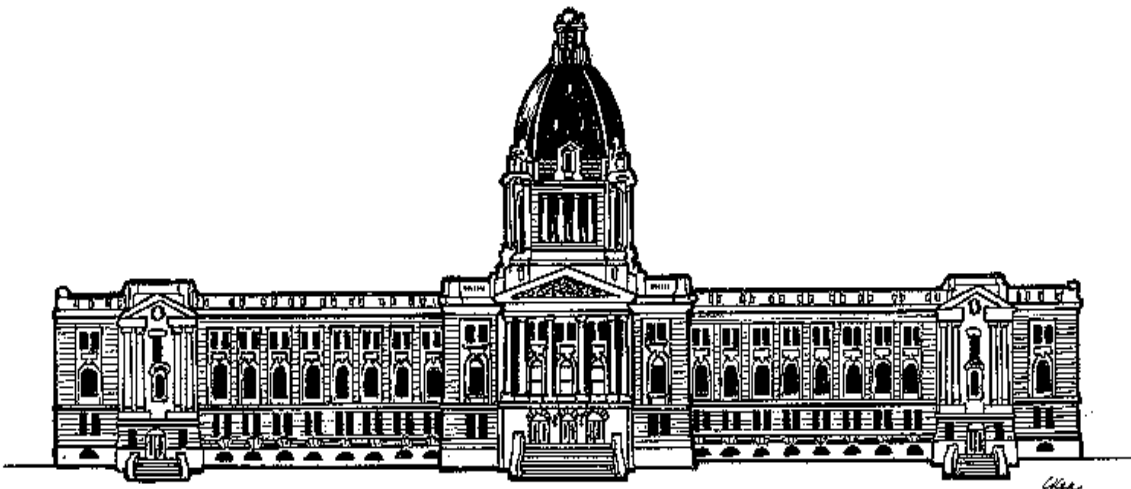




# **STANDING COMMITTEE ON CROWN AND CENTRAL AGENCIES**

**Hansard Verbatim Report**

**No. 22 – September 29, 2009**



**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

**Twenty-sixth Legislature**

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON CROWN AND CENTRAL AGENCIES

Mr. Tim McMillan, Chair  
Lloydminster

Mr. Buckley Belanger, Deputy Chair  
Athabasca

Mr. Denis Allchurch  
Rosthern-Shellbrook

Mr. Fred Bradshaw  
Carrot River Valley

Mr. Dan D'Autremont  
Cannington

Mr. Randy Weekes  
Biggar

Mr. Trent Wotherspoon  
Regina Rosemont

[The committee met at 09:05.]

**The Chair:** — Good morning members. I will start today by recognizing that Mr. Yates will be substituted in for Mr. Belanger and by tabling the document of September 24 from CIC [Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan].

We'll start. We've got some logistics to work out, more housekeeping about the nine days of hearings starting next Tuesday, but maybe we will start out with the discussion as to what has been put forward in response to the Perrins report as far as extending the consultations into January for nine days and move forward with that. I think it's important.

Since our last meeting Mr. Perrins has released his report. His report, very large, encompassing far more, far broader range than what our committee will be looking at, being just the electricity component of Saskatchewan, but there were certainly some recommendations — specifically parts of recommendation 1 and recommendation 2 — which many members on our side, in particular our Minister of Energy and Resources, and even the Premier had mentioned publically that he thought this committee may play a larger role in contributing to specifically no. 1 and 2 of the Perrins recommendations.

So I guess that is why we're gathered here today. And I open the floor for discussion as to the layout of the nine days in January. I recognize Mr. Yates.

**Mr. Yates:** — Well thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Now I guess coming out and saying it would be an additional nine days is a little presumptuous because nothing has been brought before the committee for discussion.

And so I do want to say that it was clear, and I think we made it clear during the first discussions, that we thought that the feedback from the uranium development hearings were clear in the fact that submitters and individuals felt that the process didn't meet their needs and didn't meet their needs for a number of reasons, one of which was there was inadequate information provided for both stakeholders and individuals to be able to be fully involved and aware of what was fully at stake in the hearings. They were looking for much more information, much more sharing of details, which they didn't feel was adequately done.

Now we laid that out during the first meeting where we talked about these hearings. And it's nice to see now that the Premier and the minister share the views of the opposition in that nine days isn't adequate and that we need to go out and provide greater consultation to the people of the province. And so we thank the Premier for listening to the members of the opposition and believing in what we were putting forward.

Having said that, the Premier did muse about nine additional days in the media. But if you look at the scope and the breadth of the hearings that occurred under the UDP [Uranium Development Partnership], there's 12 communities, I believe, that were visited under the uranium development proposal hearings that we're not visiting. And I think at the very least we should visit those communities plus a couple communities that openly were, to say the least, unhappy that they didn't have the

opportunities. The communities of Weyburn and Moose Jaw are two that I'm aware of, and Melfort that we heard from.

So you know I don't want to jump and say the nine additional days meets the needs of what the people of the province of Saskatchewan want to be involved in. When three communities feel left out as a result of the UDP hearings, and yet there were 12 additional communities beyond what we're currently going to involved in those particular hearings, I think we need to fully examine what we need to do here in order to meet the public's confidence and expectations.

And I think that there are two things from the UDP report that I think we clearly need to have some discussion and focus on. One is the amount of information and hearings of professionals — individuals who are experts in the area of different energy delivery systems and energy generation systems. We need to hear from them and be able to provide that information to stakeholders.

But secondly, that we have a comprehensive enough hearing that at the end of these hearings that we're not getting the same type of feedback from communities that we got as a result of the UDP. And you know, I think both the minister and the Premier in saying we needed to do more are acknowledging that that process wasn't fulfilling for people. It wasn't satisfying to those individuals.

If you look at sort of the summary, you know, 2,600 people attended those hearings in those 15 communities. And I think that we at the very least need to offer to the people of Saskatchewan some ability in these same communities to bring forward their presentations.

I know that the people of Saskatchewan appreciate it. We, as the official opposition, have been hearing from various groups and citizens across the province of their desire to have hearings in their communities. And so in the very least I think that we would need to expand the hearings to include the communities of Yorkton and Estevan and Swift Current, Prince Albert, Buffalo Narrows, Lloydminster, North Battleford, Stony Rapids, Fond-du-Lac, Wollaston Lake, Weyburn, and Moose Jaw and Melfort — those communities that have indicated that they'd have liked to have the opportunity to have public hearings.

So to do that would require, you know, 15 additional days minimum, plus some additional time to hear from the experts in the various fields, another three or four days. So I think you're realistically looking at another maybe 18, 19 days of which we could do it in stages. It doesn't have to be, you know, continuous by any stretch. But some of the work obviously, experts, can be done right here, maybe in the lead-up to Christmas in second phase of public hearings or whatnot at a later date in January.

