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(HANSARD)

Friday, March 22, 2013

—

Speaker: The Honourable Andrew Scheer

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, March 22, 2013

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

•(1005)

[*English*]

THE BUDGET

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF MINISTER OF FINANCE

The House resumed from March 21 consideration of the motion that this House approve in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise today in the House deeply disappointed by yet another Conservative budget that disregards the real priorities of Canadians and instead pushes ahead stubbornly with an austerity agenda that will have real consequences for Canadian families.

In budget 2012, the Conservatives chose corporate giveaways and attacked the programs and services that Canadians rely on. While the Conservatives have promised to focus on jobs, budget 2013 instead focuses on job-killing austerity cuts. The Conservatives have not listened to Canadians. They are plowing ahead with cuts to pensions, health care and EI, while ignoring the serious threats facing our economy.

[*Translation*]

I am deeply disappointed today by yet another Conservative budget that disregards the real priorities of Canadians. Instead, it stubbornly continues with an austerity agenda that will have real consequences for Canadian families.

The Conservatives' 2012 budget provided corporate giveaways while attacking the programs and services that Canadians rely on. The Conservatives promised to focus on jobs, yet budget 2013 focuses on job-killing austerity cuts.

The Conservatives have not listened to Canadians. They are pushing ahead with cuts to pensions, health care and employment insurance, while ignoring the serious threats facing our economy.

[*English*]

This budget has been plagued by Conservative mismanagement. Just six years ago the Minister of Finance handed over skills training responsibility to the provinces. Now he is shutting those programs down and returning that money to the federal government. Following the 2008 economic crisis, the Minister of Finance begrudgingly ramped up infrastructure investment. Now he is cutting billions from infrastructure investments. Overall, these cuts will cost tens of thousands of jobs in cities and communities across the country.

The Conservatives claim to be strong fiscal managers, but the facts point to the contrary. The Minister of Finance missed his economic growth target for 2012 by 35%. He has presided over a \$67 billion trade deficit. Private sector economists are now telling us that this year will be even worse.

The Minister of Finance has changed his budget projections so often it is difficult to take them seriously. As this budget is being tabled, Ottawa is running about \$2 billion behind where the Minister of Finance wanted to be. Yet the minister's timetable for deficit reduction has little to do with external realities. Instead, a growing number of prominent bank economists, including Craig Alexander and Don Drummond, agree that the government has fixated on eliminating the deficit ahead of the next election.

Following a recent meeting with the Minister of Finance, BMO's chief economist Doug Porter told reporters it would probably be unwise for the federal government to step on the brake even further than it already has. There is also growing consensus, from the IMF to participants at the World Economic Forum in Davos, that austerity is not the right way to go. In fact, it is making the problem worse.

At the World Economic Forum in Davos, former U.S. treasury secretary Dr. Lawrence Summers agreed that austerity is not an effective solution for today's circumstances. Of his speech at Davos, economic reporter Chrystia Freeland wrote:

His most important point is that economic policy is more like medical treatment than religion. It isn't a dogma that should be cleaved to under every circumstance...

It is comfortable to take a religious view of economics: Once you've chosen your creed, you never have to think again. But when it comes to deficits—and maybe a lot else besides—that may not be how the world works.

Unfortunately, the Conservatives are determined to move forward with their austerity agenda, even as the negative side effects of their policies are being felt here in Canada.

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Yesterday, Carol Goar of the *Toronto Star* wrote this of the austerity agenda of the Minister of Finance. She wrote:

Since he began chopping programs and expenditures, the economy has drooped, the job market has sagged, consumers have pulled back and the corporate sector has hunkered down, sitting on its earnings.

The same formula has delivered worse results in Europe.

In fact, an IMF report released in January estimated that in the European case, every dollar in government spending cuts would cost \$1.50 in lost output. The bottom line? We cannot cut our way to prosperity. It just does not work.

The Conservatives like to crow about their abilities as fiscal managers, but it is increasingly clear that they are more interested in ideological dogma than they are in getting our economy back on track. Let us be clear. The Conservative government caused our current deficit, not overspending. In 2008, the Prime Minister proclaimed to Canadians there would be no recession here. The Conservatives refused to take action until their government was nearly defeated in the House of Commons. More and more economists agree that our ability to react to the 2008 financial crisis was severely undercut by the government's reckless insistence on deep corporate tax cuts.

Appealing to their Conservative base helped get the government into this mess, but it will not help get us out. The fact is that in a stalling economy we cannot cut our way to growth. Instead, the best way to balance the budget is to invest in job creation and kickstart economic growth.

• (1010)

[Translation]

The NDP supports investment in skills training and believes that education and training are important factors in creating high-quality, high-paying jobs.

However, right now, for every job available, there are six Canadians looking for work. This week, Statistics Canada confirmed that this number has remained relatively steady since last year, and the Conservatives' plan will not properly address the problem. The Conservatives are simply juggling money and trying to take credit for it.

The biggest economic challenge we are facing today is a weak Conservative economy. Canada fared better than many other countries throughout the last recession, but Canadians and their economy are falling behind.

Unemployment remains high—more than 7% nationally. Some provinces have unemployment rates in the double digits, and more than 1.3 million Canadians are still without work.

In addition, a number of segments of the population, such as youth, aboriginals and new Canadians, are still facing unemployment rates that are far higher than the average.

Household debt continues to reach unprecedented levels. It currently sits at 167% of disposable income.

At a time when families are barely making ends meet, hundreds of thousands of Canadians hold part-time and precarious jobs, when they would prefer permanent, full-time positions.

[English]

We just received a United Way Toronto and McMaster University study. This report reveals that 50% of the workers in Hamilton and Toronto are working in precarious jobs. That is no way to sustain an economy.

In the last week, we were disappointed to hear that Canada fell out of the top 10 of the human development index, a ranking we had dominated throughout most of the 1990s. In fact, Canada fell six spots over the last year alone. Conservatives are content to say that other countries have just improved faster than we have. The reality is that Canada's growth on the index has been substantially lower than many of its peers, especially those near the top of the list. Unlike most of the top 10, our growing income inequality has dragged down Canada's ranking on the UN list. In fact, the Conference Board of Canada has given Canada a "C" grade, and ranked us 12 out of 17 peer countries on the issue of income inequality.

It is clear that the government's choices are holding back our social improvements. Yet Conservatives would have us believe, "There's nothing left to see here. Move along".

They have spent untold tax dollars on advertisements for their budgets, even buying expensive ad time during the Super Bowl and the Oscars. However, budget 2013 shows us once again that this is just a shell game. There is no Oscar for them.

On infrastructure, training and support for manufacturing, the Conservatives are mostly just shifting around money and trying to make it look like they are taking real action. They claim to be dedicated to closing tax loopholes, but their cuts to the Canada Revenue Agency are a serious hindrance to achieving that goal. This budget policy brought to Canadians is more like a Don Draper budget, all spin and no substance. We are not *Mad Men* here.

Canadians want to do better and they deserve a government that is committed to doing better too. We need a government that is willing to aim higher, not one that is content to simply say that all is well. We know the Conservatives get their policy ideas from just a select few, even though the finance committee undertakes pre-budget consultations every year. I will tell members what we heard from Canadians about their priorities for 2013.

The Assembly of First Nations told us that:

—investments in First Nation education systems become even more crucial to ensuring that First Nation citizens can take advantage of existing and projected opportunities. Canada requires a well-trained workforce, especially in the booming resource extraction industry, and First Nation entrants into the labour market will be crucial in filling current and future labour market requirements in all sectors, skilled trades and professions.

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However, budget 2013 not only fails to address the specific challenges faced by aboriginal people, it actually introduces a regressive new workfare program for first nation communities. Conservatives are touting their goal of having an education act in place by 2014 and claim to be committed to consultation with first nations, but the Assembly of First Nations has opted out of this process already due to the Conservatives' stubborn piecemeal approach.

Instead of building a new, more respectful relationship with first nations, the measures in budget 2013 reveal an insulting, in fact, even a paternalistic approach. Despite supporting the NDP motion on Shannen's Dream for equitable funding for first nation students, the Conservatives are failing to provide any additional funding to close the 30% funding gap for students in first nation communities. Shannen's Dream remains just that, a dream. We need action from the Conservative government.

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities emphasized the link between productivity and infrastructure investment. It told us:

—during the period when productivity in the United States outpaced Canada's, infrastructure investment in Canada declined by 3.5 percent while in the United States it grew by 24 percent. The discrepancy between Canada's infrastructure investments and that of other global competitors, especially China and the European Union, are even greater.

In fact, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities estimates Canada's infrastructure deficit at \$123 billion. That was in 2007 and it is even greater today.

The Canadian Construction Association agreed. Its representative told the committee that “there can be no economic growth without state-of-the-art and well-maintained critical public infrastructure”. The Association of Consulting Engineering Companies also confirmed that “A national, long-term infrastructure investment strategy can eliminate the economic costs of infrastructure underinvestment and promote a sustained economic recovery in Canada”.

● (1015)

Yet, in budget 2013, and I know they have announced a lot of big numbers, there will be a decline in infrastructure spending. Of the numbers they have announced, most will kick in in 2020 or even beyond.

[*Translation*]

The Conservatives can play with the numbers all they want, but the fact remains that the federal government's investment in infrastructure over the next few years will still be less than \$5 billion. Money will only be available to cash-strapped provinces if they can afford to match the federal government's contribution. The New Democrats obviously want taxpayers to have value for their money.

[*English*]

We are open to finding creative ways to do this.

[*Translation*]

We are open to the idea of finding creative ways to get the private sector to participate. The private sector can sometimes offer the best value but, in other cases, it may be more costly to use private sector intermediaries. We should not force communities to choose one option over another.

[*English*]

We have seen the underwhelming take-up of the P3 fund. I think only about 30% of it has been taken up. Municipalities do not want to be forced into costly P3 solutions. That is not the way to treat municipalities. Meanwhile, the necessary plan for long-term, predictable, sustainable infrastructure funding, long requested by municipalities across the country, is still missing from the equation.

The Canadian Labour Congress told us:

Business investments are not where they should be. The across-the-board corporate tax cut didn't deliver the promised investments in real assets....Thus, these cuts failed to boost economic growth and productivity and didn't help create more and better jobs in Canada.

Once again, with budget 2013, the Conservatives have failed to introduce new measures to create jobs. In fact, there are still 300,000 more unemployed people than before the recession. While the budget extends the existing small business job creation tax credit, which we support, it fails to provide any new tax incentives to encourage youth job creation. We are just not doing the job we need to be doing on behalf of our young people. It is not only a personal tragedy for young people that they cannot get a start in the workplace, it is also a drag on our economy. If young people do not get a good start early in their lives, not just in any job but in a decent job, that negativity, lack of income and underperformance tends to extend for a number of years. That is a loss to our economy and to our society, and it is a tragedy in the individual lives of young people across Canada.

Rather than offering a real program for skills training and job creating for aboriginal youth, the budget forces first nations communities to impose a workfare program on youth living on reserve.

Campaign 2000 told the committee:

This period of slow economic growth and high personal debt requires the federal government to prevent and reduce poverty for the health and well-being of all Canadians.

Nothing is being done in budget 2013 to address the record levels of household debt. Instead, the Conservative government has remained focused on an austerity agenda that has made major cuts to the services families rely on. Budget 2013 pushes ahead with \$36 billion in reckless cuts to provincial health care transfers. That is still looming on the horizon.

Even in the wake of multiple food safety scares this year, the budget does nothing to reverse the \$56.1 million in dangerous cuts to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, putting the security of our food supply at risk. Budget 2013 also continues with changes to EI that will force workers to take a 30% pay cut, despite overwhelming opposition from Canadians. That is simply unacceptable. We do not need a low-wage strategy; we need a good jobs strategy here in Canada.

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●(1020)

Meanwhile, the budget reverses the Conservatives' 2007 decision to hand over responsibility for skills training to the provinces, but it provides no new money for education and training. That is great public administration: download the programs to the provinces, and then without consultation, upload the programs to the federal government. It is clear to us that the Conservatives have not been listening to Canadians.

However, New Democrats have been listening every step of the way. That is why we are focused on the real things Canadians want, on changes for Canadians—real people in Canada—on the solutions they are looking for and on the real priorities in the lives of Canadians. That is what we are going to deliver when we get the chance.

We need solutions like investing in small businesses to create jobs for young people. We have a tremendous opportunity with the creativity, education, enthusiasm and ingenuity of our young people that, frankly, we are squandering. However, New Democrats are going to do better.

Youth unemployment, which is at a whopping 13.5%, is two and a half times the national rate. There are still 240,000 more young people unemployed than there were before the recession, but all the budget does for youth job creation is re-announce funding for 5,000 internships.

TD Economics has said that the spike in youth unemployment from the recent recession will cost our economy \$10.7 billion in the next three years alone. This tragedy for individuals is also a tragedy for our overall economy and our overall society. Clearly, putting people to work is the best way to reduce our deficit.

There is no need to reinvent or privatize public services. There is no need to trample on economic or labour rights. Instead, New Democrats know that supporting small and medium-sized businesses, supporting the manufacturing sector and creating good, value-added, high-quality, high-paying jobs is the real solution to our deficit and to strengthening our economy.

New Democrats are focused on solutions like long-term predictable transit investment that our cities need to shorten commute times. We have to get past this gridlock. It is polluting, stressful and a tremendous drag on our overall economy. We hear that right across the country. Canadians face some of the world's longest daily commutes. Traffic gridlock is costing our economy \$10 billion each and every year. In fact, the Toronto Region Board of Trade has said that our infrastructure deficit is a leading drag on our region's economy.

After years of federal downloading, our cities cannot afford to develop modern transit systems, the systems we need and deserve. They cannot do it all on their own. Too much has been downloaded to them without the fiscal tools to be able to pay the bills for that. In fact, Canadian municipalities are now responsible for 53% of infrastructure in the country, but they receive just 8¢ of every tax dollar collected. Meanwhile, Canada remains the only G8 country without a national transit strategy. How does that make any sense in a modern economy?

We need a plan to improve business productivity and keep our communities moving.

●(1025)

[*Translation*]

The New Democrats are focusing on solutions such as reliable federal investments to renew infrastructure for the next generation. Canada's infrastructure was built after the Second World War. It needs to be renewed. Whether Canadians travel by car, motorcycle or bicycle, they have had enough of potholes and congested or closed roads. It is ridiculous for people to be apprehensive about getting behind the wheel for fear that the overpasses might collapse.

For years now, the federal government has been downloading its responsibilities. Our communities cannot afford to renovate all the crumbling infrastructure. The 2013 budget only aggravates the problem by making billions of dollars in cuts to infrastructure investment and by forcing local communities to use costly private sector intermediaries.

[*English*]

New Democrats are focused on real solutions that support Canadian families through strengthening retirement security and health care, such as ensuring decent, long-term health care benefits for all Canadian veterans, including modern-day veterans. The women and men who serve this country deserve our deepest respect, from the moment they sign up through the rest of their lives. Too many Canadian veterans are struggling even to access the health care they need. Those who served after the Korean War are finding themselves unable to access long-term care services offered by Veterans Affairs. Now the Conservatives are moving to cut some \$210 million from veterans' health care. How does that make sense?

●(1030)

Canadians deserve better from the budget, and they deserve better from the government. Conservatives have mismanaged file after file. They are poor managers and poor public administrators. Canada's stagnant economic growth has had serious consequences for families. Even as the Parliamentary Budget Officer is in court trying to get information about the cost of the last round of Conservative cuts, this budget provides few details on how the numbers will all shake out. I guess we will have to wait and see what they bring in for a budget implementation act.

Now the finance minister has gone to Asia, rather than staying to answer questions about his budget. In contrast, New Democrats are here, and we are standing up for Canadian families. New Democrats are here and are focused on the real priorities of Canadians. We have practical, sustainable plans to build a fairer, greener, more prosperous Canada for all. Remember that according to finance department numbers, when we look at all federal, provincial and territorial budgets, it is New Democrats who balance the books more often than any other party, so that is more good news for Canadians. That is a record we are proud of. It is a record Canadians deserve, and it is one they are going to get in 2015.

In 2011, a study by the International Monetary Fund found:

[W]hen growth is looked at over the long term, the trade-off between efficiency and equality may not exist. In fact equality appears to be an important ingredient in promoting and sustaining growth.

We could not agree more. Canadians are counting on us for leadership and to bring forward ideas and proposals that will put the public interest first.

We will not accept a budget that pushes aside the concerns of first nations groups and pushes stubbornly ahead without true consultation. We will not accept a budget that fails to move Canada forward in the 21st century economy and that leaves a huge environmental debt for future generations. We will not accept a budget that continues to put all our eggs in the resource basket instead of investing in the balanced economy that has driven growth and prosperity since the Second World War. We will not accept a budget that attempts to balance the books by downloading the costs to struggling provinces and municipalities, and we will not accept a budget that not only ignores the concerns of Canadians but that will actually make it harder for families to make ends meet.

New Democrats will continue to work every day in the interests of all Canadians. That is why we will not support Conservative budget 2013. That is also why I would like to introduce the following amendment. I move:

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word "That" and substituting the following:

"this House not approve the budgetary policy of the government as it:

- a) cuts billions of dollars in infrastructure funding that will cost tens of thousands of jobs in communities across the country;
- b) continues with devastating cuts to health care, pensions and Employment Insurance;
- c) provides no new funding for skills training, dictating a federal takeover of responsibility for skills training programs;
- d) pushes forward with cuts to vital environmental programs such as the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency and the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy;
- e) fails to address record levels of household debt;
- f) provides no new tax credit for youth job creation;
- g) does nothing to encourage private business to invest the nearly \$600 billion in so-called "dead money" currently on their books;
- h) fails to close the 30% funding gap for students in First Nations communities;
- i) forces First Nations communities to impose workfare programs for youth living on reserves;
- j) takes over \$2.3 billion out of the pockets of small businesses through changes to the dividend tax credit, without offsetting measures to mitigate this significant tax increase;
- k) cuts support for innovation by eliminating support for labour sponsored venture capital funds;

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l) hobbles the competitiveness of credit unions and thus reduces competition for big banks; and

m) looks to empty the pockets of Canadians by applying GST/HST to hospital parking.

● (1035)

The Speaker: The amendment is in order.

Questions and comments, the hon. Minister of State for Western Economic Diversification.

Hon. Lynne Yelich (Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification), CPC): Mr. Speaker, I was very disappointed to hear that the critic for finance from the official opposition is encouraging her colleagues to vote against things that she has actually asked for, particularly training.

These were areas that were very important to western Canada, training and matching skills to the workers. I would suggest that the member look at that area in particular because she did emphasize skills and training and how important good jobs were for Canadians.

That particular area means that the jobs will be filled by skilled workers. There is going to be an interest, whether or not they are the private sector. The federal government is helping put together the private sector and students.

I am wondering why she would criticize that, or the community infrastructure improvement fund, or the building Canada fund, something municipalities have asked for. Has the member noticed that the mayors across Canada have received this budget very well? I am not sure if the member understands that this is what the mayors and the FCM have asked for across Canada.

Ms. Peggy Nash: Mr. Speaker, the member is right in saying that there has been a call for more skills training. What I have focused on is that with this budget the government would just be moving existing money around. In order to get any of this money spent in the future, the government members would have to sit down with the provinces and bargain agreements to use the money already out there that provinces are already using for skills training. The provinces are not being consulted on this. In some ways, it may do the opposite of what the member is calling for because there would have to be a lengthy negotiation with the provinces on skills training. It would have been more productive if the government had done these negotiations in advance and was actually putting in some additional money, bringing new money to the table to achieve skills training.

On infrastructure, I know that municipalities have been calling for greater investment. That is the problem. This budget would actually see the amount of money go down as time goes on.

● (1040)

Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I commend my colleague for her speech. It was thoughtful and the tone was very productive.

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I will pick up on a theme that she raised and that the minister across the floor also raised a moment ago. The Prime Minister was apparently quoted in pre-budget communication strategy leaks to the media saying that he was “mad as hell” on the question of training and vacant jobs. If he was mad as hell before this budget, he must be positively furious this morning.

There would be no new money for skills training. The Conservatives would actually freeze funding at 2007 levels, which is actually a 10% cut if we adjust for inflation. How can that be, when youth unemployment is up 5% since 2007 and when over one-third of Canadians between the ages of 25 and 30 are still living at home with their parents? It would be fine to simply make that claim without juxtaposing it against other expenditures.

Here is the big whopper that Canadians are getting very frustrated about. We know the current government has spent over \$600 million on advertising since its arrival, and on present trends by the next election it will be \$1 billion of taxpayer dollars on TV, Internet and radio ads, and \$29 million for billboards across Canada. For most Canadians, that is simply obscene.

How is it possible that the government can reconcile providing no new money for jobs training and skills training while spending \$600 million on advertising?

Ms. Peggy Nash: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his very informative and interesting question. It speaks to the point I was making during my speech, that this budget would have more to do with Don Draper of *Mad Men* than with real job creation and building the Canadian economy. I do not know how only funding the advertising industry is going to get this economy back on track, but young people today are tragically being left behind. Not only are they facing the highest tuition fees ever and the highest levels of student debt, but when they get their education and are out in the workforce, if they get any kind of employment, it is very precarious. It is not enough to sustain them and they are having trouble even paying off their student debts.

These training programs are pretty thin gruel. It would be existing money that supposedly the federal government would upload from the provinces, after downloading it a few years ago. How would this all work? The Conservatives would have to sit down with the provinces and consult with them and negotiate agreements. The current government's history has been a “my way or the highway” approach, so the Conservatives are not great at negotiation.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate my hon. colleague from Parkdale—High Park on her speech, as well as her in-depth, methodical analysis of this budget, which does not meet Canadians' expectations. Based on the consultations we have held over the past year as the official opposition, clearly, this is not the direction we want to take.

The austerity introduced in 2012 will continue for many years. It will kill jobs and prevent economic growth, and this will result in a loss of revenue for the Canadian government, which will be forced to make further budget cuts that will reduce services to Canadians.

I would like to ask my colleague a question about one specific measure: the phasing-out of the labour-sponsored funds tax credit. As we know, labour funds received an additional 15% tax credit. The government decided to eliminate that, under the pretext that labour funds and the usual RRSPs issued by financial institutions had to be on a level playing field.

There is a big difference between labour funds and other kinds of private RRSPs. Labour funds invest that money in businesses that are struggling, in businesses that are just starting up and in businesses that will create jobs. Losing this tax credit will lead to a lack of competition. In addition, it will create not only an uneven playing field for these funds, but also a loss of competitiveness.

I would like to hear my colleague's comments on that particular measure.

• (1045)

Ms. Peggy Nash: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question. It is a very pertinent question because this government claims to be talking about jobs, job creation and creating prosperity when, in reality, it is cutting jobs and hindering prosperity.

With the labour-sponsored funds tax credit, we have seen and continue to see direct investment in job creation, and the number of jobs created can be tallied.

Eliminating this tax credit means eliminating this job creation tool, which will not be replaced by real job creation measures. This is really mind-boggling, coming from this government. I would say that it is more ideological than pragmatic.

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question for the member is in regard to the issue of citizenship. The government has made a commitment to give \$40 million toward the speeding up of processing times. We need a goal established by the government to have citizenship applications processed in a timely fashion, within that 12 months. That is the most important thing. At the very tail end of the budget, it implies there is going to be a citizenship fee increase. Could the member provide comment in terms of tax increases versus user fee increases?

Ms. Peggy Nash: Mr. Speaker, the government has increased costs to Canadians, but often by stealth. Conservatives like to say they are not increasing taxes, but EI premiums go up, fees go up. Through privatization measures, things tend to cost more for Canadians. For newcomers who are often scrambling to get every penny they can when they come to Canada, seeing an increase in the fee to come here and become citizens is yet another barrier to new Canadians.

Hon. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to speak to budget 2013.

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[Translation]

I have to say that, based on the Conservatives' fanfare as they released part of the budget in the days leading up to yesterday, I was expecting great things from budget 2013.

[English]

After all, we were led to believe that this budget would help address Canada's skills gap: 260,000 jobs without people; 1.3 million people without jobs. We were told that the skills gap was the most pressing issue of our time and that new investments would form the cornerstone of this budget.

Reports said that the Prime Minister was mad as hell about Canada's training programs and that he would not take it anymore. However, when we finally had a chance to see the budget, it did not even come close to this hype.

Not only is there no new money for training, the government is actually freezing its training budget at 2007 levels. What has happened since 2007? The economy went into a recession, from which the Canadian labour market has yet to recover, and inflation over the last six years has driven prices up by 10%, so a dollar today simply does not go as far as it did in 2007.

What we have now is an even greater need for training programs to get Canadians back to work, but the government is actually providing fewer resources than before. In the lead up to the budget, the Conservatives identified the correct problem, but in the budget they failed to provide an adequate solution.

If the Prime Minister was mad as hell before the budget, he must be absolutely furious today, because the measures in budget 2013 will not improve training in Canada. With less money for training than before, a 10% cut, when we factor in inflation, simply will not get the job done. It simply will not be enough to satisfy someone who is actually concerned about Canada's skills gap.

[Translation]

I imagine that if the Prime Minister had been serious about this, he would have accepted the premiers' invitation to sit down with them in Halifax.

• (1050)

[English]

Perhaps what is really irking the Prime Minister is the fact that he has not been able to take credit for Canada's training programs. Maybe that is why he did not sit down with the premiers in Halifax to talk about the economy. Imagine, the premiers asked the Prime Minister to sit down with them last autumn to discuss the economy at their premiers' meeting in Halifax, and the Prime Minister said no, that he did not have to do that.

Budget 2013 actually helps the Prime Minister's real objective, and that is to stamp the economic action plan logo on every training program in Canada. However, the Conservatives should not be preoccupied simply with ensuring that the federal government gets all of the credit. They should be focusing on helping Canadians get jobs. On that point, budget 2013 fails.

