



MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

OTTAWA, Thursday, May 21, 2026
(19)

[English]

The Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights met this day at 8 a.m., in room B45, Senate of Canada Building, the chair, the Honourable Paulette Senior, presiding.

Members of the committee present: The Honourable Senators Arnold, Arnot, Ataullahjan, Bernard, Ince, McPhedran, Senior and Wells (*Alberta*) (8).

Other senators present: The Honourable Senator Pate (1).

Participating in the meeting: Robert Mason and Madalina Chesoi, Analysts, Library of Parliament.

Pursuant to the order of reference adopted by the Senate on Thursday, April 30, 2026, the committee continued its consideration of Bill C-9, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (hate propaganda, hate crime and access to religious or cultural places).

APPEARING:

The Honourable Sean Fraser, P.C., M.P, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency.

WITNESSES:

Department of Justice Canada:

Owen Ripley, Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, Policy Sector;

Joanna Wells, Senior Counsel and Team Lead, Criminal Law Policy Section;

Marianne Breese, Counsel, Criminal Law Policy Section.

Métis National Council:

Victoria Pruden, President (*by videoconference*).

Anishinabek Nation:

Linda Debassige, Grand Council Chief.

Chiefs of Ontario:

Abram Benedict, Ontario Regional Chief *(by videoconference)*.

Black Opportunity Fund:

Craig Wellington, Chief Executive Officer.

Black-Manitobans Chamber of Commerce:

Deborah-Zita Somakoko, President and Founder.

Anglican Church of Canada:

Ryan Weston, Lead Animator, Public Witness for Social and Ecological Justice.

Diocese of Toronto, Anglican Church of Canada:

Kevin Robertson, Bishop *(by videoconference)*.

African United Baptist Association:

Reverend Andrea Anderson *(by videoconference)*.

As an individual:

Reverend Cheri DiNovo, Former Member of the Provincial Parliament and Clergy *(by videoconference)*.

The minister made a statement and answered questions.

At 9:02 a.m., the committee suspended.

At 9:08 a.m., the committee resumed.

Victoria Pruden, Grand Council Chief Linda Debassige and Regional Chief Abram Benedict each made a statement and answered questions.

At 10:02 a.m., the committee suspended.

At 10:10 a.m., the committee resumed.

Craig Wellington and Deborah-Zita Somakoko each made a statement and answered questions.

At 11 a.m., the committee suspended.

At 11:11 a.m., the committee resumed.

Ryan Weston, Reverend Cheri DiNovo, Bishop Kevin Robertson and Reverend Andrea Anderson each made a statement and answered questions.

At 12:01 p.m., the committee adjourned to the call of the chair.

ATTEST:

Caroline Woodward

Clerk of the Committee