



NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FIRST SESSION

THIRTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

Votes and Proceedings

of the Assembly

Thursday, 24 May 2007 — No. 9

**President of the National Assembly:
Mr. Michel Bissonnet**

QUÉBEC

The Assembly was called to order at 10.01 o'clock a.m.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Government Bills

Passage in Principle

Mr. Couillard, Minister of Health and Social Services, moved, –That Bill 1, An Act to establish the Fund for the promotion of a healthy lifestyle, do now pass in principle.

After debate thereon, the motion was carried and Bill 1 was accordingly passed in principle.

Mr. Fournier, Government House Leader, moved that Bill 1 be referred for clause-by-clause consideration to the Committee on Social Affairs.

The motion was carried.

At 11.04 o'clock a.m., at the request of Mr. Fournier, Government House Leader, Mr. Picard, Third Vice-President, suspended the proceedings until 2.00 o'clock p.m.

24 May 2007

The proceedings resumed at 2.04 o'clock p.m.

—————
Moment of reflection

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Presenting Papers

Mr. Fournier, Government House Leader, on behalf of Mrs. Jérôme-Forget, Minister responsible for Government Administration and Chair of the Conseil du trésor, transmitted the following Message from Her Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, which Mr. President communicated to the Assembly:

OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR

Her Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor of Québec transmits to the Assembly, in accordance with the provisions of section 54 of the Constitution Act, 1867, the Estimates of Expenditure for the fiscal year ending 31 March 2008, and recommends the said Estimates to the consideration of this Assembly.

Québec City, 18 May 2007

Lise Thibault

Mr. Fournier, Government House Leader, on behalf of Mrs. Jérôme-Forget, Minister responsible for Government Administration and Chair of the Conseil du trésor, laid upon the Table:

The Estimates of Expenditure for the fiscal year ending 31 March 2008, Volumes I, II, III and IV, in French and English.

(Sessional Paper No. 91-20070524)

24 May 2007

Mr. Fournier, Government House Leader, moved:

THAT the Estimates of Expenditure for the fiscal year ending 31 March 2008, save those of the National Assembly, be referred to the Standing Committees for consideration.

The motion was carried.

Mr. President tabled the following:

The document entitled "Proposal for Temporary Amendments to the Standing Orders and the Rules for the Conduct of the Proceedings in the National Assembly Regarding Committee Membership and the Quorum of the Assembly".
(Sessional Paper No. 92-20070524)

By leave of the Assembly to set aside Standing Order 116 (1), Mrs. Houda-Pepin, First Vice-President, then moved:

THAT the Standing Orders and the Rules for the Conduct of Proceedings in the National Assembly be amended by the provisions contained in the document entitled "Proposal for Temporary Amendments to the Standing Orders and the Rules for the Conduct of the Proceedings in the National Assembly Regarding Committee Membership and the Quorum of the Assembly", tabled today by the President of the National Assembly;

THAT these amendments be in force for the duration of the 38th Legislature, notwithstanding the prorogation of the session;

THAT these amendments be included in the Votes and Proceedings of the National Assembly as part of the present motion.

STANDING ORDERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

36.1 Want of quorum – A Member may call attention to the want of a quorum only if no fewer than six Members from his parliamentary group are then present in the House.

When one or more committees are meeting, this number shall be reduced to three.

SECTION 1.1
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

117.1. Members – The Committee on Public Administration shall consist of:

- (1) twelve permanent members, who shall be apportioned as follows:
 - (a) five Members from the parliamentary group forming the Government;
 - (b) four Members from the Official Opposition; and
 - (c) three Members from the Second Opposition Group, one of whom shall not be entitled to vote.
- (2) twelve temporary members, who shall be apportioned as follows:
 - (a) five Members from the parliamentary group forming the Government;
 - (b) four Members from the Official Opposition; and
 - (c) three Members from the Second Opposition Group.

(See R.C.P. 3.1)

117.4. Participation of independent Members – Any independent Member may take part in the proceedings of this committee; but he may not vote or move any motion.

117.8. Quorum – The quorum of this committee shall be four permanent members, including its chairman.

The quorum of any subcommittee thereof shall be a majority of its permanent members, including its chairman.

SECTION 3
MEMBERSHIP

121. Members — Every committee shall consist of twelve Members, who shall be appointed for two years and be apportioned as follows:

- (1) five Members from the parliamentary group forming the Government;
- (2) four Members from the Official Opposition; and
- (3) three Members from the Second Opposition Group, one of whom shall not be entitled to vote.

(See R.C.P. 3.1.)

122. Repealed

126. Allocation of chairmanships — Five committees shall be chaired by Members from the parliamentary group forming the Government, two shall be chaired by Members from the Official Opposition, and two shall be chaired by Members from the Second Opposition Group.

126.1 Allocation of vice-chairmanships — The vice-chairmanships of the several committees shall be apportioned among the parliamentary groups in the following manner:

- (1) four Members from the parliamentary group forming the Government;
- (2) four Members from the Official Opposition; and
- (3) two Members from the Second Opposition Group.

The vice-chairman of a committee shall not belong to the same parliamentary group as its chairman.

