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—
Chair

Mr. Anthony Housefather

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● (0950)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Anthony Housefather (Mount Royal, Lib.)):
We will now resume our meeting for our first meeting of studying Bill C-266, an act to amend the Criminal Code (increasing parole ineligibility).

Our first witness is our colleague Mr. James Bezan, the MP for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman.

Mr. Bezan, it's a pleasure to have you before the committee. The floor is yours.

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC):
Thank you, Mr. Chair and colleagues.

It's indeed a pleasure to be able to appear on my private member's bill, an act to amend the Criminal Code (increasing parole ineligibility), Bill C-266, the short title of which is the respecting families of murdered and brutalized persons act.

I originally introduced this bill in the first session of the 41st Parliament as Bill C-478. I was promoted in 2013 to parliamentary secretary for defence and had to drop my private member's bill, even though it had received second reading and had been sent it to committee.

The bill was picked up in the second session of the 41st Parliament by our former colleague Colin Mayes, who was the MP for Okanagan—Shuswap, as Bill C-587. It made it through committee, but then there was dissolution of Parliament for the 2015 federal election and that put an end to the bill's moving forward.

This bill amends section 745 of the Criminal Code of Canada to give the power to our judicial system to increase parole ineligibility up to 40 years from the current maximum of 25 years for those who commit a crime of abduction, sexual assault and murder.

Right now, there are charges for all those crimes, under sections 279, 280, 281, 282 and 283 of the Criminal Code for abduction, while sexual assault charges are defined under sections 151 to 153.1, 271, 272 and 273 of the Criminal Code, as well as murder in the first and second degree.

What this bill will do is give the full discretion to our judges and juries. After an individual is convicted of crimes, the judge must ask the jury if they “wish to make a recommendation with respect to the number of years that the accused must serve before the accused is

eligible for release for parole”. It is not mandatory for the jury to provide a recommendation, and the judge is not beholden to the jury in taking the recommendation, should it be made.

I know there are some concerns around whether or not this violates section 12 of the charter regarding cruel and unusual punishment. I should state again that this is strictly judicial discretion. The parole ineligibility period can be set at anywhere from 25 years up to 40 years, based upon the discretion of the judge. When determining the parole ineligibility period, the judge must have “regard to the character of the offender, the nature of the offences and the circumstances surrounding their commission”.

I modelled my bill after former Bill C-48, the Protecting Canadians by Ending Sentence Discounts for Multiple Murderers Act. Again, that piece of legislation has stood up to a charter challenge and afforded judges the ability to extend parole ineligibility periods for multiple murder convictions. Rather than having them concurrent, they are now served consecutively.

The way I came up with 40 years for parole ineligibility for the commission of a crime that involves the abduction, sexual assault and murder of an individual, it's on that same transaction. Again, looking at consecutively serving that sentence, for murder, it's 25 years without parole, while abduction faces a maximum parole ineligibility period of 10 years and sexual assault faces a maximum parole ineligibility period of 4.6 years. That's how I arrived at 40.

I can't stress enough that this bill targets the most depraved of our society. It targets those who have never received parole, so we aren't doing anything to further punish the criminal. This is about sparing the families from appearing at unnecessary parole board hearings.

As you know, right now, even if somebody has a life sentence for committing a crime, they can, at year 23, start applying for parole. All too often, we've witnessed that when these individuals apply for parole, they use it as an opportunity to feed their depraved nature and revictimize the families. That's why I brought this forward. It was to be compassionate to the families who have gone through these ongoing, unnecessary and extremely painful Parole Board hearings.

When it comes to the type of criminal this targets, we're talking about criminals like Michael Rafferty and Terri-Lynne McClintic, who abducted, raped and murdered Tori Stafford; Paul Bernardo, who back in the 1990s abducted, raped and murdered Leslie Mahaffy and Kristen French. One of the things that really drove me on this was, if you remember back in 2009-10, the ongoing investigation in the arrests of Terri-Lynne McClintic and Michael Rafferty. It was all over the news. As a father of three daughters, it really hurt me knowing that this poor little girl had suffered so badly.

Clifford Olson, at that time, was diagnosed with cancer and was dying in prison. I was driving around in my riding listening to CBC and they were talking to Sharon Rosenfeldt, whose son, Daryn, had been murdered by Clifford Olson. Clifford Olson applied for parole on three occasions. First he used the faint hope clause which existed at that time, and then at year 23 and year 25, he applied for parole again. He used those opportunities to describe in graphic detail how he murdered the Rosenfeldts' son. He would send letters to them, hoping that they'd appear at the Parole Board hearing so he could describe how he killed Daryn.