But we're only simply raising the concerns that we heard from communities and individuals as a result of the UDP process, and think that we need to have a very detailed discussion about what we want to achieve from these hearings. And that having had a set of hearings — although they were government, not committee hearings — that people felt didn't meet the particular

set of needs, that we at least try to meet the needs of those people of Saskatchewan who want to make submissions.

**The Chair:** — I recognize Mr. Weekes.

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair. First I just want to repeat again what our Chair has said, that our government has listened to Mr. Perrins and what came out of the UDP process. And our Minister of Energy and Resources and our Premier have responded by acknowledging that there is a need for more public hearings. And I will make a proposal of dates and communities.

I would also just like to remind the members opposite that they were asked to put forward a list of stakeholders that would be invited to these public hearings. The Saskatchewan Party did and the New Democratic Party did not submit that stakeholder list, so if they want to get that in, I think would be appropriate.

The suggested list, I'll just go through the list of dates and communities that we think would adequately serve the people of Saskatchewan, starting with January 18 in Lloydminster; January 19, Saskatoon; January 20, Saskatoon; January 21, Saskatoon; January 22, Yorkton; January 25, Estevan; January 27, Regina; January 28, Regina; and January 29, Regina.

[09:15]

We feel that adding these extra dates and locations would look after each region in the province – given that we're also holding nine meetings this fall before the fall sitting – and people in every region would have a meeting that they could attend personally and without travelling too far.

And also, as we all know, the people can submit a written presentation online as well. If they don't want to appear, they certainly can have their voice heard through the Internet or just by mail. I put forward that suggestion for dates and locations for the second part of the legislative hearings in the new year.

**The Chair:** — Ms. Morin.

**Ms. Morin:** — Well I mean, quite frankly, the most glaring omission in the list that the Sask Party government has just put forward is that we have basically disqualified most of the communities in the North that were visited prior, with the UDP consultations. And certainly, regardless of whether they were visited prior with UDP consultations, one would think that one would want the opinions of the individuals in the North as well.

I think the most glaring omission by far is Prince Albert, being a significant sized city. And it certainly doesn't appear on your list, and neither does North Battleford. I would also want to submit that the communities of Buffalo Narrows, La Ronge, Stony Rapids, Fond-du-Lac, and Wollaston Lake, which were significant enough to visit during the UDP consultations, should all be consulted as well in the more broad energy scope of this committee.

But as I said, the fact that Prince Albert and North Battleford have been omitted on this list is an absolute insult, and a huge glaring omission on behalf of the Sask Party government that I think should be reviewed.

**The Chair:** — If I could possibly clarify a couple of things. The steering committee — which is comprised of the Vice-Chair Mr. Belanger and myself and the Clerk — had a discussion, and Mr. Belanger very clearly stated that he would like to see four locations that were not in Saskatoon and Regina. He made that very clear before the first meeting of this committee. I don't think that the government side is particularly stuck on the four locations that we picked. I think that Mr. Belanger made a good suggestion. We're not ever going to let politics get in the way of, you know, taking good advice. But if the opposition would have suggestions that maybe the four locations we picked weren't appropriate, would you like to move those around? I go to Mr. Wotherspoon.

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Just this comment. I hope what we're here today for is not entrenched in positions because the opposition's here to work again, as we were a few weeks back, to work on something that's really important to Saskatchewan people. The last meeting was completely shortchanged the importance of this issue, and we saw government members completely entrenched in a position, and one that quite frankly was irrational and indefensible — whether that be public opinion that would judge that or whether that be the Perrins report.

I was surprised then that government members were so entrenched in their position when we knew the Perrins report was coming out the next week. It didn't make any sense, and it was certainly out of line with what Saskatchewan people were concerned with. That being said, obviously government members were here simply last time to drive an agenda, and we're pleased that common sense may have prevailed with the Premier to stretch this out now. If government members suggest what they're offering here right now, and if they're stuck in that position as they were last time, and if there's no co-operation from this point forward, then we have huge concerns again.

Mr. Chair, I'll take your offer at face value and offer a few other communities as you've requested. And I think at that what we'll be looking for, it would be certainly Swift Current where we're looking at some of the wind possibilities that exist down through that region. Not only that, it's a highly populous and strong community that should have their voices heard.

Prince Albert — as my colleague Ms. Morin has highlighted — Buffalo Narrows, North Battleford, Stony Rapids, Fond-du-Lac, Wollaston Lake. And we need to be looking at communities that, learning from the UDP process, and we can go back to the testimony made available, both recorded through video and through hard copy, where so many individuals were frustrated. That's specifically Moose Jaw, specifically Weyburn, specifically Melfort were excluded. We can't do that again. So we need to stretch the breadth of the communities we're going to meet with this time, and we're going to need to do it right.

But I do have another significant concern and that being that the government changed its position completely a week after the last meeting, and we haven't yet reconvened a meeting. And I'm concerned, Mr. Chair, that ads, I believe, have run now in some communities. And this has implications because one of the biggest flaws of the initial process that was put forward was the lack of separation of the important phases of this decision-making process.

And we've been clear from day one that for the public and public stakeholders to engage in an informed way that doesn't simply polarize debate but allows actual, thoughtful engagement, we need to have experts first. We need to have that industry testimony and we need to do this right. And that information needs to then be made available to the public in as many ways as this committee can be creative with. Certainly it needs to be posted online with full recording, and as well it needs to be made available in hard copy to any individual in this province who wants to see what's been put forward.

So my concern is that we haven't reconvened a meeting since the reversal of the government members, and now we have ads that, I understand, are running that's inviting the public to come to committee meetings that start next week. I don't know how this committee can believe that the public can engage in a thoughtful manner about the proposals that will be made without having that information come first.

So we still have concerns about the process. And maybe, Mr. Chair, if you can enlighten me, do we have a plan here? Our concern would be that certainly we think that the public should engage with this committee in a very thorough way, but that that should happen following the expert and industry testimony. So my question to government members or to this committee as a whole, how are we going to respond to this, now that ads have been run?

**The Chair:** — Mr. Weekes.

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd just like to respond to the member's concerns. I think he should give the public a little bit more credit. First of all, we know that SaskPower will be giving the committee a briefing on the first day. So there is expert testimony there from SaskPower, and they're going to be in the process along the way.

As the member opposite knows, there's going to be an interim report after the first nine days of sitting of the committee, and then we're going to come back in the new year and have nine more days. So I think the process that's involved, that we have outlined, is going to give everyone ample time to reflect on the first nine days, look at the interim report, and then come back and hold more hearings and more information in the new year.

**The Chair:** — Ms. Morin.

**Ms. Morin:** — I think it was very clearly outlined, both by the opposition NDP [New Democratic Party] caucus in the spring session through the consultations that we had with individuals and the concerns that we received through our office, that people really wanted to have some expert knowledge about what they were supposed to be speaking to and of when the uranium development consultations were taking place. That's clearly what was heard in the uranium development process, the consultations. People were saying that how can we make an informed decision or make an informed comment on the issue when we don't have the expert testimony that we need, or the experts available in the room that we need, to be able to ask the questions that we have. That was very clear also in Mr. Perrins's report, that that was expressed very vehemently in those meetings by the individuals that were attending.

