



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

Standing Committee on Health

HESA • NUMBER 040 • 1st SESSION • 42nd PARLIAMENT

EVIDENCE

Tuesday, February 7, 2017

—
Chair

Mr. Bill Casey

Standing Committee on Health

Tuesday, February 7, 2017

• (1105)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester, Lib.)): I will call our meeting to order. Today we're here to discuss M-47. On December 8, the House of Commons passed private member's motion M-47, which states:

That the Standing Committee on Health be instructed to examine the public health effects of the ease of access and viewing of online violent and degrading sexually explicit material on children, women and men, recognizing and respecting the provincial and territorial jurisdictions in this regard, and that the said Committee report its findings to the House no later than July 2017.

Today we'll hear from MP Viersen who proposed the motion.

You have 10 minutes for your opening statement.

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Good morning, everybody. It's a real honour and a privilege to be here today. I got to know many of you over the process of advocating for the motion, so it's an honour for me here today to address the committee as a whole. Thank you for inviting me here.

It has been an interesting road that I've travelled for the first 18 months since I was elected. I was honoured to receive support from every party in the House of Commons for the motion M-47. I think that reflects the gravity of the negative health impacts on youth and adults who access and view online sexual violence.

Since M-47 was adopted, I have received inquiries from around the world. Countries as far away as Denmark have been astonished at M-47's success through the House of Commons. They view the adoption of M-47 as a progressive step towards gender equality and look forward to the outcome of this study.

I don't mean to add any more pressure to this committee, but other countries are looking at what Canada is going to do. We will probably set an example for the world in addressing the negative health impacts of sexual violence online. They see us as cutting edge on this issue.

It's hard to believe that it has been over 30 years since the House of Commons has taken on a study of this topic, especially the issue of sexually explicit material. Thirty years ago, the Internet never even existed. We're in a whole new world, as they say. Even back then before the Internet, that committee found that sexually explicit material perpetrates "lies about aspects of women's humanity and denies the validity of their aspirations to be treated as full and equal citizens."

A lot of people, when they think of pornography today, think of *Playboy*. But the fact is that online adult content has shifted, due to

the explosion of the Internet, to a much more explicit form of material, the vast majority of which features violence and degradation.

I want to share a few key statistics about sexually explicit material and the industry behind it. In Canada, the average age of first exposure to sexually explicit material for boys is 12 years old. Sexually explicit websites get more visitors each month than Netflix, Amazon, and Twitter combined, with PornHub, the largest free site in Canada, alone receiving over 21 billion visits in 2015.

Thirty-five per cent of all Internet downloads are sexually explicit. Globally, sexually explicit material represents a \$97 billion industry. Almost 90% of mainstream sexually explicit content features violence towards women. Sexually explicit material has become the primary source of information about sex and a significant factor influencing sexual behaviours for children and adolescents.

Let that sink in for a minute. A \$97-billion industry that makes up 35% of all Internet downloads, that is easily accessible by the click of a button, and that primarily features violence and degradation of women is the primary sexual educator of our youth, starting from the age of 12.

As a result, boys and girls are being taught that violence and degradation is acceptable and to be accepted. As they grow up to be women and men, they are denied meaningful relationships. This is impacting the physical, mental, and emotional health of many young Canadians who will grow up to be mothers, fathers, doctors, lawyers, teachers, and legislators.

We need federal leadership through the lens of the public health model, and I hope that the study by and recommendations of this committee will set the stage for leadership from the government. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention explain the public health model approach as: define the problem, identify risk and protective factors, develop initiatives and programs, and invest in widespread adaptation of effective efforts.

In Canada, and globally, we are the first on the stage on this issue. We need to define the extent of the harm to the health of Canadians, especially our youth. There has been extensive research undertaken regarding the impact of accessing and viewing violent and degrading sexually explicit material, but it has to be addressed within the public health model approach.

• (1110)

If we think back to the fight against tobacco, the key shift didn't occur until the harm was recognized and the public health model approach was taken. We explored and defined the problem, identified the risks and preventative factors, and developed a public health campaign. We saw success in that there was a widespread adoption of effective initiatives. Over the past 30 years, tobacco use by Canadians under the age of 24 has been cut in half and smoking cigarettes is no longer socially acceptable.

Now, some may say that people are not impacted by media and marketing and kids are especially impacted by what they view. But the evidence tells us otherwise, especially in research done by health organizations. For example, this year's report from the Heart and Stroke Foundation focuses on the harmful impacts of online marketing and media. I have it right here. They say, "The kids are not alright", and that's just with regard to the food and beverage sector, never mind that the largest portion of the Internet is being used for sexually explicit materials, not food marketing.

The message throughout the report communicates the same message that child advocates and research on this issue want to emphasize. It notes:

Marketing is big business and it is sophisticated. Millions of dollars are spent convincing our impressionable children and teens they want a whole range of products, including food and beverages that are having a devastating effect on their health.

These tactics are employed by every industry, especially the pornography industry. As I mentioned earlier, 40 years of multi-disciplinary research on the emotional, social, developmental, behavioural, and cognitive impacts of exposure to sexually explicit material have been undertaken. That is why I am urging this committee to undertake a robust and in-depth study.

There are many experts who are available to speak to the committee about public health impacts of online sexually violent and degrading material. In fact, the motion that I put forward received support from nearly 60 organizations from across the country, and that has nothing to do with the front-line workers and the academics who are working in this field, or the health care providers who see the effects of this every day.

This committee needs to hear from researchers, academics, and health experts on how the evidence shows the harms of viewing and accessing sexually explicit material. Some people you might like to hear from include Dr. Kim Roberts from Wilfrid Laurier University, who works on child memory development and has consulted on thousands of cases of child sexual abuse, or Dr. Mary Anne Layden, a psychotherapist at the Center for Cognitive Therapy at the University of Pennsylvania. She can speak on how the exposure shapes attitudes and behaviours; shapes sexual templates; shapes gender and sexual identity; encourages risky behaviours; limits capacity to develop intimate and life-affirming relationships, both

platonic and sexual; leads to body dysmorphia; can lead to habitual and addictive porn consumption; and can undermine a healthy, connected, stable adulthood for men and women.