The budget attaches new strings to the training funds that require matching provincial money. Cash-strapped provinces simply may

not be able to afford it. British Columbia has said that it was alarmed at the change. Alberta is not sure even if it can afford to participate in the program.

[Translation]

The Quebec Minister of Finance, Nicolas Marceau, said, "—this is a direct attack on Quebec. It is economic sabotage."

[English]

Clearly, these proposed changes in budget 2013 require a greater level of co-operation between the federal government and the provinces, but the Conservatives have got off to a very bad start.

When it comes to training, what the Conservatives have delivered is not an economic action plan. It is an economic inaction plan. In terms of Infrastructure, this is another area where budget 2013 does not live up to the hype.

There is a national consensus that we must do more to invest in our communities. Some say that there is \$160 billion infrastructure deficit. We have known for years that the government's infrastructure plan from budget 2007 would expire in 2014, and we were led to believe that budget 2013 would deliver significant new money to help Canadian cities and communities invest in infrastructure.

Not only does budget 2013 fail to deliver the goods, the Conservatives are actually cutting new infrastructure funding in order to balance the budget by 2015. Starting in 2014, the Conservatives will cut new funding for provincial and municipal infrastructure by almost \$2 billion a year, compared to what was actually already in budget 2007.

New money under the building Canada fund drops from \$1.7 billion in 2013 to a paltry \$210 million for each year until the budget is supposedly balanced. On top of that, the Conservatives are playing a shell game with infrastructure. They are taking infrastructure money from budget 2007 that they have failed to yet get out the door and are spreading it over the next five years and trying to call it new money. It is another example of the Conservatives economic inaction plan.

We were told that the budget would focus on manufacturing. This is an area where the Conservatives have a dismal record. In fact, Canada's manufacturing sector has hemorrhaged jobs, an astounding 350,000 net jobs lost since the Conservatives took office in 2006. Clearly, the status quo is not working.

What does budget 2013 do? The cornerstone of the budget's plan for this sector is another two-year extension of the temporary accelerated capital cost allowance. This is the third time the government has extended this program for exactly two years.

Statements by Members

The private sector has been asking for a five-year extension so it can plan ahead for long-term capital investments and make strategic investments based on the long term, not on the availability of government funds. Instead the Conservatives are only prepared to offer more of the same.

Whether it is training, infrastructure or manufacturing, budget 2013 just does not live up to the Conservative hype.

In terms of the deficit, this is a budget that back loads its investments at the end of this decade and then projects a surplus in 2015 that is no bigger than a rounding error. The Conservatives are basing their budget surplus on rosy revenue projections and cuts to new funding for infrastructure. This is more false advertising. Again, the Conservatives economic inaction plan is full of it.

The Conservatives' plan promises jobs, growth and long-term prosperity. What does it actually deliver? On the jobs front, the percentage of Canadians with paid work is still lower than it was in 2008. Canada's labour market still has not recovered from the recession.

It is even harder for young Canadians to find work. The employment rate today for young people is more than five points worse than prior to the recession. More Canadians in their late twenties are stuck living at home than before. In the late 1990s, one in five Canadians in their late twenties was still living at home with parents. Today, it is one in three. Young Canadians simply cannot afford to move out. Their incomes have dropped since 2008. They are being squeezed between being underemployed or unemployed and having to pay crippling levels of student debt.

Lost in yesterday's budget coverage was the release of a TD Bank report on student loans. According to this report, student debt in Canada now stands at almost a trillion dollars. It is the second-highest source of debt in Canada next to home mortgages. The 90-plus day delinquency rate on student loans is at an all time high. The Government of Canada has been writing off hundreds of millions in Canada student loans over the last few years.

• (1055)

[*Translation*]

Too many young Canadians are losing hope. We run the risk of creating a lost generation of youth who are burdened with high debt and have no useful work experience.

[*English*]

Young Canadians, their parents and their grandparents are looking to the government for a concrete strategy to create new opportunities for young Canadians. Instead of delivering a real plan to help our youth, budget 2013 focuses its so-called job opportunities for youth plan on more government advertising. Under this so-called youth jobs plan, the Conservatives are taking \$19 million from existing programs and reallocating that money to advertising, as though the solution to the country's job crisis for young Canadians is more economic action plan ads on TV.

Budget 2013 also places Canadian jobs at risk by continuing to hike job-killing EI premiums. In fact, the average Canadian worker will pay an extra \$50 in EI premiums next year and his or her employer will face even higher increases.

With measures like these, no wonder budget 2013 assumes that Canada's unemployment rate in 2014 and 2015 will in fact go even higher than previously predicted.

The Conservatives also talk about growth and long-term prosperity. Well, the budget assumes that Canada's economy will actually slow down. In fact, the government had to reduce its growth projections for this year by more than a full percentage point.

It seems the only growth taking place in the Canadian economy right now is the growth in household debt. This does not bode well for the long-term prosperity of middle-class Canadians. Canadian families now owe a record \$1.67 for every \$1.00 of annual income. This level of personal debt is higher than American families were carrying prior to the crash.

Meanwhile, median household incomes have flatlined over the last four years. Canadian families may have bigger mortgages today, but they are in no better position to pay them. In fact, a growing number of Canadians are now struggling to pay their mortgages, even at low rates. They are petrified as to what will happen when rates go up. Making matters worse, housing prices are starting to soften.

For many Canadians, their home is not simply a place where they live, it is also part of their retirement plan. The experts say that Canadian home prices are now over-valued, and the Minister of Finance is partly to blame. It was the finance minister, with his risky mortgage scheme in budget 2006, that brought U.S.-style 40-year mortgages with no down payments to Canada. That scheme made 40-year mortgages the norm in Canada, it drove up housing prices and it helped to create a housing bubble.

The Speaker: I will stop the hon. member there. He will still have about eight minutes left to conclude his remarks after question period. Right now, it is time for statements by members.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*Translation*]

THE BUDGET

Mr. Jean-François Fortin (Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in yesterday's budget, the Minister of Finance should have changed course, but instead he once again unilaterally chose to pursue an Ottawa-centric agenda, one tinged with arrogance and disdain for Quebec and the regions.

Statements by Members

Quebeckers wanted the government to change its mind about employment insurance reforms and the Canada pension plan and cancel cuts to economic development for the regions of Quebec, science, and programs and services offered by departments like Fisheries and Oceans Canada. Sadly, the government chose to stubbornly stay the course.

Moreover, the government is once again interfering in areas under Quebec's jurisdiction, including labour. The federal government is tackling the deficit at Quebec's expense and resurrecting the fiscal imbalance.

There is no dialogue happening. As the saying goes, Ottawa wants what is good for you, and it will get your goods as well.

* * *

● (1100)

[English]

INFRASTRUCTURE IN RICHMOND HILL

Mr. Costas Menegakis (Richmond Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute the 45,000 families in my riding who call Richmond Hill their home. Residents of this diverse community enjoy a quality of life enhanced by a plethora of services and activities. Individuals from all fields of endeavour, youth and seniors, have benefited from the support provided by our government's economic action plan.

In keeping with Richmond Hill's tradition of producing champions, I was proud to recently stand with Mayor Dave Barrow and Richmond Hill resident and Canadian junior figure skating champion Anthony Kan to announce our government's contribution of \$722,833 towards the much needed renovation of Elvis Stojko Arena. I was delighted to see that many of Richmond Hill's pre-budget recommendations were considered in economic action plan 2013.

I am honoured to be part of a team that is both listening and delivering results to my constituents, and indeed for all Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

* * *

WORLD WATER DAY

Mr. Fin Donnelly (New Westminster—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, 70% of our planet is covered by water and 70% of the human body is also made up of water. Today is World Water Day, and communities around the world are celebrating the importance of fresh water. Water is increasingly seen as blue gold, and today is an important reminder of the need to advocate for sustainable use of fresh water.

While Canada has 20% of the world's fresh water, only 7% of it is usable by humans. Many communities in Canada, including too many first nations, lack adequate water services. The protection of fresh water and the economies that depend on it are under attack by the Conservative government, which removed protection from 99% of Canada's lakes and rivers, closed the ELA, gutted fisheries protection from the Fisheries Act and scrapped thousands of environmental assessments from massive pipeline projects. Just yesterday, we learned that the government will slash another \$100 million from Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

I call on the government to immediately change course and for once stand with Canadians to protect our fresh water.

* * *

RETIREMENT CONGRATULATIONS

Mr. Ed Holder (London West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank George Myatte, a Londoner who is being honoured today on the occasion of his retirement from the Canadian Forces. George has given so much more than just dedicated service; he is a true Canadian hero. He would not say so, but just look at his service to Canada. His career highlights include service in the Gulf war and the Bosnian war, as well as Kuwait and Yugoslavia. He has received countless honours and awards for his service. If ever anyone could be said to be a patriot, it is George Myatte.

In addition, he has been a driving force on behalf of London's military family resource centre and the Memory Project. These are testaments to his strong belief in giving back. Today, Londoners will gather to honour and thank George for his exemplary service. He has truly made London proud.

I look forward to seeing what the future holds for my friend. I know that he will take on his next endeavour with commitment, dignity and passion. George means many things to London and to Canada. To me, he is a dear friend of the highest order.

I thank him, I salute him and I honour him. On behalf of the House and our country, I would like to thank George for making a difference. *Pro patria.*

* * *

GEORGINA PALMER

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I stand to pay tribute to Georgina Palmer of Rocanville, Saskatchewan, who recently passed away in her 99th year. Georgina showed in so many ways the character of rural people who lived through the difficult years of the dirty thirties. Her home was open to all, night and day, and I was fortunate as a young 23-year-old farm activist to stay and learn from her the rural life of Saskatchewan prairie farmers.

An active member of the National Farmers Union and the Prosperity Women's Institute, she worked hard for her community. She loved to relate the stories of growing up in the Bear Creek area, which adjoins the Qu'Appelle Valley. Not at all ready to slow down after retiring from the farm, she worked her garden and did beadwork, quilting, crocheting and more. All of her work was for the benefit of others. She even started a thrift shop in her basement later in life, from which she made large donations to the community.

A beautiful life that came to an end, she died as she lived: as everyone's friend.

Statements by Members

● (1105)

STRATFORD FESTIVAL

Mr. Gary Schellenberger (Perth—Wellington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this spring the Stratford Festival will roar to life once again, bringing back the finest theatrical company in North America.

For 2013, the festival has outdone itself yet again, with a daring and impressive playbill sure to thrill experienced theatregoers and newcomers alike.

The list of not-to-miss productions this year includes *Romeo and Juliet*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *The Three Musketeers*, *Othello*, *Tommy*, *Waiting for Godot* and *The Merchant of Venice*.

Apart from world-class theatrical productions, the festival will hold a score of musical and cultural events.

I congratulate the Stratford Festival on its continued success and thank the festival for its countless contributions to the city of Stratford, the surrounding area and Canada. Over the decades the festival has added to the vibrancy and cultural wealth of the region, and I wish it all the best for 2013.

* * *

[Translation]

BRUNSWICK MINE

Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it saddens me to rise today to mark the end of an era in Acadie—Bathurst.

At the end of the month, the Brunswick Mine, located near Bathurst, will close its doors for good after 49 years in business. Eight hundred people will lose their jobs.

[English]

Brunswick Mine is an underground lead-zinc-copper mine. It began production in 1964. The Brunswick mine orebody was one of the largest underground zinc mines in the world well into the late nineties, and it produced more than 120 million tonnes of ore over the years.

[Translation]

In its heyday, the Brunswick Mine employed over 1,700 people. The closure of the mine will seriously affect northern New Brunswick's economy.

As a former Brunswick Mine miner, I feel for the workers, their families and the whole community.

I wish all of the employees who will be retiring a happy retirement, and I hope that the rest will find jobs they like.

I would like to thank Brunswick Mine for providing jobs for so many years in northeastern New Brunswick.

[English]

TAX INCENTIVES FOR CHARITABLE DONATIONS

Mr. Peter Braid (Kitchener—Waterloo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, economic action plan 2013 delivers real support for Canada's charities.

Responding to the finance committee's study on charitable giving that was triggered by my private member's motion, budget 2013 introduces the first-time donor's super credit, which will boost the charitable tax credit by 25% on donations of up to \$1,000 in any one taxation year.

This innovative new measure will expand the donor base by encouraging those who are not giving to start giving. It will especially encourage young Canadians to become donors and build important relationships with charitable organizations.

Charities fulfill an important role in our communities, and I am pleased that our government is committed to collaborating with the charitable sector to support its work toward building a better society.

* * *

TUBERCULOSIS

Mr. Joe Daniel (Don Valley East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, March 24 is World Tuberculosis Day. Last week I travelled with Results Canada to Malawi to view the impact of TB on people in the developing world and to view the incredible progress being made to combat this deadly disease.

TB kills over one million people every year and is spreading at alarming rates across Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. TB is also a leading killer of people living with HIV, yet TB is preventable and curable with treatments costing as little as \$20. I witnessed how Canadian investments in the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria are tackling TB and HIV co-infection and making incredible headway treating these two diseases.

Canadian leadership by TB REACH has made it the number one procurer and distributor of the GeneXpert machine, a revolutionary DNA-based TB diagnostic tool.

As the member for Don Valley East, I can say that many of my constituents care about this issue, and I am proud that this Conservative government is recognized as a world leader in global TB control.

* * *

SCHOOLS ON RESERVES

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I recently received letters and had the pleasure of meeting students from Tamanawis Secondary School in Surrey, B.C. These students are concerned about the state of education and schools on reserves in Canada.

These high school students are upset that first nations students attending schools on reserves receive a lower standard of education than students in the rest of Canada. These students recognize how important education is to their own future successes and want to make sure that the same opportunities are available for all young people in Canada.

Statements by Members

We must ensure that equal per-student funding is available so that students are treated equitably no matter where they live in this great land.

I want to thank the students of Tamanawis for sharing their thoughts with me, but most of all I want to congratulate their parents, their teachers and the young people in Newton—North Delta for the love, hope and optimism they provide in an often dismal world.

* * *

• (1110)

LAST POST FUND

Mr. Scott Armstrong (Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the veterans and legions across my riding to thank the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance for increasing the funding envelope of the Last Post Fund.

The Last Post Fund is the fund we use to show respect to our veteran soldiers, the ones who fought at Juno in Normandy, the ones who fought in the jungles of Burma, the ones who liberated millions of Europeans in World War II, a generation of soldiers who are coming to the ends of their lives.

Our government has answered their request to respect them by increasing the Last Post Fund from \$3,600 to \$7,300 to help and support their families with the funeral.

We need to show these veterans respect, both in life and in death. Our government has answered that call.

I call upon the opposition to stand and vote in favour of this budget. If it votes against budget 2013, it will be voting against every veteran across our country.

* * *

[*Translation*]

SILK INDUSTRY

Mr. Réjean Genest (Shefford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today I want to talk about a highly innovative company located in the industrial hotbed of Granby. It is developing a textile fibre from milkweed, an indigenous plant.

This company is called Encore 3, and its name refers to the company values of “environment”, “co-operation”, “research” and “employment”. Its research has uncovered the extraordinary potential of milkweed. This ultra-light vegetable silk has proven to be a warmer insulator than goose feathers and polar fleece. Another one of its interesting characteristics is that it can absorb up to 40 times its weight in oil, which would be helpful in the case of oil spills in the ocean, for example.

Encore 3 just founded a growers' co-op to farm 1,000 hectares and develop a milkweed supply. The first harvest is expected in 2014.

Long live Quebec's silk industry.

[*English*]

TARIFF REDUCTIONS

Mr. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I applaud economic action plan 2013 and its sharp focus on keeping Canada's economy strong while also delivering key measures that support Canadian families.

In order to lower prices for Canadian families, the budget will eliminate all tariffs on baby clothing. My son Jack turns 21 months old today and is going through clothes like wildfire. Parents of infants will notice this change.

Tariff reductions will also keep prices low on ice skates, hockey equipment, skis and other equipment to promote physical fitness. This will not only leave money in the pockets of Canadians but it will also lower the price gap between the U.S. and Canada, something we monitor closely.

On Saturday morning, I know that moms and dads in the Garnet Rickard arena in Bowmanville and on the slopes of Brimacombe ski resort in Durham will be talking about this family-friendly budget.

Here is what Dean LaPierre of the Windsor Minor Hockey Association had to say:

This is awesome. This will definitely help because the cost of equipment is the main thing people cite when deciding to register. ... It could cost \$600 to \$700 to equip one player, double if the kid's is a goalie...so this is a great.

Indeed it is great. I hope the NDP supports families and this budget.

* * *

NATIONAL WATER STRATEGY

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, water is our planet's most vital resource.

Humans can survive for about one month without food, but only three days without water. Without water, there is no agriculture to feed the rapidly expanding world population. Without water, we cannot contain the spread of disease through proper sanitation. Without sufficient water supplies, economic growth is stifled.

A wise Canadian water expert once said that if climate change is a shark, the shark's teeth are climate change's impact on water.

The reason we must do more to combat and adapt to climate change is that disequilibrium of the hydrologic cycle owing to climate change means that the earth cannot fully support our human, ecosystem and economic needs. Water science is one of the keys to overcoming future water challenges, whether from climate change, pollution or overconsumption.

In 2007 the House adopted my motion calling on the government to create a true national water strategy, complete with a vigorous water science component. World Water Day is an ideal starting point for launching a real effort to bring about such a strategy.

Oral Questions

●(1115)

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. David Wilks (Kootenay—Columbia, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians can be proud of the steps our government has taken to protect the environment.

The opposition parties deal in hot air and rhetoric, in contrast to the actual action our government is taking—action to improve the air we breathe, the land we occupy and the environment we work in.

While the Leader of the Opposition was spending time trying to undermine Canadian jobs and economic prosperity in Washington, our Minister of Finance was diligently working on a plan to secure our economic future and protect our environment.

The \$325 million announcement in yesterday's budget for Sustainable Development Technology Canada will help to develop clean new technologies that will create efficiencies for businesses and sustainable economic development for all Canadians.

Our government recognizes the link between protection of the environment and security of our economy. Unlike the NDP and the Liberals, we do not believe one has to take a back seat to the other.

* * *

THE BUDGET

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday's budget was beached before it arrived, like the *S. S. Minnow's* three-hour tour or an oil spill ship headed to a Conservative photo op. For the Conservatives, it is full steam ahead on cuts to pensions, health care and EI.

On top of their self-congratulatory speech full of unrealistic predictions, Conservatives have even introduced new taxes. That is right: tax hikes. In black and white, on page 331 of the budget, there are new taxes on safety deposit boxes, new taxes on credit unions and even new taxes on hospital parking fees.

How does charging people more when they visit a hospital help Canadians? No wonder the Minister of Finance slipped on his new pair of shoes and ran away from the budget as soon as he could.

New Democrats are united against these reckless cuts and will continue to hold Conservatives to account for their mismanagement and deceit.

Gilligan was funny. The government's economic failure is not.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Ryan Leef (Yukon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand in the House and report that yesterday the Minister of Finance delivered Canada's economic action plan 2013.

It is not just a plan; it is *the* plan for economic growth, jobs and long-term prosperity. It is a plan that includes a new building Canada plan, the Canada job grant, investment in the manufacturing industry, tariff relief for baby clothes and sports equipment, increased funding for the Last Post Fund and the list goes on.

While our government is taking action and delivering results for Canadians, the Leader of the Opposition is advocating for increased and reckless spending, increased taxes, and is trash-talking Canada. In fact, if it were up to the Leader of the Opposition and his party, they would impose a \$20 billion job-killing carbon tax that would raise the price on everything including gas, electricity and groceries.

On this side of the House, we will continue to stand up for Canadians. Our government will continue to support jobs, growth and long-term prosperity.

ORAL QUESTIONS[*Translation*]**EMPLOYMENT**

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as we speak, 240,000 young people do not have jobs. There are more unemployed youth now than there were before the recession. Those are the facts.

What is this budget doing? It is downloading astronomical costs onto the provinces, playing games with worker training and taxing hospital parking. What an insult.

Why did the Conservatives not use this budget to focus on jobs rather than on these misplaced priorities?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is not at all the case.

The priority of the budget tabled in the House is to create jobs. We are very proud that over 900,000 new jobs have been created since the end of the recession.

The opposition's real choice is to support the new measures set out in the budget: the Canada job grant, the creation of apprenticeship opportunities, and a tax break for new manufacturing equipment.

All these measures will create jobs, and the NDP must support them.

* * *

[*English*]**INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS**

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, rather than explain this budget to Canadians, this minister scooted off to China to try to sell this gong show budget.

Yesterday's budget made it clear that Conservatives have run out of steam. They are continuing last year's cuts to health care and to pensions, adding Mike Harris-style mandatory workfare for first nations and playing a shell game with skills training for Canadians. Their smoke and mirrors cannot hide these facts.

When will the Conservatives admit that they are downloading billions and billions of dollars onto the backs of the provinces?

Oral Questions

•(1120)

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the budget presented yesterday would give a 6% increase in health care funding to the provinces and territories. The budget yesterday would increase support for post-secondary education by 3%. The budget yesterday is squarely focused on what matters to Canadians: creating jobs, economic growth and securing our long-term prosperity.

Will the New Democrats, for once, put aside their blind ideology and support the Canada job grant and new measures for apprentices? Why do the New Democrats not stand up for people looking for work?

* * *

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, here is who is blind in this conversation: a Minister of Finance who first claims that there would be an increase in infrastructure spending and then later has to admit,

there is less spending, [...] on [...] infrastructure projects [...].

That is \$1.2 billion less, meaning less money for crumbling roads, less money for congested highways, less money for a starved public transit system. The Conservatives have lost their way and spend all of their time listening to their own rosy rhetoric instead of listening to Canadians.

When will the Conservatives drop the smoke and mirrors exercise and be honest with Canadians that \$1.2 billion less spending on infrastructure would hurt them and hurt our fragile economy?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let us look at the facts. This is the largest long-term federal infrastructure commitment in Canada's history. We are investing in infrastructure to create jobs and long-term prosperity. Thanks to our investment infrastructures, we are making a real difference. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities stated that “[this] budget delivers significant gains for Canada's cities and communities”.

Why do the New Democrats not put aside their blind ideology, stand up and support municipalities and stand up and support the construction of bridges, roads and sewers? Why will they not do the right thing and finally redeem themselves?

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is Conservatives who should redeem themselves because the reality is we would have more than \$1 billion less in infrastructure.

[*Translation*]

The reality is that over a billion dollars less is being invested in infrastructure. Even the Minister of Finance admitted it yesterday.

These cuts will cause the loss of tens of thousands of jobs. The rebuilding of vital roads and bridges will be delayed or even abandoned.

Why does the Minister of Finance not take infrastructure funding more seriously?

Mr. Pierre Poilievre (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and for the

Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the NDP is isolating itself.

Those who understand what is at stake support the budget.

[*English*]

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities stated:

[The] budget delivers significant gains for Canada's cities and communities.

This is [also] a budget that delivers real gains for Canadians. [...] it will spur growth and job creation while laying the foundation for a more competitive economy.

Those who are in the infrastructure sector and who are working on the ground say that this budget would deliver for the Canadian people. Why do the New Democrats not support it?

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is too bad that it would deliver after the year 2020 and beyond.

The Minister of Finance admitted that he would cut infrastructure funding, right before he headed to the hills to avoid selling his budget. The fact is that for the next four years, federal infrastructure funding would be \$4.7 billion lower, and there is still a \$120 billion infrastructure deficit facing our communities. With tens of thousands of jobs on the line, crumbling bridges, roads in gridlock, transit being starved, why are the Conservatives taking this reckless approach?

Mr. Pierre Poilievre (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the reason that the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and others are supporting our approach and our budget is because there is a difference here. On this side, we support more results for infrastructure. On that side, they support more expensive programs. They want to spend on fattened union contracts and administrative costs. We want to deliver results, and we have. The average age of a piece of infrastructure in Canada has dropped to 14 years from 17 years. In other words, our infrastructure is newer today than at any time in the last three decades.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT

Hon. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today Canada has 260,000 jobs without people and more than 1.3 million people without jobs. Youth employment rates are five points worse than in 2007. Student debt is at \$1 trillion, and over a third of Canadians in their late twenties are still living at home with their folks. The government calls the job skills gap the biggest challenge of our time, so why is there no new money for training and no new plan for five years?

Why are the Conservatives prepared to waste the potential of a generation of young Canadians?

Oral Questions

• (1125)

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is not the case at all. We have come forward with an economic action plan which is focused on fixing our country's skills shortage by getting Canadians new and better jobs. We are going to do something remarkable. We are going to ensure that people get trained for a job that actually exists. We are going to work cooperatively with the provinces and employers to get the job done. The initiatives put forward in this budget will make a real difference and help build upon the 950,000 net new jobs that this government has created since the bottom of the recession.

* * *

THE BUDGET

Hon. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, not only is there no new money for skills training, this budget actually freezes funding at 2007 levels, which was before the downturn. Today the need for training is even greater than it was then. Not just that, freezing the funding at 2007 levels means there has actually been a 10% decrease in terms of real dollars.

The Conservatives were right to call Canada's skills gap a crisis, but why are they being so wrong by putting in no resources to actually address it? Why is spending money on Conservative government advertising more important than investing in today's youth?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I did not even mention that we increased the transfers to the provinces to an unprecedented level, by 3%, to support post-secondary education. That is good news.

I can remember when the acting leader of the Liberal Party was premier of Ontario. He used to decry the cuts that the Liberal government made to provinces and territories, the cuts to post-secondary education, the cuts to health care. This government is there.

The Association of Canadian Community Colleges said:

Federal commitments...will encourage a reduction in barriers to Canada's economic success, while maximizing the talents and advanced skills of Canadians.