Having said that, since the Wall government and the Sask Party has decided to make the changes to allow more meetings to take place on top of the nine that were initially brought to this committee and adding the extra dates — although they're locked into another nine days, it seems, without any flexibility again — one would wonder why then they wouldn't also take advantage of the recommendation in the Perrins report and also what was coming forward in the UDP process, some of which some of the Sask Party members themselves attended, I certainly attended as many as I could, and also through the recommendation of the opposition caucus in the spring, to ensure that that expert information is available to the public before they have to go into another process where they're being asked to offer opinions and suggestions and comments.

So the fact that we have advertising currently out there for the public to engage themselves in meetings that are supposed to be commencing next week, without having the information that they've already expressed that they need through the uranium development process, is absolutely confounding. I don't understand why the government is doing this. I don't understand why this committee thinks it should proceed in this way. And I would suggest that the fact that the opposition caucus members are sitting here and making meaningful comments and suggestions are being completely dismissed.

So it's confounding to me again why we are even sitting here if there's not going to be any meaningful discussion, if it's simply going to be something locked in by the Wall government to proceed in the way that they want to proceed — which is just to slap on another nine days because oops, they've been embarrassed through the Dan Perrins report — without doing the meaningful consultations that need to take place, that were asked for by the people of this province whether they were pro- or anti-nuclear development in this province.

**The Chair:** — Mr. Weekes.

**Mr. Weekes:** — Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd just like to respond again, meaningful consultation. You know, the government has looked at the UDP report and what Mr. Perrins has said and what the people who attended those meetings said, and so we have responded. We have the opening day, SaskPower is going to be available to brief the committee. It's a public committee. People can listen in or attend. Questions would be raised by both . . . I have many questions of SaskPower. I assume the opposition will have some questions of SaskPower concerning alternative energy.

That's the other issue I would like to point out. This is about alternative energy. It's not just about one item — nuclear or any other. It's about the whole. And that's why we're holding 18 meetings across the province to talk about alternative energy. So just to counter what you've said, I think we have responded to everything the opposition has said. And the UDP report and Mr. Perrins, our Minister Boyd and the Premier has stated that we need more meetings, and there's going to be more meetings.

So I'm not quite sure — I know SaskPower is going to be available; they're slotted into the schedule — and personally, I wouldn't have a problem having SaskPower come back at the committee's will and answer more questions at any time during the process. But that's something that the logistics of it need to

be worked out.

But expert testimony, if people want to make presentations — experts or individuals or otherwise — well, put their name on the list and come to the committees. That's what this is all about. Let's have the expert testimony other than SaskPower appear. So it's open for everything that you've suggested; it's available during this process.

**The Chair:** — Mr. Yates.

**Mr. Yates:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Well as we've indicated before, these hearings are for the people of Saskatchewan. It's to help us all — all members of the legislature, people of Saskatchewan — to better understand what our energy options are moving forward, so that from those discussions and from the awareness that's generated by public hearings like this, good sound public policy decisions can be made moving forward on behalf of the people of the province of Saskatchewan to provide energy for our use in the future.

But we have an opportunity here on the heels of a process that people felt was inadequate, to put forward an adequate process. And prior to us even having the ability to have any meaningful discussion today about it, we hear about nine days, and it appears like the government members have been directed that the additional hearings will be nine days.

[09:30]

So my question to the Chair is, or the government members, has the Premier already decided it's only an additional nine days and that's it? If he has, let us know and we know then that these discussions are meaningless. But let us know. If the Premier has already made that decision and it seems that you come with very clear direction, let us know.

**The Chair:** — I guess I would like to have this opportunity to clarify. I guess I'd first agree with Mr. Wotherspoon that I think that the Premier is an excellent Premier and very astute . . . In his earlier comment. I think that we have been very clear that, you know, that the committee does need to make these decisions and with best intentions which . . . [inaudible] . . . the last committee may have taken a step back, but again and let's try and find some common ground here.

From the government point of view, it has been somewhat trying that the opposition members have completely discarded what their very own member, the Vice-Chair, has had put forward in the steering committee. They come with a proposal that had no resemblance to who their representative on the steering committee put forward. Then they don't bother putting forward a list of . . . They talk about stakeholders they think should be involved, and they don't bother to put forward a list to invite people who they think are important to invite to the committee hearings.

It leaves the government members feeling that the opposition would oppose pretty much anything that . . . The people of Saskatchewan expect there to be a reasonable process that fulfills the needs put forward from the Perrins report, from the people of Saskatchewan, what they would like to see.

I don't think that the opposition are coming to the table looking to find middle ground. I think that they're trying to find something that no matter where the government members of the committee go, the opposition would not be satisfied. So therefore there has to be a reasonable process put forward and we'll go forward from there. I think that as a committee, we'll go forward from there, and I think that the interim report is an excellent step that has been proposed by Mr. Weekes. It gives an opportunity to sum up a lot of the testimony that we have heard and gives people some time to think about it. And anyone that wants to come back and discuss that further in the new year, they certainly will have that option.

I hope I've addressed Mr. Yates's concerns, and I recognize Mr. Wotherspoon.

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — So I believe there's a role for a Chair to be one of judicious, one to be fair, one to be unbiased. I'm not sure if I'm witnessing that in this committee, neither a few weeks ago nor here today.

Just to clarify my statements with regard to the Premier, my statement was he once held an indefensible and irrational position for which these members in government were simply the carriers of that message. He retracted that position, which we think indicates hopefully some common sense, landing where it should and certainly a reflection, I would hope, of political opinion in the Perrins report.

But what we're hearing here today is that our Premier seems to be locked in in likely an indefensible position here again. What we also hear is we have committee members that are entrenched, not willing to work. And we have a Chair who's not going to operate from the role that he should — from a fair, unbiased perspective. That's unfortunate. There are other members of this committee that if they want to carry the Premier's message, maybe they should.

But it's clear about one thing: is that we believe that the public — of many other things the broad base of communities that need to be expanded for consultation — as well the role and presentations for demand-side management, DSM or conservation which should certainly be part of the expert and industry testimony, I don't see those things being spoken about. But I think specifically to focus on one piece so we can make this a working committee that works, I'm concerned about the fact that it seems that we're proceeding with a mishmash of public and expert and industry testimony next week in the first nine-day session. And if that's what I'm hearing, the opposition has concern to this.

We talk about making good public policy, and that's what this committee has the opportunity to do. If we fail in that, I think we're failing the people of Saskatchewan. So the opposition has been adamant that we have a distinct phase here. That first phase, and I don't think that we necessarily need to contain this to the nine days but certainly those first nine days need to be experts, need to be industry, and that testimony then needs to be able to be available to the public to engage thoughtfully here.