127. Selection of chairmen and committee members — Within fifteen days after the opening of the first session of a Legislature, and from time to time thereafter as the necessity may arise, the Committee on the National Assembly shall meet to allocate the committee chairmanships and vice-chairmanships among the parliamentary groups. It shall also prepare lists of Members to serve on the several committees and shall name the date on which they are first to meet. All such decisions must be unanimous.

The President shall report this meeting to the Assembly; a Vice-President shall thereupon move concurrence in this report, and the Assembly shall decide the question forthwith.

128. Repealed

SECTION 4
CHAIRMEN, VICE-CHAIRMEN AND CLERKS

134. Chairmen and vice-chairmen to be elected — Each committee shall, at the opening of the first session of every Legislature and, as the necessity may arise, during the course of a Legislature, elect a chairman and a vice-chairman, who shall hold office for two years:

Provided that the Committee on Institutions shall elect a second vice-chairman from among the members of the Second Opposition Group.

135. How elected — No member of any committee shall be deemed elected its chairman or its vice-chairman unless a majority of the members thereof from each parliamentary group shall have voted in his favour.

137. Election of vice-chairmen — The chairman of each committee shall preside at the election of one or more vice-chairmen, as the case may be.

The members of a committee who belong to the same parliamentary group as its chairman and, in the Committee on Institutions, those who belong to the same parliamentary group as the vice-chairman envisaged in the second paragraph of Standing Order 134, shall not be eligible for the office of vice-chairman.

138. Duties and powers of chairman — The chairman shall organize and direct the proceedings of his committee and take part in its deliberations; and he shall have the right to vote, except as otherwise provided in Standing Order 121(3).

140. Vacancies — Whenever the office of chairman of any committee becomes vacant, a vice-chairman of that committee shall take the chair, and he shall perform the duties of the chairman and exercise his authority. The committee shall, within thirty days, elect a new chairman.

141. Absence or inability to act — In the unavoidable absence of the chairman of any committee or whenever asked by him to do so, a vice-chairman of that committee shall take the chair, and he shall perform the duties of the chairman and exercise his authority.

Whenever the chairman and the vice-chairman, or both vice-chairmen, as the case may be, are absent or unable to act, the clerk shall so inform the committee, which shall take the appropriate measures.
(See R.C.P. 6.)

156. Quorum — The quorum of any committee shall be four members, including its chairman; that of any subcommittee shall be a majority of the number of its members, including its chairman.

The presence of a quorum shall be required whenever a vote is taken, and no decision shall be deemed to have been arrived at by any vote taken when a quorum is not present.

A committee having once been called to order, a quorum shall thereafter be held to be present; but if any member takes notice of the want thereof, or if it appears on a division that a quorum is not present, the chairman shall suspend the proceedings.

If no quorum is present within a reasonable time, the chairman shall adjourn the proceedings.

RULES FOR THE CONDUCT OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

3.1 Members entitled to vote — The whip of the Second Opposition Group, or his representative, shall, whenever necessary, identify those Members who shall be entitled to vote. (See S.O. 117.1 and 121).

4. Steering committees — A committee shall, at the request of its chairman, establish a steering committee. Whenever a committee comprises two vice-chairmen, the steering committee thereof shall consist of its chairman, of its two vice-chairmen, and of its clerk.

Whenever a committee comprises but one vice-chairman, the steering committee thereof shall consist of its chairman; of its vice-chairman; of some member of the committee who shall have been chosen by a majority of the members of each parliamentary group, and who belongs neither to the same parliamentary group as its chairman nor to that of its vice-chairman; and of its clerk.

The steering committee shall prepare and submit to the standing committee a plan of the latter's proceedings. The steering committee shall also, between meetings of the standing committee, take any decisions it may deem necessary.

6. Substitutions for chairman — Whenever the chairman and the vice-chairman, or both vice-chairmen, as the case may be, are absent or unable to act, a member of the committee may substitute for the chairman. (See S.O. 141).

The motion was carried.

Presenting Reports from Committees

Mr. President tabled the following:

The report from the Committee on the National Assembly, which met on 16, 17, 22 and 23 May 2007 to select the members of the parliamentary committees and to establish the list of temporary chairmen.

Mrs. Houda-Pepin, First Vice-President, moved that the Assembly concur in the report from the Committee on the National Assembly.

The report was concurred in.

(Sessional Paper No. 93-20070524)

Presenting Petitions

The abstracts of five petitions respecting the extension of the AccèsLogis programme were laid upon the Table:

- the first, being the abstract of a petition signed by 15 citizens from the riding of Gaspé, by Mr. Lelièvre (Gaspé);
(Sessional Paper No. 94-20070524)
- the second, being the abstract of a petition signed by 21 citizens from the riding of Mercier, by Mr. Turp (Mercier);
(Sessional Paper No. 95-20070524)
- the third, being the abstract of a petition signed by 11 citizens from the Québec City region, by Mr. Légaré (Vanier);
(Sessional Paper No. 96-20070524)
- the fourth, being the abstract of a petition signed by 30 citizens of Saint-Hyacinthe, by Mr. L'Écuyer (Saint-Hyacinthe);
(Sessional Paper No. 97-20070524)
- the fifth, being the abstract of a petition signed by 16 citizens from the riding of Roberval, by Mr. Trottier (Roberval).
(Sessional Paper No. 98-20070524)