Let us work together to help the unemployed get the skills and training they need to move to work.

* * *

[Translation]

INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government has acquired the bad habit of never consulting the provinces. This is part and parcel of the Conservatives' narrow-mindedness. They do not listen to anyone—neither the opposition nor Canadians. The government listens only to the sound of its own voice. It imposes rather than consults.

The fact that the government did not bother to consult the provinces before unveiling its new plan for worker training is yet more evidence of this.

Why does the government have so much contempt for the provinces? Is this any way to manage a federation?

[English]

Ms. Kellie Leitch (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour, CPC): Mr. Speaker, economic action plan 2013 is focused on fixing our country's skills shortages by getting Canadians new or better jobs. For the first time, the Canada jobs grant will take skills training choices out of the hands of governments and put them where they belong, with employers and employees, so that we can create jobs. This will result in people getting trained for the jobs that actually exist.

We want to work with the provinces to take training from government to employers and employees. This is going to build upon our 950,000 net new jobs since the downturn in the recession.

* * *

[Translation]

TAXATION

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, by progressively eliminating the tax credit granted to people who contribute to labour-sponsored funds, the Conservatives are unnecessarily attacking a model of economic success that is unique to Quebec. Labour-sponsored funds have helped create and maintain tens of thousands of jobs in Quebec in all sectors. Their very existence is in jeopardy now that the government is abolishing tax credits for these funds.

Why are the Conservatives abolishing such a wonderful model of economic development in the middle of a period of economic instability?

Mrs. Shelly Glover (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the tax credit was not helping stimulate economic growth and job creation. That is what we learned from our consultations and independent experts, such as the OECD.

We are replacing the credit with the government's new venture capital strategy by investing \$400 million. The Province of Ontario has also eliminated this tax credit.

The provinces are free to do what they want and to find their own means of investment. We will listen to the experts.

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, they claim that the economy is their priority, except they are sabotaging proven models of economic development.

More than 700,000 shareholders have contributed to labour-sponsored funds, which invest primarily in regional development. The tax credit is an incentive to invest. By eliminating the credit, the Conservatives are targeting 200,000 well-paid jobs.

Oral Questions

Yet again yesterday, the Conservatives demonstrated their total lack of understanding of the economic reality in Quebec's regions. Will they reconsider this irresponsible measure that could cost thousands of jobs?

• (1130)

Mrs. Shelly Glover (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I said, the tax credit was not working and the provinces are free to find other means of investment. We will listen to the experts.

We have seen the NDP's record and how they throw up roadblocks to job creation and investments in our country. We will not listen to the NDP either. We have created 950,000 jobs since the recession and we will continue to create jobs with the budget we just tabled.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT

Ms. Isabelle Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, NDP): Mr. Speaker, perhaps the Minister of Finance does not want to answer questions because he knows that his botched budget does not meet the employment needs of Canadians.

Seventy per cent of jobs created in the coming decade will require post-secondary training, but what does the budget do to ensure that education will be more affordable? Nothing. What does it do to reduce the burden of student debt? Nothing. What does it do to create jobs that match the skills of young graduates? Nothing.

Why is the Minister of Finance ignoring the lack of employment for our young people?

[*English*]

Ms. Kellie Leitch (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour, CPC): Mr. Speaker, economic action plan 2013 puts forward a number of initiatives to make sure that Canadians have opportunities for jobs, whether that be the Canada job grant or the creation of 5,000 new post-secondary internships. We are moving forward to make sure Canadians have the skills they need to get the jobs they need.

The Association of Canadian Community Colleges had this to say:

Federal commitments in Budget 2013 will encourage a reduction in barriers to Canada's economic success, while maximizing the talents and advanced skills of Canadians....

ACCC congratulates the government for making investments designed to address Canada's skills gap.

* * *

[*Translation*]

PENSIONS

Ms. Éline Michaud (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it seems as though the Minister of Finance is trying to run away from his budget as quickly as possible. This is not surprising: his budget does nothing for seniors.

The Conservatives are moving forward with their brutal changes to income security for seniors by raising the age of eligibility for old age security and the guaranteed income supplement from 65 to 67.

The Conservatives had an opportunity to help the one-quarter of seniors who live below the poverty line, but their budget only makes things worse.

Why are the Conservatives abandoning our seniors?

[*English*]

Ms. Kellie Leitch (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour, CPC): Mr. Speaker, seniors have contributed so much to building this country. That is why this government has been focused on supporting them, whether that be through the increase in the GIS, the largest increase in the last quarter century, which the opposition did not support, or through our investments that have lowered poverty rates down from the over 5.2% under the Liberals.

We are focused on making sure that seniors are supported, unlike the opposition parties.

Mr. Mike Sullivan (York South—Weston, NDP): Mr. Speaker, instead of defending his budget, the Minister of Finance has run away from it in his new shoes. There is no action in this plan for seniors. The Canadian Association of Retired Persons said that seniors "will be disappointed that the federal budget contained little to address their priority concerns". Too many Canadian seniors are struggling. Cheaper hockey gear will not put food on the table, a roof over their heads or pay for prescription drugs.

Why are Conservatives failing Canadian seniors and pushing ahead with their reckless cuts to income security?

Ms. Kellie Leitch (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let me be very clear. The opposition has not supported any of the initiatives we put forward to support seniors, whether that be the increase in the GIS, the guaranteed income supplement or the creation of a minister of state to support seniors.

This government has been focused on making sure seniors are supported. We will continue to do that. We ask the NDP why it never supported any of these initiatives that we put forward.

* * *

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, every young Canadian deserves an equal chance in life, but first nation students attending on-reserve schools receive 30% less funding than their peers in provincial schools. The budget does nothing to close this gap, not one extra dollar for first nations' K to 12 education. Instead, first nations get a punitive workfare program to which no other Canadians are subject.

Why are Conservatives ignoring the real need for education?

Oral Questions

Mr. Greg Rickford (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, not only did our government reaffirm our consultations and our process through the first nation education act, we also committed to new resources for scholarships, bursaries and training for aboriginal students.

These investments build on last year's budget investments in new resources for new schools, literacy programs and administration of aboriginal education. The opposition members voted against all of these. I urge them to stop voting against improvements for aboriginal education and vote in favour of this year's budget.

• (1135)

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the NDP will continue to vote against budgets that do not get the job done.

The workfare program for first nations people is not only insultingly paternalistic, it is a waste of taxpayer money. The government would spend more money enforcing compliance than on the actual training. This sounds like more bureaucrats in Ottawa, not more jobs on reserves.

When will the minister start providing first nations with the education that they need and the respect that they deserve?

Mr. Greg Rickford (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we want to ensure that young aboriginal Canadians have access to personalized job training to help them secure a job. Provinces have been doing this kind of programming successfully for many years.

The outrageous comments by the Leader of the Opposition yesterday remind us how out of touch the NDP is with the potential of the aboriginal workforce and the Canadian economy. While the NDP betrays Canada's interests at home and abroad, we are creating jobs and growth for aboriginal Canadians.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jonathan Genest-Jourdain (Manicouagan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives promised to make aboriginal issues a priority in the 2013 budget.

Although the word “aboriginal” is used a lot, there is no real commitment. Once again, these are broken promises.

The money announced for the first nations infrastructure fund will not be enough to address the housing crisis and the lack of drinking water in the communities.

When will the Conservatives keep the promises they made to aboriginal peoples and treat them as equal partners?

[*English*]

Mr. Greg Rickford (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern

Ontario, CPC): An interesting question, Mr. Speaker, because every time we make substantial moves forward with our aboriginal partners and communities and leadership, the NDP votes against.

We have been focusing on education. We have been focusing on water and waste water treatment on reserves, the ability to have the capacity to maintain these state-of-the-art facilities, continuing to replace infrastructure and bringing forth the kind of legislation that deals with these major infrastructure commitments and shared priorities with first nation communities.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Romeo Saganash (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, NDP): Mr. Speaker, \$132 million to manage a \$109 million program. Only the Conservatives can come up with that.

What we do see in this budget is the frequent use of the word “aboriginal”, but no real investments.

Aboriginal peoples reached out to the government and were hoping for real change.

Instead, they are offered insulting, paternalistic measures with not enough funding to attack the problems they are facing.

When will the Prime Minister establish a respectful relationship? I can tell the House that we are not waiting.

Mr. Greg Rickford (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have to ensure that aboriginal youth have access to personalized training that will help them find work. That is exactly what the provinces have been doing successfully for many years.

Yesterday's comments by the Leader of the Opposition demonstrate once again how out of touch the NDP is with the Canadian economy and the potential of the aboriginal workforce.

While the NDP betrays Canada's interests at home and abroad, we are creating jobs and prospects for the future.

Oral Questions

[English]

ETHICS

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister will go to any length to blame others and cover for the disgraced former minister, Peter Penashue. The Conservatives threw Reg Bowers, his former campaign manager and official agent, under the bus, even though they appointed him as a highly qualified member to the offshore petroleum board.

That has not stopped the controversy over Penashue's law-breaking deeds. Is that why the Prime Minister has spent thousands of taxpayers' dollars to pay back Penashue's illegal donations, and now uses the PMO to promote him?

Mr. Pierre Poilievre (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in addition to being a question filled with falsehoods, I do not know why the Liberals would pick that particular member to ask ethics questions. After all, he was forced to repay money that he illegally collected from taxpayers for his housing allowance. Members cannot reimburse rent they have paid to themselves through a House of Commons taxpayer-funded housing program, as that member can now attest, having paid the money back.

By contrast, we on this side of the House are proud to support a hard-working and honest future member of Parliament in Peter Penashue.

* * *

● (1140)

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is not unusual to see mud as a diversion from that member. However, we could get into the parliamentary secretary's robocall company, 3D Contact Inc., that violated CRTC rules, if he wants to go down that path.

Let us get to the administration and the management of government. That is what the question is about.

Let us remember the promise of 650 troops for Goose Bay, the promise for a rapid reaction battalion and the UAV squadron promise. They never came through. The Prime Minister never delivered, nor did Mr. Penashue.

Why did the—

The Speaker: Order, please. The hon. Minister of National Defence.

Hon. Peter MacKay (Minister of National Defence, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as the parliamentary secretary has said numerous times in the House, Mr. Penashue has not only delivered for CFB Goose Bay, he has delivered on many fronts, whether it be the Labrador highway or his efforts to ensure the long-term sustainability of the seal hunt. Unlike the member who has just asked the question, he kept faith with his constituents when it came to the dismantling of the wasteful long gun registry, which was set up under this member's government.

Therefore, when it comes to the lessons learned about delivering for constituents and getting the job done, there is nothing to be learned from the member for Malpeque.

* * *

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Cardigan, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, after slashing DFO by \$80 million last year, the government is now gutting another \$100 million out of the departmental budget this year. That will certainly not fix the problems at DFO. It would not bring back the Coast Guard stations, the ELA or protect fish habitat. The budget also includes a cut of around \$16 million a year for small craft harbours.

Does the government not realize that by continually slashing the budget of the department and continually slashing the small craft harbours budget, it is destroying our Canadian fisheries?

Mr. Randy Kamp (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thought the member opposite would be rising to congratulate our government on the significant investments in the Canadian fishing industry in economic action plan 2013. If he reads it, he will see that it includes support for first nation fishing enterprises, improving the conservation of fisheries and enhancing regulatory certainty for the agricultural sector. All of these enhance the sustainability of commercial, recreational and aboriginal fisheries, to which we are fully committed.

* * *

[Translation]

SMALL BUSINESSES

Mr. François Lapointe (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, NDP): Mr. Speaker, increasing the capital gains exemption to \$800,000 and indexing it may seem like a step in the right direction for small and medium-sized businesses, but the government is actually taking more than it is giving. By changing the dividend tax credit, this government will rob small and medium-sized businesses of \$2.3 billion even though these businesses are key to our very fragile economic recovery.

Why not offer them genuine help with their attempts to invest in the real economy?

Mrs. Shelly Glover (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as the member knows, this is just a minor change to ensure that the dividend tax credit is appropriate.

Rather, the issue is this: how does our record compare to the NDP's? We have done a lot for small businesses in previous budgets and in this one. The NDP, however, told Washington that Canadians' jobs are worthless. We stand with Canadian businesses, and we will always do so.

*Oral Questions**[English]*

Mr. Dan Harris (Scarborough Southwest, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives give with one hand and take back more with the other. Changing the dividend tax credit in the budget will hurt small businesses everywhere across the country, especially since there are no measures in the budget to completely offset this. Small businesses represent 48% of private sector jobs in our country. If we want them to create jobs and grow we should not be stifling their efforts.

Can the Conservatives explain how they expect small businesses to create jobs when they take \$2.3 billion out of their pockets?

Mrs. Shelly Glover (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member knows very well it was a simple, technical fix on that credit.

Here is what the Canadian Federation of Independent Business has said about economic action plan 2013:

Overall, this is a good budget for small business. [The minister] has done a solid job by remaining on course to eliminate the deficit while announcing some important measures for Canada's entrepreneurs[....] We're particularly pleased the government publicly acknowledged taking some of these measures—such as the expansion of the EI Hiring Credit—at the recommendation of CFIB's 109,000 members.

* * *

• (1145)

TAXATION

Mr. Dan Harris (Scarborough Southwest, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is just a big shell game with them. In another shocking reversal of policy, Conservatives killed a four-decade-old policy and added a brand new tax on Canada's credit unions. They did it without consultation and without warning.

Credit unions are vital participants in their communities. They are owned by Canadians, not by Bay Street, and they provide invaluable banking options for Canadians. Why are they attacking Canada's credit unions with new taxes?

Mrs. Shelly Glover (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, once again, the NDP is really out of touch on this one. The credit unions will continue to have access to the small business tax rate on the same basis as every other small business in Canada. The additional deduction is an outdated tax preference and is no longer necessary, due to changes in the small business tax rate.

So out of touch is the NDP that it did not even realize that Quebec eliminated special access for credit unions to its reduced provincial tax rate in 2003.

[Translation]

Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP): Mr. Speaker, what people will remember is that this government has given us its seventh deficit budget.

The best idea the Minister of Finance could come up with was to impose a \$10-million tax on Canadian members of credit unions. That is indefensible. No wonder he ran off to Malaysia. Desjardins alone will have to pay \$75 million, or 6% of its profits. That means members will get less back from their credit unions.

The Conservatives did their worst with workers' money, and now they are targeting a successful economic model that got its start in Quebec—

The Speaker: The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance.

Mrs. Shelly Glover (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, first, as we have always said, we are on track for a balanced budget by 2015.

Credit unions will still have access to the small business tax rate, like all other small businesses in Canada. The additional deduction is an outdated tax preference and is no longer necessary given the benefits of our new tax rates. That is why Quebec eliminated its reduced rate in 2003.

* * *

*[English]***HUMAN RESOURCES AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**

Mr. John Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday's budget was a triumph for small businesses, for workers and for Canadians, including those in the beautiful riding of West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country.

The minister announced a Canada job grant that will better align skills with that which employers need and with the jobs that are readily available. Could the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of HRSDC give us some indication of what responses the minister has had to the Canada job grant?

Ms. Kellie Leitch (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country for his huge contributions to the budget.

The minister has informed me that she has spoken with her provincial counterparts and looks forward to working with all of them on the new Canada job grant.

As the National Association of Career Colleges has said:

Thanks to the reforms proposed in this budget, including the new Canada Jobs Grant, an increased number of unemployed and underemployed Canadians will be able to obtain the training that they need to access jobs that in demand now, and will be in the future.

I could go on, Mr. Speaker, but we are doing a great—

[Translation]

The Speaker: Order.

The hon. member for Pontiac.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Mathieu Ravignat (Pontiac, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we hoped that the Conservatives would learn from their mistakes. Apparently, that is too much to ask.

As a reminder, the last budget axed environmental assessments, killed the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, and put an end to protection measures for our lakes and rivers. Yesterday's budget is so inadequate that it does not even mention climate change.

Why do the Conservatives continue to reduce investment and refuse to tackle environmental issues?

[English]

Ms. Michelle Rempel (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would encourage my colleague opposite to actually read through the budget and to vote for measures that are included in there, including funding for the Sustainable Development Technology Canada, which helps to develop and accelerate the adoption of clean energy technologies, and things like additional funding for the Nature Conservancy of Canada, which protects ecologically sensitive areas.

Our track record speaks for itself. I ask him to please vote for the budget.

Mr. Fin Donnelly (New Westminster—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we would vote for something we could believe in. This budget shows the Conservatives' complete disregard for protecting Canada's fisheries and environment, slashing hundreds of millions from DFO and hinting at more consolidation, while putting aside a pittance for community groups to do fisheries habitat protection. If only we had a law that protected fish habitat.

Does the minister not realize that his attacks on the environment will leave Canadians and our fisheries high and dry?

• (1150)

Mr. Randy Kamp (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the department is making operations more efficient by simplifying its management and organizational structure. This means reducing administrative expenses for management and overhead, reducing duplication and improving our decision-making processes. I wonder which of these the member is opposed to doing.

This will not put our front-line staff or our services to Canadians in any worse condition.

[Translation]

Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canadians could not disagree more with the government's response.

This year, the Conservatives may not want to boast about gutting environmental protections, but at one time, they were quite proud of that fact. They were quite proud of their irresponsible measures that kept communities from participating in the consultation process and gutted environmental reviews.

Will the minister now admit that the Conservative agenda is not in the interests of Canadians, that it fails the environment and that it is harming our good jobs that depend on the environment?

[English]

Ms. Michelle Rempel (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would remind my colleague opposite that in economic action plan 2012, we

actually increased funding for consultations for environmental assessments. Also, the Commissioner of the Environment stated that reducing the amount of small assessments, for projects such as installing a park bench in a national park, would actually see us spending better resources on larger projects with greater environmental impact.

The real question, the real failure, is the NDP's ideological opposition to the development of our energy sector when the science says that this creates jobs and economic growth in an environmentally responsible way.

Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the environment commissioner actually denounced the fact that you had eliminated 99% of environmental assessments.

The Speaker: The hon. member knows that he has to address his comments through the Chair and not directly at his colleagues. I hope that he remembers that.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Natural Resources held a photo op on Monday to talk about accidents, but it actually caused a shipwreck, which is a real metaphor for the government. It is shipwrecking the environment, and it is sinking the jobs that depend on a clean environment, with deeper cuts to DFO, after it already cut fish habitat protection, and failure to reverse the devastating cuts to environmental reviews. Climate change does not even merit a single mention.

The question is clear: Why do they not stop wrecking the environment and start protecting it?

Ms. Michelle Rempel (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I always relish the opportunity to correct the record.

The Commissioner of the Environment actually said that the majority of screenings are for very small projects for which there are no significant environmental impacts. The agency has estimated that 94% of screenings would not pose significant adverse environmental impacts.

What would pose adverse economic impacts is the NDP's constant denigration of our country's major energy sector, one of the major sectors of economic growth and job creation. When will the member opposite get on board with the sector that is actually creating jobs and growth for this country?

* * *

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (St. Paul's, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, budget 2013 is an uneconomic inaction plan for aboriginal people.

Only one third of aboriginal children are finishing high school, yet budget 2013 fails to provide one new dollar for first nations' K to 12 education. One cannot benefit from skills training without basic math and reading skills.

Oral Questions

Will the government remove the funding cap and close the funding gap for first nations education, or will it continue to deprive the fastest growing part of our population from fully participating in Canada's economy?

Mr. Greg Rickford (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, not only did our government reaffirm our commitment to consult with first nations across Canada on the development of a first nations education act to improve outcomes for aboriginal children in K to 12, we also committed new resources for scholarships, bursaries and training for aboriginal students. These investments build on last year's investments and new resources for new schools, literacy programming and administration of aboriginal education on reserve.

That member, her party and the official opposition voted against it all.

* * *

INFRASTRUCTURE

Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives' spin machine, of course, is in high gear after the announcement of their economic inaction plan yesterday.

The Conservatives slashed infrastructure to wipe away red ink, hoping that no one would notice, but believe me, Canadians are not going to be fooled. Communities had been promised over \$5 billion for infrastructure, and the government has now slashed that to \$3 billion. Conservatives have again failed to deliver on promises, so now they say, nudge nudge, wink wink, "just wait, trust me".

How can Canadians possibly trust a government that clearly makes lots of talk, lots of hot air, and delivers very little?

• (1155)

Mr. Pierre Poilievre (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let us talk about what the Liberals delivered. When we took office, the average piece of infrastructure in the country was 17 years old, a historic high. Now, it is 14 years old. Our infrastructure has not been this renewed in three decades. That is because we have been rebuilding, replacing and reconstructing our infrastructure and getting the results on the ground.

We now have a long-term plan to build even further. Let us keep building.

* * *

THE BUDGET

Mr. Ryan Cleary (St. John's South—Mount Pearl, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Labrador has been all over the national news lately. Unfortunately for Labradorians, none of it has been good. Back home, they are saying one can either do it the right way or the Penashue.

To make matters worse, Labradorians were also stiffed in yesterday's budget. Labrador was only mentioned once, and that

was for an old jobs program. For Conservatives, Labrador is just a place to pull puppet strings.

Why was the big land forgotten in yesterday's budget?

Mr. Pierre Poilievre (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the people of Labrador have taken the Penashue all the way to results. That is exactly what we expect them to do in the next election. He delivered for the Muskrat Falls project, which has created jobs. The long gun registry is gone. The seal hunt and the polar bear hunt are here to stay.

He is delivering results on the ground, and the people of his community will have a chance to celebrate those results and send him back to Ottawa to deliver more.

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ETHICS

Mr. Ryan Cleary (St. John's South—Mount Pearl, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the seal hunt, the biggest collapse of the world's seal market, has happened under the Conservative government's watch.

The fact of the matter is that this man, Penashue, broke the law. He cheated. As his time as an MP was coming to an end, Conservatives used his ministerial position to make a government announcement and gain an unfair advantage. He started a website and took out a full page ad, all before he resigned.

Why is the Prime Minister standing with a man who cheated, who broke the law and who abandoned any pretence?

Mr. Pierre Poilievre (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I cannot believe they put that particular member up to ask about the seal hunt. It was not so long ago that he went on a radio interview to say that he thought the seal hunt had no future at all. Since that time, thank goodness, Peter Penashue stood and fought back and defended the seal hunt for his constituents and for rural and remote Canadians across the country.

Speaking of seals, Peter Penashue defended the elimination of the long gun registry. When the hon. member for St. John's South—Mount Pearl had a chance to vote, he voted like a trained seal.

*Oral Questions***INFRASTRUCTURE**

Mr. David Sweet (Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Minister of Finance tabled the next phase of our economic action plan, which will focus on jobs and economic growth. Among many measures announced in our economic action plan 2013, our government introduced the new building Canada plan. Could the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities tell us about our new federal investments in job-creating infrastructure?

Mr. Pierre Poilievre (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in the last seven years, we have successfully reduced the average age of our infrastructure to 14. That means that our infrastructure is newer than at any time in the last three decades. We built on that plan with a new one. Over ten years, predictable funding will also allow for more private sector competition to help get Canadians where they are going faster with a lower tax bill.

When it comes to infrastructure, the Conservative government knows where the rubber meets the road.

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INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last night, the Prime Minister's Office appropriated CIDA to itself in order to advance Canada's business interests and the Prime Minister's political interests. Any poverty alleviation will happen by accident rather than by design.

In order to get foreign aid money, the world's poorest will have to learn to do business with us and be politically obedient. How does the minister feel about misappropriating the money set aside for the world's poorest and most desperate for his political interests?

• (1200)

Ms. Lois Brown (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have made Canada's aid more focused, effective and accountable. We are enshrining in law the important roles and responsibilities for the international development and humanitarian assistance minister. This change will coordinate all of our international assistance with broader Canadian values and objectives and it will put development on equal footing with trade and diplomacy. Canadians want to know that their development dollars are making results.

[Translation]

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier-Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, merging CIDA with DFAIT could have been a perfect opportunity to bolster the image of international development under the direction of an excellent minister. However, given the Conservatives' appalling record when it comes to international development, we can just forget about that. They have slashed the aid budget, linked that aid to the interests of large corporations and politicized the funding process.

Will the minister commit to focusing his efforts on what—

The Speaker: The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation.

[English]

Ms. Lois Brown (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I said before, we have made our aid more focused, more effective and more accountable.

I would like to read what the leader of the member's party actually said in his policy document. He wrote, "making development assistance central to our foreign policy by moving the Canadian International Development Agency to the heart of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade". Why is the member not supporting her leader?

* * *

*[Translation]***MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY**

Mr. Royal Galipeau (Ottawa—Orléans, CPC): Mr. Speaker, nearly two million Canadians work in the manufacturing sector. These Canadians and their families expect their government to support their jobs, not undermine them. The last thing they want is a government that taxes everything that moves and travels to foreign capitals to ruin their reputation.

[English]

Canadians certainly do not want a government that taxes everything that moves and visits foreign capitals to talk down the Canadian economy.

[Translation]

Can the government confirm how we will continue to stand up for jobs and strengthen the competitiveness of our manufacturers and processors?

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his very relevant question and I congratulate him on the great work he does for the people of Ottawa-Orléans.

Our government will continue to support Canadian manufacturers and processors through initiatives that will enable them to work to their full potential, innovate and remain competitive in the global economy, which will benefit Canadian families for years to come.

Our economic action plan 2013 demonstrates once again that while our government is working to ensure Canada's prosperity, the NDP would rather go traipsing around the world and sabotage our economic development while they are at it.

* * *

TAXATION

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher, NDP): Mr. Speaker, what verbiage.