We risk, without doing this, actually damaging important industries in our province. Without providing the opportunity for industries to speak on their behalf, to put forward their

expert information to Saskatchewan people, we polarize a debate and a discussion on all energy sources. This isn't fair to Saskatchewan business, to Saskatchewan industry, and it's certainly not fair to Saskatchewan people. As a whole, it's a poor process and it's flawed and we need to correct it.

So my concern is, we've run ads, I understand. I don't know why we didn't reconvene a committee before, Mr. Chair. We had an opportunity for leadership when the Premier said he wanted to do something different here. Instead, we've run ads inviting the public. And it's been very clear from day one that the opposition New Democrats have been the only ones committed to work, and that would be the detailed proposal that was put forward three weeks ago.

The Chair can blather on all he wants about a conversation he had with a committee member, but what we do is we meet as a committee and we discuss our proposal. And that's been clearly defined. So my question is, is this committee, are the committee members willing to ensure that those first nine days are contained or constrained to expert and industry? And then we can talk about how we're going to make that work best.

**The Chair:** — I recognize Mr. Weekes.

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you. I am baffled by what the member opposite just said. He's suggesting that we cut the public out of nine days of hearings. I mean, is that what you're suggesting, that we only have expert testimony? We cut the public out of nine days of hearing? I find that totally unacceptable. You should be ashamed of yourself for saying it. Anyway what did the NDP Party do in 16 years of government? Did you ever hold a hearing, a public hearing or a legislative committee hearing, about energy? None. Zero.

But, Mr. Chair, I think I have a suggestion to compromise somewhat on our schedule, and I'd like to make a motion. And the motion reads:

That the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies hold additional public hearings on the following dates, times, and locations: January 18, 2010, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in Lloydminster.

And the next one is the compromise:

January 19, 2010	10 a.m. – noon 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.	Prince Albert
January 20, 2010	10 a.m. – noon 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.	Saskatoon
January 21, 2010	9 a.m. – 2 p.m.	Saskatoon
January 22, 2010	10 a.m. – noon 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.	Yorkton
January 25, 2010	10 a.m. – noon 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.	Estevan
January 27, 2010	10 a.m. – noon 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.	Regina
January 28, 2010	10 a.m. – noon 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.	Regina
January 29, 2010	10 a.m. – noon 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.	Regina

I so submit.

**The Chair:** — Will the committee accept the motion as read?

**An Hon. Member:** — No.

**The Chair:** — I recognize Ms. Morin.

**Ms. Morin:** — Well, Mr. Chair, we see once more that the Wall government and the Sask Party members opposite are locked into this nine-day process starting January 18. I don't know what the magic is about having a nine-day process regardless of what everything they have heard so far about what the public wants, about what the opposition caucus, NDP caucus is putting forward as recommendations, but we see once again that they are locked into a nine-day process.

All they've done is cut Saskatoon out of one of the days and replaced it with Prince Albert instead. So they are hearing the message from the opposition caucus obviously that the citizens of Prince Albert would be incredibly disheartened about the proposal they put forward. But they are failing to hear the message about the communities of, for instance, Swift Current, Weyburn, Melfort, Moose Jaw, Buffalo Narrows, North Battleford, La Ronge, and Stony Rapids. They are failing to hear what people are . . . and Wollaston Lake. They are failing to hear — and Fond-du-Lac, sorry — they are failing to hear this message.

And why we're simply locked into this magical number of nine days for January, when clearly the Premier has instructed them in terms of extending the process — making sure it's more comprehensive, making sure it's more inclusive, and making sure that it is fulfilling the need that is supposed to be met. And the need is that people want to have expert advice, testimony, and submissions, and that the public wants to be able to comment on those and decide what the energy future of this province is going to be going forward.

This isn't something that is just a fly-by-night process to make one simple decision that's going to affect us for the next couple of years. This is going to affect the future of Saskatchewan in terms of meeting its energy needs. This is an incredibly important process; this has come to a crucial point.

And as for the comments of the members opposite about not having this process in the past 16 years, we have not come to the situation that we are currently in in the past 16 years.

This demand is being met because of the wonderful policies that were put in place by the previous NDP administration to make sure that there was growth in this province after it was left in the devastating shape that it was left by their predecessors, Mr. Chair, since they're clearly forgetting their history and wanting to do some revisionism.

So here's the reality. The reality is that we currently have a situation where we're going to need to do some upgrading to our current system in terms of refurbishing and such, potentially, and also to meet future energy needs. There is also the issue of demand-side management and conservation that is not even being addressed by the members opposite or the Wall government to this point.

We haven't seen, for instance, a single windmill erected in this

province since the Wall government took power in 2007, and prior to that we were the highest per capita producer of wind energy in this country. This is a topic that clearly this government isn't taking seriously. They didn't take it seriously through the uranium development process. That process was flawed from the very beginning. The NDP opposition caucus was clear that it was flawed from the very beginning, and it was proven correct through the Dan Perrins report, quite frankly.

And now they have the Dan Perrins report in their hands. They have all the submissions that the NDP caucus put forward. They have the suggestion by the NDP caucus in the spring session of 2009 that called for an energy development process, which would then include all the energy options for the entire province that would be available to the people of Saskatchewan, and they chose to ignore that. This is now exactly what we're going into, or should be going into, is a full review of the energy development options that could be available to the province of Saskatchewan. And once again the Wall government and the Sask Party has decided to have another failed process, another sham of a consultation process.

And quite frankly, if the Wall government thinks that we're going to agree to simply these nine days, locked in, and that we're simply going to substitute one of the hearing days in Saskatoon and slot P.A. in, then quite frankly they're dreaming in Technicolor because this will not be acceptable to the people of Saskatchewan. This is certainly not acceptable to the NDP caucus. And it is certainly an embarrassment and disrespectful to the process going forward.

[09:45]

**The Chair:** — In the interest of the motion, I'm going to read the motion because I don't think it was accepted as read, and then I will open the floor for further debate. The motion as read by the member for Biggar:

That the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies hold additional public hearings on the following dates, times, and locations:

January 18, 2010	9 a.m. – 2 p.m.	Lloydminster
January 19, 2010	10 a.m. – noon 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.	Prince Albert
January 20, 2010	10 a.m. – noon 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.	Saskatoon
January 21, 2010	9 a.m. – 2 p.m.	Saskatoon
January 22, 2010	10 a.m. – noon 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.	Yorkton
January 25, 2010	10 a.m. – noon 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.	Estevan
January 27, 2010	10 a.m. – noon 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.	Regina
January 28, 2010	10 a.m. – noon 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.	Regina
January 29, 2010	10 a.m. – noon 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.	Regina

That is the motion as put forward by the member from Biggar. I recognize Mr. Wotherspoon.

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Unbelievable, Mr. Chair. Unbelievable

that the Biggar member, who speaks of growth at the same time that his government's presiding over some concerns over contractions in his own economy, is dragged to what he calls a compromise, to meet with the city of Prince Albert and the people of Prince Albert. That's absolutely shameful. He calls this a compromise.

