

Educational Resources

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE SIMULATION - VEGETABLE HARMONY ACT

Role Cards

Committee members and officials

Senator/MP _____, Chair of the Standing Committee on Food and Nutrition

British Columbia

Government

Personal Profile: You are a senator/MP and the chair of the Standing Committee on Food and Nutrition. You think that the work of committees is really important in Canadian democracy, and you take your role as chair very seriously. You want to make sure that the committee hears the views of Canadians and that the members on the committee do their very best job in examining and debating the bill. You will vote based on what you think is best based on the arguments you have heard.

Mr. / Ms. _____, Clerk of the Standing Committee on Food and Nutrition

Personal Profile: You work for the Parliament of Canada. You are an expert on the rules of committees. Your job will be to keep track of the votes and amendments to the bill. You have to remain neutral in the debate, so you are not allowed to express your opinion or make any decisions based on your own opinion.

Senator/MP _____

**Amendment*

Alberta

Government

Personal Profile: You are a senator/MP and belong to the government party. You and your children don't like vegetables. You think this bill is great, but want to add a couple of other items to the list — asparagus and beets. You will introduce an amendment to add them to the list of restricted vegetables.

Senator/MP _____

New Brunswick

Government

Personal Profile: You are a senator/MP and belong to the government party. You are also a medical doctor and want to help pass laws that will make Canadians healthier. Even though you represent the party in government, you believe this bill will be bad for the health of Canadian kids. You want to vote the way you think is right, even if it is against your party.

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Senator/MP _____

Saskatchewan

Government

Personal Profile: You are a senator/MP and belong to the government party. You think parents should be able to feed their children what they want to feed them. This bill is popular in your province — a part of Canada that has the lowest amount of vegetables eaten per person anywhere in Canada. You also think you should support your own political party and leader, and they support this bill.

Senator/MP _____

Ontario

Government

Personal Profile: You are a senator/MP and member of the government party. You used to be a teacher, and you think that parents shouldn't force their kids to eat foods that taste terrible to them. You believe most kids will grow up to like vegetables. You live in a province that has a lot of vegetable farms. Those farmers are worried about this bill.

Senator/MP _____

British Columbia

Government

Personal Profile: You are a senator/MP and member of the government party. This bill is unpopular in your province because you have many farms growing vegetables, and most people there eat a lot of vegetables. You don't like most vegetables and your parents didn't make you eat them when you were young.

Senator/MP _____

Manitoba

Government

Personal Profile: You are a senator/MP and member of the government party. Some people in your province support this bill, and others think it's a terrible idea. You personally think it will make parents feel relieved that they don't have to serve yucky vegetables to their kids.

Senator/MP _____

Quebec

Government

Personal Profile: You are a senator/MP and member of the government party. You think parents should let children help choose what foods to prepare and eat. You think most children will choose to eat vegetables that have a less strong taste than those on the list. You support this bill.

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Senator/MP _____

Ontario

Opposition

Personal Profile: You are a senator/MP and member of the opposition party. This bill is very unpopular where you live — a place that has many vegetable farmers. You don't like many vegetables yourself and now wish that your parents had you taste more of them as a child.

Senator/MP _____

**Amendment*

Nova Scotia

Opposition

Personal Profile: You are a senator/MP, a member of the opposition party and a former restaurant owner. You oppose this bill as it is written right now, because it could be a real problem for restaurants in the country. You agree with the position that will be taken by the witnesses from the Canadian Restaurant Association. You will introduce an amendment that says that the bill does not apply to restaurant meals. If that amendment is accepted, you might support the bill.

Senator/MP _____

Alberta

Opposition

Personal Profile: You are a senator/MP and member of the opposition party. You were once an athlete, famous all over Canada for winning two gold medals in speed skating at the Olympics. You grew up eating a very healthy diet with lots of vegetables and protein and very little junk. Your family is pescatarian. This means that you eat fish and seafood, but not meat or poultry. You oppose this bill as unhealthy for kids.

Senator/MP _____

Northwest Territories

Opposition

Personal Profile: You are a senator/MP for northern Canada and a member of the opposition. It has often been very expensive to transport fresh fruit and vegetables to northern Canada. You think that the government should take action to make nutritious foods more affordable for families in your territory. You do not think this bill will do anything to lower the cost of nutritious foods.

Senator/MP _____

**Amendment*

Quebec

Opposition

Personal Profile: You are a senator/MP and member of the opposition as well as a former chef. You think dessert is a very important thing in a happy life. You eat dessert every night, and you think it makes you a happier person. You plan to introduce an amendment to the bill that will require parents to serve dessert every night.

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Senator/MP _____

PEI

Opposition

Personal Profile: You are a senator/MP and member of the opposition. This bill is unpopular in the city you live in. Like most people there, you do not understand why the government should try to tell parents what vegetables to feed their children. Parents should have the right to make these choices.

Senator/MP _____

Newfoundland

Opposition

Personal Profile: You are a senator/MP and member of the opposition. This bill seems popular with many people in your province, but you don't agree with it. You think parents should expose children to many strange and unique tastes, and that will train them to like many types of foods.

Lead minister and witnesses

The Honourable Mr. / Ms. _____, **Minister of Food**

Government

Personal Profile: Last year, the prime minister selected you to be the Minister of Food. You are in charge of the government department that is responsible for many things related to growing, manufacturing or inspecting food in Canada. This bill was your idea. You love food and sharing meals with your family, and you think this bill will help families enjoy food together more often because they won't be arguing about what to eat.