Routine Proceedings

By cutting the tax credit for the labour-sponsored funds, the disciples across the way have decided to attack one of the jewels of Quebec's economy. These funds are a unique model of prosperity in the Americas. Tens of thousands of Quebeckers count on a stable job because of these funds. The Conservatives do not want to preserve these jobs. With their budget choices, they are clearly showing their ignorance of the reality in Quebec. Fortunately, the people of Quebec voted NDP in the last election.

What gives the government the right to assault the drivers of economic development in Quebec in the middle of a period of economic instability?

Mrs. Shelly Glover (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will repeat what I said previously. The tax credit did not favour economic growth and job creation, as indicated by independent experts, including the OECD, during our consultations.

We are replacing this credit through the government's new strategy for venture capital by investing \$400 million. Ontario has also eliminated this tax credit. The provinces are free to choose their own investments. For our part, we are listening to the experts.

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INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

Mr. Jean-François Fortin (Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matapédia, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the 2013 budget is a direct attack on the way Quebec does things. Ottawa will take away millions of dollars from Quebec that would help the unemployed find jobs. In its place, the federal government is pushing a program that will force workers and the Quebec government to provide more money if they want the federal government to contribute. In order to hand out cheques with the maple leaf on them, the federal government is ready to axe initiatives that are working well.

Will the Minister of Finance listen to his Quebec counterpart, who has condemned this full-on attack against Quebec, and will he stop the federal government's interference in manpower training?

• (1205)

[English]

Ms. Kellie Leitch (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada's economic action plan 2013 is focused on fixing our country's skill shortage by giving Canadians new or better jobs. We want to work with the provinces and take training from governments and provide that opportunity to employers and employees.

Our government is taking decisive action to create good jobs and see a higher quality of life for hard-working Canadians. We encourage the opposition members to support this initiative.

* * *

[Translation]

TAXATION

Mr. André Bellavance (Richmond—Arthabaska, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the elimination of the labour-sponsored funds tax credit is another frontal attack on Quebec and its workers.

In addition to impoverishing people who are trying to save for their retirement, the federal government is also going to deprive Quebec SMEs of a key economic lever.

Labour-sponsored funds are an integral part of Quebec's economic organization, as demonstrated by the fact that \$312 million of the \$355 million Ottawa plans to take away from workers will be from Quebec.

How can the Minister of Finance eliminate a program that encourages workers to save and an economic development tool that works? Why did the government table an anti-Quebec, anti-worker, anti-union budget?

Mrs. Shelly Glover (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, once again, I have already answered this question: the tax credit was not working.

However, the real question is this: will the opposition support economic action plan 2013, which supports skills development, persons with disabilities, youth, aboriginal people and newcomers to Canada?

Will they support help for manufacturers and their employees? Will they help small businesses to create jobs by supporting our budget? I hope they will, because Quebeckers are counting on them to give us their support.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

CONFLICT OF INTEREST CODE

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Pursuant to section 15(3) of the Conflict of Interest Code for Members of the House of Commons, it is my duty to lay upon the table the list of all sponsored travel by members for the year 2012, as provided by the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner.

* * *

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36.8 I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to six petitions.

* * *

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there has been discussion among the parties and I think you would find agreement for the following motion. I move:

Routine Proceedings

HEALTH

Hon. Gordon O'Connor (Minister of State and Chief Government Whip, CPC): I move:

That, in relation to its study on technological innovation, eleven members of the Standing Committee on Health be authorized to travel to Montréal, Quebec, in the winter-spring of 2013, and that the necessary staff accompany the Committee.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Does the chief government whip have the unanimous consent of the House to propose the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

[*Translation*]

PETITIONS

PARENTAL LEAVE

Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the people who signed this petition are asking the government to make the necessary changes to the Canada Labour Code to increase parental leave to a maximum of 72 weeks in the case of the birth or adoption of multiples.

They are also asking the government to amend the Employment Insurance Act to increase the maximum number of weeks during which parental benefits can be paid out at 70% in the case of the birth or adoption of multiples.

Several hundred people have signed this petition.

[*English*]

SEX SELECTION

Mr. LaVar Payne (Medicine Hat, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to present another petition from over 200 individuals.

The petitioners ask that the House condemn discrimination against females occurring through sex-selective pregnancy termination. They ask members of Parliament to support Motion No. 408 and condemn sex selection.

ANIMAL WELFARE

Mr. Alex Atamanenko (British Columbia Southern Interior, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have two sets of petitions to present.

The first petition has over 500 names from Ontario, B.C. and Alberta. The petitioners point out that horses are ordinarily kept and treated as sport and companion animals. They are not raised as food production. They are commonly administered drugs that are strictly prohibited from being used in the food chain.

The petitioners call upon the House of Commons and Parliament to bring forth and adopt into legislation my bill, Bill C-322, an act to amend the Health of Animals Act and the Meat Inspection Act.

That, notwithstanding any Standing Order or usual practice of the House, following oral questions on Wednesday, March 27, 2013, a member from each recognized party, as well as the member for Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour and the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands may make a brief statement and the time taken for these statements shall be added to the time provided for government orders.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Does the hon. member for Winnipeg North have the unanimous consent of the House to propose the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PUBLIC SAFETY AND NATIONAL SECURITY

Hon. Gordon O'Connor (Minister of State and Chief Government Whip, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there have been consultations and I believe you would find agreement for the following travel motions. I move:

That, in relation to its study on the economics of policing, six members of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security be authorized to travel to San Diego, Los Angeles and San Francisco, California, United States of America, in the winter-spring of 2013, and that the necessary staff accompany the committee.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Does the chief government whip have the unanimous consent of the House to propose the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motions?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

• (1210)

Hon. Gordon O'Connor (Minister of State and Chief Government Whip, CPC): I move:

That, in relation to its study on the economics of policing, six members of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security be authorized to travel to London and Manchester, United Kingdom, in the winter-spring of 2013, and that the necessary staff accompany the committee.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Does the chief government whip have the unanimous consent of the House to propose the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

Routine Proceedings

The second petition is from folks from B.C. and Ontario with over 300 signatures.

The petitioners are calling for stronger animal cruelty legislation. Canadians are tired of hearing about animals that are being abused, while their abusers walk free. As well, the link between cruelty to animals and cruelty to humans has been well documented.

The petitioners call upon the House of Commons to work with the provinces to ensure federal and provincial laws are constructed and enforced to ensure that those responsible for abusing, neglecting, torturing, or otherwise harming animals are held appropriately accountable.

SEX SELECTION

Mr. Randy Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present this petition signed by residents of the Lower Mainland, in British Columbia. The petitioners call upon Parliament to condemn discrimination against females that occurs through sex-selective pregnancy termination.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Fin Donnelly (New Westminster—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present three petitions.

The first is from Canadians who call on the House of Commons to support Motion No. 400, moved by the member for Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, to protect the water and public health of our rural communities.

SHARK FINNING

Mr. Fin Donnelly (New Westminster—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is from thousands of Canadians who call on the Government of Canada to immediately legislate a ban on the importation of shark fin to Canada.

SEARCH AND RESCUE

Mr. Fin Donnelly (New Westminster—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the final petition is to save the Kitsilano Coast Guard station. Whereas the recent decision by the federal government to close the Kitsilano Coast Guard station is a grave mistake that will undoubtedly cost lives of those in peril on shores and waters near Vancouver harbour, the petitioners call on the Government of Canada to rescind its decision and reinstate full funding to maintain the Kitsilano Coast Guard station.

SEX SELECTION

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition from some of the residents of Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo who ask that the House condemn discrimination against females occurring through sex-selective pregnancy termination.

• (1215)

PENSIONS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I table a petition signed by residents of all ages from Winnipeg North. The petitioners ask the Prime Minister not to raise the age to qualify for OAS from 65 to 67. They want to ensure the government does not do anything to diminish the importance and the value of Canada's three major seniors programs: OAS, GIS and CPP.

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Nos. 1161, 1164 and 1167.

[Text]

Question No. 1161—**Mr. Scott Simms:**

With regard to the Government of Canada, what is its net worth: (a) as a whole for each fiscal year since 2005, broken down by (i) assets, (ii) liabilities; and (b) broken down for each fiscal year since 2005 by department, agency and crown corporation by (i) assets, (ii) liabilities?

Mrs. Shelly Glover (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada's net worth, or accumulated deficit, broken down by assets and liabilities for each fiscal year since 2004-05 can be found in Table 1.2, Government of Canada Detailed Statement of Financial Position, on page 1.17 of volume I of the Public Accounts of Canada 2012, available on the Public Works and Government Services Canada website at <http://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/recgen/cpc-pac/index-eng.html>.

Supplementary information regarding the government's assets and liabilities, including a breakdown by department, agency and crown corporation for certain categories of assets and liabilities, can be found on an annual basis in sections 4 to 10 of volume I of the Public Accounts of Canada.

In addition, departments, agencies and crown corporations publish annual financial statements which provide further details of their assets and liabilities. These financial statements are available through departments' and agencies' annual departmental performance reports and crown corporations' annual reports, which are available on their respective websites.

Question No. 1164—**Mr. David McGuinty:**

With regard to the \$20 million Southern Ontario Fund for Investment in Innovation: (a) how many companies, which the government is aware of, have received loans; (b) what companies have received loans; and (c) what was the amount of each loan?

The Budget

Hon. Gary Goodyear (Minister of State (Science and Technology) (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario), CPC): Mr. Speaker, with regard to (a), two loans funded by the Southern Ontario Fund for Investment in Innovation, SOFII, have been announced, and more will be publicly announced in the future. Commencing April 30, 2013, all loans approved under SOFII will be disclosed on a quarterly basis on the websites of the organizations delivering SOFII, those being the Eastern Ontario Community Futures Development Corporation Network and the Western Ontario Community Futures Development Corporation Association. FedDev Ontario's website will have a link to the website listings of approved SOFII loans.

With regard to (b), the projects announced include Konrad Group Inc., located in Toronto and Peterborough, which received an Eastern SOFII loan, and Voices.com, located in London, which received a Western SOFII loan.

With regard to (c), Konrad Group Inc. was provided with a repayable interest-bearing loan of \$500,000; Voices.com was provided with a repayable interest-bearing loan of \$500,000.

Question No. 1167—Ms. Elizabeth May:

With regard to the transportation costs incurred by Lockheed Martin to bring a F-35 model from Fort Worth, Texas, to Ottawa, Ontario, and back to Fort Worth, Texas for the purposes of a press conference held on July 16, 2010, during which the Minister of Defence announced the government's intent to procure F-35s for the Royal Canadian Air Force: (a) did the government or any of its departments, agencies, or crown corporations reimburse or pay any amount of the transportation cost to Lockheed Martin; (b) if so, what was the total amount paid or reimbursed to Lockheed Martin or the contractor responsible for transportation; (c) on what date or dates was it paid; (d) who authorized the decision to reimburse Lockheed Martin for the transportation costs; (e) on what date was this decision taken; (f) what were the terms of the agreement between Lockheed Martin and the government to share the transportation costs; and (g) on what date was it signed?

Hon. Kerry-Lynne D. Findlay (Associate Minister of National Defence, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Lockheed Martin paid for all transportation costs for the F-35 model featured at the press conference held on July 16, 2010, in Ottawa. The Department of National Defence did not incur any costs for the transport of the model.

* * *

[English]

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if Questions Nos. 1162, 1163 and 1165 could be made orders for returns, these returns would be tabled immediately.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 1162—Mr. Scott Simms:

With regard to priority employment appointments in the federal public service: (a) for the period of June 1, 2011, to January 30, 2013, how many people were hired and of these how many were (i) casual employees, (ii) term employees, (iii) indeterminate employees; (b) how many members of the Canadian Forces have been medically released and (i) how many of these qualified medically released members have applied for a priority employment appointment, (ii) how many have received a priority appointment, (iii) how many were still on the priority employment

appointment list when their eligibility period expired, (iv) how many were hired by each government department; and (c) what measures are being taken to extend this program to account for the large number of temporary and contract workers employed by the government?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1163—Ms. Judy Foote:

With regard to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) in the federal riding of Random—Burin—St. George's, broken down by year, community and totalled for the riding, from 2002 until present: (a) how many RCMP officers were there; (b) what were the total expenditures of the RCMP; (c) how many open positions went unfilled; (d) how many RCMP officers were transferred outside the riding; (e) how many RCMP officers were transferred to the riding; (f) does the government or RCMP have any plans to decrease the number of RCMP officers; (g) how many incidents requiring the RCMP occurred; and (h) what are the terms in the agreements between the RCMP and each community?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1165—Mr. François Lapointe:

With regard to the Montmagny, Quebec, company PurGenesis, how much funding has the government provided PurGenesis since fiscal year 2008-2009, per year, up to the current fiscal year, by department or agency, initiative and amount?

(Return tabled)

[English]

Mr. Tom Lukiwski: Finally, Mr. Speaker, I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Is that also agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

THE BUDGET

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF MINISTER OF FINANCE

The House resumed consideration of the motion that this House approve in general the budgetary policy of the government, and of the amendment.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): When the House last left this question on the motion, the hon. member for Kings—Hants had eight minutes remaining in the time for his remarks, and of course the usual ten minutes for questions and comments that will follow.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Kings—Hants.

Hon. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it was in budget 2006 that the Minister of Finance actually brought in 40-year no-down-payment mortgages to Canada, and that had a significant effect. By the first half of 2008, over 50% of new mortgages issued in Canada were 40-year mortgages. His decision to introduce U.S. style loose money mortgages to Canada actually changed the culture of borrowing and lending in Canada.

The Budget

Now we have record debt levels and a softening housing market, and Canadians are looking to the government for leadership. Budget 2013 will not help middle-class families who are struggling. Instead, the Minister of Finance's recent demand that banks increase mortgage prices will only make it harder for middle-class families to make ends meet.

I will give an example. Increasing the mortgage rate from 2.89% to 3.09%, which is exactly what the Minister of Finance asked Manulife to do, would actually cost someone with a \$400,000 mortgage an extra \$12,000 over the next five years. That is an extra \$12,000 that a Canadian family would have to set aside and it would add an extra \$12,000 to the profits of banks or financial institutions, simply because the Minister of Finance decided to meddle in mortgage prices, trying to undo the damage he did with his loose mortgage policies in his first budget.

Unlike the Conservatives, a Liberal government would never have jeopardized the economy and Canada's housing market with a risky mortgage scheme. Unlike the Conservatives, the Liberal Party and Liberal governments have a strong record of economic and fiscal competence. It was a Liberal government that turned a \$43 billion deficit that it inherited from the previous government into nine consecutive budget surpluses and paid down more than \$80 billion off the national debt.

Today, a Liberal government would prioritize measures that would kickstart the economy and help create jobs. Thanks to the hard work of the 1990s, the Government of Canada's finances are strong enough to allow some flexibility. We could support economic growth now and still balance the budget in the medium term. We could afford to freeze EI premiums in order to protect Canadian jobs.

We could afford to remove the 2% funding gap on post-secondary education for aboriginal Canadians. In fact, we cannot afford not to. Aboriginal Canadians represent not only the youngest and fastest growing population in Canada, they are also the most economically and socially disadvantaged. In fact, only a third of young aboriginals are graduating from high school, and that is why it is horrendous that the government has not devoted one penny in this budget to K-to-12 education for aboriginal youth.

A Liberal government would also end the Conservatives' wasteful and ineffective advertising campaign. The government's spending has exceeded half a billion dollars of Canadians' money on Conservative ads. We see economic action plan ads every night on TV, even during the most expensive airtime, such as NHL playoffs, Super Bowl and the Oscars. A Liberal government would introduce new rules to ensure that government advertising is non-partisan and provides real value for taxpayers' money.

There are some measures in budget 2013 that we have been calling for, and as such are willing to support. Last year, I tried to amend the budget bill to increase the maximum threshold for the hiring credit for small businesses from \$10,000 to \$15,000. We warned the government that continuing to freeze the threshold at \$10,000 was punishing small businesses near that threshold and creating a perverse situation that encouraged them not to go over it and hire more people.

The Conservatives were too stubborn to support our amendment last year, but I am glad to see that it is in their proposal exactly as we proposed it a year ago. Freezing EI rates for all businesses would have been even better, but fixing the hiring credit for small business is better than nothing.

We have also been asking the government to listen to the manufacturing sector and extend the accelerated capital cost allowance for at least five years. The Conservatives have partially listened and extended the program for two years, which is better than nothing.

Last November, on the eve of Black Friday, my colleague from Cape Breton—Canso stood in this House and asked the Minister of Finance to reduce tariffs on hockey equipment. He asked the government to get rid of this \$20 job-killing hockey tax, and we are pleased that the Minister of Finance has listened to the Liberal member for Cape Breton—Canso.

Despite these individual measures we cannot support the overall direction, or perhaps lack of direction, in budget 2013. Instead of delivering measures to kickstart the economy, the Conservatives are making short-term spending cuts their priority.

• (1220)

Instead of introducing a real plan to create jobs, budget 2013 would increase job-killing EI taxes, freeze money for training at 2007 levels and cut new funding for infrastructure.

Instead of cutting Conservative waste, the budget would devote even more money to advertising the government's economic action plan, with this year's television ad campaign beginning mere hours after the finance minister delivered his budget speech.

With this in mind, I move, seconded by the member for Winnipeg North, that the motion be further amended by adding the following:

That the amendment be amended by adding after the words "hospital parking" the following:

- n) imposes three more job killing employment insurance tax hikes by 2016 taking an additional \$4 billion out of the pockets of Canadians;
- o) does not provide a dedicated waste water infrastructure fund to help municipalities meet the new federal waste water regulations;
- p) fails to bring the provinces together to create a supplemental voluntary Canada Pension Plan;
- q) downloads new costs onto the provinces and territories to pay for job training;
- r) provides no new funding for critical water and waste water needs in First Nations communities;

The Budget

- s) fails to provide a comprehensive approach to addressing mental health needs of Canadians;
- t) fails to expand the scope of the Last Post Fund to include post-Korean War Veterans;
- u) fails to restore funding to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans for search and rescue;
- v) fails to find the funding to keep open the Experimental Lakes Areas, the world renowned freshwater research facility;
- w) fails to restore funding to the Interim Federal Health Program for refugee health care;
- x) does not renew the critical Extended Employment Insurance Benefits Pilot Project; and
- y) commits even more funding to wasteful partisan advertising.

● (1225)

Mrs. Shelly Glover (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am quite surprised at the volume of positive comments that the government has been receiving as a result of this wonderful new economic action plan 2013.

My question for the member is, when we hear from organizations such as the Engineers Canada, Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters, Canadian Federation of Independent Business, Canadian Council of Chief Executives, the National Association of Career Colleges, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, George Brown College, the Certified General Accountants Association of Canada, and I could go on and on, saying this is a great addition to the plan that has been put in place by this government, that has made us number one in the G7 in job creation, in growth, et cetera, why on earth is that member and his party prepared to vote against these folks?

Hon. Scott Brison: Mr. Speaker, I hear from Canadians all the time, including my constituents. I hear from parents who are worried about the future of their children and grandparents who are worried about their grandchildren.

The fact is that youth employment numbers are five points worse than they were five years ago in 2007. That is why it is unacceptable that in this budget the government has frozen federal funding at 2007 levels. In real terms, that represents a 10% cut because of inflation. Beyond that, we have a significantly worsened employment situation today than we did in 2007, after a financial crisis.

This is the question the hon. member should be answering to what could be a lost generation of youth in Canada. Why is the government doing less today to invest in skills and training than it was doing in 2007, prior to a global financial crisis? Why is partisan government advertising of over \$600 million more important to the government than investing to protect and create opportunities for young Canadians?

Mr. Jamie Nicholls (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the member for Calgary Centre-North stood up today and boasted about financing for SDTC, Sustainable Development Technology Canada. However, when we look at the numbers, there is only \$1 million allocated for this very important agency, which develops the sustainable economy of the future that we would like to have.

My hon. colleague had a lot of experience with finance. Could he explain how \$1 million for sustainable development technology is not really putting value to the idea of building that innovative economy of the future, which we so need to build in Canada today?

Hon. Scott Brison: Mr. Speaker, the reality is that jobs in sustainable industries and the green jobs of tomorrow will probably be one of the fastest growing areas of the global economy. They represent a remarkable opportunity and the government does not get it. However, it knows that Canadians want investments in those areas enough to put forth a pittance, \$1 million, such that it can talk about it. The government is more interested in talking about these things than actually doing something about it.

Another \$1 million into trying to harmonize the regulatory differences or labour code differences between provinces for skills will not accomplish anything, but it enables the members opposite to say they are doing something. It is an all-talk, no-real-action kind of government because it is more interested in the votes than the jobs of Canadians.

● (1230)

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary secretary talked about some of the messages being received with respect to this. Our leader said that this is not about the economy but rather about politics and propaganda. That is the message that sums this particular budget up at its best. It is basically utter nonsense. The building Canada plan really does not kick in until practically the next decade. The skills development is a long time down the road when we need it now.

My colleague talked about the employment insurance tax on workers and businesses going up three times over the next three years in this budget. That is against the background of the government having cancelled the five-week pilot project. The five-week pilot project in my province alone will take about \$7 million out of the pockets of people that they would have used for food, groceries, electricity and all the other things they have to do.

What is with the government in terms of its attack on seasonal industries while still taxing workers and businesses more under this budget? Could the member answer that?

Hon. Scott Brison: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is quite right that the changes to EI are aggressive and could actually hurt some of the most vulnerable in Canada, particularly those living in rural Canada. It is a continued and sustained attack on rural Canadians.

He is also correct that every January when the government hikes up payroll taxes by \$600 million, effectively these are job-killing payroll taxes. It is very difficult to try to create more jobs in that kind of environment, particularly for young Canadians.

In terms of changes to EI and some of the attacks on the most vulnerable Canadians, I would also remind the hon. member that the government decided that raising the OAS from 65 to 67 was just fine, even when 40% of the people getting OAS are making less than \$20,000 a year and 53% of people getting OAS are making less than \$25,000.

This is a meanspirited attack on some of Canada's most vulnerable citizens.

The Budget

[Translation]

Mr. Royal Galipeau (Ottawa—Orléans, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is rather unfortunate to hear such remarks and such viciousness.

In the area of health, we know full well that from 1965 to 1995, the federal government provided 50% of the funding for health services from one end of this country to the other. Before we were elected in 2006, the member's government made cuts, in 1995, that reduced the funding from 50 cents per dollar to 14 cents per dollar. Over the past seven years, we have gradually increased the federal contribution to the provinces for health and education.

What does the member think is so meanspirited about that?

Hon. Scott Brison: Mr. Speaker, today's debate is on budget 2013. However, I would be pleased to discuss the record of the Liberal government, which eliminated a Conservative deficit while also reducing federal debt and making significant investments in our health care system. We worked closely with the provincial governments at the time.

The current Conservative government is doing the exact opposite, including with its changes to education and skills training.

I remember that last fall, the Prime Minister refused to meet with the premiers in Halifax, which is unacceptable. That type of approach is not good for federal-provincial relations.

I am proud of the Liberal government's record. The current government's approach with the provinces is embarrassing, quite frankly.

• (1235)

[English]

Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Kings—Hants, who I have worked with on the finance committee, for his interesting speech.

I would like to hear his thoughts on the incredible financial irresponsibility of the government, playing shell games with money that really belongs to the taxpayers, shifting money around to reduce the amount available for infrastructure, playing games around skills training. We have seen the attacks on the Parliamentary Budget Officer.

The government is really the worst in Canadian history in terms of poor financial management. I would like to know the member's thoughts on that.

Hon. Scott Brison: Mr. Speaker, that is a very difficult question to answer.

The reality is that the member is quite right. This is the least transparent and least accountable government in Canadian history. It has done everything it can to try to stifle and stymie the efforts of the Parliamentary Budget Officer.

In fact the government was found in contempt of Parliament by the previous Speaker, Speaker Milliken. It was actually the first government in the history of the parliamentary system within the British Commonwealth to have been found in contempt of Parliament because of its refusal to give the costs to Parliament.

This is not just something that should bother opposition members. It should bother government members who have the same fiduciary responsibility to know the costs of what they are voting on. It is offensive to Parliament. It is offensive to citizens. It is also offensive to taxpayers, who deserve to know how their money is being managed.

Mrs. Shelly Glover (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am going to be sharing my time with the very hard-working member for Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo.

It is an honour to participate in the debate on economic action plan 2013. While the budget was tabled only yesterday, this is a process that started for myself and my colleagues on the finance committee last summer when we started preparing for our committee's annual pre-budget consultations.

Today's document is truly a reflection of months and months of consultations by the finance minister, the finance committee and all members of Parliament who went from coast to coast to coast to ask Canadians for their ideas and thoughts on how to make the Canadian economy stronger. I would like to thank all Canadians who made their voices heard and participated in that process and assure them that economic action plan 2013 keeps Canada on the right track for jobs and economic growth.

Indeed, with over 950,000 net new jobs created since the depth of the global recession in July 2009, with 90% full time and nearly 80% of those jobs private sector jobs, Canada has the absolute best job growth record among all G7 countries in recent years. What is more, Canada is alone among G7 countries to receive the highest possible credit ratings from all of the major credit rating agencies with a stable outlook, which contributes to low borrowing costs. It is little wonder Canada has earned the trust of global investors for its responsible fiscal, economic and financial sector management.

In the words of the independent IMF recently, "Our outlook for the Canadian economy is a relatively rosy one". However, as Will Rogers once said, "Even if you are on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there". Indeed, in a fast-changing global economy that not only remains uncertain in places such as the U.S. and Europe, but where Canada faces growing competition from new emerging economies such as China and India, we cannot afford to be complacent. We need to keep on moving forward with positive measures for Canada's economy and job growth.

[Translation]

Economic action plan 2013 strengthens this record with actions in all areas that drive economic progress and prosperity by connecting Canadians with available jobs, helping manufacturers and businesses succeed in the global economy, creating a new building Canada plan, investing in world-class research and innovation, and supporting families and communities.