And at the same time he's not willing to go meet with Swift Current, with Weyburn, with Moose Jaw, with Wollaston Lake, with North Battleford — the list that Ms. Morin has so aptly put. A compromise. This is our job as legislators; this is our responsibility to the people of the province.

The Biggar member also needs to realize that he's completely shortchanging the public in this process, that he is not allowing the public to engage in a thoughtful manner. Without allowing industry and experts to provide their testimony to the people of this province as it relates to the question at hand of meeting our future energy needs, he's polarizing discussion, not informing the public, and not allowing them to engage in debate in a thoughtful way.

So the member opposite, the Biggar member who speaks of growth at a time when he's presiding over a contraction, needs to open up this discussion. And the Biggar member needs to make sure that when we go forward with these proposals, we need to have that expert information available and then back to the public. And what we're doing right now is shortchanging the public in an exercise that's incredibly important. So certainly the proposal that has been put forward is not acceptable. And I think it's inexcusable for government members to talk about compromises in going out and meeting with people of this province that we're supposed to be representing.

**The Chair:** — Mr. Yates.

**Mr. Yates:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I'd like to make an amendment to the motion.

I'd like to add to the motion:

that on		
February 1	10 a.m. - 12 noon 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.	Swift Current
February 2	10 a.m. to noon 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.	Weyburn
February 3	10 a.m. - 12 noon 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.	Moose Jaw
February 4	10 a.m. - 3 p.m.	Melfort
February 5	10 a.m. - 3 p.m.	North Battleford
February 8	12 noon - 4 p.m.	Stony Rapids
February 9	12 - 4 p.m.	Fond-du-Lac
February 10	12 - 4 p.m.	Wollaston Lake
February 11	12 - 4 p.m.	Buffalo Narrows

**The Chair:** — Will the members accept the amendment as read by Mr. Yates?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.



**The Chair:** — Agreed. Debate? Mr. Yates.

**Mr. Yates:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I think, as indicated by the amendment, we want to put before the committee the opportunity to have public hearings in those communities that wish to have public hearings, to allow the people of the province of Saskatchewan, the people from those communities, to be heard. It would be very, very unfortunate if the government members used their majority to take away the ability of citizens of this province to speak to their legislators, Mr. Chair. And if the members opposite look at this proposal in its entire scope, is very, very inexpensive compared to the money that was spent on a single source of potential energy in the study of the UDP report.

And in this particular set of hearings, we're going to be looking at a vast variety of potential energy sources and potential opportunities to generate electrical energy for the province of Saskatchewan, including, you know, not just coal and hydro and wind, solar perhaps. There's issues around geothermal and biomass as well, energy issues that may be brought forward.

And we have to give the people of this province who want to make presentations, who want to be involved in this very, very important set of public hearings, the opportunity to be heard.

The city of Swift Current should not be excluded. This is the Premier's own community where in fact the majority of our wind-generated power in the province of Saskatchewan is situated just a mile south. I think the people who live in the vicinity, in the areas of that wind generation, would like to make presentations to this committee. I think there's opportunities for us to learn from the experience that they have had. And I think it's important that we take this opportunity to do this right. And for those reasons, that's why we made the amendments that we did.

**The Chair:** — Mr. Weekes.

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just one point. I'd just like to refresh the members opposite of what they did when they were in government concerning the TILMA [Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement] hearings. We are proposing twice as many meetings as they held in the TILMA hearings, and the TILMA hearings all were held in two cities — Saskatoon and Regina.

And TILMA was about the whole . . . was about a fabric of our society, all our institutions, and our economy. It was everything that we in Saskatchewan love so dearly, and they only held meetings in two centres — Saskatoon and Regina. Thank you.

**The Chair:** — Mr. Yates.

**Mr. Yates:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. To correct the public record for being the only member sitting here that was involved in the TILMA hearings, there were no such presentations made to expand the scope of where those hearings would be heard, so at the time because of the nature of those particular hearings it was felt, and the level of public interest, so that was satisfactory.

Mr. Chair, to say that a totally different set of circumstances

should be compared to be the same is totally irrational. If the members opposite are not prepared to listen to the people of Saskatchewan, well then they're not prepared to listen to the people of Saskatchewan. Unfortunately for the people of Saskatchewan, if the government uses its majority to vote down the opportunity of people to be involved in these public hearings, to be able to have their communities heard, then it's very unfortunate.

It's amazing that they're prepared to go to these communities to deal with the single source of power that they were trying to sell to the people of Saskatchewan. It's unfortunate they were prepared to spend \$3 million of taxpayers' money to try to sell people on a single source of power, but when this committee, tasked with the responsibility of looking at future energy options for the province of Saskatchewan, they're not prepared to spend one-twelfth of that — one-twelfth of that — in public hearings, and that's very unfortunate, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** — Seeing no more debate, I call for the vote on the amendment. All those in favour? I count three. Oh, only two can vote. I see two. All those opposed? It is defeated.

I call for a vote on the motion put forward by Mr. Weekes. All those in favour? I count four. Opposed? Defeated.

**An Hon. Member:** — It's not defeated.

**The Chair:** — Oh I apologize. It is carried. I recognize the member for Biggar.

[10:00]

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move:

That the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies issue an interim report outlining the information received from SaskPower, stakeholders, and the public, and that the interim report be tabled with the Legislative Assembly during the fall period of the third session of the 26th legislature.

I so move.

**The Chair:** — Do the members accept the motion as read?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Accepted. The debate. Mr. Yates.

**Mr. Yates:** — Thank you very much. Prior to moving on with a vote on this particular issue, Mr. Chair, I would like to ask whether or not, in the interim period between December 2 when the session ends and January 18, whether or not the committee is prepared to look at a period of time prior to the interim report being published where we have the opportunity to spend three or four days with experts and give them the opportunity to give us added insight, knowledge, and advice about the various energy possibilities in the province.

That can be done of course here in the city of Regina with no additional costs, as you have indicated previously, for moving equipment. It's only our time and the opportunity to be better

informed, have greater knowledge. And the inclusion of that in the interim report then gives individuals and the public an opportunity for that information to be considered in the second round of public hearings.

So my question is, we have never totally had this discussion. And I think it's important, before we vote on an interim report, we have a discussion about bringing in, giving the opportunities for experts and companies to come forward on various energy sources — wind power, hydro, nuclear, coal, experts on demand-side management, alternative energies in general. And we'll all benefit from the knowledge of those experts

And these are the types of presentations that can't be done in 15 or 20 minutes. It may take an hour or two for them to give us a thorough understanding of both the positives and negatives of each source of energy generation. And it's only our time, gentlemen — and ladies, pardon me, or members of the committee — and I think that it's invaluable to us and invaluable to the people of the province of Saskatchewan. So I do think that we need to, prior to looking at the interim report, decide whether or not we are going to allow for those presentations.

**The Chair:** — Before I recognize the next person in the debate, it's been brought to my attention that there are restrictions on initiating inquiries when the House is in session. Rule 147(5) states that:

Inquiries may be initiated only after a session is adjourned or prorogued, or unless otherwise ordered by the Assembly.