You could also hear from Dr. Donald Hilton, a well-known neurosurgeon, who can speak on how viewing sexually explicit material can shape and rewire an adolescent brain.

The Public Health Agency of Canada lists exposure to sexually explicit material as a contributing factor on sibling violence. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health noted in her speech in the House in support of my motion that there is a staggering 342% increase in the reports of child sexual abuse over four years to Cybertip.ca.

The committee should also consider that as many as one in six girls and one in 12 boys are currently experiencing sexual abuse. Dr. Peter Silverstone, co-author of a new study out of the University of Alberta states:

When all types of sexual abuse are combined including exposure to pornography or other sexual material, the number of children sexually abused is as high as 1 in 3 girls and 1 in 6 boys.

The committee also needs to hear from people from the front lines, such as pediatricians, registered nurses, psychologists, child development researchers, Canadian front-line service providers for abused women and children, teachers, social workers, and the like. They will all tell you about the direct impacts on the health of women, men, and children that exposure to sexually explicit material is having.

• (1115)

They will tell you that the public health issues include sexually transmitted infections; the direct impact on women who are not just minors who continue to be viewed as objects to be sexually assaulted or tortured by family members, partners, or strangers; how harming women has become normalized by the pornography industry; the prevalence of revenge porn and the resulting suicides; the direct impact on young men, including erectile dysfunction, addiction, loss of motivation; increased support for sexual coercion; and the relationship between pseudo child sexual assault and real child sexual assault.

The renowned Sheldon Kennedy Child Advocacy Centre puts it this way:

The impact of exposure to pornography, sexual exploitation and the overall sexualisation of children results in traumatic and detrimental outcomes for a child. It is our view that it is society's collective responsibility to protect children outweighing concerns about censorship... Any exposure to adult or child pornographic images is abuse and children are detrimentally harmed and further victimized by these actions.

Yet today, the \$97-billion pornography industry has unparalleled and uninhibited access to our youth, marketing violence and degradation on a level never before seen. We need to be bold. We need to take action.

The Chair: Mr. Viersen, you're considerably over, so you can wind it up here.

Mr. Arnold Viersen: As a nation we need to take a comprehensive approach to this issue based on a public health model.

I want to end by quoting Ms. Sophie Grégoire Trudeau, who captures this so well in her quote. She says:

The objectification of the female body, the normalization of pornography, and rape language and culture is destroying the self-esteem of our girls and is an insult to the spirit of our boys.

That is what is at stake here.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

Now we're going to start our first round of seven-minute questions. We're going to start with Dr. Eyolfson.

Mr. Doug Eyolfson (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia—Headingley, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Mr. Viersen. You've obviously put a lot of work and thought into this. As you say, it's an important issue that should be dealt with. I think it's gone unnoticed for too long.

What role do you think parents are playing in this right now?

Mr. Arnold Viersen: I would say that our parents are definitely our first educators, so they're our first line of defence. As with every health issue that we come across, the parental responsibility and role is paramount; it's the number one role. Just as with smoking, gambling, and alcohol, the state also has significant roles to play in that as well.

In Canada we have public health so we need to ensure that everybody is engaged in informed consent so that they know what they're getting into when they view these things. Look at the models that we've done for either tobacco use or alcohol use in terms of how the state has interfered with parental rights.

Mr. Doug Eyolfson: Further to that, do you foresee a role in schools in educating children in matters of healthy sexual attitudes, safe-sex practices, and consent? Do you think schools can play a role in helping to educate them as a defence against this problem?

Mr. Arnold Viersen: Yes, I see the schools as an extension of the parental responsibility. One of the really interesting things that has happened in Alberta is that the association of school trustees voted 97% in favour of implementing the outcomes of this study into their curriculum. In Alberta right now we're going through a curriculum overhaul, and they said the impacts of pornography should definitely be part of the sex education in Alberta.

Mr. Doug Eyolfson: I'm glad to hear this is happening. I'm a firm proponent that schools can play a role in education to children in safe-sex practices and healthy attitudes.

What is your response when you have parents who want to opt their children out of such education programs, who say that they object to having this kind of education in schools, and who accuse the state of interfering with their parental rights by teaching these matters in school?

• (1120)

Mr. Arnold Viersen: Once again I'll go back to my earlier statement that I think that the parents are the primary educators of

their children and their children's education is entirely their responsibility, and they're allowed to defer some of that responsibility to the state. I would go back to the fact that, if they're uncomfortable with this, they should be allowed to opt out.

Mr. Doug Eyolfson: Part of this motion talks about ease of access. Again, it's something I couldn't agree with more. Children can simply walk out with one of these devices, and once out the door, any reliable teenager can figure out how to get around parental locks, and things.

When you talk about ease of access, do you know of any jurisdictions where something like this—addressing ease of access at a government level—has been addressed?

Mr. Arnold Viersen: I believe that the U.K. has already been down this path somewhat. They carry it on two different streams, I think, without passing any legislation. Their own Internet service providers have put in some sort of opt-in filter or meaningful age verification. Opt-in filters and meaningful age verification are two things they looked at.

There's one thing I'd like to point out about this. You say that teenagers are looking for this. First exposure, typically, is not somebody looking for it. There's a nine-year-old boy in Manitoba who was playing a video game and it was just a pop-up on his screen. It's being marketed to them. That would be one of the things I would like to stress, for sure.

Mr. Doug Eyolfson: Yes, I couldn't agree more. It used to be a joke that when you did any Internet search, everything past your third hit was nude celebrities. That's, unfortunately, not a joke anymore.

Mr. Arnold Viersen: Yes.

Mr. Doug Eyolfson: You're right. It does come up when you're looking for something else. It's very difficult.

I know you've probably been asked some of this. In talking about the public health and ease of access, what would you say is the government's role in addressing this? How would the government control this ease of access?

Mr. Arnold Viersen: That's going to be a difficult one, just because of my own civil liberty... I see myself as a libertarian, as well. That's going to be a fine line, for sure.