During my time, I would like to delve into more detail about these key initiatives.

The Budget

The first is connecting Canadians with available jobs. The government knows that Canadian workers are among the highest educated and best trained in the world. However, the training system must be better attuned to helping Canadians acquire the skills they need to obtain high-quality jobs.

Economic action plan 2013 announces the government's intention to renew the labour market agreements with the provinces and territories in 2014 with investments of \$500 million per year.

The agreements will be reformed to directly connect skills training with employers and jobs for Canadians with the Canada job grant, which is the centrepiece of the new agreements.

The grant will account for \$300 million of total annual labour market agreement funding from the federal government on full implementation in 2017-18. The grant will require matching contributions from employers as well as provinces and territories.

Businesses with a plan to train Canadians for an existing job or a better job will be eligible to apply. The grant will provide access to a maximum \$5,000 federal contribution per person toward training at eligible training institutions.

This means that the grant could provide Canadians with \$15,000 or more per person, including provincial, territorial and employer contributions.

• (1240)

[English]

I am extremely proud of the Canada job grant as it responds to the most common and frequently mentioned concern during the pre-budget consultations that I participated in as both a proud member of the finance committee and as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance.

Indeed, as the Canadian Chamber of Commerce outlined in its recent Top 10 Barriers to Competitiveness for 2013 report, the number one issue identified by businesses across the country as holding back economic growth and hurting our ability to compete globally was Canada's skills shortage.

In the words of chamber president Perrin Beatty, "We have a skills problem well on its way to becoming a crisis, and you need only look at the demographic wedge that we're confronting to see that the problem is only going to get worse."

As well, we could listen to the president of the Mining Association of Canada, Pierre Gratton, speaking about his sector alone: "Labour market studies show that mining will need to hire 10,000 workers every year for the next 10 years. ...and we all need to work together—industry, governments, educational institutions, first nations and other partners—to ensure Canada's economy does not falter because we fail to fill the jobs our economy has to offer."

I think the Canada job grant, which will directly connect employers looking for skilled workers who want to fill those jobs, is an extremely positive initiative in helping match and train more Canadians, but that is not all we are doing to support training in economic action plan 2013. We are also supporting persons with disabilities, youth, aboriginal people and newcomers to get into the labour force with new training investments. Indeed, I would like to

highlight just a few of the measures we are taking to create and provide more opportunities for aboriginal youth.

This government is providing \$241 million to help aboriginal youth across Canada to access the skills and training they need to participate in large economic projects like those in the resource sector near their communities. Indeed, in my home province of Manitoba, we see tremendous success stories of businesses getting aboriginal youth involved and allowing them to benefit from economic opportunities.

I use as an example what I saw first-hand with Vale Inco in Thompson, which established its own training program for aboriginal youth on reserve. We are seeing more aboriginals than ever before getting involved, being employed by resource industries such as Vale Inco and taking advantage of these good high-quality jobs.

The budget will complement and enhance our ability to work with business, other levels of government and first nations communities to provide economic opportunities for the unemployed. I think that is something we would all like to see happen more and more, and economic action plan 2013 will do just that.

I would like to also discuss the new investments for infrastructure in the budget, specifically the creation of a new building Canada plan.

• (1245)

[Translation]

Canada's prosperity is supported by a vast and complex network of highways and roads, water and waste water infrastructure, transit systems and recreational and cultural facilities. This network reaches into every community and touches every Canadian.

The new building Canada plan provides approximately \$53.5 billion in new and existing funding for provincial, territorial and municipal infrastructure. Overall, the new plan will provide \$70 billion in federal funding over 10 years for infrastructure.

[English]

In my limited time here today, those were a couple of things that I wanted to speak about in economic action plan 2013, but I do need to mention that I know we all, as MPs, have Canadian citizens at heart. This is a budget that will help Canadian citizens in a number of areas.

I would implore the opposition to take the time to really, truly consider the effects and the positive initiatives for Canadian people and to support the budget once and for all, because it really does help our communities to thrive. It concentrates on job creation, on economic growth and on the long-term prosperity of our country.

The Budget

[Translation]

Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to believe the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, but I would like her to answer a question.

For example, with regard to the QFL Solidarity Fund, does the minister not realize that \$10 billion has been injected into Quebec's economy over the past 30 years and that 500,000 jobs were created and saved since 1990? The governments are getting their money back within three years. With 2,239 partner companies, one in seven Quebec workers was able to participate and 200,000 Quebecers were able to contribute to an RRSP for the first time by investing in the fund.

Yet, the government is now backing out of all that. Is it doing so because it hates workers or because it wants to attack the union?

Mrs. Shelly Glover: Mr. Speaker, as I and many other speakers have said, this is a great budget. We will not take any lessons from the NDP when it comes to supporting businesses in general. Let us remember what the NDP just did in Washington. Here in Canada, the government supports economic growth and job creation.

The NDP went to Washington to say that it did not want jobs to be created here in Canada. The NDP asked Washington to prevent the creation of jobs in Canada and the United States. The NDP wants to stop the Conservative government from taking action in Canada.

I am a Conservative, but first and foremost, I am a Canadian. What the NDP did was shameful. The NDP should never forget what they did to their country.

[English]

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the parliamentary secretary to the minister of endless deficits.

Not once since 2006 has the current government gotten it right—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Order, please. The hon. member for Ottawa—Orléans is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Royal Galipeau: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has much experience in this House and is a privy councillor to boot. He should know to strictly respect other members of this House and not attribute titles that do not exist. If he only read page 613 of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, he would know that what he did was wrong. There is no such minister in this House. There is a Minister of Finance, and he happens to be the best minister of finance in the world.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): I thank the hon. member for Ottawa—Orléans for his intervention. Members of course do know that referring to other members in the House either by their riding name or their title is the appropriate thing to do. Characterizations otherwise invariably take us in the wrong direction for what are healthy debates in the House.

We will continue with questions and comments. The hon. member for Scarborough—Guildwood.

•(1250)

Hon. John McKay: Mr. Speaker, I think we hit a nerve. When we hit a nerve—

Mr. Royal Galipeau: Mr. Speaker, that does not come with an apology.

Hon. Judy Sgro: What is the matter with him?

Hon. John McKay: Mr. Speaker, they hate to deal with facts in this place, as opposed to the fantasies on the other side. The simple fact that the hon. member does not want to accept is that for every budget, with the exception of the first budget that he inherited from the Liberal Party, the Conservatives have had deficits. It is endless deficits, and we have this fantasy plan to get out of deficit.

The definition of “insanity” is to keep on doing the same thing over and over again and expect a different result. On page 287 we have a projection, which we are supposed to take on faith, that somehow or other we are on the plan to get out of deficit and return to surplus.

My question is for the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance responsible for the biggest accumulation of deficit in Canadian history. Why does she think the Conservatives can get out of this mess?

Mrs. Shelly Glover: Mr. Speaker, my children are watching today, and it is highly inappropriate for my children to be watching someone who is supposed to be respectable and honourable and see that member act the way he is acting. I apologize to my children for having to witness such deplorable behaviour, behaviour that is really unbecoming of a member of Parliament.

Having said that, I will answer the question with the following. If the Liberals will hush for a moment, I will be proud to answer what the Conservative government's accomplishments have been.

Let us not forget we have the best fiscal position in the G7. We have the lowest overall tax rate on new business investment in the G7, the strongest job creation record in the G7 and the best financial system in the world. We have been considered to be the best place for business growth and for creation of jobs, and we have the highest credit rating in the world.

I am sorry, but I am going to say this one last time: the Liberals and the Liberal government before us were embarrassing for what they did by slashing health care, slashing education and stealing \$57 billion out of the EI operating accounting for their own private use and slush fund. I take no lessons from that Liberal member.

[Translation]

Mr. Yvon Godin: Mr. Speaker, my children are also watching what is going on in the House of Commons. To say that a government stole money is not appropriate. I apologize to my children, because the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance is perfect.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): I thank the hon. member for Acadie—Bathurst for his intervention. However, I did not appreciate certain unparliamentary comments. As I said, attacks on specific members or parties in this House do not contribute to a civil debate.

The Budget

That being said, we will resume debate.

[English]

The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue.

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to rise today to speak to our economic action plan 2013. I would like to start by congratulating the minister on the fine job he has done. To me, it is like he has hit another home run. He has been up to bat nine times and each time, it does not matter what the economic situation is, he is able to adjust, respond and create and craft a plan that is suitable for the challenges we face. I am very proud to be on the team and I am proud of our economic action plan 2013.

I have to take a quick minute to contrast our plan with what would be the policies of the opposition. Ronald Reagan once said it best in terms of how the opposition would approach it. He said, "If it moves, tax it. If it keeps moving, regulate it. And if it stops moving, subsidize it". For our part, we know there are certain measures that we need to take to ensure a strong and vibrant economy, jobs, economic growth and long-term prosperity. These measures certainly would not be the policies of the opposition.

Today, it is important for me to focus on some of the areas in our tax system. There are two really important areas on which I will focus on. One is red tape reduction. The other is the integrity of our tax system through looking at areas such as the closure of some tax loopholes.

Another quote I always like is from Albert Einstein. He said, "The hardest thing in the world is to understand the income tax". That was a long time ago. As our world becomes more complex, our income tax also becomes more complex and adds complexity.

There is something that is important and that is a covenant. It is a covenant that the government has with the Canadian taxpayer. Taxpayers work very hard for their money. They expect to pay the minimal amount of taxes necessary for us to do the things that are important for them. Whether that be equipping our armed forces or providing the necessary roads and infrastructure, they want us to ensure we really focus on the very important use of their money because they have worked very hard for it.

With regard to that, it is important to remember that since we came to office, our government has been focused on recognizing that and has cut taxes for Canadians over 150 times. That leaves important dollars in their pockets to do the things they want to do for their families.

Right now, it is particularly important that we are focusing in on the tax system, as many Canadians are gathering their papers together and submitting their taxes to the Canada Revenue Agency. Many people have very simple taxes. They sit down, they have their income, they might enjoy the transit tax or the arts tax credit and they might have a few expenses, but for them, it is moving forward.

It is important to note that in order to maintain the integrity of our tax system, we need to focus in on loopholes, aggressive tax planning and the use of offshore tax havens and tax evasion. All of

those things mean that ordinary everyday Canadians will have to pay more money.

We are certainly committed to maintaining the integrity of our tax system and also to protecting our tax base. It is important to note that in a 2012 study, PricewaterhouseCoopers ranked Canada higher than any other G7 country based on the overall ease of complying with our tax obligation. That is a really big plus for us, Canada and our system.

Our government has realized that it needs to provide the CRA with important necessary tools to crack down on tax cheats. That is why we focused in on the CRA's international audit program by nearly 40% from the last year of the Liberal government. What Canadians need to hear is this. They will hear the opposition say that we have cut the audit program and so on, but we have not. We have really focused time, energy and resources on that program and it is bearing results. We have recouped significant dollars from the program.

● (1255)

When Canadians hide their income and assets in foreign jurisdictions, they take valuable tax dollars away from our health care, pensions and social programs. In other words, again, we all suffer from tax evasion.

In budget 2013 we proposes a number of measures that will further strengthen the CRA's ability to address the aggressive international tax planning and to combat international tax evasion. These tools will give CRA an unprecedented ability to maintain and protect the tax base. It is also important to recognize that the finance committee is currently looking at the issue of tax evasion and the use of offshore tax havens. These measures are very consistent with the testimony we have heard from witnesses in terms of important measures the government needs to take.

We moved forward on some of the important measures we heard, because it was important not to wait. I also hope through our study the finance committee is doing, we will actually have some additional recommendations we can provide for government.

Let us take a quick look at some of the tools included in economic action plan 2013. Currently, banks, credit unions, caisse populaire, trust and loan companies are required to report international electronic fund transfers of more than \$10,000. Many people will know this by the name FINTRAC. Budget 2013 proposes that starting in 2015 the same information will get reported to the Canada Revenue Agency and we will be able to use this information to verify the accuracy of information provided by taxpayers who engage in foreign financial transactions.

Another really important program, which has been tried in other countries, and the banks all indicated last week that could be a very important tool, is the international tax evasion whistleblower initiative. In budget 2013, we announced our intention to launch a new initiative to encourage individuals to report information about international tax evasion and avoidance and, if eligible, receive a payment.

The Budget

In addition to these measures, budget 2013 proposes a number of other tools to assist CRA in combatting international tax evasion and avoidance. We will extend the normal reassessment period for taxpayers who failed to properly report income related to specified foreign property, revise income verification statements to require more detailed information and streamline the process for CRA to obtain information from third parties, such as banks.

The opposition had stated on numerous occasions that it considered the fight against international tax evasion a priority. Our government has long recognized this problem and has consistently taken steps to strengthen the CRA audit and compliance capabilities. I trust the opposition will see the importance of these measures and actually support us in budget 2013.

There is one other area I want to quickly focus on in terms of the Canada Revenue Agency. As many people are aware, we had a red tape reduction commission that tabled a report almost two years ago now. From that report, a number of different departments in government agreed to move further in terms of how they would take care of the issues that created an unnecessary burden on our small businesses.

It is really the important reduction of red tape. It is a silent killer of jobs. It imposes crippling costs on businesses, restricts innovation, productivity, and competitiveness. It is bad for Canada and it is bad for business.

Last summer, as we travelled the country, we heard there were simple things we could do to make a big difference. I was at about 10 different round tables. There was a form that drove our businesses and our accountants nuts. I had never heard of it before. I think it is called a T59. It was something that was a real burden for them in how they were able to authorize someone to do their income tax work on their behalf and how they could authorize a provider.

That one change was specifically mentioned. We heard from Canadians and business owners and we made the changes that were necessary.

It is important to note that the Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses praised the government's extraordinary efforts to reduce red tape for small business. The minister was delighted, and we were pleased to receive the Golden Scissors Award.

• (1300)

We have many initiatives, which are actually mentioned in this budget. Our government continues to look at the important issue of reducing red tape. Other things we are intending to do is to continue making it easier for businesses to communicate with the Canada Revenue Agency. My Business Account is extremely popular. Canada Revenue Agency is responding in writing through My Business Account and standing by those decisions. There is online mail. I could go on and on, but there are many great things.

I would call on all opposition parties to support these important initiatives, whether it be combatting tax evasion or closing tax loopholes. They should be looking favourably at supporting the very important measures in our economic action plan.

• (1305)

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I was interested in what the member had to say in particular about tax evasion and tax havens. In fact, if we go back to our platform in the last two elections, we had focused on this issue. With regard to the issue of tax evasion and tax havens, we are talking about tens of billions of dollars. We were talking to representatives of the IMF recently in Washington. The member may have heard about the trip to Washington. They were very concerned about this.

The problem is the government has cut the capacity to go after the very people we need to. It has cut staff at CRA. I just spoke with one of the people who goes after these tax cheaters and tax havens and he cannot keep up. He is way behind. He is working hard, but he does not have the resources. How can the government say that it is serious about this when it has taken away the tools to go after tax havens and tax evaders?

Mrs. Cathy McLeod: Mr. Speaker, it is exactly the opposite. We have provided significant resources in terms of the audit department. We have actually given it the opportunity to realign with Public Prosecution Service of Canada and the work that the RCMP does. We have realigned them. In addition, through the economic action plan, we are giving them those very important tools.

Contrary to what the member just said, we have increased resources and tools and are tackling this issue very effectively.

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I hope I do not get the Conservatives too fired up this time.

The hon. member, speaking for the government, wants our support. I direct her attention to a table on page 287, which is the increase in the national debt during the government's administration. In this table alone, we go from \$582 billion up to the better end of \$634 billion before it is apparently going to magically start to decline. If we went back to when the Conservatives became government, it has gone from about \$450 billion up to close to \$634 billion. It has gone from less than 30% of GDP to now in the order of 34% of GDP. The take on the revenues out of the economy has gone up to 14.5%.

How in heaven's name can she reasonably expect opposition parties to support a government that is paying for its mismanagement by simply running away with debt?

Mrs. Cathy McLeod: Mr. Speaker, I was elected to Parliament in 2008 and remember facing extraordinary challenges in terms of the global recession at that time. As we moved forward with what was a very important economic action plan that provided much-needed stimulus, I remember hearing the Liberals and NDP saying, "Spend more, spend more, spend more". In actual fact, had we listened to them, that debt would be much higher than it is.

The Budget

The results speak for themselves. If we look at Canada's results with the lowest net debt to GDP ratio and job creation, we see very clearly that we have a plan that is working. Our plan is to get back to a balance budget by 2015. It is not doing what the Liberals did, which was to cut health care transfers to the provinces. We are going to do it by creating jobs, economic growth and long-term prosperity.

Mr. David Sweet (Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of initiatives in this economic action plan for infrastructure, for more social and economic inclusion for people with disabilities, and the list goes on.

I would like to ask the member about the super credit for those who are first-time donors to charitable organizations. Could I get her take on how that would help charitable organizations that serve the community to grow and extend their help to those less fortunate?

Mrs. Cathy McLeod: Mr. Speaker, I first want to recognize the member for Kitchener Centre. His motion in the House moved us toward a study at finance committee into encouraging charitable donations.

This particular initiative of a super credit for a first-time donor was amazingly well received. I hope it will really spur on lifelong donors to our charitable sector, which provides such important work for Canadians.

• (1310)

[Translation]

Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise here today to speak to budget 2013. I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou.

I know the government wants us to vote with it and wants everyone in the House of Commons to agree with it. That is the kind of Conservative government we have right now. It believes it is right about everything, and everyone else is wrong and their ideas are all bad.

Before I begin my speech, I would like to talk about something that worries me. The government wants to offer tax cuts to people who make charitable donations for the first time. It wants to transfer all the work, all the responsibilities of the government, onto people who will do it on a volunteer basis, people who make donations. It is no longer the government that will provide assistance, but rather Canadians, and this will come from a tax cut.

Meanwhile, the Conservatives refuse to recognize that the Fonds de solidarité FTQ, for instance—an \$8.8 billion fund that, since its creation 30 years ago, has injected \$10 billion into Quebec's economy—has created and safeguarded 500,000 jobs since 1990.

With this fund, governments get their money back in three years. Sixty per cent of the capital is invested in businesses in Quebec and the rest of Canada. There are 2,239 partner businesses. Approximately 200,000 Quebecers invested in an RRSP for the first time by investing in the fund. We have to consider that.

The 12-month return is 4.7% and the average 10-year return is 10%. The goal of this fund is to assist workers. We should not forget that one of its objectives is to help workers save money for their retirement while creating and saving jobs. It is the best plan Canada

has ever had, and the Conservatives are getting rid of it. That is unbelievable.

I wonder what workers or the unions have done to this government for it to hate them so much. There are just two questions, and that is where the problem lies.

I would like to come back to what is happening in my area. Earlier, the member spoke about the Conservatives' tour of the regions. Could she tell me who on the Conservative team went to northeastern New Brunswick to see what is happening to seasonal workers? The fishing industry has collapsed and in the forestry industry, pulp and paper plants in Miramichi, Bathurst and Dalhousie have closed. The Brunswick mine will be closing at the end of the month, with the loss of 800 good jobs.

The government is supposed to be helping people across the country. Instead of helping Canadian workers and those in my region, the Conservatives are eliminating the worker training program. I believe that the parliamentary secretary, or one of the members opposite, let something slip this morning. She said that they had to train people out west. That is why the Conservatives took that money. I am not supposed to use the word "steal", but the truth is that they took money from the 2013 budget to provide training out west. That is what they want to do.

Who will use that program? One can only imagine. The government will invest up to \$5,000 for every worker and the province will have to match \$5,000 for that same worker. The employer will also have to put in \$5,000. I do not see how small businesses back home will be able to contribute \$5,000 an employee. They did not have to do so before, because New Brunswick—much like Quebec and other Canadian provinces—was responsible for training workers in the province.

The government is now saying that it wants to have this money to train workers and send them out west. We can see how open the government is towards Canadian workers.

• (1315)

I will read a job posting from the Service Canada site.

Title: Scaffold erector

Terms of Employment: Temporary, Full Time, Shift, Overtime, Weekend, Day, Night, Evening

Salary: \$41.20

That is good money.

Anticipated Start Date: As soon as possible

Location: Fort McKay, Alberta (100 vacancies)

Skill Requirements: Education: Not required

Credentials (certificates, licences, memberships, courses, etc.): Not required

Experience: 5 years or more

Languages: Speak English

Further down the job posting:

Other Languages: Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Spanish

No French.

Other Information: This job does not require to speak English. Remote Camp Location—2 hours North of Ft. McMurray.

The Budget

They say they want to allocate money to train Canadians who will go work in Fort McMurray, but they are not even able to include francophones in the job postings on the Service Canada site.

I remember asking a member, who is here in the House but who I will not name, why francophones who do not speak English are not hired in Fort McMurray.

[English]

I remember what he said, “If you want to come to work at Fort McMurray, you better learn how to speak English”.

[Translation]

The member is sitting here today.

If we want to create jobs, we need to invest in infrastructure, for example. Shutting down the VIA Rail line between Moncton and Bathurst will not help create jobs. We need to invest in a much needed airport in northern New Brunswick. That is what the Conservatives should be investing in. They need to provide training.

If we want to do something good for the workers and tradespeople, then agreements need to be established between the provinces. That way, a tradesperson who has completed a course in one province but has not managed to find a job in that province could work in another province, and the class hours could be recognized as hours of work, which is currently not the case.

This type of agreement needs to be negotiated and established between the provinces. Then, when jobs are created in our regions, our people will be trained and can come back home.

Let us come back to the job posting. I can understand why it says that education is not required and that the only requirement is five years of experience. Since people from my region who go there to work as scaffolders are not being offered training, that means that no one is being trained. Even if they did have the training, they would not have five years of experience. So what is the result? Temporary foreign workers are hired to come and work here. That is the excuse Canadian businesses are using to bring foreign workers here and pay them 15% less than Canadian workers. It is cheap labour. That is what that means.

The Conservatives have crucified people in my region by making cuts to employment insurance, seasonal work, the fisheries and the forestry industry. They have not done anything to help New Brunswick's economy. This budget is cutting \$4.6 billion in infrastructure over the next four years. Yet the Conservatives are boasting that they are investing in infrastructure. There is a reason why Maurice Martin, a man from the southeastern part of the province, has been on a hunger strike against this government for 17 days.

It is shameful. They never even phoned him. They will never do anything to try to help the people in my region, despite everything that is happening there. I will never vote in favour of their budget, unless they change their way of drafting budget bills. They have nothing to brag about.

The Conservatives are even going to tax people who park in hospital parking lots and students who park at universities. Yet they

say that they will not tax people. What planet are they are living on? It is certainly not the same one as the rest of us.

I can guarantee that the Conservatives will never get our vote, because they have caused nothing but misery for the people in my region. There can be a better vision for our country, our workers, and our companies and businesses.

I thank my colleagues for their attention.

• (1320)

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I always appreciate the passion with which the member expresses himself in the House. He obviously feels passionate on a number of different issues.

With regard to this budget, something that still comes up a great deal in my own constituency is that people were hoping to see a decision to reverse the increase of the retirement age from 65 to 67. Throughout the year I have had the opportunity to introduce petitions on that issue from residents of Winnipeg North. We have had postcards and all sorts of things coming back on this issue.

I wonder if the member would comment on the importance of our senior pension program and why it is that the government would have been best advised to listen to Canadians. It is not just the residents of Winnipeg North but Canadians from coast to coast to coast who want to see the pension age remain the same, with people being able to retire at the age of 65 as opposed to 67.

Mr. Yvon Godin: Mr. Speaker, if we look at the workers for example, the government is transferring the costs of retirement to the provinces because people will end up on welfare. Those workers in big industries who have pension plans will probably take their retirement at the age of 60. However, not everyone has those pension plans. We get calls in our office from workers across the country saying that it just does not make any sense. I hate to say it but some of them even say that they cannot wait until age 65 to stop working because they are burning out. The men and women who work so hard in the bush and the women working in the fish plants will never have a pension plan in their lives. With all respect, I just do not see them working in the fish plants until the age of 67. They are burning out because they work 14 to 16 hours a day.

That is the respect the government has for the workers because it hates the workers. I have said many times in the House and outside of the House that the government hates the workers across the country, the men and women who get up in the morning and work so hard—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Order, please.

Questions and comments. The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources.

Mr. David Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, perhaps the member opposite should get up and apologize. Those are disgusting comments to be making in the House. If he does not like the budget, that is one thing.

The Budget

The New Democrats have consistently gone around the world speaking against the interests of resource areas, which he represents. They were glad to go down to Washington and tell the U.S. government that it should be opposing resource development in this country. The member should not get up and lecture us about whether he likes workers better than we like workers.

We are willing to stand up for Canadian workers across this country. We have resource development that provides 20% of the GDP in the country and pays billions of dollars in taxes each year so that he can talk about the programs that he likes so much.

I would like to know if the member will stand up and apologize to Canadians and workers for the way he has spoken here. He should apologize to the government as well. We are doing a lot of good things for Canadian workers across the country, developing the economy and keeping it stable in a tough time internationally. The Minister of Finance has done an excellent job of doing that.

Mr. Yvon Godin: Mr. Speaker, one judges a government by its actions. The government's actions are to take away the training program in New Brunswick and to cut employment insurance so that we have people calling and crying on the phone because it is taking away something that is paid for by the workers and the businesses of the country, not the Conservative Party. The government is now taking that away and does not care. It is taking away the training program that allowed people to get jobs in their own province. That is what it is doing.

I do not have to apologize to the people of this country because I did not insult them, and I will not apologize to the Conservative Party.

• (1325)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Djaouida Sellah (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his passion and all of the work he does on behalf of his region.

I have a question for him. We were looking for many things in this budget, not cuts to health care and centralized training. There is not a word in the budget about public transit even though we know that all of our infrastructure is in a deplorable state.

