

**Beduz, Alex**

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**From:** Nelson Wiseman [nelson@chass.utoronto.ca]  
**Sent:** July 13, 2014 4:03 PM  
**To:** Beduz, Alex  
**Subject:** RE: Letter: Queen's Park - Standing Committee Composition

Dear Mr. Clark,

From the letter you sent me and on the assumption that the facts in it are accurate, my opinion is that the Government is entitled to 5 seats on each committee and that both the Official Opposition and the Third Party are entitled to 2 seats each. The selection of committee chairs and their partisan affiliation are, in my opinion, separate issues.

Sincerely,

Nelson Wiseman  
Director, Canadian Studies Program  
Professor, Dept. of Political Science  
100 St. George Street  
University of Toronto  
Toronto, ON.  
M5S 3G3  
416.978-3336  
[nelson@chass.utoronto.ca](mailto:nelson@chass.utoronto.ca)

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**From:** Beduz, Alex [mailto:[alex.beduz@pc.ola.org](mailto:alex.beduz@pc.ola.org)]  
**Sent:** July-13-14 11:29 AM  
**To:** 'nelson@chass.utoronto.ca'  
**Subject:** Letter: Queen's Park - Standing Committee Composition

Dear Dr. Wiseman,

This is Alex Beduz, Director of Legislative Affairs for the Official Opposition at Queen's Park, thank you for recently speaking with me. I hope this message finds you well and I apologize for having to send you this over the weekend, but the advice I am seeking requires urgency. As you know, the House Leaders are currently under negotiations for the structure and administrative aspects which occur in the Legislature at the beginning of each new session. The Official Opposition House Leader, Steve Clark, MPP is seeking out third-party input with regards to an impasse over the composition of the standing committees. Please see the attached letter for more information.

If you would like to discuss further please contact me at: 647.982.5870 or [alex.beduz@pc.ola.org](mailto:alex.beduz@pc.ola.org)

Sincerely,  
Alex Beduz

14/07/2014

Dr. Nelson Wiseman  
Associate Professor, Political Science,  
University of Toronto,  
Toronto, Ontario

July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2014

Dear Dr. Wiseman,

Over the past week, the Government and the Opposition have been at odds regarding the composition of the Standing Committees at Queen's Park. This disagreement is preventing the Legislature from implementing important legislation.

We are hopeful that you can add your voice to the impasse.

The Opposition believe that Standing Orders are quite clear and that the composition should be based on the percentage of seats held in the Legislature. Whereas the Government believes that a majority government should have an absolute majority on the Committees.

In 1986, an amendment was made to the Standing Orders of the Legislature which stated that the Committees "shall be in proportion to the representation of the recognized Parties in the House." In Chart 1 (see Appendix 1), you will find a timeline of how the Standing Orders refer to Standing Committee composition.

Based on the results of the recent 2014 General Election, the Government won 58 seats, the Opposition won 28 seats and the Third Party won 21 seats. This amounts to 54.21%, 26.17% and 19.63% of the seats in the Legislature. Therefore, based on the percentage of seats in the Legislature, the composition of Committees should be:

Liberal - 54.21% (58 seats)	= 4.88 of 9 (5 Seats)
PC - 26.17% (28 seats)	= 2.36 of 9 (2 Seats)
NDP - 19.63% (21 seats)	= 1.77 of 9 (2 Seats)

The Government continues to argue that the impartial chair cannot be factored into that equation and want Committee's struck with a 6, 2, 1 composition to ensure that they have an outright majority on each Committee. This would ensure that they have 5 voting members whenever one of their members is in the Chair. The Opposition disagrees with this assessment because it goes against the Standing Orders and the proportionality of the Legislature.

It is our belief that in order to get 6 seats on Committee, the Government would need between 68 and 71 seats. As you can see in Chart 2 and 3, in 2003 and 2007, the Liberal Government obtained the percentage needed to get 6 seats on Committee. Whereas in 1999 and 2011, the

Government did not obtain the threshold that was required and as a result were left with 5 and 4 seats respectively.

When looking at the past composition of the Standing Committees, the Legislature has always followed the Standing Orders. However, the Parties have also come to an agreement that the Party of the Chair be given an extra seat that is taken away from the Government's seats.

Further, it is the Opposition's belief that the majority on the Committee is not 6, but rather 5. This is supported by the Government House Leader from the last Parliament, Hon. John Milloy. Mr. Milloy in a letter sent to the Opposition House Leaders stated, "the government has proposed the establishment of the Standing Committees consistent with the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly that would have given the opposition a **majority** on all committees." (emphasis added)

When you look at Chart 3, the Government House Leader was referring to the Opposition having 5 members on Committee and the Government only having 4 members. I would also like to add that Mr. Milloy's assessment of a 4, 3, 2 composition did not remove the Chair from the equation, like the Government is trying to do now. This left the House with a Committee composition that had 5 Committees chaired by the Opposition with a "tied" vote (4 Government and 4 Opposition MPPs).

