

The Chair: Okay. I think that there's an adjustment for this included in the potential budget. I think we knew about this potential. No, Madam Clerk? Before I lead you down the wrong road, she's going to stop me before I make a mistake. How good is that?

Ms Dean: Thank you, Speaker. Pay for parliamentary secretaries is something that's determined by the executive branch, so it would be authorized through an order in council similar to pay that's for members who participate on agencies, boards, and commissions, as set out in section 37 of the Legislative Assembly Act. This new provision is similar to the provisions in section 37. Again, it's not related to performing work related to a parliamentary role but an executive branch role. The way we currently handle stipends authorized under section 37 is that we rely on an instrument such as an order in council. We simply process the pay, and we get reimbursed from the ministry.

Mr. Eggen: Right. Okay.

Ms Dean: So it has zero impact on our budget.

The Chair: And let me say that Madam Clerk is right. I would not have said that even half as well as what you just heard.

Mr. Eggen: Yeah. I was curious which path you were heading down there, Mr. Chair.

In all seriousness, we know that we have a responsibility to demonstrate to the public how MLAs' compensation is being determined and chosen. You know, we've had quite a number of controversial increases like the 14 per cent increase to living allowances and the UCP's overall caucus budget going up by more than a million dollars. I feel responsible to at least explain to the public what and how this is coming out. So, I guess, when will we know the cost of the parliamentary secretary increase or pay compensation? I want to be able to explain that to the public in a reasonable sort of way.

The Chair: Listen, I'm happy for you to raise it here, to be clear, but it's something you may want to ask when the bill comes up.

Mr. Eggen: Oh, for sure. For sure I will, yeah.

The Chair: You're not wrong to raise it here, but I think you might understand, based on the explanation that Madam Clerk gave, that you might want to also ask in the House about that.

Mr. Eggen: Yeah. For sure. Of course, it all is contingent on, well, the debate and the deliberations and whether the bill passes or not. You know, I just want to put a flag up there that people are watching.

The Chair: I've got MLAs Sabir, Bouchard, and now Gray in line. MLA Sabir, you're first up.

Mr. Sabir: A couple of questions. In last year's budget we had allocated \$1.5 million for the Electoral Boundaries Commission. I don't see anything in this one. Any updates on that one, how that's going?

The second question relates to this audio, IT digital enhancement.

The Chair: I think it's a good question, but I believe the anticipation is that the work will be done by the end of this fiscal year, hence there's nothing in next year's budget because, well, we don't always know the future. It's anticipated that whatever work gets done will be completed by the end of the fiscal year.

Mr. Sabir: On budget, on time?

The Chair: I haven't heard differently. Has anybody else?

Ms Dean: It's mandated.

Dr. Ludwick: It's mandated to finish by March 22.

The Chair: Yeah. It's mandated to finish by March 22, and I don't think additional funding has been allocated or granted to the commission, so it's on budget until it's not, and hopefully it will always be on budget. That's obviously – pardon?

Dr. Ludwick: It's under budget.

The Chair: Under budget thus far? Okay.

Again, I'd like to give you a solid gold guarantee that it'll be under budget, and that will certainly be the efforts that are made, but, yes, thus far, as of this day and time, it's under budget.

Mr. Sabir: What about this IT audio enhancement? Are they on time and on budget?

Ms Dean: Sorry; are you talking about the ERP project?

Ms Gray: No. The Chamber upgrades.

Ms Dean: We are anticipating that the Chamber upgrade will be completed by this summer. The heavy lifting was done this past summer, where basically the whole Chamber was torn apart and put back together.

The Chair: Two days after the House was sitting, on May 14, every piece of wire got ripped out. Every camera, every microphone has all been replaced. I know it looks the same as it was, well, mostly the same as it was, but it is not the same. It's all new stuff.

Mr. Sabir: Are there more funds allocated in this budget?

Ms Dean: Yes; \$2 million to complete the project.

The Chair: MLA Sabir, is that your question? Okay. I just didn't want to move on if you still had more questions.

