



MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

OTTAWA, Monday, February 28, 2022

(7)

[English]

Pursuant to the order of the Senate of November 25, 2021, the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology met this day in room W110, 1 Wellington St., and with videoconference, at 2:03 p.m. ET, the chair, the Honourable Ratna Omidvar, presiding.

Members of the committee present: The Honourable Senators Bovey and Kutcher (2).

Members of the committee present by videoconference: The Honourable Senators Bernard, Gagné, Gold, P.C., Griffin, Lankin, P.C., Mégie, Moodie, Omidvar, Patterson, Petitclerc and Poirier (11).

Other senators present by videoconference: The Honourable Senators Cordy, Pate and Quinn (3).

Participating in the meeting: Andrea Mugny, Procedural Clerk, Marc-André Lanthier and Lori Meldrum, administrative assistants, Committees Directorate; Laura Blackmore and Laura Munn-Rivard, analysts, Library of Parliament.

Pursuant to the order of reference adopted by the Senate on Thursday, February 24, 2022, the committee continued its consideration of Bill C-12, An Act to amend the Old Age Security Act (Guaranteed Income Supplement).

WITNESSES (by videoconference):

Canadian Association of Retired Persons:

Bill VanGorder, Chief Operating Officer and Chief Policy Officer.

CanAge:

Laura Tamblyn Watts, President and Chief Executive Officer;

Diana Cable, Director of Policy and Research.

Réseau FADOQ:

Gisèle Tassé-Goodman, President;

Danis Prud'homme, General Manager.

Advocacy Center for the Elderly:

Graham Webb, Executive Director;

Karen Steward, Lawyer.

National Institute on Ageing:

Michael Nicin, Executive Director, Ryerson University.

Bill VanGorder, Laura Tamblyn Watts and Diana Cable each made a statement and answered questions.

At 2:58 p.m., the committee suspended.

At 3 p.m., the committee resumed.

Gisèle Tassé-Goodman, Graham Webb, Karen Steward and Michael Nicin each made a statement and, together with Danis Prud'homme, answered questions.

At 3:05 p.m., the Honourable Senator Gagné replaced the Honourable Senator Gold, P.C., as a member of the committee.

It was agreed that the committee proceed to clause-by-clause consideration of Bill C-12, An Act to amend the Old Age Security Act (Guaranteed Income Supplement).

It was agreed that the title stand postponed.

The chair asked whether clause 1 shall carry.

The Honourable Senator Patterson moved:

That Bill C-12 be amended in clause 1, on page 1, by replacing lines 4 and 5 with the following:

“1 (1) Subparagraph (c)(i.1) of the definition income in section 2 of the Old Age Security Act is replaced by the following:

(i.1) the amount of the payment under the program referred to in section 275 of the Budget Implementation Act, 2021, No. 1,

(2) The definition income in section 2 of the Act is amended by adding the fol-”.

A point of order was raised concerning the receivability of the amendment.

At 3:47 p.m., the committee suspended.

At 3:50 p.m., the committee resumed.

RULING BY THE CHAIR

Thank you, honourable senators, for your participation in this debate. As I said, I'm prepared to provide my ruling. My decision is based on the relevant procedural authorities and past Senate precedent, which I have spent some time studying over the weekend. According to Senate Procedure in Practice, on page 141, "An amendment must respect the principle and scope of the bill, and must be relevant to it."

The written authorities agree that an amendment is out of order if it is irrelevant to the bill, beyond its scope, inconsistent with the bill or if it effectively reverses the bill's principles.

As chair, it is my role to adjudicate whether this amendment falls within these parameters. So in the House of Commons, principles and scope are interpreted in a very rigid manner. However, as noted in December 2009 by Speaker Kinsella, who said:

... several Senate Speakers have expressed a preference for presuming a matter to be in order, unless and until the contrary position is established. This bias in favour of allowing debate, except where a matter is clearly out of order, is fundamental to maintaining the Senate's role as a chamber of discussion and reflection.

While I do not believe this amendment is destructive to the principle of the bill, some senators have questioned whether the amendment is beyond the scope of the bill. Having weighed the various arguments, I believe that this is a matter that requires further deliberation and analysis by all senators. Being mindful of the urgency with which we are being asked to consider this matter, I therefore rule that the amendment is in order and debate may continue.

I would remind members that accepting the admissibility of this amendment does not mean that the committee agrees or disagrees with the substance of the proposed amendment but simply that we will have the opportunity to discuss the amendment and vote on it.

I would also remind senators that this bill will be debated again in the Senate when the bill is studied at third reading and senators have further opportunity to comment.

Resuming debate on the motion in amendment of the Honourable Senator Patterson:

That Bill C-12 be amended in clause 1, on page 1, by replacing lines 4 and 5 with the following:

"1 (1) Subparagraph (c)(i.1) of the definition income in section 2 of the Old Age Security Act is replaced by the following:

(i.1) the amount of the payment under the program referred to in section 275 of the Budget Implementation Act, 2021, No. 1,

(2) The definition income in section 2 of the Act is amended by adding the fol-”.

After debate, the question being put on the motion in amendment, it was negatived on the following vote:

YEAS

The Honourable Senators

Griffin, Patterson, Petitclerc — [3]

NAYS

The Honourable Senators

Bernard, Bovey, Gagné, Kutcher, Lankin, Mégie, Omidvar, Poirier — [8]

ABSTENTIONS

NIL

It was agreed that clause 1 carry.

It was agreed that the title carry.

It was agreed that the bill carry.

It was agreed that the committee proceed in camera to discuss a draft report (observations).

At 4:13 p.m., the committee suspended.

At 4:14 p.m., pursuant to rule 12-16(1)(d), the committee resumed in camera, to discuss a draft report.

At 4:18 p.m., the committee suspended.

At 4:18 p.m., the committee resumed in public.

It was agreed that the chair report Bill C-12 without amendment to the Senate.

At 4:18 p.m., the committee adjourned to the call of the chair.

ATTEST:

Daniel Charbonneau

Clerk of the Committee