



FIRST REPORT
OF THE
STANDING COMMITTEE
ON
PROCEDURE, PRIVILEGES AND LEGISLATIVE OFFICERS

Third Session
Fifty-ninth Legislative Assembly
of the
Province of New Brunswick

December 19, 2019

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE	
Mr. Fairgrieve, Chair Mr. Savoie, Vice Chair Hon. Ms. S. Wilson Mr. Fitch Mr. Kenny	Mr. LePage Ms. LeBlanc Mr. Melanson Mr. Coon Mr. DeSaulniers

December 19, 2019

To The Honourable
The Legislative Assembly of
The Province of New Brunswick

Mr. Speaker:

I present herewith the First Report of the Standing Committee on Procedure, Privileges and Legislative Officers for the Third Session of the 59th Legislature.

Pursuant to Standing Rule 92, all Standing Rules and practices of the House, together with any matter referred by the Speaker, stand permanently referred to the Committee.

Further to its permanent order of reference, the Committee held a meeting on December 18, 2019, to review the Standing Rules and practices of the Legislative Assembly and its committees.

The Committee's Report contains recommendations for amendments to the Standing Rules in order to dissolve the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations and merge its mandate with the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, and to create a new Standing Committee on Climate Change and Environmental Stewardship.

And your Committee asks leave to make a further report.

Stewart Fairgrieve, MLA
Chair

Your Standing Committee on Procedure, Privileges and Legislative Officers begs leave to submit this, their First Report of the session.

Further to its permanent order of reference, your Committee held a meeting on December 18, 2019, to review the Standing Rules with the consideration of merging the mandate of the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations with the mandate of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts. The Committee also considered the creation of a new Standing Committee on Climate Change and Environmental Stewardship.

Merging the separate mandates into a single oversight body that is the Public Accounts Committee is supported by the Auditor General, who outlined a number of reasons for doing so, of which included:

- A sole Public Accounts Committee would have more ability to hold relevant entities (departments and Crown corporations) and senior officials and senior corporate executives to account;
- Interrelationships of government departments and Crown corporations have become more complex with a number of Crown corporations performing functions that in the past were considered mainstream government programs;
- Most Canadian jurisdictions have a single Public Accounts Committee and not a separate Crown Corporations Committee.

The Public Accounts Committee held orientation sessions open to all Members and relevant staff on October 2 and 3, 2019, which was hosted by the Office of the Auditor General in conjunction with the Canadian Audit and Accountability Foundation. Based on recommendations brought forward by the Auditor General and discussions during these sessions, the Public Accounts Committee subsequently carried a motion on October 10, 2019, in support of merging the two committees.

The Committee agrees with the Public Accounts Committee and recommends amendments to the Standing Rules in order to dissolve the Crown Corporations Committee and merge its mandate with the Public Accounts Committee.

On December 12, 2019, the Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick adopted the following resolution:

WHEREAS herbicides and pesticides are used by the forest industry, NB Power, and the agricultural sector for vegetation control;

WHEREAS despite findings by Health Canada and New Brunswick's Chief Medical Officer indicating that glyphosate does not pose a cancer risk to humans at current exposure rates, concerns about the spraying of glyphosate remain;

WHEREAS, prior to taking any decision related to changes to the application of glyphosate in New Brunswick, it is important to hear from stakeholders including the forest and agricultural sectors, subject matter experts, and the general public;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT this House urge the government to refer the issue of glyphosate spraying to a legislative committee in order to hold public hearings, engage stakeholders, invite submissions, and make recommendations to government within six months.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT this House support the creation of a legislative committee dedicated to climate change and environmental stewardship.

The above resolution was considered by the Committee and the Committee recommends that a Standing Committee on Climate Change and Environmental Stewardship be added to the list of Committees under the Standing Rules.

Amendments to the Standing Rules

Your Committee therefore recommends for adoption the following amendments to the Standing Rules:

1 Standing Rule 89 is repealed and the following is substituted:

89 The Standing Committees shall be appointed on motion at the commencement of each House and shall be:

(a) the Standing Committee on Climate Change and Environmental Stewardship;

(b) the Standing Committee on Economic Policy;

(c) the Standing Committee on Estimates and Fiscal Policy;

(d) the Standing Committee on Law Amendments;

(e) the Legislative Administration Committee;

(f) the Standing Committee on Private Bills;

(g) the Standing Committee on Procedure, Privileges and Legislative Officers;

(h) the Standing Committee on Public Accounts;

(i) the Standing Committee on Social Policy.

2 Standing Rule 90 is repealed.

3 Standing Rule 93 is repealed and the following is substituted:

93 All reports to the House of the Auditor General, all Public Accounts, and all annual reports of government departments, provincial agencies, boards and commissions stand permanently referred to the Public Accounts Committee.