We know that these individuals never get parole. Parole boards have been very consistent that these psychopaths are never released, so why would we put the families through these ongoing and unnecessary Parole Board hearings? They feel obligated to be there, to stand up for the rights of their loved one, to read their victim impact statement and ensure that the Parole Board never forgets about the heinous crimes that these individuals have committed.

We're also talking about David James Dobson, who murdered Darlene Prioriello. I worked quite closely with Darlene's sister Terri on this bill. Donald Armstrong abducted, raped and murdered Linda Bright back in 1978, and Glenna Fox. David Threinen abducted, raped and murdered Dahrlyne Cranfield, who was only 12 years old; Robert Grubestic, who was nine; Samantha Turner, who was eight; and Cathy Scott, who was seven years old. He died in custody.

We're talking about the Russell Williams, the Luka Magnottas, the Robert Picktons. More recently, in Toronto, Bruce McArthur killed eight men. He abducted them, raped them and then brutally murdered each and every one of his victims.

Mr. Chair, how much time do I have?

• (0955)

The Chair: We're going to be pretty flexible about this since you're the only witness, so do what you need to do.

Mr. James Bezan: Thank you.

I just want to put on the record a couple of quotes from some of the families. I mentioned Linda Bright, Janet and Karen Johnson, Darlene Prioriello and Sharon Rosenfeldt's son Daryn.

Linda Bright was only 16 years old when she was abducted by Donald Armstrong in Kingston. He applied for parole on numerous occasions, including most recently in 2012. Linda's sister Susan Ashley, with whom I worked on this bill as well, said, "My heart breaks having to live through this again. My heart breaks having to watch my mom and dad drag up their thoughts and pain from that deep place inside them where they tuck their hurt away". Linda's mother, Margaret Bright, said, "This is not fair. We should not have to relive our tragedy. When I remember my daughter, let me

remember her as a little girl. Don't make me think about the other awful time in 1978.... Let me tell you this has been the most difficult thing I've had to do in the last 20 years".

Sharon Rosenfeldt has been very active with the national victims of crime organization and has attended some of my press conferences in the past. She appeared at this committee in 2015 and really drove this home when she was on CBC, as I mentioned, talking about what happened to her son and how the system needs to be fixed. Daryn was only 16 and was a victim of Clifford Olson. They had to go through the faint hope clause hearings in 1997, and parole hearings in 2006 and 2010 before Olson passed away.

He was denied parole every time. Her husband, Gary, who has since passed away, said, "What's really horrendous about this...is this is only the beginning. We're going to have to do this every two years as long as Olson lives. And this is a very painful experience for myself, my family."

Sharon said, "Attending parole hearings every two years or five years after the offender has served 25 years is cruel and unusual punishment for the victim's family".

Terri Prioriello, whose sister Darlene was killed in 1982, said, "Families have already been victimized once. They shouldn't have to be victimized every two years. Having to face a loved one's killer and to read what he did to her and how her death has affected our lives is something nobody should ever have to do once, never mind twice."

She went on to say in an interview in 2007, talking about her mother's impact statement that she read into the record, "I listened to her read it and it was like she was burying Dolly all over again. It was so upsetting for Mom. She cried. Families shouldn't have to go through this all over again."

Donald Armstrong killed Susan Ashley's sister. Susan Ashley said in 2012 in the London Free Press, "He cannot be fixed. And to put him in the community, it's a public risk to any woman that he can have access to. My family and myself, we really don't want to see another family victimized like we were. It's a terrible thing to have to endure, it's a lifetime of pain and suffering."

Colleagues, Bill C-266 is a bill that is needed in our judicial system. It is fair; it is just, and it is compassionate.

It is fair because it doesn't change the outcomes of current murderers who are incarcerated because they never get parole. All the research we have done proves that they are incarcerated for life. It is just because we are ensuring that the system still gives the power to the courts and the judges to use their discretionary powers and authority to determine the credibility and circumstances of each case and to apply the sentencing fairly and justly. It is compassionate. I can't stress that enough. This is about standing up for the families of the victims, making sure they don't have to endure ongoing and unnecessary Parole Board hearings at which they are revictimized and which all too often feed the depravity of those murderers.

Thank you.

• (1000)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Bezan.

We'll start with questions now.