MLA Bouchard.

Mr. Bouchard: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Now, I'm wondering how the proposed merit increases and CPI adjustments are incorporated into the different components of the LAO, MLA administration, and caucus budgets.

Ms Dean: With respect to the caucus budgets, we have an estimate that 70 per cent of the caucus budget is based on staff salaries. So those adjustments are applied to 70 per cent of the caucus budget. With respect to MLA admin, that's where the member's services allowances are housed. There's a formula in the member's services allowance that is for staffing, so we apply those percentages to that percentage of the MSA.

The Chair: Okay. That takes us to MLA Gray.

Ms Gray: Thank you. Just on the conversation we were having around compensation and the difference with the potential – the bill has not passed – parliamentary secretary pay changing, I was just refreshing my view because the Legislative Assembly Office does a really good job of trying to explain MLA compensation to the public. On the website there's the MLA remuneration tab, which shows Premier pay as well as ministers, and so on. My assumption would be that parliamentary secretaries, should the bill pass – once amounts get set by order in council, that would be reflected here and included in some of the financial compensation reporting that's already done. I'm just assuming that that's correct, but I wanted to check.

Ms Dean: I'm going to look to Lyndsay to speak to that.

Ms Tischer: I think I'm looking at the same tab. It's member remuneration, MLA remuneration, and this version was effective April 1, 2025. On this page of our public website we do have all of the additional remuneration that MLAs could receive for different roles, whether it be Executive Council related or additional House duties, special allowances, and my assumption, should this go forward, is that the parliamentary secretary, as an additional earning, would grace that page.

Ms Gray: Thank you for that clarification.

The Chair: I see no more speakers and I see no amendments, so this is the point where I would say that if you are in favour of the motion – actually, I just need a mover to approve the budget parameters as presented. MLA Bouchard.

Mr. Roth: We need somebody to read the motion into the record.

The Chair: MLA Bouchard, you're moving that the Standing Committee on Members' Services (a) approve the '26-27 budget parameters for the Legislative Assembly of Alberta presented to the committee on November 27, 2025, as distributed and (b) direct the Legislative Assembly Office to prepare the '26-27 budget estimates in accordance with the approved budget parameters.

Is that what you just moved?

11:05

Mr. Bouchard: That is exactly what I just moved.

The Chair: Okay.

Any further discussion on that motion?

All in favour, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no. And online, are there any opposed? MLA Singh or Armstrong-Homeniuk? Hearing none, that's carried.

Okay. That takes us in the agenda to the update to the acceptable IT use policy.

Changes are being proposed to the attached Acceptable Use Policy for IT Resources in response to the rollout of the new generative artificial intelligence ("AI") tools for staff.

The proposed amendments are noted in red on the documents circulated to the committee. These changes

are intended to ensure AI tools are used in a manner that aligns with workplace standards for privacy, security and professional conduct.

Key proposed changes:

- (1) Generative Artificial Intelligence Usage
 - The following types of uses will not be permitted:
 - misrepresenting AI-generated content as human-created or original work in order to deceive,
 - creating content that impersonates another individual in order to deceive, and
 - generating or distributing explicit or obscene content.
- (2) Security and Compliance
 - Clarification that IT Resources include cloud services.
 - Disclosing confidential information to an AI-tool that is not authorized for use with IT Resources.

The proposed changes are intended to reinforce the LAO's commitment to safeguarding its digital infrastructure and ensuring responsible use of emerging technologies.

Are there any comments or questions from the committee on the updated acceptable IT use policy? MLA Gray.

Ms Gray: Thank you very much. I'm certainly curious about bringing forward these two additional pieces. I think that they do make some sense. The rollout of Copilot and the additional training that the LAO has been providing to help members and staff understand what these AI tools are is appreciated. I know personally I'm still trying to figure out how I might incorporate its use. My attempts with Copilot have been hit or miss right now, but that's probably on me. So I'm working my way through that.