Can my colleague comment further on these issues?

Mr. Yvon Godin: Mr. Speaker, where I come from, public transit means VIA Rail, which used to stop in Bathurst six times a week. Now that is down to three times a week.

CN is planning to remove the track between Moncton and Bathurst. Where is the federal government assistance for that? Northeastern New Brunswick does not even have buses anymore. Why has the government not done anything about that?

The government is supposed to be working for all Canadians, not just for one part of Canada. That is the problem with the Conservative government: it has its ideological vision, and it could really not care less about Canada. Its agenda is clear: help some, not others.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Before I give the floor to the hon. member for Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, I should let him know that I will be interrupting him at 1:30

p.m. because today's period for the consideration of government orders will be over.

The hon. member for Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou.

Mr. Romeo Saganash (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the member for Acadie—Bathurst is always a hard act to follow no matter the topic. I thank him for his passion and inspiration. I would also like to thank the other members of all parties who have taken part in this debate so far.

[*English*]

The Prime Minister likes to refer to his Minister of Finance as the best finance minister in the world, but in fairness, he also likes to call Peter Penashue the best MP that Labrador has ever had. Maybe he has a different definition of the word “best” than the rest of us because the facts do not seem to support his claim about his finance minister. Members should remember that he missed his economic growth target for 2012 by 35%. A lot of people have mentioned that and I think it is important to repeat it.

[*Translation*]

This budget contains some good measures, such as those to combat tax evasion, but it also contains problems too numerous to ignore.

[*English*]

Of the initiatives that the Minister of Finance has brought forward, there is one in particular that jumped out at me. It is stunning in its insensitivity. In the budget, the Conservatives introduced a new measure aimed at first nation youth.

All members in the House know about the substandard education that exists among first nation communities. Statistics show special needs identification and placement rates in first nation elementary and secondary schools. Approximately 47% of first nations currently need a new school. Approximately 74% of first nation schools currently require major repairs. Only 46% of first nation schools have a fully equipped gym and so on. On top of that, 32% of schools have an issue with access to clean drinking water. With all that, between 2004 and 2009, the graduation rate on first nations was approximately 36%, compared to the rate of 72% in the general population.

During the Prime Minister's meeting with first nation leaders in January, he promised again to renew the government's approach to issues such as these. However, in this budget, there is no new money for first nation schools. They still face a 30% shortfall for another year. Children fighting for an education in communities such as Lac-Simon or Lac de l'Orange will receive considerably less than other students in provincial schools.

On the other hand, the government decided to introduce training funds for aboriginal youth, but with one major caveat. To qualify, first nation communities have to agree that recipients of income assistance programs undergo specific job training.

The budget states:

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—to effectively support and ensure compliance among on-reserve Income Assistance recipients. Funding will be accessible only to those reserve communities that choose to implement mandatory participation in training for young Income Assistance recipients.

This means that in order to get access to these funds, communities must agree that youth between the ages of 18 to 24 cannot collect welfare without taking job training. That is unfair.

I know my time is up, but I hope I can come back to these issues next time.

• (1330)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The hon. member for Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou will have six and a half minutes remaining for his comments when the House next resumes debate on the motion.

It being 1:30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

AIR PASSENGERS' BILL OF RIGHTS

The House resumed from February 7 consideration of the motion that Bill C-459, An Act respecting the rights of air passengers, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Joe Daniel (Don Valley East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to address the House of Commons on private member's Bill C-459, an act respecting the rights of air passengers, which was introduced in this chamber in November of last year. Our government strongly supports consumer protection measures, however, the bill is fundamentally flawed and would likely have impacts contrary to what it seeks to achieve. Furthermore, it is redundant given the passenger protection approach that already exists in Canada and this government's effort to strengthen it in recent years.

Let me start by noting that the bill calls for all-in advertising. I am pleased to remind the House that our Conservative government has already put in place these measures by way of regulations that were brought into force in December 2012, following extensive consultation with industry, consumers and other stakeholders.

Beyond that, Bill C-459 proposes a prescriptive regime that would increase the regulatory burden on air carriers and on travellers. It would introduce additional costs into our air transport system and it would not improve the passenger protection approach that already exists in this country. In Canada today, airline passengers are protected through provisions in the Canada Transportation Act. All carriers operating in Canada, or arriving or departing from Canada, are required to develop terms and conditions of carriage that they must respect. They must make those terms and conditions readily accessible to passengers.

The Air Transportation Regulations under the act specify the items that must be included in the terms and conditions of carriage, such as the carrier's policies regarding cancelled or delayed flights, lost or

damaged luggage, and denied boarding due to overbooking. This establishes a clear basis on which passengers can raise concerns if they feel they have not been treated appropriately.

The Canadian Transportation Agency is mandated to resolve travellers' complaints by examining whether the carriers are acting in compliance with their terms and conditions of carriage and by assessing the reasonableness of the terms and conditions. The act also includes significant provisions to ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities.

If a traveller is not able to resolve his or her issues directly with the carrier and submits a formal complaint to the agency, the agency would begin by seeking a mutually satisfactory solution to the problem by way of alternative dispute resolution. If this is not successful, arbitration is an option. We know that in fact most complaints are resolved by way of mediation. In some instances, the agency has found that a carrier's terms and conditions of carriage are not reasonable, resulting in significant changes to the benefit of passengers. Recent such decisions have addressed questions such as lost baggage and denied boarding.

In short, our current system works. Furthermore, it does so because of the proactive stance that our Conservative government has taken on passenger rights.

In 2007, we took action to strengthen the consumer protection regime for air travellers by introducing measures as part of Bill C-11, An Act to amend the Canada Transportation Act and the Railway Safety Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts. These amendments improved the transparency of carriers' terms and conditions of carriage and made the complaint process under the Canadian Transportation Agency permanent.

In 2008, we introduced Flight Rights Canada, an initiative to inform Canadians of their rights under the act. This also resulted in the creation of a plain language voluntary code of practice, which our major carriers adopted into their terms and conditions of carriage. I have already mentioned the airfare advertising regulations brought into force last year.

The prescriptive regulatory regime proposed in C-459 is not consistent with Canada's approach to consumer protection in transport. As written, the bill raises a number of questions and creates systems that would ultimately increase the burden on all parties.

To begin with, the proposed bill would only empower the agency to enforce provisions relating to duty to disclose pricing, announcements at airports and obligations to inform passengers of their rights at check-in. With respect to other matters such as cancellations, delays and denied boarding, consumers would seemingly have to seek redress through the courts if they are not satisfied with a carrier's response. This would be costly, time-consuming and a burden on the passengers as well as on the Canadian court system.

• (1335)

Bill C-459 seeks to address concerns that were identified with previous private members' bills on this subject, which made air carriers responsible for problems that are the fault of other parties, such as airports or navigation providers.

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However, the current bill would introduce a new regulatory burden, namely that carriers would need to make a submission to the Canadian Transportation Agency proving the third party's responsibility. This would result in more red tape for the carriers and more work for the agency. The additional costs, obviously, would likely be borne by travellers and taxpayers.

Furthermore, the bill would recognize that carriers would not be made responsible for cancellations arising as a result of *force majeure*, particularly weather. The carriers would remain responsible for the situation resulting from *force majeure*, such as airport or tarmac delays, and we all know that weather is a major factor in this country.

The bill would create confusion between its provisions and the current provisions of the Canada Transportation Act. There is also potential conflict between Bill C-459 and the Carriage by Air Act, which brings into force passengers' rights provisions enshrined in the Montreal convention, an international treaty to which Canada is a party.

In conclusion, we are committed to promoting passengers' rights by way of an approach that minimizes costs and regulatory burden on all travellers in the air industry.

Bill C-459 would add nothing to this, but it does have the potential to significantly increase the regulatory burden and cost to Canada's air transportation sector and to create confusion within the regulatory regime without further addressing passenger needs.

For this reason, we cannot support Bill C-459.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise today to speak to Bill C-459.

From our party's perspective, we support the bill going to committee. I do not think members should be surprised by that, because a number of years ago, a similar motion was brought to the House, which was supported by all political parties.

For many years we have seen a great deal of consumer frustration with airlines. Once one gets to the airport, there are problems getting onto the aircraft and with departures, arrivals and luggage. There have been a litany of horror stories, and they continue today. There are significant issues that need to be addressed.

If we are able to get Bill C-459 to committee stage and to possibly make some amendments, it would actually give it some teeth. In that sense, consumers across Canada would benefit immensely. The Liberal Party would like to see the bill go to committee.

First, just to illustrate our concerns, a colleague of mine introduced a motion in 2008. It was M-465. It is a very short motion, which I will read into the record:

That the House call upon the government to bring forward an airline passenger bill of rights similar in scope and effect to legal instruments being either proposed or enacted by jurisdictions within Europe and the United States for the purpose of protecting passenger interests in a consistent and rules-based way and to provide a means of ensuring adequate compensation...by the airline industry to airline passengers who experience inconveniences such as flight interruptions, delays, cancellations, issues with checked baggage and other inconveniences incurred while travelling on commercial passenger airline services originating from anywhere in Canada.

This motion was brought forward by the Liberal party by one of my colleagues back in April 2008. What is most interesting is that at the time, it passed the House unanimously. All political parties were supportive of the motion, and justifiably so. If we were to canvass our constituents, we would find wide support for motions, bills or legislation of this nature. We were encouraged that it actually garnered the support of all parties in the House.

Not that much later, the government attempted to bring in legislation that they referred to as "flight rights Canada". It was a government initiative and was an attempt to deal with the issue. However, there was a serious flaw. There really were no regulations that followed that provided some teeth.

As a result, we see the types of issues raised five, six or seven years ago being raised today. In part, it is because the government has decided that it is not an important enough issue for Canadians.

● (1340)

That is why I was interested in the previous speaker saying that the Conservatives did not believe there was a need to support this bill. I would disagree. The Conservatives have very little to lose by at least allowing the bill to go to committee where we could possibly amend it.

The reason I read the motion to remind members was to reinforce the fact that there was a time in which MPs of all political parties supported the importance of consumer rights within our airline industry. It would appear that the Conservative Party is starting to back away in terms of recognizing those consumer rights. Therefore, I encourage the government to give more reflection and consider the benefits to consumers by at the very least allowing the bill to go to committee.

Bill C-459 had been introduced in another form, by the former member for Elmwood—Transcona, someone I knew reasonably well from the House and from serving together in the Manitoba legislature. From what Mr. Maloway talked about when he introduced his bill, it is fair to say that Canadians responded well to it. For that the reason, I reinforce the fact that not only would people from Winnipeg benefit, as I represent Winnipeg residents, and Mr. Maloway used to as a member of Parliament, but it would benefit people far beyond Winnipeg or Manitoba.

Our busiest airports, whether Toronto, Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver, Montreal or Halifax, coast to coast, all have significant increase in traffic. Looking to the future, as airline tickets continue to be reasonably affordable on a larger scale as more consumers find themselves in a position where they can afford to fly, the demand for this type of legislation, if crafted correctly, would be of great value and benefit. That is the reason we need to look at how we can bring in legislation that would protect the interests of the consumers.

When a flight has been cancelled or delayed, there are circumstances beyond an airline's control. An example of that would be a number of weeks when we get whiteouts, or snowstorms or things that are beyond the ability of airlines to control. It is understandable that we would see airlines being cancelled or delayed.

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Then again, there are other issues that cause passengers a great deal of concern in why a flight has been delayed yet another hour or two hours. It might relate to maintenance and to what degree proper diligence was done by the airline, or the amount of time which one had to spend due to misplaced luggage. My son's mother-in-law came for a visit from the States and had her luggage all torn up, and it had to be wrapped in plastic. The luggage was replaced.

Very real issues are happening in that whole industry. It is an industry that will be growing into the future. It would be wonderful to have legislation and regulations to protect consumers. Not only would Winnipeg North residents want to see something of that nature, I argue all Canadians would welcome consumer-friendly airline industry legislation and regulations.

● (1345)

[Translation]

Mr. Jamie Nicholls (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by thanking the member for Laval for his bill, which is designed to protect the rights of Canadian families, small businesses and business travellers by creating an air passenger bill of rights. It is an important initiative that would strengthen consumer protection by establishing clear compensation rules and by penalizing companies at fault.

To begin, I should point out that a number of airlines already have good business practices. We acknowledge that and congratulate those companies, but, unfortunately, the same cannot be said of all the airlines, and that is why this bill is so important and so necessary. It is important because it targets carriers that have developed bad practices in order to gouge customers. I am thinking, in particular, about airlines that overbook or deliberately cancel flights.

Basically, this bill is designed to protect consumers by discouraging bad practices and by forcing greater standardization within the airline market. These worthwhile objectives would have a positive impact on both consumers and airlines that already have exemplary practices.

More specifically, the airline passenger bill of rights proposed by this bill would protect passengers in certain situations.

First, when a flight is cancelled, passengers would be entitled to reimbursement or a seat on the next available flight. They would also be entitled to a meal depending on the delay, as well as to compensation, if necessary. Should the airline not meet its obligations, it would have to pay each passenger \$500. In addition, companies that voluntarily cancel a flight would be required to compensate all passengers between \$250 and \$600, an amount that would be determined based on the distance of the flight canceled by the company, not to exceed the total amount paid by the passenger for the flight.

Second, passengers would be entitled to compensation when an airline refuses to let them board because of overbooking. This happens when an airline sells more tickets than it has seats on a flight. This tactic is used by some companies that count on the fact that certain passengers will not show up for the flight. Therefore, they sell more tickets than they have seats available. This dubious practice does not cause problems when certain passengers do not

show up, but when enough passengers do, the company must refuse to allow certain passengers to board, passengers who had reserved and paid for their airline ticket. Under this bill, companies that refuse to allow a passenger to board because the flight is overbooked would have to pay \$250 to \$600 in compensation. Once again, that amount would be determined based on the distance of the flight the passenger was prevented from boarding.

Third, when a flight is delayed, passengers would be entitled to meals, refreshments and accommodation, based on the length of the delay.

Fourth, passengers would be entitled to compensation in the amount of \$500 if their baggage is misplaced by the airline.

This bill obviously goes into much more detail than what I just mentioned. It gives air passengers clear rules about compensation and reimbursement. It prevents Canadian families' vacations from being disrupted as a result of the poor practices of certain airlines. It ensures that entrepreneurs and small and medium-sized business owners who regularly use air transport will be compensated when airlines do not respect their commitments. It standardizes practices in the air industry.

● (1350)

All of these measures work. For almost 10 years now, several countries in Europe have had such measures in place and have proven that they are effective.

How can anyone be against measures that protect consumer rights and that work well?

[English]

Some of my colleagues from the other side of the House seem to think that the system we have in place is sufficient to ensure that passengers and families are treated fairly by air carriers. They seem to believe that since it is in the best interest of the companies to treat their customers fairly that they will do so to prevent customers from switching air carriers for their next travel arrangements.

That might be true in some cases, but what happens when things do not work out that way? What happens when an air carrier decides not to compensate passengers adequately for a situation in which the company is responsible? What happens when passengers and families are stuck at the airport for hours without any help or services from the air carrier?

The answer is quite simple. The passengers have to pay for the services they need, including food and housing, and if they do not have the means to do so they have to wait and sleep at the airport terminal, which is not nearly as entertaining as Tom Hanks would lead us to believe. Let us not forget that many Canadians, such as a family who has maxed out their credit card for their vacation and are travelling on a limited budget, do not have the financial means to pay for such unexpected expenses, especially in these times where Canadian families are overburdened with debt.

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The fact is that passengers who feel they were treated unfairly may receive some compensation through informal facilitation or some form of adjudication by the Canadian Transportation Agency, but that does not solve the problem. It does not provide those passengers and families with the service they need at the time they need it. It is more red tape for a Canadian family to go through to be reimbursed for the trouble they have suffered.

It is easy to say that all they have to do is pay for the food and hotel room since they might receive some compensation many months later. However, as I said, not everyone has the financial means to pay for such unexpected expenses, especially when they know they might not get their money back in the end.

This is one of the reasons that this bill is important for consumer rights. It would make sure that passengers have access to reasonable and free services when they are forced to stay at the airport for an extended period of time. When a flight is cancelled, if the air carrier does not provide those services free of charge, it would have to compensate the passengers with a fixed amount of \$500.

This bill of rights for passengers would prevent those air carriers who have developed bad practices from benefiting from them. They would probably abandon practices such as overbooking and voluntary cancellations of flights. As for those carriers who do not use such money-making tactics, they would not be penalized with this new bill.

If an air carrier is not responsible for a flight delay or a flight cancellation, in other words, if the cancellation or delay of a flight is the result of a measure or decision taken by an airport authority, the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority, Nav Canada, or the Canada Border Services Agency, the air carrier may submit the matter to the Canadian Transportation Agency. If the air carrier was indeed not responsible for the situation, it would be compensated.

In short, this bill would make sure that passengers, families and small business owners are treated fairly by every air carrier. By creating such consistency across the industry, it would also benefit those air carriers that have good practices and do not try to make more money from their customers by overbooking or cancelling flights. In the end, the bill would benefit everyone but those companies who would try to shortchange consumers.

• (1355)

Mr. Mike Sullivan (York South—Weston, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in support of the wonderful bill put forward by my friend the member for Laval to try to put some structure around how Canadians are treated by airlines in our country.

The Conservative government believes that the aviation system has to be protected to the point of legislating private companies back to work even before there is a labour dispute. We can only wonder why the government is not supportive of something that would protect the rights of consumers when it is so eager to protect its corporate fans.

The consumers involved here are people who take flights throughout Canada. Canada being the large and disparate country that it is, the use of airlines is necessary for some travel within Canada and is often the only way to get quickly from point A to

point B. This is because we do not have the infrastructure for a high-speed rail system, as some countries do.

Airlines know that there is an oligopoly in the country, with only two major carriers. As a result, they really have Canadians at their mercy when it comes to how they treat them in the event of cancellations, overbooking or lost luggage. There is no formal regulatory system to insist that airlines do the right thing by their passengers. Some do, and we are not here to criticize those airlines, but we are opposed to airlines that treat their passengers shoddily.

We believe that the time has come to create, as already exists in Europe, a passenger bill of rights, such that when an airline treats passengers badly or when an airline chooses to cancel or overbook a flight, it is on the hook for some compensation for those people.

The airline certainly will not put back the missed meeting, the missed birthday, the missed wedding or any of the other things that Canadians rely on airlines to get them to on time. One of the reasons we use planes is that we want to get to a place on time; the airline will not replace those things, but it will offer some measure of compensation. The same is true for businesspeople, who cannot replace a missed meeting or make up for not meeting face to face with the client they had hoped to woo into investing in their company. These things will not be replaced, but they may get a few dollars out of it at least, to help them feel a little bit better about it.

The best way to speak on this matter is to offer some examples of what happens to real passengers when airlines treat them shabbily.

My family was booked on an Air Canada flight, but it turned out that an American airline was providing a portion of the travel. The American airline, which I will not name in order to avoid finger pointing, decided to cancel the flight. I was travelling with a one-year-old, and we ended up in a very stark and dismal airport for the better part of 14 hours while we waited for the replacement flight they had promised us. We were there from 9 in the morning until almost 11 o'clock at night waiting for the replacement.

All through the day, we were trying to find another way to get to where we were going. When I investigated, the airline said they had had to cancel the plane because of weather problems in the other city. Canadians will accept that weather is a big part of what we have here and that it may in fact cause problems, so I accepted this reason at face value at that point in time. However, I checked later on, and there was no weather in that city. It was a beautiful, dry, sunny, calm day in the city that they claimed had weather problems.

What was going on was what airlines sometimes do. The airline realized that it had a very light load on the plane. When a plane has maybe only 30 passengers but could seat 50 and the next plane to the same city has a similar situation, the airline will combine the two flights. This happens all the time, and the airlines do not tell us they are doing it.

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● (1400)

If one looks at the board and sees the planes that go between, say, Toronto and Ottawa, for example, and one of them says “cancelled”, chances are that one of the reasons it is cancelled is that it has a light load and the airline wants to combine flights to save money. That is all well and good, but by bumping people off their scheduled flights, they miss their connections and they miss the meetings, the birthdays, the weddings or the funerals. How does that repay people? It does not. The airlines at the moment do not have any obligation whatsoever when they do this kind of thing. That is one example.

I have another example. When my son in Alberta was coming for a surprise visit last November, his flight from Edmonton to Toronto was going through Calgary. When he got to the airport in Edmonton, there was a big snowstorm in Calgary. Did they say anything to him in Edmonton, before he got on that plane, about the fact that the Calgary portion of his flight had been cancelled? No. They knew it, but they did not want to give him the opportunity to say that he wanted his money back and that he would not go with Air Canada but would go with WestJet. Instead, they assured him that his plane would go. He actually asked, because he knew there was a snowstorm in Calgary, and he was told that it was going and not to worry. Of course, he got to Calgary at 10 o'clock in the morning and was told there would be no flights until the next day, at which point the trip was completely wasted. There was no point in coming.

As one can imagine, there was a lot of chaos at the airport in Calgary as thousands upon thousands of people tried to make other arrangements to get somewhere when weather caused the airport to be messed up. There was only one agent on duty for a very long line of people. To add insult to the injury of not being able to get from point A to point B, people had to stand in line—there were no chairs in the line—for hours to rebook their flights, cancel their flights or go back to where they were coming from. Yes, it is true that it was ultimately caused by weather, but the airline should never have allowed him to get on the plane in Edmonton in the first place.

That is part of what this bill would do. When an airline knows that there is going to be a cancellation, it would be up to the airline to inform the passengers that there will be a cancellation. I can understand why the airline would not want to do that. It wants to keep the money and wants people to travel and use that airline.

The other issue this bill would deal with is lost luggage. I am sure that most of us here have experienced lost luggage at some point in their careers. I know that I have. What is the airline's response when people lose their luggage? People are told to buy more underwear and send the airline the bill. There is no immediate recompense. It does not immediately provide money for people to buy underwear. For kids travelling to university with nothing in their pockets but their student cards, it is a little difficult, faced with no luggage, to keep going to school every day in the same pair of underwear. The airlines do not supply it. They simply say that people have to buy it and send them the receipts. This bill would provide some recompense.

The final part of this bill is the piece dealing with airlines charging extras when they show people the price. The airlines in Canada are very sneaky with this stuff. Air Canada has something called a fuel

surcharge. Between here and London, England, it is \$206 for people in regular class and \$315 for people in business class. If we add up all the people on the plane and all the fuel charges, it is more than for actually filling up the plane's tank. It charges more in the fuel surcharge than the fuel actually costs. The statement on its website is that it is to provide for fluctuations in operating costs caused by varying fuel prices. That is not the case.

It also charges a Nav Canada surcharge, which is to reflect the fact that it is an airline and has to fly. Nav Canada does not charge per passenger. It charges per plane. It is \$5,000 or so per plane. It does not break it down per passenger. The airline does. It tries to make it sound as if these are government charges. I am sorry, but we are not in charge of this. The government is not in charge of whether there is an insurance fee to be paid or a Nav Canada fee to be paid by the airline. That is a private matter between the airline and Nav Canada.

● (1405)

This is a good bill. This is a bill that would give Canadian passengers some footing in their debates with airlines and would give them some rights. I am proud to support it.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Manon Perreault (Montcalm, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my colleague's bill addresses a significant need in Canada regarding the rights of air passengers.

This issue can affect all Canadians, anyone who uses air travel. Indeed, some problems that can arise during a flight do not happen in other forms of travel. Whether it involves a cancelled or delayed flight, lost baggage, or if boarding is denied, these things can happen to anyone.

Many incidents can arise during air travel. Accordingly, passengers' rights need to be protected any time airlines are treating their passengers unfairly. Compensation rules and requirements for the carriers need to be imposed in order to ensure that travellers are not put at a disadvantage.

The bill places obligations on air carriers to provide compensation and other assistance to passengers in certain cases when a flight has been cancelled or delayed, when boarding has been denied, and when an aircraft has remained on the ground for a period of more than an hour at an airport.

It also requires air carriers to disclose all relevant information to the public regarding the pricing of flights and to keep passengers informed regarding any misplaced baggage and any developments in respect of their flights that could have a significant impact on their travel plans.

These rights apply in certain situations. First of all, when a flight is cancelled, passengers have the right to be reimbursed or re-routed to their final destination. They are entitled to meals based on the length of the delay, and to accommodation, if necessary. They are entitled to compensation in the amount of \$250 to \$600, unless the flight is cancelled due to extraordinary circumstances or if passengers agree to be re-routed.

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Second, when travellers are denied boarding as a result of overbooking on the part of an airline, passengers are entitled to compensation in the amount of \$250 to \$600, as well as any benefits offered by the airline.

Third, when a flight is delayed, passengers are entitled to meals and refreshments in a reasonable relation to the waiting time, as well as accommodation, if necessary.

Fourth, when baggage is misplaced, passengers are entitled to \$500 in compensation.

Fifth, when the advertised price is wrong, airlines must include all costs to be assumed by the airline, as well as all duties, fees and taxes that they collect on behalf of other parties.

This bill takes a page from European legislation that has been in place for several years. It must be said that we are lagging far behind in that respect. European regulations establish compensation for passengers when they have problems with air transportation.

If a flight is overbooked or cancelled, the passenger is entitled to financial compensation. Airlines are always required to provide assistance.

This month, the European Commission announced a number of measures to provide air passengers with new rights and better access to good information and assistance when they are stranded at an airport.

New procedures to handle complaints and new enforcement measures are also included in order for passengers to obtain what they are entitled to. Oversight of airlines by domestic and European authorities will be strengthened.

Even persons with disabilities are better served under the rules established by the European Union. The regulations adopted in 2006 are based on the simple principle that persons with disabilities should have the same opportunity to travel by air.