Mr. / Ms. _____

Witness representing the Canadian Vegetable Growers Association

Personal Profile: You are the president of the Canadian Vegetable Growers Association. Your family has been growing vegetables on a farm in British Columbia for 70 years. The farm grows many kinds of vegetables in greenhouses year-round and supplies them to local grocery stores. You grew up eating all sorts of fresh vegetables from the farm, and now you enjoy all of them. You think it is important for the government to encourage parents to feed vegetables to their children. It is healthy for them, but it is also important so that farmers in Canada can earn enough money to support themselves.

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Mr. / Ms. _____
Witness representing the Canadian Vegetable Growers Association

Personal Profile: You own a small organic vegetable and herb farm near Montreal. You think everyone would be healthier if they ate food that was organic and grown locally as much as possible. You did not really like vegetables when you were young, but have now been a vegetarian for 20 years. You think parents should be free to serve the vegetables that are in season and grown locally. Children will learn that they taste good.

Mr. / Ms. _____
Witness representing the Parents' Council of Canada

Personal Profile: You are a parent of three children and now the vice-president of the council. You do not make your kids eat vegetables that are on the list of banned vegetables because you do not want to argue with them about food. You still think you should be allowed to serve what you want for dinner, however. You believe that the government should not be able to tell you not to serve healthy vegetables.

Mr. / Ms. _____
Witness representing the Parents' Council of Canada

Personal Profile: You are the president and founder of the PCC. You started the PCC eight years ago, when the government tried to pass a bill that you did not like. The bill was to give children the right to pick their own high schools. You think that parents should make most decisions for their kids until they turn 18. You believe that parents love their kids and know what is best for them.

Mr. / Ms. _____
Witness representing the Committee for the rights of children

Personal Profile: You are 18 years old and co-president of the Committee for the Rights of Children. You are co-president with your cousin, who is 16 and the other witness. You two started this committee when you were 14 and 12. You are now a university student and want to become a lawyer. Your cousin and you started this group in your small town in Saskatchewan, and, thanks to Facebook, you now have 17,000 members all over Canada. Your group speaks up against laws and school policies that you think do not respect the rights of kids. You are a vegetarian, but think kids should have the right to make their own food choices.

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Mr. / Ms. _____
Witness representing the Committee for the rights of children

Personal Profile: You are 16 years old and co-president of the Committee for the rights of children. You are co-president with your cousin, who is 18 and the other witness. You two started this committee when you were 12 and 14. You are now in grade 11 and want to become a teacher someday. Your cousin and you started this group in your small town in Saskatchewan, and, thanks to Facebook, you now have 17,000 members all over Canada. Your group speaks up against laws and school policies that you think do not respect the rights of kids. The only vegetables you usually want to eat are carrots, corn and potatoes. You just tried a spinach and strawberry salad yesterday, though, and it was so good!

Mr. / Ms. _____
Witness representing the Restaurant Association of Canada

Personal Profile: You are the president of the R.A.C. You own two successful restaurants in Edmonton, and you have worked in restaurants since you were 17. You think this bill would be a disaster for restaurants if restaurant meals are included. You took time off during a busy time for your restaurants to travel all the way here because you think it is so important that the bill be changed.

Mr. / Ms. _____
Witness representing the Restaurant Association of Canada

Personal Profile: You studied Politics and Communications at university. You were hired by the RAC as a lobbyist. Your job is to try to get the government to pass laws that are good for the restaurant business. You do not like vegetables yourself, but you will argue that this bill has to change to protect restaurants.

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Members of the press gallery

Mr. / Ms. _____
Journalist

Personal Profile: You are 21 years old and write articles as a volunteer for your university's student newspaper. You were going to visit Parliament, and you decided that this meeting might be interesting to write about. You have never seen a parliamentary committee meeting before and do not know much about this issue yet. You are not very fond of vegetables.

Mr. / Ms. _____
Journalist

Personal Profile: You write for a big national newspaper. You have been reporting on the work of Parliament for over 10 years. It is a quiet day in Parliament, so you decided to watch this committee meeting. The topic is interesting for you because your own kids hated vegetables so much when they were younger. You never knew if you should force them to eat them or not.

Mr. / Ms. _____
Journalist

Personal Profile: You are a reporter for an Ottawa newspaper. Your paper is writing a series of stories about kids and nutrition. Last week you wrote a story about the amount of pop and sports drinks kids are drinking. This week you will write a story on this issue. You have a two-year-old daughter, and you want to learn about these issues by writing these stories.

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Mr. / Ms. _____
Journalist

Personal Profile: You have two young children. You write articles for *Mama Dada Mag*. It is a magazine for parents of babies and toddlers. You personally think that this bill is a good idea for family peace and harmony. Your kids are very fussy eaters, and many days you just feed them macaroni and cheese, milk and sliced-up grapes. They won't eat any other fruit or veggies, so you have given up for now. You agree with the bill, but you want to write a story that is balanced.

Mr. / Ms. _____
Journalist

Personal Profile: You are 13 years old and you have a blog that has 1,231 subscribers, as of this morning. You have been writing this blog for two years. You write about all kinds of issues that are important to people your age. You live not far from Ottawa, and sometimes one of your parents will let you miss school for the afternoon so you can go watch Parliament. You can express your own opinion in your blog. You haven't decided, yet, how you feel about the bill. Vegetables are okay.
