

Conservatives vote to send liberal child-care bill to committee for study ^[1]

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Excerpts

Despite their misgivings about the Liberals' national child-care plan, the Conservatives voted in favour of the bill Wednesday, approving it for further study.

In the House of Commons, the Tories backed Liberal, NDP and Bloc Québécois members of Parliament by voting to send Bill C-35 to a parliamentary committee, following several hours of debate.

Earlier in the day, Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre had signalled his MPs would be doing as much — but he'd stopped short of endorsing the child-care plan itself.

"Our view is there should be affordable child-care spaces, and there should be support for parents regardless of what choices they make," he told reporters before the party's weekly caucus meeting.

In December, Families Minister Karina Gould tabled the legislation, which seeks to enshrine the government's national daycare plan into law.

Under that plan, Ottawa has inked deals with provinces and territories with the goal of reducing daycare fees to an average of \$10 per day by 2026. The federal government has said some families are already reaping the benefits of the deals by seeing their fees start to fall.

As proposed, the bill would commit Ottawa to maintaining long-term funding, making it harder for a future government to undo.

Pressed Wednesday about whether a Poilievre-led government would honour the existing agreements, the Tory leader said that once the bill arrives at committee, MPs will look at what results are actually being achieved.

"We're going to study this proposal and we'll have a very clear policy before the next election."

The Conservatives' lack of support for the Liberals' national daycare plan became a point Prime Minister Justin Trudeau attacked the party over during the 2021 federal election.

At the time, former leader and Ontario MP Erin O'Toole campaigned on scrapping agreements with provinces in favour of ushering in a tax credit, which he argued would better help lower-income families.

Conservative MP Michelle Ferreri, who debated the Liberal bill in the House this week, has slammed the plan as "subsidizing the wealthy" while failing to address the wait times and labour shortages that parents who are seeking child care face.

As a new parliamentary sitting gets underway this week, Poilievre has begun dropping more hints about what his policy agenda will look like.

Last week, he announced he would be consulting First Nations on a way that Ottawa could share more revenues from resource developments on their lands.

He also released a video of himself offering words of compassion about people with autism and other forms of neurodiversity.

Region: Quebec ^[3]

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 funding ^[5]

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Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/23/02/conservatives-vote-send-liberal-child-care-bill-committee-study> [2] https://www.thecanadianpressnews.ca/politics/conservatives-vote-to-send-liberal-child-care-bill-to-committee-for-study/article_cd7fce25-d8b4-55d6-8c49-b0cbe703ded0.html [3] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7855> [4] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/legislation> [5] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/funding> [6] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/spaces> [7] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/affordability>