Mr. MacKenzie.

Mr. Dave MacKenzie (Oxford, CPC): Thank you, Chair.

Thank you, James, for bringing this bill forward.

I don't think you can express how deeply people who have to attend National Parole Board hearings are affected. It is the way the system operates. We understand that, but you have explained how people feel about having to go to those Parole Board hearings every two years.

You're talking about people like Clifford Olson. You're not talking about the young man down the street, who inadvertently runs afoul of the law. These are the worst of the worst of the worst.

You mentioned the Tori Stafford case. That's from my own community, my own police department. I see Rodney probably three times a month, maybe more often. His life is a disaster. I can't begin to explain what it has meant to him, so for him to have to go to the National Parole Board for these people just perpetuates and perpetuates.

Your bill is for the families. Is that true?

Mr. James Bezan: That's true. I'd say that this is all about saving them the grief.

I should point out that of course bills can't be retroactive, so this is about all cases going forward. All we can do is compare that to the Tori Stafford case and others, knowing what those families have endured and what they're going to have to continue to face, because you aren't going to change those sentences that individuals like Rafferty and McClintic currently have.

Unfortunately, Rodney is going to have to go through what we're trying to prevent in the future.

Mr. Dave MacKenzie: Right. Having said that—I think everyone in this room understands that—what it does is give us a kind of check mark for the kind of people we'll be dealing with in the future with this legislation. You've also made it very clear that it doesn't take away the discretion of the judge or the jury. It seems to me to be a logical situation.

We saw in the paper just last week that a family from Toronto whose son, a police officer, was murdered is now going to

Vancouver for a Parole Board hearing, 25 years after that, and even that creates a lot of anxiety for these people.

You've talked with many of these people. Did they see any solutions other than what you have here?

Mr. James Bezan: Well, when you look at the cases around people like Paul Bernardo or Clifford Olson, because of Bill C-48 ending sentence discounts for multiple murders, those psychopathic serial killers will be already captured by that bill. They can get consecutive life sentences of up to 25 years.

This is really about that single case like Tori Stafford's, where we can increase it from 25 to 40 years. Again, it's about those families. Part of what I originally drafted in 2012 has been taken care of under Bill C-48, but we still have that hole of those heinous murderers who go out there and find that one child or that one victim, and then brutally torture, sexually assault and kill them.

• (1005)

Mr. Dave MacKenzie: You mentioned the Bruce McArthur case. I think there are eight victims in that situation. Bill C-48 would allow for consecutive terms there, but in this situation, if he had been apprehended after one victim, he would fall under what you have here in this bill.

Mr. James Bezan: That's right. If Bruce McArthur had killed only one victim, he could have faced up to 40 years.

Again, what that case proved is that the judge used his discretion in the sentencing. Rather than going with eight consecutive multiple sentences, I believe he came up with 25 years as the parole ineligibility for those eight victims. Take into consideration the age of the murderer, Bruce McArthur. He was 66 years old at the time of sentencing.

Mr. Dave MacKenzie: If we were to look at the worst of the worst, which we have here, I don't think we need to be psychiatrists to understand that there is something wrong with these people and it is going to be very difficult for society to accept them back into the general population.

Having said that, there is an opportunity for them within the system to apply for parole, albeit a long way down the road. Many of these offences are committed by people who are in their twenties, so they would still have the opportunity to have parole eligibility 40 years later. It seems like a long time, yet it's not a long time if you're the victim's family. Is that the sense you get?

Mr. James Bezan: I think I was trying to move the yardsticks, even for those who... As you mentioned, a murderer who is only in his twenties, in 40 years' time, the parents and the loved ones of the victim may be well on in their years or even no longer with us. Moving those yardsticks does save those families from having to attend those hearings. Still, remember that it's not always just the parents. Sisters, brothers and friends can attend those Parole Board hearings, and for victim impact statements, it's the immediate family members who make those statements.

Mr. Dave MacKenzie: Yes.

I think you've already indicated this, but I'll just reiterate that many of these people who are incarcerated for those crimes play on the opportunity to get parole to harass victims all over again—families and friends.

Mr. James Bezan: Yes. We witness that all too often. These individuals love to go to their Parole Board hearings, knowing that they will be refused parole, and just relish how the families are reacting to them. We're not dealing with people who have any empathy. They're not compassionate. They feed off the fear of others. That to me is what we want to prevent in the future.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Ms. Khalid.