I am curious if the LAO is measuring any kind of adoption or which Members of the Legislative Assembly are attending the training only because I think that there's a real interest in making sure that MLAs are using AI tools responsibly in engaging with constituents, speeches happening in the Legislature. I'm seeing this conversation pop up more and more in the world, including reporting on people analyzing speeches in the House in other jurisdictions to see: was this AI-written or not?

I'm really curious about the adoption of these things as well as (2), the second bullet, "disclosing confidential information to an AI-tool that is not authorized for use with IT Resources." If I understand that correctly, that's taking something that should be proprietary and giving it to ChatGPT or something that isn't our Copilot AI safe environment. Is that correct? And can you tell us more about how the rollout of training is going?

The Chair: I think you're correct, but I'm going to ask somebody smarter than me to actually give the answer. How's that?

Dr. Ludwick: Thank you very much for the question, MLA Gray. Your first question is: are we recording or tracking those attending the training and orientation activities? We're not. They're being provided for the benefit of all those who attend.

To your second question, with respect to specifically the security and compliance item relating to the disclosing of confidential information to an AI tool, you are right in your concern there. The concern that we have is that data governance becomes a really

important item when we start to integrate AI tools because AI will look at any resources it has available to it in order to formulate its response to your question. So it becomes really important for us to make sure that we've set up our infrastructure appropriately so that when we are using AI tools, we are not in danger of disclosing confidential information in a way that we didn't intend to.

The Chair: Does that answer either your question or the flavour of your question, MLA Gray?

Ms Gray: Yeah. The additional information is helpful and appreciated.

I have follow-up questions if there aren't others on the list.

The Chair: There are others on the list, but you've got the floor, so why don't you carry on?

Ms Gray: Oh, thank you very much. As part of the acceptable use policy for these IT resources as well as the LAO thinking about all departments and how they use AI, I'm very curious if, within this policy, an acceptable use of the new AI tools would be the drafting of legislation. We use the LAO as an important resource in our work as private members when it comes to bill drafting, and recently there's been some media reporting about using AI to draft legislation. I would really like to know whether that's something that could happen here at the LAO under this policy, if it's happening now, or what the policy might say going forward.

The Chair: Are we using AI at all, and what safeguards are we using?

Ms Dean: I am looking to the Law Clerk, but I do not believe we are using AI right now. Rest assured, Parliamentary Counsel is responsible for ensuring that bills are appropriately drafted, and that's right in our standing orders. So AI will not trump the Law Clerk.

The Chair: I think what I'm hearing is that even if we use AI, human eyes will double-check it. I didn't want to put words in your mouth, Madam Clerk.

Ms Dean: Correct.

Ms Gray: Thank you very much for that answer. That makes absolute sense and alleviates me because one of the concerns is AI hallucinations and case law. Like, there's a really big conversation about this happening out in the world, and I'm wanting to understand how our policies interact with – the importance of drafting good laws is important to me. Thank you for letting me ask that question.

The Chair: I'll editorialize ever so briefly that the update to the IT policy is, I guess, what I would call severely obvious but necessary changes. It's kind of like: well, why did you have to add that? Because if somebody does those things, then the question we ask is: well, why didn't you make a rule against it? I, at least, won't be surprised if we see further refinements as we get more experience with AI in the future.

On the list to ask questions I have MLAs Singh and Wright. MLA Singh.

Mr. Singh: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Part of my question was already answered here, but if you could please expound a little bit more on: how will the LAO support its members, staff, and contractors in understanding and adapting to the new restrictions related to AI such as training, onboard materials, or guidance documents?

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Dr. Ludwick: MLA Singh, there are some training facilities that are available, there are some resources available that are and will be on OurHouse to support the orientation for those stakeholders that you mentioned towards the use of AI. Certainly, what I would say towards what the Speaker just said is that this area is a fast-moving area of IT, so I would recommend that we all just keep our head up with respect to the things that will be evolving over the next so many years.

The Chair: MLA Singh, any other questions or comments?