The regulations on the rights of people with reduced mobility when using air transport prohibits operators from refusing to make a reservation or board passengers because of a disability. However, there are some exceptions due to safety reasons established by law.

The person with reduced mobility must be informed of the refusal, together with the reasons, within five days of making the reservation.

Persons with disabilities are also entitled to obtain, from airport authorities, free assistance at airports and aboard aircraft. These services are funded by a levy collected from the airline companies. European Union countries also impose penalties and have independent organizations to deal with complaints.

• (1410)

This is the approach we should take in Canada, given how successful the common rules for the compensation of air passengers instituted by the European Union in 2004 have been.

If Europeans have such rights, then Canadians should have them too. Europeans do not hesitate to exercise their rights when they feel they have a valid complaint against an airline.

Whether passengers have been denied boarding or downgraded, or their flight has been significantly delayed or cancelled, these are forms of abuse, and we must legislate to prevent them from happening again. If people think that they have a legitimate complaint against an airline because they have been denied boarding or downgraded, or their flight has been significantly delayed or cancelled, they must be able to exercise their rights without any hesitation.

It is simply a matter of logic. Travellers should receive a refund or compensation for their trip if it is cancelled. Consequently, travellers must have access to clear rules regarding refunds or compensation in the event that the airline changes their travel itinerary without two weeks' notice. Otherwise, many Canadian families' vacations will end up being disrupted simply because of an airline's bad practices.

If airlines do not honour their commitments, they must compensate travellers. This bill is a good approach in terms of respectful relations between airlines and travellers.

We need to put rules in place to protect the rights of consumers by working with airlines. Quite frankly, some airlines have really good practices. Others, however, quite commonly engage in practices that are harmful to consumers, such as overbooking and cancelling flights.

When such situations occur, it is important to ensure that travellers are compensated by the airline. Reasonable compensation for travellers would be provided depending on the situation and the damage done, without creating false expectations on the part of the traveller.

It is true that some airlines already have good compensation practices in place, but that is not the case for all of them. This bill would penalize only the airlines that take advantage of consumers.

It is common practice among some airlines to offer refunds only to passengers who are refused boarding. When flights are overbooked, which happens often, people are not usually reimbursed. Bill C-459 would also provide compensation to passengers who end up in that situation, based on the distance of the flight in question.

I already hear the Conservatives saying that no one can control the weather, that not all the blame can be put on the airlines and that some of the responsibility lies elsewhere.

That is why this bill allows for exceptions when it is not the airline's fault. For example, passengers will not receive compensation in the case of a cancelled flight caused by extraordinary circumstances that could not have been avoided. In the case of extraordinary circumstances, airlines do not have to provide the compensation set out in Bill C-459.

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That is the essence of the bill that would create a fairer relationship between passengers and airlines, something that has existed in Europe for many years. It will be particularly beneficial to middle-class Canadian families and SME owners. Whether we are talking about a family vacation, a business trip or any other kind of travel, passengers will not end up powerless and will have rights.

There is currently a serious legislative gap to be filled, and the bill introduced by my colleague from Laval fills the major gap we have in Canada. We must ultimately ensure that passengers are properly compensated when there is a problem at the airport.

• (1415)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The hon. member for Laval has five minutes for his right of reply.

Mr. José Nunez-Melo (Laval, NDP): Mr. Speaker, given the remarks of my official opposition and government colleagues, it seems even clearer to me that a bill such as the one I have introduced is essential.

Like me, members on the other side of the House have demonstrated their support for air passengers. My Conservative colleague, the member for Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, who chairs the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, was quite right when he said: “Consumers have the right to expect to be treated fairly by airlines.” That was on February 7 of this year. What he said is a fact, and it points to the problems that led to the drafting of this bill.

Comments by some government members lead us to believe that existing mechanisms already allow for impartial inquiries when individuals feel they have received unsatisfactory treatment from an airline. That is not true. Many airlines do not see why they should be proactive when it comes to passengers' rights.

The current legislation does not encourage being proactive in the least—quite the opposite, actually. Canada's policy on passengers' rights is based on a disconcerting dichotomy of intimidation and insecurity. The intimidation starts with the very first paragraph on the ticket purchase agreement, where it states that the buyer agrees that the airline assumes no responsibility. Insecurity is created in collusion with insurance companies, which try to force consumers to buy protection. Both aspects employ mechanisms that require passengers to file a complaint themselves in order to receive compensation for the airline's negligence. This bill addresses that approach.

The air passengers' bill of rights that we are discussing today will require all airlines doing business in Canada—apart from the clearly indicated exceptions—to comply with standards for respecting passengers' rights. The main objective is to regulate the sector, as is already the case in Europe, so that compensation for a change in travel plans becomes the standard and not the result of long, expensive legal proceedings.

All it takes is talking to a few victims of bad practices to understand just how very long and particularly awkward the compensation process can be. We must recognize that some airlines already offer good compensation. Moreover they are not necessarily the ones that offer very expensive tickets, as some government colleagues claim.

The goal of the bill is to standardize the practices of airlines when it comes to compensation and, at the same time, to ensure that the rights of passengers are protected fairly and reasonably. We are trying to eliminate misunderstandings and the frustration that result from these abnormal situations.

• (1420)

When this bill was introduced, immediately after the first hour of second reading, my offices in Laval and in the Confederation Building were inundated with emails and calls from across Canada. We managed to compile a record of testimonies ranging from simple delays and minor processing errors to really illegal, if not cruel, actions.

I would like my colleagues across the way to understand that Canada needs to do something about this and that it must adopt a bill like this one.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): In my opinion the nays have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Pursuant to Standing Order 93, the recorded division stands deferred until Wednesday, March 27, 2013, immediately before the time provided for private members' business.

It being 2:25 p.m., the House stands adjourned until Monday next at 11 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 2:26 p.m.)

APPENDIX

**ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS WITH THEIR
CONSTITUENCIES, PROVINCE OF CONSTITUENCY
AND POLITICAL AFFILIATIONS;
COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE,
THE MINISTRY AND PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY**

CHAIR OCCUPANTS

The Speaker

HON. ANDREW SCHEER

The Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. JOE COMARTIN

The Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. BARRY DEVOLIN

The Assistant Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. BRUCE STANTON

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

HON. ANDREW SCHEER

MR. NATHAN CULLEN

MS. JUDY FOOTE

HON. ROB MERRIFIELD

HON. GORDON O'CONNOR

MS. NYCOLE TURMEL

HON. PETER VAN LOAN

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

First Session—Forty-first Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Ablonczy, Hon. Diane, Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas and Consular Affairs)	Calgary—Nose Hill	Alberta	CPC
Adams, Eve, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs	Mississauga—Brampton South	Ontario	CPC
Adler, Mark	York Centre	Ontario	CPC
Aglukkaq, Hon. Leona, Minister of Health, Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and Minister for the Arctic Council	Nunavut	Nunavut	CPC
Albas, Dan	Okanagan—Coquihalla	British Columbia	CPC
Albrecht, Harold	Kitchener—Conestoga	Ontario	CPC
Alexander, Chris, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	Ajax—Pickering	Ontario	CPC
Allen, Malcolm	Welland	Ontario	NDP
Allen, Mike	Tobique—Mactaquac	New Brunswick	CPC
Allison, Dean	Niagara West—Glanbrook	Ontario	CPC
Ambler, Stella	Mississauga South	Ontario	CPC
Ambrose, Hon. Rona, Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for Status of Women	Edmonton—Spruce Grove	Alberta	CPC
Anders, Rob	Calgary West	Alberta	CPC
Anderson, David, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board	Cypress Hills—Grasslands	Saskatchewan	CPC
Andrews, Scott	Avalon	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Angus, Charlie	Timmins—James Bay	Ontario	NDP
Armstrong, Scott	Cumberland—Colchester— Musquodoboit Valley	Nova Scotia	CPC
Ashfield, Hon. Keith, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway	Fredericton	New Brunswick	CPC
Ashton, Niki	Churchill	Manitoba	NDP
Aspin, Jay	Nipissing—Timiskaming	Ontario	CPC
Atamanenko, Alex	British Columbia Southern Interior	British Columbia	NDP
Aubin, Robert	Trois-Rivières	Québec	NDP
Ayala, Paulina	Honoré-Mercier	Québec	NDP
Baird, Hon. John, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Ottawa West—Nepean	Ontario	CPC
Bateman, Joyce	Winnipeg South Centre	Manitoba	CPC
Bélanger, Hon. Mauril	Ottawa—Vanier	Ontario	Lib.
Bellavance, André	Richmond—Arthabaska	Québec	BQ
Bennett, Hon. Carolyn	St. Paul's	Ontario	Lib.
Benoit, Leon	Vegreville—Wainwright	Alberta	CPC
Benskin, Tyrone	Jeanne-Le Ber	Québec	NDP
Bergen, Candice, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety	Portage—Lisgar	Manitoba	CPC
Bernier, Hon. Maxime, Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism)	Beauce	Québec	CPC
Bevington, Dennis	Western Arctic	Northwest Territories	NDP
Bezan, James	Selkirk—Interlake	Manitoba	CPC
Blanchette, Denis	Louis-Hébert	Québec	NDP
Blanchette-Lamothe, Lysane	Pierrefonds—Dollard	Québec	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Blaney, Hon. Steven, Minister of Veterans Affairs and Minister for La Francophonie.....	Lévis—Bellechasse	Québec	CPC
Block, Kelly	Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar	Saskatchewan	CPC
Boivin, Françoise.....	Gatineau	Québec	NDP
Borg, Charmaine	Terrebonne—Blainville	Québec	NDP
Boughen, Ray	Palliser	Saskatchewan	CPC
Boulerice, Alexandre.....	Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie....	Québec	NDP
Boutin-Sweet, Marjolaine.....	Hochelaga	Québec	NDP
Brahmi, Tarik.....	Saint-Jean.....	Québec	NDP
Braid, Peter	Kitchener—Waterloo	Ontario	CPC
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	Saskatchewan	CPC
Brison, Hon. Scott	Kings—Hants	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Brosseau, Ruth Ellen.....	Berthier—Maskinongé.....	Québec	NDP
Brown, Gordon.....	Leeds—Grenville	Ontario	CPC
Brown, Lois, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation	Newmarket—Aurora.....	Ontario	CPC
Brown, Patrick	Barrie	Ontario	CPC
Bruinooge, Rod	Winnipeg South.....	Manitoba	CPC
Butt, Brad.....	Mississauga—Streetsville.....	Ontario	CPC
Byrne, Hon. Gerry	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Newfoundland and Labrador.....	Lib.
Calandra, Paul , Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage	Oak Ridges—Markham	Ontario	CPC
Calkins, Blaine	Wetaskiwin	Alberta	CPC
Cannan, Hon. Ron	Kelowna—Lake Country	British Columbia	CPC
Carmichael, John.....	Don Valley West	Ontario	CPC
Caron, Guy	Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques	Québec	NDP
Carrie, Colin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health....	Oshawa	Ontario	CPC
Casey, Sean	Charlottetown	Prince Edward Island....	Lib.
Cash, Andrew	Davenport	Ontario	NDP
Charlton, Chris	Hamilton Mountain	Ontario	NDP
Chicoine, Sylvain	Châteauguay—Saint-Constant..	Québec	NDP
Chisholm, Robert	Dartmouth—Cole Harbour	Nova Scotia	NDP
Chisu, Corneliu.....	Pickering—Scarborough East ..	Ontario	CPC
Chong, Hon. Michael	Wellington—Halton Hills	Ontario	CPC
Choquette, François	Drummond	Québec	NDP
Chow, Olivia	Trinity—Spadina	Ontario	NDP
Christopherson, David	Hamilton Centre	Ontario	NDP
Clarke, Rob.....	Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River.....	Saskatchewan	CPC
Cleary, Ryan	St. John's South—Mount Pearl	Newfoundland and Labrador.....	NDP
Clement, Hon. Tony, President of the Treasury Board and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario	Parry Sound—Muskoka	Ontario	CPC
Coderre, Hon. Denis	Bourassa	Québec	Lib.
Comartin, Joe, The Deputy Speaker	Windsor—Tecumseh.....	Ontario	NDP
Côté, Raymond.....	Beauport—Limoilou	Québec	NDP
Cotler, Hon. Irwin.....	Mount Royal	Québec	Lib.
Crockatt, Joan	Calgary Centre	Alberta	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Crowder, Jean	Nanaimo—Cowichan	British Columbia	NDP
Cullen, Nathan	Skeena—Bulkley Valley	British Columbia	NDP
Cuzner, Rodger	Cape Breton—Canso	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Daniel, Joe	Don Valley East	Ontario	CPC
Davidson, Patricia	Sarnia—Lambton	Ontario	CPC
Davies, Don	Vancouver Kingsway	British Columbia	NDP
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	British Columbia	NDP
Day, Anne-Marie	Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles	Québec	NDP
Dechert, Bob, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs	Mississauga—Erindale	Ontario	CPC
Del Mastro, Dean, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Peterborough	Ontario	CPC
Devolin, Barry, The Acting Speaker	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	Ontario	CPC
Dewar, Paul	Ottawa Centre	Ontario	NDP
Dion, Hon. Stéphane, Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Québec	Lib.
Dionne Labelle, Pierre	Rivière-du-Nord	Québec	NDP
Donnelly, Fin	New Westminster—Coquitlam	British Columbia	NDP
Doré Lefebvre, Rosane	Alfred-Pellan	Québec	NDP
Dreeshen, Earl	Red Deer	Alberta	CPC
Dubé, Matthew	Chambly—Borduas	Québec	NDP
Duncan, Hon. John	Vancouver Island North	British Columbia	CPC
Duncan, Kirsty	Etobicoke North	Ontario	Lib.
Duncan, Linda	Edmonton—Strathcona	Alberta	NDP
Dusseault, Pierre-Luc	Sherbrooke	Québec	NDP
Dykstra, Rick, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	St. Catharines	Ontario	CPC
Easter, Hon. Wayne	Malpeque	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
Eyking, Hon. Mark	Sydney—Victoria	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Fantino, Hon. Julian, Minister of International Cooperation	Vaughan	Ontario	CPC
Fast, Hon. Ed, Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway	Abbotsford	British Columbia	CPC
Findlay, Hon. Kerry-Lynne D., Associate Minister of National Defence	Delta—Richmond East	British Columbia	CPC
Finley, Hon. Diane, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development	Haldimand—Norfolk	Ontario	CPC
Flaherty, Hon. Jim, Minister of Finance	Whitby—Oshawa	Ontario	CPC
Fletcher, Hon. Steven, Minister of State (Transport)	Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia	Manitoba	CPC
Foote, Judy	Random—Burin—St. George's	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Fortin, Jean-François	Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia	Québec	BQ
Freeman, Mylène	Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel	Québec	NDP
Fry, Hon. Hedy	Vancouver Centre	British Columbia	Lib.
Galipeau, Royal	Ottawa—Orléans	Ontario	CPC
Gallant, Cheryl	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	Ontario	CPC
Garneau, Marc	Westmount—Ville-Marie	Québec	Lib.
Garrison, Randall	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	British Columbia	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Genest, Réjean	Shefford	Québec	NDP
Genest-Jourdain, Jonathan	Manicouagan	Québec	NDP
Giguère, Alain	Marc-Aurèle-Fortin	Québec	NDP
Gill, Parm	Brampton—Springdale	Ontario	CPC
Glover, Shelly, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance	Saint Boniface	Manitoba	CPC
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	New Brunswick	NDP
Goguen, Robert, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	New Brunswick	CPC
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton East	Alberta	Ind. Cons.
Goodale, Hon. Ralph	Wascana	Saskatchewan	Lib.
Goodyear, Hon. Gary, Minister of State (Science and Technology) (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario)	Cambridge	Ontario	CPC
Gosal, Hon. Bal, Minister of State (Sport)	Bramalea—Gore—Malton	Ontario	CPC
Gourde, Jacques, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency for the Regions of Quebec	Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière	Québec	CPC
Gravelle, Claude	Nickel Belt	Ontario	NDP
Grewal, Nina	Fleetwood—Port Kells	British Columbia	CPC
Groguhé, Sadia	Saint-Lambert	Québec	NDP
Harper, Right Hon. Stephen, Prime Minister	Calgary Southwest	Alberta	CPC
Harris, Dan	Scarborough Southwest	Ontario	NDP
Harris, Jack	St. John's East	Newfoundland and Labrador	NDP
Harris, Richard	Cariboo—Prince George	British Columbia	CPC
Hassainia, Sana	Verchères—Les Patriotes	Québec	NDP
Hawn, Hon. Laurie	Edmonton Centre	Alberta	CPC
Hayes, Bryan	Sault Ste. Marie	Ontario	CPC
Hiebert, Russ	South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale	British Columbia	CPC
Hillyer, Jim	Lethbridge	Alberta	CPC
Hoback, Randy	Prince Albert	Saskatchewan	CPC
Holder, Ed	London West	Ontario	CPC
Hsu, Ted	Kingston and the Islands	Ontario	Lib.
Hughes, Carol	Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskasing	Ontario	NDP
Hyer, Bruce	Thunder Bay—Superior North	Ontario	Ind.
Jacob, Pierre	Brome—Missisquoi	Québec	NDP
James, Roxanne	Scarborough Centre	Ontario	CPC
Jean, Brian	Fort McMurray—Athabasca	Alberta	CPC
Julian, Peter	Burnaby—New Westminster	British Columbia	NDP
Kamp, Randy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and for the Asia-Pacific Gateway	Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission	British Columbia	CPC
Karygiannis, Hon. Jim	Scarborough—Agincourt	Ontario	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and for the Atlantic Gateway	South Shore—St. Margaret's	Nova Scotia	CPC
Kellway, Matthew	Beaches—East York	Ontario	NDP
Kenney, Hon. Jason, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism	Calgary Southeast	Alberta	CPC
Kent, Hon. Peter, Minister of the Environment	Thornhill	Ontario	CPC
Kerr, Greg	West Nova	Nova Scotia	CPC
Komarnicki, Ed	Souris—Moose Mountain	Saskatchewan	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Kramp, Daryl	Prince Edward—Hastings	Ontario	CPC
Lake, Hon. Mike, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry	Edmonton—Mill Woods—Beaumont	Alberta	CPC
Lamoureux, Kevin	Winnipeg North	Manitoba	Lib.
Lapointe, François	Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup	Québec	NDP
Larose, Jean-François	Repentigny	Québec	NDP
Latendresse, Alexandrine	Louis-Saint-Laurent	Québec	NDP
Lauzon, Guy	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	Ontario	CPC
Laverdière, Hélène	Laurier—Sainte-Marie	Québec	NDP
Lebel, Hon. Denis, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada	Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean	Québec	CPC
LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic	Beauséjour	New Brunswick	Lib.
LeBlanc, Hélène	LaSalle—Émard	Québec	NDP
Leef, Ryan	Yukon	Yukon	CPC
Leitch, Kellie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour	Simcoe—Grey	Ontario	CPC
Lemieux, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	Ontario	CPC
Leslie, Megan	Halifax	Nova Scotia	NDP
Leung, Chungsen, Parliamentary Secretary for Multiculturalism	Willowdale	Ontario	CPC
Liu, Laurin	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles	Québec	NDP
Lizon, Wladyslaw	Mississauga East—Cooksville	Ontario	CPC
Lobb, Ben	Huron—Bruce	Ontario	CPC
Lukiwski, Tom, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre	Saskatchewan	CPC
Lunney, James	Nanaimo—Alberni	British Columbia	CPC
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence	Cardigan	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
MacKay, Hon. Peter, Minister of National Defence	Central Nova	Nova Scotia	CPC
MacKenzie, Dave	Oxford	Ontario	CPC
Mai, Hoang	Brossard—La Prairie	Québec	NDP
Marston, Wayne	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek	Ontario	NDP
Martin, Pat	Winnipeg Centre	Manitoba	NDP
Masse, Brian	Windsor West	Ontario	NDP
Mathyssen, Irene	London—Fanshawe	Ontario	NDP
May, Elizabeth	Saanich—Gulf Islands	British Columbia	GP
Mayes, Colin	Okanagan—Shuswap	British Columbia	CPC
McCallum, Hon. John	Markham—Unionville	Ontario	Lib.
McColeman, Phil	Brant	Ontario	CPC
McGuinty, David	Ottawa South	Ontario	Lib.
McKay, Hon. John	Scarborough—Guildwood	Ontario	Lib.
McLeod, Cathy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue	Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo	British Columbia	CPC
Menegakis, Costas	Richmond Hill	Ontario	CPC
Menzies, Hon. Ted, Minister of State (Finance)	Macleod	Alberta	CPC
Merrifield, Hon. Rob	Yellowhead	Alberta	CPC
Michaud, Éline	Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier	Québec	NDP
Miller, Larry	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	Ontario	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Moore, Christine	Abitibi—Témiscamingue	Québec	NDP
Moore, Hon. James, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages	Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam	British Columbia	CPC
Moore, Hon. Rob	Fundy Royal	New Brunswick	CPC
Morin, Dany	Chicoutimi—Le Fjord	Québec	NDP
Morin, Isabelle	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine	Québec	NDP
Morin, Marc-André	Laurentides—Labelle	Québec	NDP
Morin, Marie-Claude	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	Québec	NDP
Mourani, Maria	Ahuntsic	Québec	BQ
Mulcair, Hon. Thomas, Leader of the Opposition	Outremont	Québec	NDP
Murray, Joyce	Vancouver Quadra	British Columbia	Lib.
Nantel, Pierre	Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher	Québec	NDP
Nash, Peggy	Parkdale—High Park	Ontario	NDP
Nicholls, Jamie	Vaudreuil-Soulanges	Québec	NDP
Nicholson, Hon. Rob, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Niagara Falls	Ontario	CPC
Norlock, Rick	Northumberland—Quinte West	Ontario	CPC
Nunez-Melo, José	Laval	Québec	NDP
Obhrai, Deepak, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs	Calgary East	Alberta	CPC
O'Connor, Hon. Gordon, Minister of State and Chief Government Whip	Carleton—Mississippi Mills	Ontario	CPC
Oliver, Hon. Joe, Minister of Natural Resources	Eglinton—Lawrence	Ontario	CPC
O'Neill Gordon, Tilly	Miramichi	New Brunswick	CPC
Opitz, Ted	Etobicoke Centre	Ontario	CPC
O'Toole, Erin	Durham	Ontario	CPC
Pacetti, Massimo	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel	Québec	Lib.
Papillon, Annick	Québec	Québec	NDP
Paradis, Hon. Christian, Minister of Industry and Minister of State (Agriculture)	Mégantic—L'Érable	Québec	CPC
Patry, Claude	Jonquière—Alma	Québec	BQ
Payne, LaVar	Medicine Hat	Alberta	CPC
Péclet, Ève	La Pointe-de-l'Île	Québec	NDP
Perreault, Manon	Montcalm	Québec	NDP
Pilon, François	Laval—Les Îles	Québec	NDP
Plamondon, Louis	Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour	Québec	BQ
Poilievre, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario	Nepean—Carleton	Ontario	CPC
Preston, Joe	Elgin—Middlesex—London	Ontario	CPC
Quach, Anne Minh-Thu	Beauharnois—Salaberry	Québec	NDP
Rae, Hon. Bob	Toronto Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Rafferty, John	Thunder Bay—Rainy River	Ontario	NDP
Raitt, Hon. Lisa, Minister of Labour	Halton	Ontario	CPC
Rajotte, James	Edmonton—Leduc	Alberta	CPC
Rankin, Murray	Victoria	British Columbia	NDP
Rathgeber, Brent	Edmonton—St. Albert	Alberta	CPC
Ravnat, Mathieu	Pontiac	Québec	NDP
Raynault, Francine	Joliette	Québec	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Regan, Hon. Geoff	Halifax West	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Reid, Scott	Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	Ontario	CPC
Rempel, Michelle, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment	Calgary Centre-North	Alberta	CPC
Richards, Blake	Wild Rose	Alberta	CPC
Rickford, Greg, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario	Kenora	Ontario	CPC
Ritz, Hon. Gerry, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board	Battlefords—Lloydminster	Saskatchewan	CPC
Rousseau, Jean	Compton—Stanstead	Québec	NDP
Saganash, Romeo	Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik —Eeyou	Québec	NDP
Sandhu, Jasbir	Surrey North	British Columbia	NDP
Saxton, Andrew, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board and for Western Economic Diversification	North Vancouver	British Columbia	CPC
Scarpaleggia, Francis	Lac-Saint-Louis	Québec	Lib.
Scheer, Hon. Andrew, Speaker of the House of Commons	Regina—Qu'Appelle	Saskatchewan	CPC
Schellenberger, Gary	Perth—Wellington	Ontario	CPC
Scott, Craig	Toronto—Danforth	Ontario	NDP
Seeback, Kyle	Brampton West	Ontario	CPC
Sellah, Djaouida	Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert	Québec	NDP
Sgro, Hon. Judy	York West	Ontario	Lib.
Shea, Hon. Gail, Minister of National Revenue and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency	Egmont	Prince Edward Island	CPC
ShIPLEY, Bev	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Ontario	CPC
Shory, Devinder	Calgary Northeast	Alberta	CPC
Simms, Scott	Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Sims, Jinny Jogindera	Newton—North Delta	British Columbia	NDP
Sitsabaiesan, Rathika	Scarborough—Rouge River	Ontario	NDP
Smith, Joy	Kildonan—St. Paul	Manitoba	CPC
Sopuck, Robert	Dauphin—Swan River— Marquette	Manitoba	CPC
Sorenson, Kevin	Crowfoot	Alberta	CPC
Stanton, Bruce, The Acting Speaker	Simcoe North	Ontario	CPC
St-Denis, Lise	Saint-Maurice—Champlain	Québec	Lib.
Stewart, Kennedy	Burnaby—Douglas	British Columbia	NDP
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Eastern Shore	Nova Scotia	NDP
Storseth, Brian	Westlock—St. Paul	Alberta	CPC
Strahl, Mark	Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon	British Columbia	CPC
Sullivan, Mike	York South—Weston	Ontario	NDP
Sweet, David	Ancaster—Dundas— Flamborough—Westdale	Ontario	CPC
Thibeault, Glenn	Sudbury	Ontario	NDP
Tilson, David	Dufferin—Caledon	Ontario	CPC
Toet, Lawrence	Elmwood—Transcona	Manitoba	CPC
Toews, Hon. Vic, Minister of Public Safety	Provencher	Manitoba	CPC
Toone, Philip	Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine	Québec	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Tremblay, Jonathan	Montmorency—Charlevoix— Haute-Côte-Nord	Québec	NDP
Trost, Brad	Saskatoon—Humboldt	Saskatchewan	CPC
Trottier, Bernard	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	Ontario	CPC
Trudeau, Justin	Papineau	Québec	Lib.
Truppe, Susan, Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women	London North Centre	Ontario	CPC
Turmel, Nycole	Hull—Aylmer	Québec	NDP
Tweed, Merv	Brandon—Souris	Manitoba	CPC
Uppal, Hon. Tim, Minister of State (Democratic Reform)	Edmonton—Sherwood Park	Alberta	CPC
Valcourt, Hon. Bernard, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development	Madawaska—Restigouche	New Brunswick	CPC
Valeriote, Frank	Guelph	Ontario	Lib.
Van Kesteren, Dave	Chatham-Kent—Essex	Ontario	CPC
Van Loan, Hon. Peter, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	York—Simcoe	Ontario	CPC
Vellacott, Maurice	Saskatoon—Wanuskewin	Saskatchewan	CPC
Wallace, Mike	Burlington	Ontario	CPC
Warawa, Mark	Langley	British Columbia	CPC
Warkentin, Chris	Peace River	Alberta	CPC
Watson, Jeff	Essex	Ontario	CPC
Weston, John	West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country	British Columbia	CPC
Weston, Rodney	Saint John	New Brunswick	CPC
Wilks, David	Kootenay—Columbia	British Columbia	CPC
Williamson, John	New Brunswick Southwest	New Brunswick	CPC
Wong, Hon. Alice, Minister of State (Seniors)	Richmond	British Columbia	CPC
Woodworth, Stephen	Kitchener Centre	Ontario	CPC
Yelich, Hon. Lynne, Minister of State (Western Economic Diversi- fication)	Blackstrap	Saskatchewan	CPC
Young, Terence	Oakville	Ontario	CPC
Young, Wai	Vancouver South	British Columbia	CPC
Zimmer, Bob	Prince George—Peace River	British Columbia	CPC
VACANCY	Labrador	Newfoundland and Labrador	

