



April 30, 2026

The Honourable Francis Scarpaleggia, M.P.  
Speaker of the House of Commons House of Commons,  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

**RE: Formal Request for a Procedural Review and definition of “Comprehensive Response” to Committee Reports.**

Dear Mr. Speaker,

We are writing you today to formally highlight a significant procedural gap in *House of Commons Procedure and Practice* that undermines the spirit of parliamentary oversight and the efficacy of the committee system.

As noted in Chapter 20 of the Fourth Edition (2025), “Speakers have consistently refused to define “comprehensive” in this context, maintaining that the nature of the response must be left to the discretion of the government”.

While we respect the principle of executive discretion, the lack of a minimum standard for "comprehensiveness" has created a loophole that allows the government to evade accountability, even when faced with unanimous parliamentary recommendations.

A stark example of this failure is the government’s response to the unanimous *2017 OGGO Report No. 9*, which was a review of the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act (PSDPA). Despite the Committee's unanimous call for over 30 specific amendments to a law widely recognized as flawed and ineffective, the government’s "comprehensive response" consisted of a mere one-and-a-quarter-page letter. It offered only vague commitments to an "administrative review" and failed to provide a point-by-point response to the proposed legislative changes—a standard of rigour that is notably practiced in the Senate.

The negative consequences of this procedural ambiguity are not merely academic; they are deeply human. By allowing the government to provide a non-response to critical legislative reform, the current interpretation of Standing Order 109 causes:

- Prolonged Harm: It permits the continuation of a legislative framework (the PSDPA) that current research confirms is causing serious psychosocial injury and professional and financial devastation to principled public servants who report wrongdoing.
- Erosion of Public Trust: It facilitates a culture of administrative "trickery" that erodes the trust and respect Canadians hold for our democratic institutions.



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- Legislative Neglect & Evasion of Accountability: It renders the exhaustive work of House Committees effectively moot if the government can satisfy its procedural obligations with a cursory dismissal.

For the sake of transparency, democratic integrity, and the protection of those who serve the public interest, a "comprehensive" response must require a substantive, in-depth review and consideration of every recommendation put forward by a Committee.

I urge you, as the guardian of the rights and privileges of the House and its members, to consider:

- a modern interpretation of “comprehensive” in the context of committee reports establishing a minimum standard of an amendment by amendment review

Given the fact there is now another Task Force Report recommending major reform and rewriting of the PSDPA, we are deeply concerned this gap will be used to once again avoid repairing the flaws that our initial research indicates violates our Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Parliamentary procedure should serve as a bridge to accountability. In the case of the PSDPA, sadly, it allowed for executive inaction.

Thank you for your attention to this matter as well as a related issue of failure to do “statutory reviews” as outlined in a separate letter.

Sincerely,

*P Forward*

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