Ms. Iqra Khalid (Mississauga—Erin Mills, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Mr. Bezan, for coming in today and for presenting this bill in Parliament.

To start, do we have any statistics from the past 10 years on how many people this would impact?

Mr. James Bezan: The PBO did talk to Corrections Canada. They anticipate that about three cases a year would be at play here. We had the Library of Parliament research the number of murderers—you know, the sadistic killers who abduct, torture, murder and do all sorts of grotesque things to their victims—and they couldn't find anyone who's ever been released who had been charged. They went back more than 10 years. They went back over the last 40 or 50 years, trying to find if any of those people had ever been released, and they couldn't identify one.

Ms. Iqra Khalid: Have you consulted with the Parole Board of Canada? What's been their feedback on this bill?

Mr. James Bezan: I have attended some Parole Board hearings, but I haven't consulted directly with the leadership at the Parole Board. I've always respected the work they do. Anyone who has attended Parole Board hearings knows that it's a tough, tough job. They have to wade through the cases of individuals who are pleading for parole—they've done their 12-step programs, and in their minds they've rehabilitated—and then often the Parole Board still says no.

I never bothered talking to them directly, because as parliamentarians, we're the ones who get to set the laws. I've reviewed some of the casework done by the Supreme Court. I'm looking at section 12 of the charter. Again, the Supreme Court is very clear that Parliament is responsible for defining what we want to see in legislation and the law, as long as it meets the charter compliance test. They have either referred things back to Parliament or accepted what we've decided.

I thought I'd leave this in the hands of the courts, first and foremost. They will be the ones who will prescribe what the sentences are. Judges will have full power and discretion in setting those sentences. The Parole Board will respect what those sentences are, and then, based upon their own capabilities and analysis, will determine whether individuals meet the criteria for release.

• (1010)

Ms. Iqra Khalid: Speaking of the courts and judges, the bill proposes very strict elements that must be met in order for the

ineligibility to continue. Do you think that would impact trials and how prosecutions occur? Would there be increased pressure on prosecutors to put forward extra charges, etc.? How would that impact the length of trial?

Mr. James Bezan: Historically, we've seen that the courts, the prosecutors, the Crown and defence lawyers will often determine what the final charges will be. We are definitely at a point in time, versus what has happened historically, when we're looking at multiple charges rather than just charging for the most egregious crime that was committed. In this case, it would be murder.

There are factors that continue to compound the crime that was carried out. Let's say an individual abducts someone. They still have a chance to rethink their decision to kidnap someone. They could walk away from it. If they commit a sexual assault, they've made the next step. Again, they could release their victim and just face the potential of two charges. If they carry out the third act, why would we just say that we're nailing them with murder, it being the most egregious crime they committed and the one with the stiffest penalty, when they had a chance to show remorse? They had a chance to change direction on the path they were taking, and yet they still carried out the abduction, the rape and the murder. I think prosecutors and police would want to prosecute and charge based upon all three crimes committed in that one individual case. I think it's clear in the bill that it's on the same transgression against the same victim.

Ms. Iqra Khalid: Thank you.

I think Mr. Fraser had a question as well.

Mr. Colin Fraser (West Nova, Lib.): Is there more time?

The Chair: Yes, you have a minute and a half.

Mr. Colin Fraser: Thanks, James.

The way the bill reads is that “up to 40 years” could be substituted for 25 years. Do you foresee the discretion being used to make it something between 25 and 40 years, or is this pretty much a case of if it is being substituted, it will be 40?

Mr. James Bezan: No. I see it strictly as the ability of the judge to determine what factors aggravated the kidnapping, assault and murder. Looking at the age of the murderer, the age of the victims, the judge will have full discretion on what they set as a time.

We're seeing that now in some of the cases, where multiple murderers can get consecutive sentences. The judges are not necessarily doing it always in 25-year blocks. That proves to me that our judicial system is working, that the court still has the complete power to determine sentencing based on each and every individual case.

Mr. Colin Fraser: Do you think, if there were an instance where the 25 years was substituted with something over 25, it would give another ground for appeal to the individual and drag the matter out further? Obviously, the conviction would stand, but the matter would be before the courts for an even longer period of time.

Is that of any concern?

Mr. James Bezan: As we know, life sentences and times of parole and eligibility for all crimes change from time to time. It usually is based on cases going forward, not retroactively. For those who are serving life sentences based on 25 years, I don't see it changing if they decide to increase that to 30 years or decrease it to 20 years in the future.