I would say that the public health model legislation is just one of the roads we can go down. I think we need to turn the culture on a lot of this stuff, much like with smoking. We never banned smoking, but we have done, and continue to do, significant work in stigmatizing those who smoke. We can make all the laws in the world, but if the culture doesn't change, we still...

Cordelia Anderson, a lady we had here on the Hill the other day, said it well. She said that we cannot prosecute, legislate, or incarcerate our way out of this issue. It's going to be a culture shift, for sure. That's what any of us who work in the field of gender equality are working on—culture shifts. We cannot legislate our way out of this.

Mr. Doug Eyolfson: I have no further questions.

Thank you.

The Chair: We'll move to Mr. Webber.

Mr. Len Webber (Calgary Confederation, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Mr. Viersen, for being here today and for all the work you've done on this and many of the other work-related things you do as an MP. I know people in your constituency of Peace River—Westlock who have not met you but have heard about the work you've been doing. They appreciate it, and they thank you, as well.

Mr. Viersen, in your presentation you asked us to do a robust study of this issue of sexually explicit material and the harm it does in our society. I am still unsure, though, of the kinds of outcomes or recommendations you would like to see in the report from this committee. Could you give us some idea of what you would like to see come out of this report?

Mr. Arnold Viersen: As I mentioned earlier, it's imperative that we get this public health model, much the same as we did with tobacco, in a similar vein. I would advocate that when you're speaking to the Canada health ministry later—I think you're having them in as well—that you ask them how it went with the public health model that they took when they went after tobacco and smoking.

I would love to see the recommendations include a number of things: a health campaign; funding of media literacy on this issue, and for youth; implementing the training of health care providers, so they can identify some of the addiction issues that come along with this; providing treatment for folks who are addicted.

One of the interesting things about online sexual violence is that when you combine the sexual stimuli with the violence, it triggers two parts of your brain at the same time. It gives you an effect that is similar to an illicit drug, so you have a number of people who are addicted to this in the same manner. Some of the neurologists will tell you that it's the same sort of thing that happens with somebody who takes illicit drugs. Therefore, it is highly addictive.

Have some meetings with some of the provincial ministers—Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan—on this topic. Get all of the health ministers together and have a meeting just on this, so that it's on their radar. Partner with the regulatory bodies, so that they all have a bit of training on this. Make it harder for youth to access it.

Going to the questions earlier, there is an opt-in or a meaningful age verification, and talk to the Internet service providers about that. Strengthen the obscenity laws to prevent the publication of violent and degrading sexually explicit material. That may be another option.

Ensure that the education system across this country addresses this as well. I know that's provincial jurisdiction, but use whatever methods you have here at your disposal.

•(1125)

Mr. Len Webber: Great, thank you.

Absolutely, education is a provincial jurisdiction. Again, I wonder what we could do there. Of course, bringing in the provincial ministers would be one thing, to get them together in a meeting.

There are a lot of people who have expressed an interest in presenting to this committee. We have an extensive list from our

clerk, Mr. Gagnon. You're filling up my email, and I appreciate that. I'm glad that we have that interest from people who want to present. You've mentioned a few organizations that you would like to see present to us, but we also have numerous others that you probably don't even know about.

Mr. Chair, we have a subcommittee meeting to decide who we are going to have to present to us. I would ask you and the committee if perhaps Mr. Viersen can participate with me in the subcommittee meeting to look at the individuals who want to present to us. Perhaps we can have his input on who he thinks we should have at this particular meeting. I'm hoping that our committee would allow Mr. Viersen to be there at the subcommittee meeting to choose these witnesses.

I guess I should ask you first, Mr. Viersen. Would you be willing to come and choose these people to present to us? I'm sure your answer would be yes.

Mr. Arnold Viersen: Yes, for sure.

Mr. Len Webber: If that's the case, then, I guess I don't have to ask you who else you think should be presenting to us during this study.

When you say you want this committee to do a robust study, what do you envision for time? How long do you envision—weeks, months? How many meetings do you expect us to do, Mr. Viersen?

Mr. Arnold Viersen: That is up to your committee for sure. I've had nearly 100 folks approach me asking, "How can I become a witness at this committee?" If you have six people at each meeting that would be six to 10 meetings, right? That's entirely up to you.

I know the committee report will be drawn upon by organizations from around the country. That's probably one of the big roles of the committee as well, to bring all those people together to build that report, so that there's a national view of what the problems are. For example, in my own province of Alberta, the school trustees have said that they will be using that report to build on the Alberta curriculum. There will be people using this report outside of this place. That's why I see that it's necessary to have a really robust report on this.

•(1130)

The Chair: Okay, the time is up.

Go ahead, Mr. Davies.

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Thank you for being here, Mr. Viersen. Congratulations on your work bringing this important issue forward. I'm going to start with a bit of the legal context that's currently the case in Canada.

Though access to sexually explicit material in Canada is legal, as you know, the content is regulated under the Criminal Code. Under section 163 of the Criminal Code, it is currently an offence to make, print, publish, distribute, or circulate "any obscene written matter, picture, model, phonograph record or other thing whatever". It is also an offence to possess such material for the purpose of publication, distribution, and circulation. A so-called "obscene" publication is one that has "the undue exploitation of sex, or of sex and any one or more of the following subjects, namely, crime, horror, cruelty and violence" as a dominant characteristic.

In your view, is the current Criminal Code legislation deficient?

Mr. Arnold Viersen: I'm not totally up to speed on what the Criminal Code has to say on this. I approached this entirely from a health perspective. Therefore, I do not have any recommendations about whether the Criminal Code is sufficient or not. I know that there have been several court rulings that have clarified some of these things, so I think I'll let the lawyers continue to hash that out in court. We could put forward law right here in this place as well, but I focused entirely on a health perspective. As I stated earlier, this is a pervasive issue throughout all of society and we are not going to be able to legislate and incarcerate our way out of this.