Mr. Singh: No. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Thank you.
That takes us to MLA Wright.

Mr. Wright: Well, thank you, Mr. Chair. I think I'm going to build off the questions asked by the member opposite because I think there are some important pieces to continue to build off that. When I take a look at the usage of AI and the constraints that are being brought in around appropriate use, I'm wondering: what type of monitoring or auditing is the LAO going to do or anticipate doing to ensure compliance with the revised acceptable use policy, especially around the AI-generated content? I think the next step further is even around the concerns around cybersecurity.

11:15

Dr. Ludwick: You've actually got a couple of questions there. To go to your first question around the monitoring of AI-generated content, we currently don't monitor that, and I'm not sure at the moment that we would pursue that. There might be a circumstance that might result and stimulate us towards doing that, but that currently doesn't exist.

That said, your point towards cybersecurity is extremely important, and the LAO has invested significantly in the last several years towards fortifying its networks in order to be able to protect itself against a number of malware that it might come across. We've also invested in a form of cyberinsurance in order to protect ourselves should there be a problem in the future. Cybersecurity is top of our mind, so I appreciate you bringing that up.

Mr. Wright: Can I ask a couple more?

The Chair: You have the floor. You should carry on.

Mr. Wright: Thank you, sir. I just kind of want to circle back on the acceptable use. My concern in hearing what we've heard is that we have parameters on what it can and cannot be used for. We're writing restrictions as to what it can and can't be used for, but we have no plan to enforce when something is used when it's not supposed to be used or in a means of no use. Is it kind of the approach that the LAO is going to take that the members are going to be enforcing these rules upon themselves when these issues come up, or is it a "we'll dive into the deep end when we need to dive into the deep end" approach?

Dr. Ludwick: Go ahead.

The Chair: No, you go ahead.

Dr. Ludwick: What I was going to say is that at the moment – I appreciate, MLA Wright, where you're going – the organization doesn't monitor members' or staff's usage of the equipment except from a perspective of making sure that the organization's IT resources are not put in peril. What the tools are used for: we don't monitor that. So I'm curious where you're suggesting the organization consider going.

Mr. Wright: I think my worry is that we're setting up rules that it can't be used for, as an example, misrepresenting AI-generated content as human-created to deceive. If a member or a member of the LAO staff use said resource to generate that, how is that monitored? How is that then enforced, and what are those steps to ensure that, while we are passing this regulation, there are the consequences to the other side, the carrot and – well, not even carrot and stick. The teeth behind the lips, if you will.

Dr. Ludwick: Going to your question towards, "Do we monitor?" No, we don't. We don't monitor, so a natural question that would come from that would be: how would we know that the policy has been breached? We wouldn't necessarily know unless some other circumstance would reveal that to us. If there is a circumstance where somebody breached the policy, then there would be other discussions and conversations that would need to be had in order to be able to make sure that the person is observing the policy.

The Chair: I will add briefly that we're all monitored, whether we want to be or not, by people that disagree with us politically. If you go create something and it's bad, I'd be very surprised if everybody doesn't know about it instantly. So there's kind of that somewhat built-in monitoring by people that politically disagree with each and every one of us. And we're all supposed to be adults. There's that.

Ms Dean: Mr. Speaker, can I?

The Chair: Yes.

Ms Dean: If I may just distinguish between the LAO actively monitoring usage versus enforcement. There are circumstances that are brought to our attention where we may need to use the strength of this policy to have a conversation with a member or a staffperson, so I do distinguish between active monitoring and enforcement.

Mr. Wright: Perfect. Thank you.

The Chair: Okay. MLA Gray.

Ms Gray: Thank you. Along these exact same lines I will just note that the policy includes under scope that "each user is responsible for understanding and complying with this policy when using IT Resources." In the case of our caucuses, with elected officials who have a million and one things going on, I think it's incumbent on both caucuses to make sure that our teams are understanding. That's one of the reasons why I asked about the training, and are we tracking – like, is the adoption where we need it to be? I think both caucuses are responsible for making sure that this information, either directly through the LAO or through caucus meetings, gets shared with all. I would encourage both opposition and government caucuses to make that a focus, maybe not in the middle of session while night sittings are happening but afterwards. Fun Christmas meetings.