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS BY PROVINCE

First Session—Forty-first Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALBERTA (28)		
Ablonczy, Hon. Diane, Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas and Consular Affairs)	Calgary—Nose Hill	CPC
Ambrose, Hon. Rona, Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for Status of Women	Edmonton—Spruce Grove	CPC
Anders, Rob	Calgary West	CPC
Benoit, Leon	Vegreville—Wainwright	CPC
Calkins, Blaine	Wetaskiwin	CPC
Crockatt, Joan	Calgary Centre	CPC
Dreeshen, Earl	Red Deer	CPC
Duncan, Linda	Edmonton—Strathcona	NDP
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton East	Ind. Cons.
Harper, Right Hon. Stephen, Prime Minister	Calgary Southwest	CPC
Hawn, Hon. Laurie	Edmonton Centre	CPC
Hillyer, Jim	Lethbridge	CPC
Jean, Brian	Fort McMurray—Athabasca	CPC
Kenney, Hon. Jason, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism	Calgary Southeast	CPC
Lake, Hon. Mike, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry	Edmonton—Mill Woods—Beaumont	CPC
Menzies, Hon. Ted, Minister of State (Finance)	Macleod	CPC
Merrifield, Hon. Rob	Yellowhead	CPC
Obhrai, Deepak, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs	Calgary East	CPC
Payne, LaVar	Medicine Hat	CPC
Rajotte, James	Edmonton—Leduc	CPC
Rathgeber, Brent	Edmonton—St. Albert	CPC
Rempel, Michelle, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment	Calgary Centre-North	CPC
Richards, Blake	Wild Rose	CPC
Shory, Devinder	Calgary Northeast	CPC
Sorenson, Kevin	Crowfoot	CPC
Storseth, Brian	Westlock—St. Paul	CPC
Uppal, Hon. Tim, Minister of State (Democratic Reform)	Edmonton—Sherwood Park	CPC
Warkentin, Chris	Peace River	CPC
BRITISH COLUMBIA (36)		
Albas, Dan	Okanagan—Coquihalla	CPC
Atamanenko, Alex	British Columbia Southern Interior	NDP
Cannan, Hon. Ron	Kelowna—Lake Country	CPC
Crowder, Jean	Nanaimo—Cowichan	NDP
Cullen, Nathan	Skeena—Bulkley Valley	NDP
Davies, Don	Vancouver Kingsway	NDP
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	NDP
Donnelly, Fin	New Westminster—Coquitlam	NDP
Duncan, Hon. John	Vancouver Island North	CPC
Fast, Hon. Ed, Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway	Abbotsford	CPC
Findlay, Hon. Kerry-Lynne D., Associate Minister of National Defence	Delta—Richmond East	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Fry, Hon. Hedy	Vancouver Centre	Lib.
Garrison, Randall	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	NDP
Grewal, Nina	Fleetwood—Port Kells	CPC
Harris, Richard	Cariboo—Prince George	CPC
Hiebert, Russ	South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale	CPC
Julian, Peter	Burnaby—New Westminster	NDP
Kamp, Randy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and for the Asia-Pacific Gateway	Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission	CPC
Lunney, James	Nanaimo—Alberni	CPC
May, Elizabeth	Saanich—Gulf Islands	GP
Mayes, Colin	Okanagan—Shuswap	CPC
McLeod, Cathy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue	Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo	CPC
Moore, Hon. James, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages	Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam	CPC
Murray, Joyce	Vancouver Quadra	Lib.
Rankin, Murray	Victoria	NDP
Sandhu, Jasbir	Surrey North	NDP
Saxton, Andrew, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board and for Western Economic Diversification	North Vancouver	CPC
Sims, Jinny Jogindera	Newton—North Delta	NDP
Stewart, Kennedy	Burnaby—Douglas	NDP
Strahl, Mark	Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon	CPC
Warawa, Mark	Langley	CPC
Weston, John	West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country	CPC
Wilks, David	Kootenay—Columbia	CPC
Wong, Hon. Alice, Minister of State (Seniors)	Richmond	CPC
Young, Wai	Vancouver South	CPC
Zimmer, Bob	Prince George—Peace River	CPC
MANITOBA (14)		
Ashton, Niki	Churchill	NDP
Bateman, Joyce	Winnipeg South Centre	CPC
Bergen, Candice, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety	Portage—Lisgar	CPC
Bezan, James	Selkirk—Interlake	CPC
Bruinooge, Rod	Winnipeg South	CPC
Fletcher, Hon. Steven, Minister of State (Transport)	Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia	CPC
Glover, Shelly, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance	Saint Boniface	CPC
Lamoureux, Kevin	Winnipeg North	Lib.
Martin, Pat	Winnipeg Centre	NDP
Smith, Joy	Kildonan—St. Paul	CPC
Sopuck, Robert	Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette	CPC
Toet, Lawrence	Elmwood—Transcona	CPC
Toews, Hon. Vic, Minister of Public Safety	Provencher	CPC
Tweed, Merv	Brandon—Souris	CPC
NEW BRUNSWICK (10)		
Allen, Mike	Tobique—Mactaquac	CPC
Ashfield, Hon. Keith, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway	Fredericton	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	NDP
Goguen, Robert, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	CPC
LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic	Beauséjour	Lib.
Moore, Hon. Rob	Fundy Royal	CPC
O'Neill Gordon, Tilly	Miramichi	CPC
Valcourt, Hon. Bernard, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development	Madawaska—Restigouche	CPC
Weston, Rodney	Saint John	CPC
Williamson, John	New Brunswick Southwest	CPC
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR (6)		
Andrews, Scott	Avalon	Lib.
Byrne, Hon. Gerry	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Lib.
Cleary, Ryan	St. John's South—Mount Pearl	NDP
Foote, Judy	Random—Burin—St. George's	Lib.
Harris, Jack	St. John's East	NDP
Simms, Scott	Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls— Windsor	Lib.
VACANCY	Labrador	
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (1)		
Bevington, Dennis	Western Arctic	NDP
NOVA SCOTIA (11)		
Armstrong, Scott	Cumberland—Colchester— Musquodoboit Valley	CPC
Brison, Hon. Scott	Kings—Hants	Lib.
Chisholm, Robert	Dartmouth—Cole Harbour	NDP
Cuzner, Rodger	Cape Breton—Canso	Lib.
Eyking, Hon. Mark	Sydney—Victoria	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and for the Atlantic Gateway	South Shore—St. Margaret's	CPC
Kerr, Greg	West Nova	CPC
Leslie, Megan	Halifax	NDP
MacKay, Hon. Peter, Minister of National Defence	Central Nova	CPC
Regan, Hon. Geoff	Halifax West	Lib.
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Eastern Shore	NDP
NUNAVUT (1)		
Aglukkaq, Hon. Leona, Minister of Health, Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and Minister for the Arctic Council	Nunavut	CPC
ONTARIO (106)		
Adams, Eve, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs	Mississauga—Brampton South	CPC
Adler, Mark	York Centre	CPC
Albrecht, Harold	Kitchener—Conestoga	CPC
Alexander, Chris, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	Ajax—Pickering	CPC
Allen, Malcolm	Welland	NDP
Allison, Dean	Niagara West—Glanbrook	CPC
Ambler, Stella	Mississauga South	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Angus, Charlie	Timmins—James Bay	NDP
Aspin, Jay	Nipissing—Timiskaming	CPC
Baird, Hon. John, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Ottawa West—Nepean	CPC
Bélanger, Hon. Mauril	Ottawa—Vanier	Lib.
Bennett, Hon. Carolyn	St. Paul's	Lib.
Braid, Peter	Kitchener—Waterloo	CPC
Brown, Gordon	Leeds—Grenville	CPC
Brown, Lois, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation	Newmarket—Aurora	CPC
Brown, Patrick	Barrie	CPC
Butt, Brad	Mississauga—Streetsville	CPC
Calandra, Paul, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage	Oak Ridges—Markham	CPC
Carmichael, John	Don Valley West	CPC
Carrie, Colin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health	Oshawa	CPC
Cash, Andrew	Davenport	NDP
Charlton, Chris	Hamilton Mountain	NDP
Chisu, Corneliu	Pickering—Scarborough East	CPC
Chong, Hon. Michael	Wellington—Halton Hills	CPC
Chow, Olivia	Trinity—Spadina	NDP
Christopherson, David	Hamilton Centre	NDP
Clement, Hon. Tony, President of the Treasury Board and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario	Parry Sound—Muskoka	CPC
Comartin, Joe, The Deputy Speaker	Windsor—Tecumseh	NDP
Daniel, Joe	Don Valley East	CPC
Davidson, Patricia	Sarnia—Lambton	CPC
Dechert, Bob, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs	Mississauga—Erindale	CPC
Del Mastro, Dean, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Peterborough	CPC
Devolin, Barry, The Acting Speaker	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	CPC
Dewar, Paul	Ottawa Centre	NDP
Duncan, Kirsty	Etobicoke North	Lib.
Dykstra, Rick, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	St. Catharines	CPC
Fantino, Hon. Julian, Minister of International Cooperation	Vaughan	CPC
Finley, Hon. Diane, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development	Haldimand—Norfolk	CPC
Flaherty, Hon. Jim, Minister of Finance	Whitby—Oshawa	CPC
Galipeau, Royal	Ottawa—Orléans	CPC
Gallant, Cheryl	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	CPC
Gill, Parm	Brampton—Springdale	CPC
Goodyear, Hon. Gary, Minister of State (Science and Technology) (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario)	Cambridge	CPC
Gosal, Hon. Bal, Minister of State (Sport)	Bramalea—Gore—Malton	CPC
Gravelle, Claude	Nickel Belt	NDP
Harris, Dan	Scarborough Southwest	NDP
Hayes, Bryan	Sault Ste. Marie	CPC
Holder, Ed	London West	CPC
Hsu, Ted	Kingston and the Islands	Lib.
Hughes, Carol	Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskasing	NDP
Hyer, Bruce	Thunder Bay—Superior North	Ind.
James, Roxanne	Scarborough Centre	CPC
Karygiannis, Hon. Jim	Scarborough—Agincourt	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Kellway, Matthew	Beaches—East York	NDP
Kent, Hon. Peter, Minister of the Environment	Thornhill	CPC
Kramp, Daryl	Prince Edward—Hastings	CPC
Lauzon, Guy	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	CPC
Leitch, Kellie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour	Simcoe—Grey	CPC
Lemieux, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	CPC
Leung, Chungsen, Parliamentary Secretary for Multiculturalism	Willowdale	CPC
Lizon, Wladyslaw	Mississauga East—Cooksville	CPC
Lobb, Ben	Huron—Bruce	CPC
MacKenzie, Dave	Oxford	CPC
Marston, Wayne	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek	NDP
Masse, Brian	Windsor West	NDP
Mathysen, Irene	London—Fanshawe	NDP
McCallum, Hon. John	Markham—Unionville	Lib.
McColeman, Phil	Brant	CPC
McGuinty, David	Ottawa South	Lib.
McKay, Hon. John	Scarborough—Guildwood	Lib.
Menegakis, Costas	Richmond Hill	CPC
Miller, Larry	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	CPC
Nash, Peggy	Parkdale—High Park	NDP
Nicholson, Hon. Rob, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Niagara Falls	CPC
Norlock, Rick	Northumberland—Quinte West	CPC
O'Connor, Hon. Gordon, Minister of State and Chief Government Whip	Carleton—Mississippi Mills	CPC
Oliver, Hon. Joe, Minister of Natural Resources	Eglinton—Lawrence	CPC
Opitz, Ted	Etobicoke Centre	CPC
O'Toole, Erin	Durham	CPC
Poilievre, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario	Nepean—Carleton	CPC
Preston, Joe	Elgin—Middlesex—London	CPC
Rae, Hon. Bob	Toronto Centre	Lib.
Rafferty, John	Thunder Bay—Rainy River	NDP
Raitt, Hon. Lisa, Minister of Labour	Halton	CPC
Reid, Scott	Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	CPC
Rickford, Greg, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario	Kenora	CPC
Schellenberger, Gary	Perth—Wellington	CPC
Scott, Craig	Toronto—Danforth	NDP
Seeback, Kyle	Brampton West	CPC
Sgro, Hon. Judy	York West	Lib.
Shiple, Bev	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	CPC
Sitsabaiesan, Rathika	Scarborough—Rouge River	NDP
Stanton, Bruce, The Acting Speaker	Simcoe North	CPC
Sullivan, Mike	York South—Weston	NDP
Sweet, David	Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale	CPC
Thibeault, Glenn	Sudbury	NDP
Tilson, David	Dufferin—Caledon	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Trottier, Bernard	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	CPC
Truppe, Susan, Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women	London North Centre	CPC
Valeriote, Frank	Guelph	Lib.
Van Kesteren, Dave	Chatham-Kent—Essex	CPC
Van Loan, Hon. Peter, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	York—Simcoe	CPC
Wallace, Mike	Burlington	CPC
Watson, Jeff	Essex	CPC
Woodworth, Stephen	Kitchener Centre	CPC
Young, Terence	Oakville	CPC
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND (4)		
Casey, Sean	Charlottetown	Lib.
Easter, Hon. Wayne	Malpeque	Lib.
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence	Cardigan	Lib.
Shea, Hon. Gail, Minister of National Revenue and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency	Egmont	CPC
QUÉBEC (75)		
Aubin, Robert	Trois-Rivières	NDP
Ayala, Paulina	Honoré-Mercier	NDP
Bellavance, André	Richmond—Arthabaska	BQ
Benskin, Tyrone	Jeanne-Le Ber	NDP
Bernier, Hon. Maxime, Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism)	Beauce	CPC
Blanchette, Denis	Louis-Hébert	NDP
Blanchette-Lamothe, Lysane	Pierrefonds—Dollard	NDP
Blaney, Hon. Steven, Minister of Veterans Affairs and Minister for La Francophonie	Lévis—Bellechasse	CPC
Boivin, Françoise	Gatineau	NDP
Borg, Charmaine	Terrebonne—Blainville	NDP
Boulerice, Alexandre	Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie	NDP
Boutin-Sweet, Marjolaine	Hochelaga	NDP
Brahmi, Tarik	Saint-Jean	NDP
Brosseau, Ruth Ellen	Berthier—Maskinongé	NDP
Caron, Guy	Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques	NDP
Chicoine, Sylvain	Châteauguay—Saint-Constant	NDP
Choquette, François	Drummond	NDP
Coderre, Hon. Denis	Bourassa	Lib.
Côté, Raymond	Beauport—Limoilou	NDP
Cotler, Hon. Irwin	Mount Royal	Lib.
Day, Anne-Marie	Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles	NDP
Dion, Hon. Stéphane, Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Lib.
Dionne Labelle, Pierre	Rivière-du-Nord	NDP
Doré Lefebvre, Rosane	Alfred-Pellan	NDP
Dubé, Matthew	Chambly—Borduas	NDP
Dusseault, Pierre-Luc	Sherbrooke	NDP
Fortin, Jean-François	Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia	BQ
Freeman, Mylène	Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel	NDP
Garneau, Marc	Westmount—Ville-Marie	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Genest, Réjean	Shefford	NDP
Genest-Jourdain, Jonathan	Manicouagan	NDP
Giguère, Alain	Marc-Aurèle-Fortin	NDP
Gourde, Jacques, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency for the Regions of Quebec	Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière	CPC
Groguhé, Sadia	Saint-Lambert	NDP
Hassainia, Sana	Verchères—Les Patriotes	NDP
Jacob, Pierre	Brome—Missisquoi	NDP
Lapointe, François	Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup	NDP
Larose, Jean-François	Repentigny	NDP
Latendresse, Alexandrine	Louis-Saint-Laurent	NDP
Laverdière, Hélène	Laurier—Sainte-Marie	NDP
Lebel, Hon. Denis, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada	Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean	CPC
LeBlanc, Hélène	LaSalle—Émard	NDP
Liu, Laurin	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles	NDP
Mai, Hoang	Brossard—La Prairie	NDP
Michaud, Élane	Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier	NDP
Moore, Christine	Abitibi—Témiscamingue	NDP
Morin, Dany	Chicoutimi—Le Fjord	NDP
Morin, Isabelle	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine	NDP
Morin, Marc-André	Laurentides—Labelle	NDP
Morin, Marie-Claude	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	NDP
Mourani, Maria	Ahuntsic	BQ
Mulcair, Hon. Thomas, Leader of the Opposition	Outremont	NDP
Nantel, Pierre	Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher	NDP
Nicholls, Jamie	Vaudreuil-Soulanges	NDP
Nunez-Melo, José	Laval	NDP
Pacetti, Massimo	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel	Lib.
Papillon, Annick	Québec	NDP
Paradis, Hon. Christian, Minister of Industry and Minister of State (Agriculture)	Mégantic—L'Érable	CPC
Patry, Claude	Jonquière—Alma	BQ
Péclet, Ève	La Pointe-de-l'Île	NDP
Perreault, Manon	Montcalm	NDP
Pilon, François	Laval—Les Îles	NDP
Plamondon, Louis	Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour	BQ
Quach, Anne Minh-Thu	Beauharnois—Salaberry	NDP
Ravignat, Mathieu	Pontiac	NDP
Raynault, Francine	Joliette	NDP
Rousseau, Jean	Compton—Stanstead	NDP
Saganash, Romeo	Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou	NDP
Scarpaleggia, Francis	Lac-Saint-Louis	Lib.
Sellah, Djaouida	Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert	NDP
St-Denis, Lise	Saint-Maurice—Champlain	Lib.
Toone, Philip	Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine	NDP
Tremblay, Jonathan	Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Trudeau, Justin	Papineau	Lib.
Turmel, Nycole	Hull—Aylmer	NDP
SASKATCHEWAN (14)		
Anderson, David, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board	Cypress Hills—Grasslands	CPC
Block, Kelly	Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar	CPC
Boughen, Ray	Palliser	CPC
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	CPC
Clarke, Rob	Desnethé—Mississippi—Churchill River	CPC
Goodale, Hon. Ralph	Wascana	Lib.
Hoback, Randy	Prince Albert	CPC
Komarnicki, Ed	Souris—Moose Mountain	CPC
Lukiwski, Tom, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre	CPC
Ritz, Hon. Gerry, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board	Battlefords—Lloydminster	CPC
Scheer, Hon. Andrew, Speaker of the House of Commons	Regina—Qu'Appelle	CPC
Trost, Brad	Saskatoon—Humboldt	CPC
Vellacott, Maurice	Saskatoon—Wanuskewin	CPC
Yelich, Hon. Lynne, Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification)	Blackstrap	CPC
YUKON (1)		
Leef, Ryan	Yukon	CPC

LIST OF STANDING AND SUB-COMMITTEES

(As of March 22, 2013 — 1st Session, 41st Parliament)

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Chair:	Chris Warkentin	Vice-Chairs:	Carolyn Bennett Jean Crowder
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Stella Ambler Dennis Bevington Ray Boughen	Rob Clarke Jonathan Genest-Jourdain	Carol Hughes Brent Rathgeber	Greg Rickford Kyle Seeback	(12)
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Associate Members

Eve Adams	Michael Chong	Daryl Kramp	Blake Richards
Mark Adler	Joan Crockett	Mike Lake	Romeo Saganash
Dan Albas	Nathan Cullen	Kevin Lamoureux	Andrew Saxton
Harold Albrecht	Joe Daniel	Guy Lauzon	Gary Schellenberger
Chris Alexander	Patricia Davidson	Ryan Leef	Bev Shipley
Mike Allen	Bob Dechert	Kellie Leitch	Devinder Shory
Dean Allison	Dean Del Mastro	Pierre Lemieux	Joy Smith
Rob Anders	Earl Dreshen	Chungsen Leung	Robert Sopuck
David Anderson	Rick Dykstra	Wladyslaw Lizon	Kevin Sorenson
Charlie Angus	Kerry-Lynne D. Findlay	Ben Lobb	Brian Storseth
Scott Armstrong	Hedy Fry	Tom Lukiwski	Mark Strahl
Niki Ashton	Royal Galipeau	James Lunney	David Sweet
Jay Aspin	Cheryl Gallant	Dave MacKenzie	David Tilson
Joyce Bateman	Parm Gill	Colin Mayes	Lawrence Toet
Leon Benoit	Shelly Glover	Phil McColeman	Brad Trost
Tyrone Benskin	Robert Goguen	Cathy McLeod	Bernard Trottier
Candice Bergen	Jacques Gourde	Costas Menegakis	Susan Truppe
James Bezan	Nina Grewal	Rob Merrifield	Merv Tweed
Kelly Block	Richard Harris	Larry Miller	Dave Van Kesteren
Peter Braid	Laurie Hawn	Rob Moore	Maurice Vellacott
Garry Breitkreuz	Bryan Hayes	Rick Norlock	Mike Wallace
Gordon Brown	Russ Hiebert	Deepak Obhrai	Mark Warawa
Lois Brown	Jim Hillyer	Tilly O'Neill Gordon	Jeff Watson
Patrick Brown	Randy Hoback	Ted Opitz	John Weston
Rod Bruinooge	Ed Holder	Erin O'Toole	Rodney Weston
Brad Butt	Roxanne James	LaVar Payne	David Wilks
Paul Calandra	Brian Jean	Pierre Poilievre	John Williamson
Blaine Calkins	Peter Julian	Joe Preston	Stephen Woodworth
Ron Cannan	Randy Kamp	James Rajotte	Terence Young
John Carmichael	Gerald Keddy	Mathieu Ravignat	Wai Young
Colin Carrie	Greg Kerr	Scott Reid	Bob Zimmer
Corneliu Chisu	Ed Komarnicki	Michelle Rempel	

ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PRIVACY AND ETHICS

Chair:

Pierre-Luc Dusseault

Vice-Chairs:

 Scott Andrews
 Patricia Davidson

 Charlie Angus
 Charmaine Borg
 Alexandre Boulerice

 Brad Butt
 Blaine Calkins

 John Carmichael
 Dean Del Mastro

 Earl Dreshen
 Colin Mayes

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Associate Members

Eve Adams	Rob Clarke	Ryan Leef	Gary Schellenberger
Mark Adler	Joan Crockatt	Kellie Leitch	Kyle Seeback
Dan Albas	Joe Daniel	Pierre Lemieux	Bev Shipley
Harold Albrecht	Bob Dechert	Chungsen Leung	Devinder Shory
Chris Alexander	Rick Dykstra	Wladyslaw Lizon	Joy Smith
Mike Allen	Wayne Easter	Ben Lobb	Robert Sopuck
Dean Allison	Kerry-Lynne D. Findlay	Tom Lukiwski	Kevin Sorenson
Stella Ambler	Royal Galipeau	James Lunney	Brian Storseth
Rob Anders	Cheryl Gallant	Dave MacKenzie	Mark Strahl
David Anderson	Parm Gill	Phil McColeman	David Sweet
Scott Armstrong	Shelly Glover	Cathy McLeod	David Tilson
Jay Aspin	Robert Goguen	Costas Menegakis	Lawrence Toet
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APPENDIX

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