Mr. Don Davies: I'll ask you one more question on law before we turn to the health and research issues. You're quite right, the Supreme Court of Canada has ruled on these sections of the code in a leading case called *R. v. Butler*. Writing for the majority, Justice Sopinka divided pornography into three categories: explicit sex with violence, explicit sex without violence but which subjects people to treatment that is degrading or dehumanizing, and explicit sex without violence that is neither degrading nor dehumanizing.

In talking about these categories, he wrote:

In making this determination with respect to the three categories of pornography... the portrayal of sex coupled with violence will almost always constitute the undue exploitation of sex—

—and therefore be illegal. He continued:

Explicit sex which is degrading or dehumanizing may be undue if the risk of harm is substantial. Finally, explicit sex that is not violent and neither degrading nor dehumanizing is generally tolerated in our society and will not qualify as the undue exploitation of sex unless it employs children in its production.

Justice Sopinka and the Supreme Court of Canada have declared that any pornography that has violence in it is already illegal. Sex, or what is commonly referred to as erotica, that is simply the portrayal of sex without any violence or degradation or dehumanization is legal. It's that middle category that I think your motion or bill speaks to, which is sex that is not violent but is degrading or dehumanizing and may be undue if the risk of harm is substantial.

Mr. Viersen, would it be fair to say that what you'd like this committee to focus on is research to help inform a court of the law in the future to determine if the portrayal of sex as degrading or dehumanizing creates a risk of harm?

• (1135)

Mr. Arnold Viersen: I'm not exactly sure how to answer that question. I'm not sure if we're trying to tell a court something with this. Again, I've gone with the health model, but that would possibly come into your report. I know that the latest research... In a report that came out in 2016, Stanley, Barter, et al., studied seven different countries, 22 different studies. It was a meta-analysis, and it was the first study of its kind to prove causation between viewing sexual violence online and perpetrating it in some fashion. That may come into your report as well.

What I would point to is the top 50 viewed videos in the world. That's a bit of the trouble with trying to manage all of this. It's in the world because it's on the Internet. You're not going to shut down the Internet tomorrow. The top 50 viewed videos have both violence and sexually degrading material in them. This is having an impact on our society.

What I would like the committee to do is to find out what that impact is and how we can address it in the Canadian context.

Mr. Don Davies: Before I get your views on directing the committee in terms of the evidence we should look at... In 2013, the U.K. Children's Commissioner asked academics from Middlesex University to review all the available evidence about the effect of pornography on adolescence, so they did a meta-sample as well. They excluded articles that had a very high or particular ideological angle and articles that had methodological problems. They ranked the quality and relevance of papers and gave them a strength rating of high, medium, or low. They reviewed 40,000 papers, but only 276 met their criteria.

In your view, should this committee be cautious about the independence and objectivity of available research? How should evidence be weighted in our study?

Mr. Arnold Viersen: I would start with hearing from some of the leading researchers in this area, such as Dr. Mary Anne Layden and Dr. Gail Dines. That would be a good place to start. I think they are very neutral in their position on a lot of this stuff. In particular, they come from significantly different ideological bends than I do, so it has been a really interesting road to travel with them, for sure.

That was probably the most unique part of all this. I would say, use your own judgment on that. We passed this unanimously through the House, with support from every party, so I think that, going forward, we should be able to continue to work together on this.

Thank you.

Mr. Don Davies: Thank you.

The Chair: Ms. Sidhu, go ahead.

Ms. Sonia Sidhu (Brampton South, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Mr. Viersen, for coming today.

I just want to ask you, did you consider provincial and territorial jurisdiction? Can you explain what engagement you had with the provinces and territories on your present action plans in this regard?

Mr. Arnold Viersen: I haven't put forward any recommendations or action plans at this point. In writing my motion, I said to respect provincial and territorial jurisdiction. I realize that in Canada, when it comes to health, that is a significant hurdle. We fund it federally, but it's provincial responsibility to lay out health. I guess at some point it's going to be... You're right. Some of your recommendations are going to be recommendations for provinces, but we'll have no recourse in actually getting them implemented. It will be up to the provinces as to whether they want to or not.

Ms. Sonia Sidhu: I know this is an important issue, but why do you view the health committee as the best way to study this? There was a relatively tight deadline formulated this year, considering all the other committee business in this committee, such as pharmacare. We all heard that 20% of people cannot take their medication because they cannot afford the prescription. Organ and tissue donation matters, as well as indigenous health. These are very important. This issue is also very important, but why do you think this is the most important issue at this time?

• (1140)

Mr. Arnold Viersen: I put this motion on notice on March 8, 2015, International Women's Day, and I anticipated that it would have been passed significantly earlier, which would have given it about a year to be studied, so there's that aspect of it as well.

The other thing I would point out is that this issue affects every Canadian, so I think it's imperative that we do study it. I put a date on it so it would get studied. The date has crept up on us for sure, but I'm pleased to be here and pleased to see that you're taking it on.

Ms. Sonia Sidhu: Other countries like China have very robust control on Internet access. I think we all know about this. Do you think we should pursue something like that? Could you elaborate on that.

Mr. Arnold Viersen: Should we pursue China's Internet...? No, I don't think we should.

Ms. Sonia Sidhu: I just want your ideas. What do you want the federal government to do?

Mr. Arnold Viersen: I've put this in the health region specifically so that you can hear from health professionals on this, hear the latest academic research, and ask their opinions on what we should be doing. A legislative approach or a regulatory approach will be part of it, but I don't see that as playing a major role in shifting societal ideas and shifting the culture on this. That's probably going to be the biggest impact we can have.

Ms. Sonia Sidhu: I heard you say that parents have some duties too, but the researchers we have heard so far have suggested that such material can have a negative impact on the ideas about sexual consent. Given that you have asked this committee to study this issue, what role do you see our government having with regard to teaching the giving of consent?

Mr. Arnold Viersen: I think it's going to take a multi-faceted approach. I think there are two aspects of consent on this issue. Number one, the violence perpetrated within the videos totally destroys the concept of consent within relationships. Number two is the other aspect of consent. When I purchase a pack of cigarettes, I am informed as to the health effects of those cigarettes, that I may develop cancer or mouth diseases. They have the most awful pictures on the packages of cigarettes.