24 May 2007

By leave of the Assembly to set aside Standing Orders 63 and 64, the abstracts of four petitions respecting the extension of the AccèsLogis programme were laid upon the Table:

- the first, being the abstract of a petition signed by 278 citizens from the riding of Taschereau, by Mrs. Maltais (Taschereau);
(Sessional Paper No. 99-20070524)
- the second, being the abstract of a petition signed by 78 citizens of Québec, by Mrs. Lemieux (Bourget);
(Sessional Paper No. 100-20070524)
- the third, being the abstract of a petition signed by 338 citizens from the riding of Sainte-Marie–Saint-Jacques, by Mr. Lemay (Sainte-Marie–Saint-Jacques);
(Sessional Paper No. 101-20070524)
- the fourth, being the abstract of a petition signed by 46 citizens from the riding of Terrebonne, by Mr. Therrien (Terrebonne).
(Sessional Paper No. 102-20070524)

By leave of the Assembly to set aside Standing Order 63, Mr. Gaudreault (Jonquière) tabled the following:

The abstract of a petition respecting the extension of the AccèsLogis programme, and signed by 75 citizens of Jonquière.
(Sessional Paper No. 103-20070524)

By leave of the Assembly to set aside Standing Orders 63 and 64, Mr. Sklavounos (Laurier-Dorion) tabled the following:

The abstract of a petition respecting the extension of the AccèsLogis programme, and signed by 50 members of housing cooperatives in Metropolitan Montréal.
(Sessional Paper No. 104-20070524)

24 May 2007

Oral Questions and Answers

The Assembly proceeded to Oral Question Period.

By leave of the Assembly to set aside Standing Orders 53 and 59, Mr. Desrochers (Mirabel) tabled the following:

Copy of a press release, issued on 24 May 2007 by the Fédération québécoise des directeurs et directrices d'établissement d'enseignement, concerning the scheduled deadline for the purchase of high school manuals.

(Sessional Paper No. 105-20070524)

At the request of Mr. President, Mr. Charest, Premier, withdrew certain words deemed unparliamentary.

At 3.12 o'clock p.m., at the request of Mr. Fournier, Government House Leader, Mr. President suspended the proceedings until 4.00 o'clock p.m.

The proceedings resumed at 4.06 o'clock p.m.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Business Having Precedence

Budget Speech

Mrs. Jérôme-Forget, Minister of Finance, delivered the Budget Speech.

During her address, by leave of the Assembly to set aside Standing Order 53, Mrs. Jérôme-Forget, Minister of Finance, laid the following documents upon the Table:

24 May 2007

The 2007-2008 Budget Speech, accompanied by the document entitled "The Budget at a Glance";

(Sessional Paper No. 106-20070524)

The Budget Plan for 2007-2008;

(Sessional Paper No. 107-20070524)

Additional information on the 2007-2008 budgetary measures;

(Sessional Paper No. 108-20070524)

A document entitled "Meeting the Challenge of Health Funding";

(Sessional Paper No. 109-20070524)

The agreement reached between the Auditor General of Québec and the Government, concerning a working group on government accounting;

(Sessional Paper No. 110-20070524)

The summary of consolidated financial transactions for the 2006-2007 fiscal year;

(Sessional Paper No. 111-20070524)

The summary of consolidated financial transactions forecast for the 2007-2008 fiscal year;

(Sessional Paper No. 112-20070524)

The budgetary revenue of the Consolidated Revenue Fund forecast for the 2007-2008 fiscal year;

(Sessional Paper No. 113-20070524)

The budgetary expenses of the Consolidated Revenue Fund forecast for the 2007-2008 fiscal year;

(Sessional Paper No. 114-20070524)

The consolidated non-budgetary transactions forecast for the 2007-2008 fiscal year;

(Sessional Paper No. 115-20070524)

The consolidated financial transactions forecast for the 2007-2008 fiscal year.

(Sessional Paper No. 116-20070524)

24 May 2007

At the end of her address, Mrs. Jérôme-Forget, Minister of Finance, moved,
-That this Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the Government.

Mr. Taillon (Chauveau) commented on behalf of the Official Opposition.

Mr. Legault (Rousseau) then commented on behalf of the Second Opposition Group.

Debates Upon Adjournment

At 5.25 o'clock p.m., by leave of the Assembly to set aside Standing Order 309, the Assembly held a debate upon adjournment on a question by Mr. Desrochers (Mirabel) addressed to Mrs. Courchesne, Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports, about school manuals.

Mr. Fournier, Government House Leader, moved the adjournment of the Assembly until Friday, 25 May 2007, at 10.00 o'clock a.m.

The motion was carried.

Accordingly, at 5.37 o'clock p.m., Mrs. Houda-Pepin, First Vice-President, adjourned the Assembly until Friday, 25 May 2007, at 10.00 o'clock a.m.

MICHEL BISSONNET

President