So for that, for an inquiry to be put forward during the Assembly, it would have to be an order of the Assembly to do that. I don't know if it's within our power as a committee to put that forward. Mr. Wotherspoon?

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Well, you know, I fully support — as we've stated — that we need this expert in industry engagement, and we need that testimony made available to the public. We need this as a distinct phase so that the public can thoughtfully engage with this process. Otherwise they're coming in and we're polarizing discussion. Individuals and groups are coming in simply with the knowledge they have, not knowing what the proposals of industry and experts are, and we're shortchanging the process greatly.

So I know the proposal that Mr. Yates puts forward calls for a time and a period where we isolate industry and experts. And it's going to be incredibly important that we then make that testimony available to the public in every way that we can to make that as accessible as possible — certainly online, certainly in hard copy — to individuals across this province and to groups across this province and across the world, for that matter.

But what we're simply putting forward here and what Mr. Yates is putting forward, I believe, is trying to clean up a flawed process. If we could simply address the first phase, we're still doing this backwards. We need to have this upfront.

Now we've seen members of government come in with their

majority and say, this is what we'll do, and that's it. There's no negotiation, no discussion, no co-operative process about something really important here today. Well I support Mr. Yates's proposal because it's something that's essential, we should be doing the right thing, and that being doing that upfront, first and foremost. And then we can bring in the public stakeholders to engage and provide their perspectives.

So I offer my support as a way of possibly cleaning up a flawed process here, but I'm continually astounded with members of government who continue to bring forward irrational positions and positions — where they're entrenched before they enter this Chamber that was formed in the spirit of all-party co-operation — on an issue bigger than all of us and something very important to our province. We have members sitting in this very Chamber who represent communities across our vast province who have no interest in even raising the concerns that maybe their communities be heard from. And certainly we're missing some very large, populous communities: Swift Current, Weyburn — a whole host of different communities. North Battleford, Moose Jaw, the list goes on. We've stated it time and time again.

So my continued concern with the process, I'd like to get this right and not to leave here today simply entrenched in positions. We need to have a distinct phase at the front end of this, and that expert and industry testimony needs to be made available to the public so that they can thoughtfully engage with this discussion. You can go out and say you're listening to people, but we've seen the Sask Party do this before — that being the UDP. Let's get this right.

We risk damaging industries and business within this province if we're not willing to let industry and business come forward with their proposals and specific organizations, experts. And we polarize the debate and that's not fair either. So I support the spirit of Mr. Yates's motion. However I'd still like to see it or his intent, and I'd like to see it first and foremost in that first phase.

**The Chair:** — I recognize Mr. Weekes.

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm again dumbfounded by the member's logic. This whole process which he doesn't accept now, it was put together by the steering committee. And Mr. Belanger was a member of his party. And we've come forward with . . . He wanted four sites outside of Saskatoon and Regina, and we've accommodated that. We've even added Prince Albert as well.

Now what Mr. Belanger thinks right now, I don't know. We have negotiated in good faith. The steering committee met, which is the appropriate forum to put these items together, and we have compromised with what the opposition wanted. And we've listened to the public. We've listened to Mr. Perrins. We've listened to the UDP report. And our Minister of Energy and Resources and our Premier stated that we need more meetings, and we've passed a motion that we are going to have nine more meetings. And we will do that.

It's interesting. Mr. Wotherspoon, now he wants . . . first he wanted to exclude the public from nine meetings, which I find totally unacceptable. Now he wants to bring in and isolate —

his word is isolate — the experts. So I'm not quite sure what kind of a meeting he has in plan when you want to isolate the experts and exclude the public. So I'm not sure if this is supposed to be a secret meeting. I'm not sure what he's proposing here when you isolate people and exclude the public.

But anyway we're staying with the motion that we have that's been passed. It's going to be open to the public. It's going to be open to the experts. The experts can make a presentation; if they want to come in and make a 15- to 20-minute presentation, they are welcome. I encourage them to do it. If they have material that is more in depth and more specific and more detailed, they submit that when they come to the hearing. And if they want to have additional information sent to the committee, they can send it by mail or by email.

So I think we've been very open. And this process is a combination of a compromise with the then member from, part of the steering committee from the NDP which . . . Well I don't know if he speaks for the committee at all; I haven't seen him at our last two meetings. But I think this process is a very good one, and we will continue with it.

**The Chair:** — I would like to do two things at this point: remind members, all members, that we restrain our debate on this motion at this time. Also, part or some of the debate I've been hearing is related to when members and when the public have time to review material.

Something that is coming up later and can potentially be discussed later is the organizing of people that request presenting to the committee. That's later on in our agenda. Potentially, I don't know if it needs a motion or it probably does not, but if the members from the opposition would like to prioritize that industry has more opportunity on the first nine days to present their points of view or their particular energy options, I don't think that that would be a problem for other people in the committee. But I'll leave that out there and let the committee know that that will be discussed later on in the agenda. I now recognize Ms. Morin.

**Ms. Morin:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair. It's interesting that the Chair has a belief that all government committee members would be interested in looking at the process in terms of how it's going to be carried out, yet we're not hearing that from the committee members themselves.

I'd like to inform Mr. Weekes, Mr. D'Autremont, Mr. Bradshaw, and Mr. Allchurch that on September 9 that the opposition caucus put forward a comprehensive proposal as to how we envision the process going forward. It's a six-page proposal. In the event any of the members of the government side have misplaced their copy, I'd be more than happy to provide them with another copy, given that it is very comprehensive and good in terms of what came out of the UDP process, from what the public had been saying and what we've been hearing from the public in terms of the opposition caucus.

As for, you know, what prior discussions took place with any particular member, Mr. Weekes, I remind the member that this proposal was put forward as the position of the NDP opposition caucus as to how we feel this proposed process should be moving forward. So I would be more than willing, Mr. Weekes,

to provide that member with another copy of this proposal, given that he's very stuck on a conversation that he had with a particular member, and that this is what this member put forward as the chairperson of the opposition caucus for the Crown and Central Agencies Committee.

As a matter of fact, it actually says on here the lead person putting forward this proposal was Mr. Belanger as the Vice-Chair and Trent Wotherspoon. Now getting back to the motion at hand — but since they were able to digress, Mr. Chair, I'm glad you gave me the opportunity to digress as well — we certainly heard from the UDP consultation process and from the correspondence and through emails and letters and countless phone calls, that I know I've received personally in my office and the other members have as well, as to how the opinion is of Saskatchewan people in terms of needing the information base that they need first in order to give a much more informed opinion on the process moving forward.

Now simply having Mr. Weekes say that SaskPower's going to be there, SaskPower's going to be there, SaskPower's going to be there, is not enough, Mr. Chair, by any stretch of the imagination. They want comprehensive knowledge and expert testimony and information from all the energy suppliers, from the various energy experts. We need experts that can speak to demand-side management. We need experts that can speak to conservation. And those two things — demand-side management and conservation — aren't even on the Wall government's radar screen. The SaskParty members on behalf of the Wall government haven't even spoken about the issue of demand-side management or conservation.