We hope that you can help us by providing an assessment of the impasse faced by the Legislature. If you require any further information, please feel free to contact my staff or myself.

Sincerely,

Steve Clark, MPP  
Leeds-Grenville  
Official Opposition House Leader

## APPENDIX 1:

### Standing Orders on Committee on Composition

Chart 1:

April, 1986	92. (c) No standing or select committee shall consist of more than 11 members and the membership of such committees shall be in proportion to the representation of the recognized Parties in the House. [Provisional.]	11 Members
October, 1989	108. (a) No standing or select committee shall consist of more than 11 members and the membership of such committees shall be in proportion to the representation of the recognized Parties in the House. [S.O.92(c).]	11 Members
June, 1992	110. (a) No standing or select committee shall consist of more than 11 members and the membership of such committees shall be in proportion to the representation of the recognized Parties in the House.	11 Members
August, 1997	109. (a) Subject to clauses (b) and (c), no Standing or Select Committee shall consist of more than 9 members and the membership of such Committees shall be in proportion to the representation of the recognized Parties in the House.	9 Members
November, 1999	111. (a) No Standing or Select Committee shall consist of more than 9 members and the membership of such Committees shall be in proportion to the representation of the recognized Parties in the House.	9 Members
May, 2008	112. (a) No Standing or Select Committee shall consist of more than nine members and the membership of such Committees shall be in proportion to the representation of the recognized Parties in the House.	9 Members
January, 2009	113. (a) No Standing or Select Committee shall consist of more than nine members and the membership of such Committees shall be in proportion to the representation of the recognized Parties in the House.	9 Members

### Chart 2:

Election	PC Seats	Percent of Comm. PC Seats	Liberal Seats	Percentage of Comm. Liberal Seats	NDP Seats	Percentage of Comm. NDP Seats
1999	59 – 57% of Seats	57% of 8 Seats = 5	35 – 34% of Seats	34% of 8 Seats = 2.72 (2)	9 – 8% of Seats	8% of 8 Seats = .64 (1)
2004	24 – 23% of Seats	23% of 9 Seats = 2	72 – 70% of Seats	70% of 9 Seats = 6.3 (6)	7 – 6% of Seats	6% of 9 Seats = .54 (1)
2007	26 – 24% of Seats	24% of 9 Seats = 2	71 – 66% of Seats	66% of 9 Seats = 5.9 (6)	10 – 9% of Seats	9% of 9 Seats = .81 (1)
2011	37 – 35% of Seats	35% of 9 Seats = 3	53 – 49% of Seats	49% of 9 Seats = 4.41 (4)	17 – 15% of Seats	15% of 9 Seats = 1.35 (2)
2014	28 – 26% of Seats	26% of 9 Seats = 2.36 (2)	58 – 54% of Seats	54% of 9 Seats = 4.88 (5)	21 – 19.6% of Seats	19.6% of 9 Seats = 1.77 (2)

### Chart 3:

[illegible]

Office of the  
Government House  
Leader

Legislative Building  
Queen's Park  
Toronto, Ontario  
M7A 1A1

Bureau du leader  
parlementaire du  
gouvernement

Édifice de l'Assemblée législative  
Queen's Park  
Toronto (Ontario)  
M7A 1A1



January 24, 2012

Mr. Gilles Bisson, MPP  
Timmins – James Bay  
NDP House Leader  
Room 112, Main Legislative Building  
Queen's Park  
Toronto, ON M7A 1A5

Dear Gilles:

Thank you for your letter, dated January 16, 2012, regarding pre-budget consultations.

Our government shares your view that Ontarians should have the opportunity to provide their advice on the difficult financial decisions ahead. We value public input on what will be a vitally important budget for our province. That's why in recent weeks and throughout the year, Minister Duncan and members of our caucus have had extensive meetings with the public and stakeholder groups.

As you know, the government has proposed the establishment of Standing Committees consistent with the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly that would have given the opposition a majority on all committees. Unfortunately both opposition parties refused this approach and have not provided names for committee membership.

As a result, no standing committees have been sitting during the inter-session and the government and opposition parties have been unable to conduct pre-budget consultations in the normal course.

While we will not be recalling the legislature, as we move toward the return of the Legislative Assembly on February 21<sup>st</sup>, I look forward to continuing discussions with you and the Progressive Conservatives with the goal of establishing Standing Committees.

PC/NDP

5

+

Lib

4

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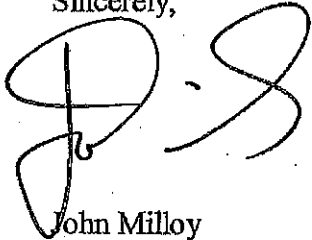
Majority?

.../2



In this respect, I remain optimistic that the government and opposition parties will be able to strike the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs upon the return of the legislature and with sufficient time to conduct meaningful pre-budget consultations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Milloy', written over a horizontal line.

John Milloy  
Government House Leader

cc: Jim Wilson, MPP, Official Opposition House Leader