



Special Standing Committee on Members' Services

Subcommittee to Review the Members' Services
Committee Orders

Interim Report (No. 2) Review of Members' Services Committee Orders

Caucus Funding Proposal

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COMMITTEES
OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Special Standing Committee on Members' Services

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**MEMBERS OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE TO REVIEW THE MEMBERS'
SERVICES COMMITTEE ORDERS**

29th Legislature

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* Member from May 2, 2018 until June 12, 2018.

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‡ Member from June 13, 2018.

1.0 SUBCOMMITTEE MANDATE

On September 26, 2016, the Members' Services Committee (the "Committee") passed a motion, as follows:

that the Members' Services Committee strike a subcommittee to conduct an extensive review of all *Members' Services Committee Orders* but not include any review of members' compensation, including benefits.

At the October 25, 2016, meeting of the Committee, the Chair advised the Committee of the Members who had been appointed to the Subcommittee to Review the Members' Services Committee Orders (the "Subcommittee").

The Subcommittee began its review on January 10, 2017.

On September 14, 2017, the Committee passed a motion that matters raised by Mr. Greg Clark, MLA, in a letter dated August 10, 2017, concerning Member expenses be referred to the Subcommittee.

The Committee passed a further motion on November 8, 2017,

that the matters of caucus funding and official party status be referred to the Subcommittee that is reviewing the *Members' Services Committee Orders* and that the Subcommittee be empowered to make any recommendations concerning these matters that are deemed appropriate.

Finally, the Committee passed a motion on October 25, 2018, to refer matters pertaining to the claiming of mileage by Members, as follows:

that the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services refer the matter of the current rate for reimbursement of mileage for Members and the manner in which mileage is recorded and claimed by Members to the Subcommittee to Review the Members' Services Committee Orders.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The Subcommittee issued its first Interim Report in February 2018, which included recommendations in 10 different areas concerning the *Members' Services Committee Orders* and related policies and guidelines.

On June 21, 2018, the Committee approved several orders to amend the *Members' Services Committee Orders* to implement recommendations made by the Subcommittee in its February 2018 report. At this meeting the Committee also adopted an additional amending order recommended by the Subcommittee governing the circumstances in which Members and constituency office employees may claim reimbursement under the *Constituency Services Order* for event tickets.

Since its last report the Subcommittee met on two occasions (June 15, 2018, and October 24, 2018) to approve the proposed amending orders that were presented by the Chair of the Subcommittee at the June 21, 2018, Committee meeting, to discuss and review the *Regulations Exemption and Variance Order*, and to consider the matter of caucus funding that was referred to the Subcommittee on November 8, 2017. In its first Interim Report, the Subcommittee recommended no changes to the caucus funding model for the 2018-2019 fiscal year but indicated it would report back to the Committee on any recommended changes for future years.

The Subcommittee is now prepared to report on the matter of caucus funding and official party status.

3.0 SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION – CAUCUS FUNDING

The Subcommittee recommends that a caucus funding model be adopted to provide certainty for all Members and caucuses.

Caucuses and Independent Members require funding for staffing, research, communication expenses, office operations and other expenses associated with the conduct of Members' parliamentary roles. The proposed caucus funding model set out in Appendix A of this report provides for a basic "per-Member" amount as well as research funding for all caucuses and Independent Members. In addition, funding is available for a Leader's Office Allowance (Official Opposition and recognized opposition caucuses) and for a Calgary caucus office (Government Caucus and Official Opposition).

Funding levels under this model depend on the type of caucus: (1) Government Caucus; (2) Official Opposition Caucus; (3) Recognized Opposition Caucus; or (4) Opposition Caucuses that are not Recognized Opposition Caucuses and Independent Members. In order to be a "recognized opposition caucus", a caucus must have a minimum of four Members of the Legislative Assembly.

In considering what should constitute a recognized opposition caucus for the purposes of this model, the Subcommittee considered section 42(1) of the *Legislative Assembly Act*, RSA 2000, cL-9, which defines "recognized opposition party" for the purposes of determining whether the leader of that party should receive a salary. In addition to the four-Member requirement, this section requires that the party received at least 5% of the popular vote in the most recent general election. The Subcommittee chose not to adopt this latter requirement for the proposed funding model so that caucuses that form partway through a Legislature, which may or may not be affiliated with a party that existed at the time of the last general election, may receive fair and adequate funding.

Subcommittee Recommendation: That the Committee adopt the proposed caucus funding model set out in Appendix A of this report for future caucus budgets commencing on polling day for the provincial general election for the 30th Legislature.

4.0 STATUS OF SUBCOMMITTEE'S DELIBERATIONS

The Subcommittee continues its review of the *Regulations Exemption and Variance Order* and will soon commence its review of the recently referred subject matter concerning Member mileage reimbursement, both of which will be addressed in a future report.

APPENDIX A

Caucus Funding Proposal

1. In this funding model, a “recognized opposition caucus” is a caucus that consists of at least four Members of the Legislative Assembly.
2. The following shall be the funding allocated to caucuses and Independent Members of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta:

	Government Caucus	Official Opposition Caucus*	Recognized Opposition Caucuses**	Opposition Caucuses that are not Recognized Opposition Caucuses** and Independent Members
Research Funding	\$400,000 + \$17,000 per MLA to a maximum of \$1,000,000	\$200,000 + \$17,000 per MLA to a maximum of \$500,000	\$25,000 + \$17,000 per MLA to a maximum of \$250,000	\$25,000 + \$17,000 per MLA to a maximum of \$76,000
Leader's Office Allowance	nil	\$546,084	\$273,042	nil
Calgary Caucus Office Allowance	\$90,304	\$90,304	nil	nil
Basic Per-Member Funding	\$78,907 per MLA (applicable to all caucuses and Independent Members)			

* Funding model applies regardless of whether the Official Opposition is a “recognized opposition caucus”

** Other than the Official Opposition

3. This funding model will take effect on polling day for the provincial general election for the 30th Legislature.