So as you can see, Mr. Chair, they are moving forward yet again in a very . . . [inaudible] . . . way with respect to another process. And that's why our member, Mr. Yates, has put forward the amendment, the motion that he has. And I would encourage the members to look at it seriously and make sure that we move forward in a much more comprehensive way and try and mitigate some of the mistakes that the Wall government and the Sask Party is making right now, with wanting to shove through another nine days of meetings without clearly thinking out how that process should follow through and move forward.

[10:15]

**The Chair:** — I again would ask committee members to be diligent about relating to the motion in regards to the interim report. Mr. Yates.

**Mr. Yates:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. We have a motion before us dealing with an interim report. But, Mr. Chair, there's a number of issues need to be discussed about what should be in that interim report. And that's the . . .

**The Chair:** — I recognized the member . . .

**Mr. Yates:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair. The members opposite, you know, will have their opportunity to speak to this committee if they so choose.

There's going to be an interim report. But what that interim report contains is important to the people of the province of Saskatchewan. And it's important that they have the

opportunity to have experts and expert evidence and information and knowledge prior to the second phase of public hearings. And that's what I'm advocating be included in the interim report, and that a process be established to ensure that we get that evidence, that information into the interim report.

Now, Mr. Chair, I repeatedly hear about the conversation between the Vice-Chair and the Chair. I want to, for the public record . . . Mr. Speaker, many people have been allowed to speak to this issue within, so I want to put it on the public record.

**The Chair:** — I've corrected two members. I gave the member from the NDP a substantial amount of leeway, as I had the government member. I will expect you to speak to the motion.

**Mr. Yates:** — Okay. Thank you very much. When this motion's dealt with, I'd like to be first up, then, to speak to that process issue, Mr. Chair.

So in concluding my remarks, we have a flawed process, a process we have seen that has many of the characteristics of the UDP process that the people of Saskatchewan said did not meet their needs. We have tried as the official opposition to meet the needs of what the people of the province of Saskatchewan told us were the flaws in the UDP report.

You talk about adding the additional days because you understand what didn't work there. Well, Mr. Chair, there are parts still being excluded, and the process still does not incorporate for people what they see as their needs. So prior to an interim report, we need to have a process as part of our public process, a specific number of days for these professionals and experts in the area of alternative energy sources to be able to present to the committee. And these are public meetings, open to the public but designed for those experts to provide us information. And the reason for this discussion, Mr. Chair, is clear: it needs to occur prior to an interim report being written.

**The Chair:** — Seeing no more debate, I call for a vote on the motion put forward by Mr. Weekes. All those in favour of the motion? I count five in favour. All those opposed? Two. The motion carries.

Okay. I'll ask the committee members to bear with me a little. Some of the stuff on the agenda we've got to beforehand, but some of it still needs gone through. So I may be jumping around a little bit.

The first details that need to be discussed is accepting written submissions before the final report is released and when will be the cut-off date for accepting requests to appear in front of the committee in January. I think we're just looking for a reasonable solution here. If we do the same as we had done for the first nine days, and that was cutting off the request to appear just the Friday before people started to appear, is that reasonable with the committee? I see no debate on that. That would be January 15.

Advertising, again, I think was appropriately done in this case. We did the two dailies in the city of Regina and Saskatoon two weeks prior for two days . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . for

three days. Do we want to continue that as well? Or would it be more appropriate if we give the Committee Clerk the latitude to advertise as what would be normal for the committee process? And there seems to be general agreement on that.

One question from a member.

**Mr. Weekes:** — Mr. Chair, are the meetings online? Are they in the Legislative Assembly website or where? I'm assuming they are. And where are they?

**Ms. Lang:** — With regards, I'm just . . .

**Mr. Weekes:** — To the advertising of the . . . And how to submit and where to submit and where to make the appointments.

**Ms. Lang:** — Currently there are a number of locations across the province that have the advertisement on our Legislative Assembly channel. As well it's on our website. And when we have these hearings, the hearings will be audio-streamed outside of Regina and video-streamed in Regina on our website. And those [www.legassembly.sk.ca/committees](http://www.legassembly.sk.ca/committees) is also advertised in the newspaper.

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you. Mr. Chair, can we ask for a 10-minute recess at this time?

**The Chair:** — Yes, certainly. All in favour of recess? Agreed.

[The committee recessed for a period of time.]

**The Chair:** — I now call the meeting back to order. We are going through the agenda, but the member, Mr. Yates, has asked for a moment of our time. Mr. Yates.

**Mr. Yates:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I just want to clarify for the record the process. We keep hearing about the steering committee meeting between the Chair and the Vice-Chair, and clearly there was a discussion and a meeting between the Chair and the Vice-Chair, a steering committee meeting. And from this steering committee meeting the Vice-Chair comes back and consults his caucus and consults his colleagues. And from that the Vice-Chair generated a proposal that was brought to the meeting on September 9 under his name — a proposal that was a discussion document to a potential proposal to move forward in these public hearings. It's reflected what his discussions with his colleagues were.

And at all times has there been an approach from the Vice-Chair working with his colleagues and his caucus. And this proposal, as I would like now to officially table because it was not tabled to the committee, which is a working document, is under the authority of the Vice-Chair with his name on it. So I'd like to officially table this with the committee.

And as both parties know, discussions occur. Those individuals go back to their respective caucuses and colleagues for input, and from that Mr. Belanger, with the help of his caucus colleagues, developed this proposal.

Unfortunately on September 9 when the proposal was put forward, Mr. Belanger was ill and not able to be with us. And

unfortunately today, Mr. Belanger unfortunately has to be at a funeral of a very close individual to him and wasn't able to be here today, but the proposal's under his name and with his full support and the support of his caucus colleagues at the time. And it was a proposal brought forward as a starting point for discussion. And I think it was brought forward with the intent of designing a process that was both beneficial to the people of Saskatchewan and beneficial in the development of good public policy.

So I just wanted to, you know . . . Clearly those discussions went on. He came back and met with his colleagues, and the result was his proposal.

**The Chair:** — I thank the member for bringing that to our attention. Being also a member of the steering committee, I would just say one would presume that Mr. Belanger, the Vice-Chair of the committee, had discussed with his colleagues what he would like to bring forward to the steering committee. What was discussed there, it seems . . . How that discussion with his colleagues beforehand would change so dramatically in the week period afterwards, I don't know, but . . . I recognize Mr. Wotherspoon.

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Just as a quick response to that. The Chair mentions that he's surprised the Vice-Chair, when he comes in to meet with caucus to have different perspectives discussed, would end up coming in an organized fashion with a slightly different message to this committee. And that somehow surprises the Chair.

This is the same very Chair who sat in this room less than a month ago with a completely entrenched, irrational, and indefensible position as it related to this committee's work and had that position completely flipped upside down a week later.