With this, there's not necessarily any informed consent. Nobody is saying if you consume this product these are the outcomes that could happen later on in life. That would be a big aspect of the consent as well that I see. I know that many of our young people, if you ask them, "Do you want to get married? Do you want to have a meaningful relationship later on in life?", that's important to all of them. Yet nobody's saying that if you engage in these behaviours you limit your ability to be able to participate in those kinds of

relationships in the future. There's that aspect of informed consent that I think is really important, and I task the committee with that as well.

I'm one guy, and a whole host of people out there have some good recommendations. I hope we get to hear from them at this committee.

Ms. Sonia Sidhu: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Dr. Carrie, this is the first of the five-minute rounds.

Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I want to thank Arnold for being here, but also for bringing up this issue. I remember that when you first approached me about the issue, I had an opportunity to talk to faith leaders in Oshawa. I asked them, "What is one of the biggest things you're facing?" They said sex addiction. I didn't realize this had become such an issue in all of our communities.

I was wondering what motivated you to take on this issue. What drew you to it?

• (1145)

Mr. Arnold Viersen: I was elected in 2015, same as the rest of you, but for the first time for me, and I had thought about a lot of things. I had asked a million questions to the neighbouring MP as to what it all entailed, but one of the things I was not anticipating was private member's business and getting chosen early on the private members' list. That was a bit of a curve ball for me.

We get a lot of mail, so I went through all the mail, talked to everybody I could talk to in my riding, and I had a list of about 30 or 40 things that I could do my private member's business on. Then somebody suggested I look at the pornography issue. I got six letters from my riding on that, and somebody also mentioned the Rehtaeh Parsons case. I don't know if you remember that or not, but that was a case from the east coast where a 17-year-old girl was raped at a party and then the pictures of it were posted on Facebook. I don't remember where I was or what was going on at the time, but that story stuck with me.

It was in the news quite a bit and that story stuck with me, and I always wondered what made those young men think it was appropriate to post the pictures, as if this were a brag story, on Facebook. That was baffling to me, so I started to do some research on that case. I spoke to Rehtaeh's mother and worked with her. She now has an organization, the Rehtaeh Parsons Society. Rehtaeh subsequently committed suicide, so in her memory her mom has started this foundation.

I worked with her and a number of other organizations from around the country to come up with the motion. It wasn't something that I came here wanting to take on, this fight, but it was something that struck me, I guess, and intrigued me. I thought that, if we can do some good around here, this is something to do good with.

Mr. Colin Carrie: I think we can do some good. I think one of the challenges with the committee is that we're trying to figure out what role the federal government and Health Canada can play. You and my colleagues have brought up the challenge with provincial and territorial jurisdiction in our country. The delivery of health care is provincial. Education is provincial.

I know in the past we've done research, we've looked at standards, and we've looked at what is being done internationally. Do you think we should be focusing on that type of thing? How much of the provincial role do you want to see investigated at this stage? Is that something we should leave to the provincial guys themselves?

Mr. Arnold Viersen: If we could, I would approach other jurisdictions and see what they're doing as well. I know that other jurisdictions don't necessarily have the split, with health and education at another jurisdictional level, so they may be able to tell you how they've dealt with some of these issues. As well, it would be good to put it in the record. I think that's going to be as important as anything, how other jurisdictions are dealing with this. Also what recommendations the academic community has is going to be very important as well.

Mr. Colin Carrie: Good.

You mentioned the tobacco industry, and I think all governments in Canada can be proud that we've really taken that on and we've seen what education can do. As you said, the labelling, these horrible pictures, that's an example.

I was just curious. I remember years ago when these violent video games were coming out. My wife and I had the conversation about that. You mentioned in your testimony the connection sometimes between sex and violence, and how that can be a problem. Did we learn anything about those violent video games and that type of thing, or do you not quite want to go there?

Mr. Arnold Viersen: Every image we see has impact on us. We know that, because the marketing world spends millions and millions of dollars getting the exact perfect image. Will it have impacts, if you want to look at the video games? I haven't had any contact with any video game developers or any of the academics who have said anything on this topic, so that would be something to talk to them about.

I know for sure that the correlation.... It's particularly when the violence and the sexual stimuli are combined that it becomes extremely impactful, so that's where most of these researchers have gone with it as well.

• (1150)

The Chair: Your time is up.

Mr. Ayoub.

[Translation]

Mr. Ramez Ayoub (Thérèse-De Blainville, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'll give the hon. member time to put in the earpiece because my question will be in French.

Thank you for being here.

No one can object to the fact that we are concerned about the health of our children and the general public.

Mr. Viersen, in order to move our committee's discussion forward and for us to take our consideration further, I'd like to know what scientific evidence is supporting your motion.

Is there evidence in the scientific documents and studies that have been done that proves that this has a direct impact on public health?

[English]

Mr. Arnold Viersen: I have a complete briefing package that I put out during the debate in the House. You're welcome to reference that and I'd be pleased to provide it to you.

The latest study, a 2016 study of over 4,500 teenagers on sexually explicit material and sexual coercion published in the Journal of Interpersonal Violence found that, for boys, perpetrating sexual coercion was an abuse significantly associated with the viewing of online pornography. That was the first study that provided us with a causal link.

Every other study up until 2016 had provided correlation.

[Translation]

Mr. Ramez Ayoub: Who conducted the study?

[English]

Mr. Arnold Viersen: This study was conducted by Stanley, Barter, and Wood. It's in the Journal of Interpersonal Violence.

[Translation]

Mr. Ramez Ayoub: Can we say, at this stage, that the studies done are only a start and that they are in the early stages? The data from these studies do not span a long period of time. Further studies and new scientific evidence are needed to corroborate data from early studies. We can't rely on a single study. A larger study should be done to determine the effects of this content on public health.

[English]

Mr. Arnold Viersen: I would say no. This has been studied for 30 years. This was a meta-analysis study, so it used the 30 years of study before it to come up with the causation aspect of it.

