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HOUSE OF COMMONS
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Hon. Andrew Scheer
Speaker of the House of Commons
224-N Centre Block
Parliament of Canada

May 30, 2013

Dear Mr. Speaker,

I am writing this letter to provide you with supplementary explanation as to the admissibility of my motions to amend Bill C-60, An Act to Implement Certain Provisions of the Budget Tabled in Parliament on March 21, 2013 and other measures. In addition to the points raised during my Point of Order in the House of Commons following Routine Proceedings today (appended to this letter), I trust that this cursory overview of my rationale in submitting these amendments for debate at report stage will assist you in your decisions regarding selection for report stage.

I have tabled three kinds of motions to amend Bill C-60 at report stage, and will provide you with my rationale as to why I ask that you select each of these for debate at report stage.

First, I have submitted four motions to delete four separate clauses of Bill C-60. In keeping with established Parliamentary practice and procedure, motions to delete are always found to be admissible and are selected at report stage.

Second, I have submitted ten substantive motions to amend Bill C-60 that were previously submitted to the Standing Committee on Finance during its clause-by-clause review of this legislation. As I described in the Point of Order I raised this morning, on May 7, 2013, the Finance Committee adopted a motion to “invite” Members of Parliament who were not members of the committee to submit amendments to be considered during the clause-by-clause review. Despite making a good-faith effort to engage with this process, I prefaced my submission of amendments to the committee with a statement that doing so

would in no way prejudice my ability to make recourse to my rights as a non-member of that committee to submit amendments at report stage. I did so on the basis that the “opportunity” being offered was in no way a sufficient or satisfactory replacement for the rights and privileges I enjoy at report stage: the right to move, withdraw, defend, or vote on my motions to amend legislation that is before the House.

Therefore, I am resubmitting to report stage the amendments that I submitted to the Standing Committee on Finance, with the hope that your consideration of the process that was on offer in the committee, represented a sufficiently drastic curtailment of my rights so as not to prejudice my ability to engage meaningfully in the legislative process at report stage. I put to you that in ruling on the admissibility of these amendments, and deciding to select them for debate at report stage, you will be fulfilling your stated role as guardian of the rights and privileges of all Members of the House of Commons, and continuing to permit me to engage meaningfully in the legislative process. However, I believe it important to note that your selection of these amendments for report stage debate would not pre-empt any future arrangement that could allow for the meaningful engagement of non-committee Members in the committee process. While this particular experiment fell well short of my rights and privileges, I remain fully committed to exploring any options that could be found “to the satisfaction of all Members.”

The third set of substantive motions to amend that I have submitted for debate at report stage of Bill C-60 are three amendments in the alternative to motions submitted to the Finance Committee. As all amendments that I proposed to the committee were voted down, I submit these amendments in an effort to arrive at changes to the legislation that may garner the support of all Members of this House. These amendments represent sound legislative proposals, but could not be submitted to the committee as they pertain to clauses that other of my motions had already attempted to amend.

In keeping with my rights as a non-member of the Finance Committee, and with an acknowledgement that the “invitation” provided to submit motions to the Finance Committee did not constitute a meaningful opportunity to engage in the legislative process on par with the rights and privileges afforded to me at report stage under Standing Order 76(5), I submit these three motions in the alternative for report stage and ask that you select them for debate.



Elizabeth E. May, O.C.
Member of Parliament
Saanich-Gulf Islands