So I think that the Chair should be very careful casting any stones. And I'm very pleased, for one, that our Vice-Chair, Mr. Belanger, works so closely with a caucus who cares so much about these issues to have reasonable discussion and bring forward reasonable positions to this table to work forward co-operatively. And I'm sure it's frustrating for the Chair to be sent very strict instructions from the Premier one day and to have the rug pulled out from under his feet a week later. But we'll leave it at that.

**The Chair:** — Well I think that we will get on with the agenda. As discussed earlier, October 2 is the deadline for people who would like to attend in person our committee meetings, the first nine days of.

The question before the committee is the prioritization or the order of the agenda for those meetings. As discussed in the earlier discussion, if the opposition members feel it's most appropriate to prioritize industry groups and energy suppliers, is that something you would like to discuss or put before the committee at this point? I will recognize Mr. Wotherspoon.

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — I think we would concur in the spirit of this. Certainly we've shared that we think that it needs to be distinct phases here and that the first phase needs to be focused on industry and expert testimony. And we greatly believe, and certainly in our consultation with public policy experts across

this province as well, and in our fine universities that suggest not doing this would be a shame to the actual process, so we would fully support taking an initial phase and having a thoughtful look at how we can fully engage experts in industry. And we also need to then make sure that that testimony and information is made fully available to the public and we need to think about what the best ways to do that is, but certainly online and hard copy to anyone that's interested is important.

And the reason we think this is so important is this provides the people of Saskatchewan, public stakeholders in Saskatchewan, with the responses from industry and from experts as it relates to the question at hand. It allows them to research, to discuss, to dialogue, and to bring forward their proposal as it relates to those specific pieces of testimony.

I believe a well-informed electorate or a well-informed voting public serves many things incredibly well, and I certainly think it would serve this committee process very well. So if the suggestion is that we're going to look at a new process for that first phase that would focus solely on experts in industry and then how we can make that testimony available, I think it's fair to say that the opposition is fully co-operative in looking at this.

**The Chair:** — I recognize Mr. D'Autremont.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well I think it's important that we do hear certainly from industry, from experts. I think these public hearings, though, should be open to everybody, that we shouldn't exclude people because they are not a so-called expert. I think, since these are public hearings, that we need to have a good mix throughout the process of those people who want to come forward during the first nine-day stage. They should have that opportunity. If they wish to wait until January, they should have that opportunity as well. I think the process that committees have is that they're open to the public, both for presentations and to hear the results of other submitters as well. So I would not favour limiting who can attend and who can present in the first nine days; nor would I do that for the second nine days.

**The Chair:** — Mr. Yates.

**Mr. Yates:** — Thank you very much. My colleague's comments a few minutes ago were not about limiting anybody's participation; in fact we want the full participation of all the people in the province of Saskatchewan who want to participate. What his comments were, is about there is benefit to us having knowledge and other individuals being able to hear that knowledge as it's brought forward by experts early in the process. It's about broadening the base of the discussions before people lock into positions so that people have as much knowledge as possible about the issues moving forward. That was one of the concerns raised in hearing after hearing during the uranium development proposal hearings.

And we were simply trying to facilitate what the people of the province of Saskatchewan have previously indicated was one of their needs. But in no way are we suggesting that we limit anybody's ability. In fact we — as you're well aware — have made proposals to open and expand the public hearings, go to more communities. And the members opposite, quite frankly, shut that down. So if anybody's trying to limit the public

participation in this process or the scope of these hearings, it's not the opposition members, it's the government members.

**The Chair:** — I have another speaker on, but I just would like to mention something that was brought to my attention. Thus far it is mainly industry, electricity suppliers that have come forward. There's still three days left of putting forward proposals to the committee to appear, but at this point it looks like it is mainly industry and electricity suppliers that have come forward.

One possibility is that the Committee Clerk put together an itinerary, and the Chair and Vice-Chair have a chance to look at it and move forward. I throw that out there. And I recognize Mr. Weekes.

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, I also just want to voice my opinion that there should be a mix of expert testimony and the general public. I raise the point that, who determines who's an expert and who's just a member of the general public? Because I have three people in my constituency I would suggest are experts because they are looking at wind power in particular and they are very knowledgeable in the industry and what needs they have. So I think it's debatable how you determine the mix.

But I would just suggest that there be a mix of the public as well as with the so-called expert testimony, because maybe some of the public need a particular day that they have time that they need to make their presentation early in the process because of conflicts in their personal life or their business life. So they shouldn't be excluded if they want a particular date to make their presentation.

[10:45]

But I think it would be fair enough to leave this with the Clerk and the steering committee to work out the itinerary and the agenda, because there's other things that may come up that necessitate a quick decision, and I'd be happy with leaving it in their hands.

**The Chair:** — Seeing no more debate, is it agreed that the steering committee will handle the itinerary?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Agreed. I just would like to confirm that the Committee Clerk, on behalf of the Chair, will send out media releases regarding committee activity. Is everybody in agreement with that? I see no debate. I take that as agreed.

Some of the issues we now need to deal with are the logistics. First off on Monday, October 12 — that is Thanksgiving — what time would the members like to depart? CTS [communication and technology services] would prefer to go earlier in the day to ensure enough time to set up. However that is Thanksgiving, and I guess that's a discussion we need to have as a committee.

Also I would like to just put on the record the Clerk had brought forward two options for buses to go to our location at La Ronge — a smaller van pulling a trailer or a full-size bus with storage underneath. One looks bigger than the other, but it was actually

the same price for both and you don't have the complications of a trailer. So the decision was made to go with the bus. So we have to decide on the time that the bus leaves and whether any members will be taking personal vehicles. Is there any particular concerns around that or should we leave that in the . . . Mr. D'Autremont.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you. We have to carry the Hansard equipment. We have to take the staff along. So you need the bus. The space is not limited on the bus, so I think whether members utilize their own vehicles or jump in the bus is not something we need to determine at this time.

**The Chair:** — Okay. Is everybody in agreement that the bus would leave, I would presume, mid-afternoon to allow time for set-up? The Clerk could probably send out a message to everyone to let them know what time it will be going. If anyone isn't going to take the bus and requires their own vehicle, again please let the Clerk know just so that no one is being left or waited for when they're not coming.

If the members could also provide contact numbers, possibly cellphones again to aid in logistics. And if anybody does not require a hotel room in Saskatoon or La Ronge, please let the Clerk know so that that doesn't get booked.

And do we anticipate other members attending? If you know now, you could bring it up. If not, again I think if you let the Clerk know, that would help in the logistics as well.

Mr. D'Autremont.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Certainly other members can sit in on the committee, but they are not part of the committee. And their expenses are chargeable to their MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] accounts, not to the committee.

**The Chair:** — Okay. Well that is the logistics that we have ahead of us to discuss. I think that about wraps it up. Could I have a motion to adjourn?

**Mr. Bradshaw:** — I will so move.

**The Chair:** — Mr. Bradshaw has moved. Agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Thank you.

[The committee adjourned at 10:50.]