The Chair: Colin, I'm sorry, but we're out of time. I'm sure you can still get time in the next round.

Mr. Colin Fraser: Okay.

The Chair: Randall.

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP): Thank you.

It's good to see you, James.

We were serving on the defence committee together, and I have enormous respect for Mr. Bezan, in particular for his concern for victims of crime. I was the public safety critic in the last Parliament when this bill first came forward. Mr. Bezan's dedication to victims is unquestionable, and I thank him for the work he does on that.

I know we all share the concern for victims. I think none of us can ever really understand the trauma of families of victims of these most serious crimes, or the victims themselves. I know that around the table we all support improving services for victims. It's one of the things our justice system has a long way to go in.

That said, I opposed this bill in the last Parliament, and I continue to have serious concerns about it. As Mr. Bezan knows, I taught criminal justice for 20 years and spent time in and out of prisons and the parole system. I'm quite familiar with the way it works. The question of safety within the institutions, both for inmates and for correctional workers, comes up with this bill.

If we take away—as the Conservative government did—the faint hope clause, we take away the possibility of parole for people. There are good studies that show people tend to become unmanageable within the prison system if they have nothing left to lose. They tend not to participate in rehabilitation programs, and they tend to misbehave, including with violence, because they have nothing left to lose, because they're not getting out.

The faint hope clause, which was in place from 1976 to 2011, allowed people the chance of applying for parole before 25 years. There were more than 1,000 cases dealt with. I think it was 1.3% of people who were paroled under the faint hope clause, and of course, none of them repeated their offences.

Have you talked to the Union of Canadian Correctional Officers about your bill and the question of safety within the institution?

• (1015)

Mr. James Bezan: I have. Stony Mountain penitentiary is in my riding, so I meet with UCCO all the time. We have talked about this bill over the years.

I'll also draw your attention to the PBO report on my bill from April of this year. It references a study that was done by Loyola University Chicago. It used empirical evidence on a number of disciplinary actions taken on different statuses of convict, including men versus women—

Mr. Randall Garrison: That was in the U.S. system.

Mr. James Bezan: Yes, it was in the U.S. system, in the state of Illinois.

What they found is that the number of disciplinary actions against those who were incarcerated for life sentences was lower than for the general inmate population. The PBO referenced that because that type of analysis doesn't exist here in Canada.

Mr. Randall Garrison: It does. In fact, there was the 2010 internal study by the Department of Justice.

Mr. James Bezan: Oh, yes, there was the Department of Justice report entitled “An analysis of the use of the faint hope clause”, so they do cite it.

Mr. Randall Garrison: It showed exactly the opposite.

Mr. James Bezan: The PBO report talks more about the lower rates for recidivism. I think that, again, we need to dig down further on that type of empirical evidence.

If the current lifers in the inmate population aren't having an increased number of disciplinary actions taken against them compared to the number for the general population incarcerated across Canada, I don't see that as being a big deal.

Mr. Randall Garrison: But that is what the Department of Justice study in 2010 found.

Mr. James Bezan: I don't have the report in front of me. What they say is that the methodology of the report does not allow the impact of earlier parole to be distinguished from parole decision-makers' ability to assess an offender's risk of reoffending on recidivism, and they look only at the costing versus the actual impact on the population.

Mr. Randall Garrison: I would emphasize again that it's not just the correctional workers, although that is one of my main concerns since I have a correctional facility in my riding as well, but it's also other inmates and the safety of other people who have been sentenced who are subject to violence as a result of the lack of any opportunity for people to think that they should behave in order to possibly get parole at an earlier date.

Mr. James Bezan: I would just say, from my discussions and from anecdotal evidence I have collected by talking to members of UCCO, that it's a dangerous environment regardless of whether or not people are getting parole eligibility at year 25 versus at year 40. Some of the convicts who are in there have a propensity to be violent, and they would rather deal with those individuals in a prison setting than allow them to be on the street. First of all, let's be compassionate to the families of the victims. Second is the concern about recidivism and whether those individuals will reoffend upon release.

To your point, if the Parole Board of Canada isn't releasing the small group of individuals we're talking about here—maybe three a year are convicted—those individuals are never getting released anyway. Will we be changing their behaviour while they're incarcerated? I don't think so. If they're psychopathic at the beginning of this—and all the psychoanalysis that is done shows that most of these people score very high on the psychopathic threshold—then they're going to be incarcerated indefinitely.