Until this point, for the last 30 years of studying this, we've only been able to show that people who engage in this behaviour also engaged in that behaviour. For the first time now we have a study, which came out in 2016, that says that people who engage in this behaviour are more likely to engage in that behaviour. It's a causation rather than a correlation.

[Translation]

Mr. Ramez Ayoub: It's not clear to me. If it goes back 30 years, I would hope that these effects have already been discussed. I am open to another study because, in my opinion, the health effects have yet to be proven.

You drew a comparison to the tobacco industry. This comparison is quite strong and it really boggles the mind. However, in this case, the direct impact on health is not only physical, but psychological as well.

It's on this last aspect that the effects aren't clear. We need a better idea of what you are putting forward in your motion and what kind of studies need to be done. The difficulty is having other speakers and witnesses who can corroborate what is being advanced and determine the real effect. From my perspective, this is the difficulty in terms of studying this motion.

• (1155)

[English]

Mr. Arnold Viersen: I would just add that I hope you get to hear from a number of the academic and health professionals that have been doing these kinds of studies. I think the evidence is clear on a lot of these things.

You talked about the different areas of health. Indeed, there are physical and also psychological health impacts of this. There are also the health impacts that result from some of the actions that are taken by individuals who consume this. There are significant impacts on health in Canadian society.

The Chair: Time's up, Mr. Ayoub.

Tom, welcome back. I think you were at our first meeting, if I'm not mistaken.

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Thank you for having me back. You've been very generous with me whenever I've been here.

Arnold, thank you very much for being here. I want to congratulate you, first of all, on the cross-party support you received on the motion. Correct me if I'm wrong, but I think you got a co-second from every single political party represented in the House.

As well, I want to congratulate you on being a new dad again.

Mr. Arnold Viersen: Thank you.

Mr. Tom Kmiec: Jillian, your third child, was born in January.

I want to take this in a slightly different direction. I sit on the foreign affairs committee. You mentioned that the pornography industry is a \$97-billion international industry, and I want to quote from the International Justice Mission. They do a lot of work helping victims of cybersex trafficking. To quote them, "Cybersex trafficking has become a terrifying cottage industry with high profit margins." They use the example of the Philippines. I want to get you to comment once I read out the stats on this.

First, there are thousands of cybersex trafficking case referrals a month, just from the U.S. alone, and 54% of the victims rescued in IJM cases are one to 12 years old. There are boys and girls being abused, forced to make explicit, violent, pornographic videos, who are as young as two years old. They also say here that in their estimation, pedophiles and predators pay \$20 to \$150 for these violent sex shows, which are then broadcast online. There's very much a demand side, and then there's the production side of it.

What role do you think Canada could potentially play with our international development aid dollars? You talk about the public health component, which is telling people about the dangers of what they're doing, or about how easy it is to obtain this material. How about on the production side, where people outside the country are

being abused? As IJM says here, violent, degrading material is being produced for the benefit of Canadians who are purchasing it.

I'd like to get your comments on that, and your viewpoint on what more Canada could be doing.

Mr. Arnold Viersen: The production aspect of it is indeed troubling. I know that right here in Canada there is significant production as well. If you hear from doctors, you'll hear them say, with regard to the acts that are done on video, that they see the repercussions of those coming into the emergency rooms right here in Canada. Beyond our borders, it becomes a little more difficult to police. With the online violent content, it goes everywhere around the world, so being able to police it from here will be more difficult. I would say that we should take every avenue we have available to us in order to do so.

On demand is probably the leading edge of where this is going. You order it. It comes to you live. In the Philippines and Cambodia this is an ongoing issue. A number of the organizations that I work with, that have supported my motion, are human trafficking organizations. They say that the entire pornography industry is the one that's funding human trafficking.

I don't have a study saying there's causation there, but they all tell me that this is exactly what's happening.

Mr. Tom Kmiec: Just on that, do you think it would be valuable, then, for the committee to look also at organizations like IJM, International Justice Mission, which does work overseas, and maybe bring in the Canadian component of what's happening overseas due to Canadian demand and viewing habits for this type of material?

Mr. Arnold Viersen: For sure. That would drive the length of your study significantly.

Ratanak International is another organization that does very similar things. A former police forensics officer is the executive director there, and he'd be glad to appear before you.

• (1200)

Mr. Tom Kmiec: I have time for one more short question.

In the material you provided to members of Parliament when this motion was being considered before the House, you mentioned that the last major study was in 1985, by the Special Committee on Pornography and Prostitution, also called the Fraser committee report.

As you mentioned here, it was before the invention of the Internet, but is it just the Internet that's driving this? You talked about sometimes the cultural change and your hope for a public health campaign to change the culture. Can you expand on that?

Mr. Arnold Viersen: The Internet has driven the ease of access, but I would definitely like to see a cultural change so that regardless of where this stuff is available....

It's a market. It's an industry, right? We talked about the production and we talked about the beginning of it, but we also have to talk about the end user. Basically, if there's no market for this stuff, the money that flows down the system will disappear. We'll save lives in places like Cambodia just because of that, for sure.

The Chair: Mr. Oliver.

Mr. John Oliver (Oakville, Lib.): Thank you very much for bringing this to the committee.

I attended a luncheon that you hosted or co-hosted a month or two months ago. I remember that new research that spoke to the public health effect was being brought forward at that. With the list of witnesses that you have suggested we listen to, will that research be encompassed?

Mr. Arnold Viersen: For sure, yes. Cordelia Anderson was the lady who was at that event.

Mr. John Oliver: Cordelia Anderson wasn't on the first list that you suggested, but...

Mr. Arnold Viersen: I can get that for you.

Mr. John Oliver: It would be helpful if you gave us your expert witnesses that you suggest we look at.

Mr. Arnold Viersen: Cordelia Anderson is American, so—

Mr. John Oliver: If you could get it in, that would be great.

Mr. Arnold Viersen: Okay.

Mr. John Oliver: There's the potential of boiling the ocean here. While I think this is probably an ocean that should be boiled, to be honest with you, it's not what your motion is. In your motion, you spoke specifically to “online violent and degrading sexually explicit material” and not just sexually explicit.