The second thing I was just noting is the noncompliance section of this policy. If I'm not mistaken, I think our IT policies have a noncompliance section in a few places, and it speaks to an allegation of noncompliance. The conversation has been about monitoring, but if somebody had a concern and thought that the policy had been breached, who is the appropriate person to raise that to under the noncompliance section?

The Chair: Okay. Well, I just asked a question, if you don't mind, because I know it's pertinent to what you're saying. I just asked to confirm that if someone, an MLA, doesn't comply and refuses to comply after warnings, can we, like, take away their laptop? I mean,

I'd hate for that. On the other hand, if it's necessary, it's necessary. So what can we do?

Ms Dean: Well, I think your question was: who would be alerted?

Ms Gray: Who would be alerted? And then I think noncompliance point 3 talks about some of the things that could happen, including that "LAO reserves the right to suspend or restrict their access to IT Resources and remove or delete any offending materials or data stored on the IT Resources," which I think answers the Speaker's question.

Ms Dean: Right. But in terms of . . .

The Chair: She wants to know: who do you complain to?

Ms Dean: Yeah. Sometimes staff become aware, but ultimately either myself or the Speaker would be the appropriate official.

The Chair: You could let the Speaker's office know, and if I don't know, I'll do what I always do: send it to the smart people for advice. Is that kind of helpful?

Ms Gray: Absolutely. Just looking at the policy and how it practically applies.

The Chair: No, it's a good question. That's why I think we might end up with more rules.

Just slightly on a tangent but pertinent to this, I was just listening to something today and yesterday on the radio about some child's toy, a teddy bear, in fact. There was AI attached. The teddy bear started encouraging young kids to light matches, so they're taking that off the market. My point is that we need to have – and I think you point to this and I think what we're saying is that we think the method is there if somebody has to have their teddy bear, their laptop, their LAO phone taken away from them if they refuse to follow the rules. Apparently, we do have the authority to do that. We would hate to exercise it, but if we're forced to, by golly, we will.

Are there any other comments?

Ms Gray: I will only say that with all of the comments and questions that I had, I think the two addendums to the policy are good ones. I appreciate the opportunity to talk a little bit more about the policy and how it needs to evolve. I imagine the conversation

will come back again as we all start to incorporate more of this a little bit into our work.

I will just reiterate at the outset that, particularly when it comes to developing legislation, the use of these tools makes me incredibly nervous.

I appreciate the LAO team and all your answers today. Thank you.

The Chair: Okay. Seeing no more comments and hearing no one objecting to the policy, if there is someone willing to move the motion that

the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services approve the revised acceptable use policy for information technology resources as distributed at the November 27, 2025, meeting.

MLA Gray, you are making that exact motion?

Ms Gray: Absolutely.

The Chair: Any further discussion on that? Any objections?

Are we all in favour of the motion by MLA Gray? Are there any opposed, including those online? Hearing none, that motion is carried.

That takes us to other business. Do any members of the committee have any other business to raise at this time, including those online?

11:25

Hearing none, that takes us to the date of the next meeting. It says at the call of the chair, so we will get – oh, pardon me. It may well be January 28, but we'll send out an official notice, okay? Thank you. This just in for me, too. In fairness, like, the staff has to kind of have an idea of what's going on and where we all are and everything and where they are. It looks like it may well be January 28, but it will be at the call of the chair, with a high likelihood of January 28.

I need a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Yao: I'll do that.

The Chair: MLA Yao, with enthusiasm. Are there any objections? Are we agreed? Any opposed, including those online? Seeing none, this meeting is adjourned, and I thank all the staff and all the committee members for your attendance and participation.

[The committee adjourned at 11:26 a.m.]