The argument you're making, Mr. Garrison, doesn't change, because those individuals are still in jail.

• (1020)

Mr. Randall Garrison: I agree with you, Mr. Bezan, that we have limited evidence, but the one piece of evidence we do have, which was the extensive study of the faint hope clause, did show that the behaviour of inmates with long sentences was improved if they had the possibility, however faint, of an earlier parole. I think the evidence—

Mr. James Bezan: That study was done in a relatively short period of time after the faint hope clause was rescinded.

Mr. Randall Garrison: It's a study from 2010. It was done before.

Mr. James Bezan: That was before it was rescinded?

Mr. Randall Garrison: Yes.

Mr. James Bezan: What we need is the empirical evidence to see whether or not those numbers have changed over time.

Mr. Randall Garrison: You and I can agree on that point.

Mr. James Bezan: Yes.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We're coming back to this side. It was Mr. Boissonnault, I believe, or Mr. McKinnon. I can't remember.

Ms. Iqra Khalid: It was Mr. Boissonnault.

The Chair: Mr. Boissonnault.

Mr. Randy Boissonnault (Edmonton Centre, Lib.): Thanks very much.

Mr. Bezan, you mentioned that you were a parliamentary secretary and that this fell off the Order Paper in the last Parliament.

At the end of the day, you're trying to help families. Is it your sense that this is entirely in the sense of judicial discretion and that you wouldn't want to be directing judges whatsoever? Would there be no sense of pressuring judges or insisting that they should be going to the 40 years versus the 25 or any period in between?

Mr. James Bezan: There's none at all, and I want that on the record, because I know often that court cases will look at testimony given in parliamentary committees, as well as at debates in the House of Commons, to determine the nature and the will of Parliament at the time. Mine is very clear. It's purely at the discretion of the judge to assign a sentence, anywhere from 25 years up to 40 years, and I'm happy with anything in between. It's giving our courts, including juries, the ability to make those decisions on their own.

Mr. Randy Boissonnault: Okay.

I noticed in the PBO report that you had done that we're talking about a relatively few people and that the effect on the budget would be in the low millions. I know there's a challenge sometimes with private members' bills and having an effect on the treasury. Have you discussed this with the Department of Finance and is there any sense of that issue coming into play in your PMB?

Mr. James Bezan: There is no royal recommendation on the bill.

Again, I don't visualize that this costs any more because of individuals never achieving parole anyway. There's actually a small savings in not having unnecessary Parole Board hearings. Even in the PBO report they're saying that the amount is only around \$2,300 per hearing. We're talking about small savings potentially on the Parole Board side.

I'm not anticipating that this actually increases the cost of incarceration, because again, the evidence is that these individuals never get released. Whether they're released at year 25 versus year 40, which is the argument of the \$1.1 million that the PBO makes is based on individuals actually receiving parole. Of course, that's not a fact.

Mr. Randy Boissonnault: Right.

If we take a look at the people who are incarcerated and would be affected by this because of the longer sentence, how many families, in your rough calculation, would this benefit, say, over the period that the PBO looked at? For instance, if we look at 25 years, how many families are we likely to spare having these Parole Board hearings every two years?

• (1025)

Mr. James Bezan: If we're only talking about one victim per murderer who abducted, raped and killed their victim, if they're talking three years over 25 years or even 40 years, it's somewhere between 75 and 120 families. I believe that the multiple serial killers, like Robert Pickton or Bruce McArthur, those individuals would fall under Bill C-48 and they wouldn't get the discount for multiple murders.

Mr. Randy Boissonnault: Right.

Mr. James Bezan: Again, we're talking about the Terri-Lynne McClintics and Michael Raffertys where there is just one victim. It is one victim, one family.

Mr. Randy Boissonnault: Yes.

You and I haven't had a chance to work on many things together and I don't think we've agreed on many things. However, I can say that what you're doing here makes sense to me as an Alberta legislator and as somebody who thinks that when you do the crime, you have to do the time. If we can prevent families from being re-traumatized, then I think it makes sense and you'll have my support.

Mr. James Bezan: Thank you very much. I appreciate that.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

I really appreciate Mr. Bezan's ability to come to the committee today.

We look forward to finishing work on your bill and getting it back to the House.

Mr. James Bezan: Thank you very much, colleagues.

I do hope that we can get it reported back before the session ends.

The Chair: Thank you so much.

We're briefly going to suspend and come back in camera to continue with online hate.

[Proceedings continue in camera]

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