There's been a lot of wandering in and out of the whole pornography industry here, but you are very much talking about the “violent and degrading”. It's that second category that Mr. Davies identified that we are targeting.

Mr. Arnold Viersen: For sure.

Mr. John Oliver: Okay. What's your definition of public health?

Mr. Arnold Viersen: I do believe there's a UN definition of public health and there's also a Canadian—

Mr. John Oliver: There's a World Health Organization one as well as the Canadian one.

Mr. Arnold Viersen: That's the one I've been using.

Mr. John Oliver: You mean the World Health one?

Mr. Arnold Viersen: Yes.

Mr. John Oliver: Okay.

Again, getting down to the focus of this, we are examining the public health effect of these things. That would be the science of preventing disease, prolonging life, and promoting health. If I understand the motion, you're asking us to come back to the House to say that we have looked at current research and that these are the impacts we have seen in current research on public health from this type of material being easily accessible and online.

Mr. Arnold Viersen: Yes, and perhaps with some recommendations on how to—

Mr. John Oliver: That's new. I didn't see recommendations. I think the first challenge we're going to have is that we don't have doctors on the committee and we can't commission—well, we do have a wonderful doctor, but we're not in the business of doing health research.

I think my reading of this, with regard to the impact or effect on public health and with regard to recommendations if there are any, is simply to determine the impact. If we come back with recent research proving that there is an impact on public health, to me that's a very powerful statement in the House of Commons that then alerts all the public health agencies and whatnot across Canada that they need to do something about it versus us coming up with recommendations.

I would think that is starting to boil the ocean again, because how do you limit access? How do you control access? What are the penalties? It's certainly a direction out to all the public health agencies, provincial and territorial, and to Canadians to begin to take action.

Mr. Arnold Viersen: I would agree with you fully that this is going to be the basic building block, the foundation of where we go from here.

Mr. John Oliver: If there is a problem, let's now get Canada to work to fix it. Is that what you're after, confirmation that there's a problem?

Mr. Arnold Viersen: Yes.

Mr. John Oliver: Okay, super.

That's all I had, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: All right.

Mr. Davies.

• (1205)

Mr. Don Davies: First, I just have to comment that in the last parliament, the Conservative government voted against putting warnings on asbestos products exported overseas. Now I hear you telling this committee that you'd like to see health warnings on dangerous products like pornography and I hear you talking about an expanded role for the state in government. I'm glad to see the evolution of the Conservative Party in this Parliament.

I also want to distinguish this pornography versus violence rating. Someone mentioned that pornography is a \$97-billion industry. Much of that is obviously consensual, non-violent depictions of sex. I want to be clear. That's not what you want us to look at. Is that correct? You want us to look at violent, degrading pornography.

Mr. Arnold Viersen: I would recommend you don't look at any of it—

Mr. Don Davies: I mean you want us to examine or study—

Mr. Arnold Viersen: I think my answer to the last question would be to set a foundation. Listen to the leading researchers, listen to the leading health professionals on this, and say that—

Mr. Don Davies: I get that, Mr. Viersen, but listen to them on what? Do you mean on violent, degrading pornography or pornography generally, including pornography that is non-violent or non-degrading? Do you have a problem with the latter?

Mr. Arnold Viersen: I guess that my entire thesis is based on the fact that the top 50 videos viewed in the world include sexually violent and degrading material.

Mr. Don Davies: I have heard that evidence. You have given that already.

I want to move quickly to the correlation versus causation issue because being the health committee, being a science-based committee, of course, technically science is based on conducting experiments, randomized control, and repeatable experiments. I've read some researchers on the subject who talk about the difficult ethical considerations in conducting research.

Technically you would have to expose subjects in a lab to violent, degrading pornography, observe the effects after, and see if they were more prone to commit violent acts. It can be very difficult from an ethics point of view. Also, there's an issue of self-selection; that is, do people prone to violence seek out violent pornography, or does pornography have that impact on people who are non-violent?

Do you have any advice to give this committee in terms of the correlation-causation issue?

I'll add one more thing, the multiplicity of factors. When someone commits a violent act sexually, there are literally dozens and dozens of factors that would go into why that person committed it. Do you have any thoughts on any of those?

Mr. Arnold Viersen: I know exactly what you're talking about. It is a huge concern to all the researchers as well, and they address that in their research significantly. They spend a lot of time. It's not like you want to expose people to this and then see what happens.

Mr. Don Davies: As you said, you don't want us to watch it, never mind research it.

Mr. Arnold Viersen: It has been more a matter of interviewing individuals who have perpetrated these acts and seeing whether it correlates backwards, so to speak.

That said, I would love for you to listen face to face to the people who have actually done the research. It's cutting-edge research, 2016. The folks who have done it are still around, so it would be great to hear from them. Every one of them spent a significant amount of time in their reports talking about exactly what you just voiced. I guess that's probably why it has taken so long to come to a causation rather than a correlation because of those exact things that you bring up.

The Chair: That concludes our questioning.

Mr. Viersen, I want to thank you very much. I think you have outlined your motion very clearly, explained it to us very clearly, and done a good job of it.

Mr. John Oliver: Mr. Chair, I don't know if it's a point of order or not, but the witness has made several references to cutting-edge 2016 research. I had asked if he would submit to the committee a list of the scientists or researchers who did that research. I want to confirm that we will get that list from the witness.

The Chair: Can you confirm that?

Mr. Arnold Viersen: I will confirm that, for sure. I will send it over immediately.

The Chair: Here's where we go from here. Today is Tuesday. On Thursday, we're going to do our Bill C-37. On Thursday, February 16, we will decide on witnesses to hear for M-47. We need everybody to submit the proposed witnesses to hear this motion by this Thursday. The steering committee will meet on the next Thursday, the 16th, to decide.

Next Thursday we'll decide whether you can attend. Mr. Webber has proposed that you attend. I'm not clear on how that works. I have to get clarification. On Thursday, we will let you know whether that's going to be part of it.

That's it for now. We're going to suspend for a minute, and then we have a little committee business to do.

Thanks again, Mr. Viersen.

