MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

OTTAWA, Monday, September 28, 2026
(25)

[*English*]

The Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights met this day at 4:01 p.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, Bernard, Karetak-Lindell, McCallum, Robinson, Senior and Wells (*Alberta*) (8).

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

Pursuant to the order of reference adopted by the Senate on Wednesday, June 10, 2026, the committee began its consideration of the subject matter of those elements contained in Division 10 of Part 4 of Bill C-31, A second Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on November 4, 2025.

WITNESSES:

Department of Justice:

Heather Watts, Director General and Senior General Counsel, Human Rights Law Section, Public Law and Legislative Services Sector;

Eric Nielsen, Senior Counsel, Human Rights Law Section.

WITNESSES:

As individuals:

Hugh Scher, Human Rights and Constitutional Lawyer (*by videoconference*).

Linda Reif, Professor Emerita, Faculty of Law, University of Alberta (*by videoconference*).

Consideration of a draft agenda (future business).

Heather Watts made a statement and, together with Eric Nielsen, answered questions.

At 4:46 p.m., the committee suspended.

At 4:55 p.m., the committee resumed.

Hugh Scher and Linda Reif each made a statement and answered questions.

At 5:38 p.m., the committee suspended.

At 5:41 p.m., pursuant to rule12-16(1)(d), the committee resumed in camera to discuss a draft agenda (future business).

It was agreed that the committee allow the audio recording and/or transcription of the in camera portion of today's meeting, that one copy be kept with the clerk of the committee for consultation by committee members and/or their staff, and that the audio recording and/or transcription be destroyed by the clerk of the committee when authorized to do so by the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure, but no later than at the end of this parliamentary session.

At 6 p.m., the committee adjourned to the call of the chair.

ATTEST:

Ericka Paajanen

Clerk of the Committee