• (1210)

(Pause)

• (1210)

The Chair: Okay. We have a little committee business. I want to point out there are extended hours on Thursday so people should be prepared for that. Whether we sit through question period or not is up to the committee at the time. We'll have to decide if we are still going. I don't know what's going to happen on Thursday. We'll see how it goes. We have to have all our questions answered by five o'clock and then deal with it after that. We could sit through question period, just so you're aware of that.

We need all of the suggested witnesses for M-47 by five o'clock on Thursday. When we have our steering committee meeting on the 16th, we'll decide whether Mr. Viersen can attend or not. I think he can, but we have to clarify the rules. We're going to talk about M-47 and Bill C-277 at that time, and how we're going to handle it.

We'll have to figure out how many meetings we're going to have on the M-47 motion, as well. The witnesses are talking about six, seven, or eight meetings. I don't know if we can do that or not, but we'll talk about that at that time.

That's really everything I have on my list. Is there any other committee business?

Mr. Webber.

• (1215)

Mr. Len Webber: Just a quick question regarding all the witnesses that want to attend, whose letters we've been receiving through the clerk. Will they be on the list or do we have to request that they now go on the list of witnesses?

The Chair: Could you prioritize the ones that you'd like to have most? Maybe you could include the whole list, but put them in priority of the ones that you'd really like to have for sure.

Mr. Len Webber: Okay, so all who requested to come and witness will be on the list?

Ms. Karin Phillips (Committee Researcher): Yes, they'll be on the list.

The Chair: We want to keep to the motion too. We can go anywhere with this motion if we're not careful. We can get into all kinds of legal and international aspects, but we want to keep it to the health impact. That's our purview. That's our area, so the witnesses should reflect the health impact of the ease of access.

Are there any other questions or issues at this moment?

Mr. Davies, go ahead.

Mr. Don Davies: Mr. Chair, I don't know what your intention is. Will we be discussing how much time we're going to allot to this study at our subcommittee meeting?

The Chair: I would say we will.

Mr. Don Davies: Okay, excellent.

The Chair: Mr. Kang.

Mr. Darshan Singh Kang (Calgary Skyview, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

How far are we willing to go with this study? Are we just going to study the facts on public health? Where are we going to cut the debate on this?

The Chair: I think we should stick to the wording of the motion, because you can go anywhere with this subject. We'll stick to the words of the motion on the health impacts of the access to violent—

Mr. Darshan Singh Kang: That was my concern. We don't want to veer off into some direction where, you know, we just—

The Chair: No. I don't think he's looking for us to go off on all kinds of tangents. He wants to talk about the health impact and he quickly repeated that, based on Mr. Oliver's questions. That's our mandate. It's to discuss that motion. It's a very narrow motion really, in a way. It's just health impacts. It doesn't talk about the access. It talks about the health impacts of the access.

That's my interpretation of it. We're going to have a hard time fitting this in with everything else anyway, so we can't be meandering around with this and going off on tangents.

Mr. Davies, as our legal counsel, I just have a question. If there is illegal content on the Internet, can the Canadian authorities do anything if it's coming from some other country? If it's obviously obscene and against the laws that you quoted, I mean if it's underage or violent or meets any of the criteria that you were talking about, can Canadian law be applied here?

Mr. Don Davies: If obscene material is published in Canada, then the Criminal Code is invoked and a charge could be laid. Then those words like it's against the law to make, disseminate, or provide would apply, and you'd have to find someone on Canadian soil, I suppose, who you could charge. If there was someone internationally, then I suppose Canada could engage Interpol. It gets a bit more difficult when you have perhaps someone who's committing a crime in Canada but not on Canadian soil. That can be difficult, but technically, yes.

I think a lot of what Mr. Viersen is talking about is already against the law. It's just a question of its not being enforced.

• (1220)

The Chair: I agree, and he's not talking about the legal aspect of it. He's talking about the health impact, which is our area.

Mr. Don Davies: Yes.

The Chair: Is there anything else at this moment?

Mr. Oliver.

Mr. John Oliver: Just on health impact, my hope is that we're looking at evidence-based material here. There will be a tonne of anecdotal self-experience comments, which actually don't constitute the scientific research that would allow us to draw a conclusion about the impact on public health. It really is important that we find the most recent research on this, make sure that it has reasonable scientific merit and has used an evidence-based approach, and come to a conclusion fairly quickly as to whether there is an impact or not.

Again, I think it's important that we get the 2016 research, which I heard two months ago was quite compelling.

The Chair: That's a good point, and we should remember that when we're submitting our priority list for witnesses. We want witnesses who have done the scientific research and have something tangible for us. I just looked at some of the latest reports, and as you say, they look compelling.

Is there no further business?

Mr. Davies.

Mr. Don Davies: I'm not sure yet exactly how to interpret this, but if we stay faithful to the wording of the motion, which I think not only we should but we must.... They're asking us to study the public health effects of online violent and degrading...and I think that maybe reinforces what John was saying about not getting dragged down into anecdotal or individual stories, although some of that may actually inform the public health impact in some way.

I think we have to be very cognizant of the public health effects. I agree with what John was saying about being careful to try to get an empirical, scientific, health-based approach, because that's what Mr. Viersen has asked for. If he is asking for a study of the health impacts, which was the purpose of my questions, to understand what he wants to limit this to, then it behooves us as a committee to take a public health approach.

The Chair: I agree. I'm just looking through my notes. He mentioned the public health model about eight times. He wasn't asking us to go off on tangents and talk about the legal aspects of it or anything, just the public health impacts, so that's where we'll stay.

Thanks very much, everybody. We'll see you on Thursday.

Published under the authority of the Speaker of
the House of Commons

SPEAKER'S PERMISSION

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its Committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the *Copyright Act*. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a Committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the *Copyright Act*.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its Committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

Also available on the Parliament of Canada Web Site at the following address: <http://www.parl.gc.ca>

Publié en conformité de l'autorité
du Président de la Chambre des communes

PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

Aussi disponible sur le site Web du Parlement du Canada à l'adresse suivante : <http://www.parl.gc.ca>