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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Wednesday, June 12, 2019

—

Speaker: The Honourable Geoff Regan

CONTENTS

(Table of Contents appears at back of this issue.)

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, June 12, 2019

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayer

•(1405)

[*Translation*]

The Speaker: We will now have the singing of the national anthem led by the hon. member for Edmonton Centre.

[*Members sang the national anthem.*]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

NUTRITION NORTH

Hon. Hunter Tootoo (Nunavut, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the minister brushed off my call for an inquiry into nutrition north Canada. It seems she does not understand the serious effect the failure of this program has on northern communities. In Nunavut, over 50% of the households are affected by food insecurity. In case she does not understand that, it means they do not have reliable access to affordable, nutritious food.

In the eight years since its launch, successive governments have spent over half a billion dollars on nutrition north and all they have achieved in Nunavut is a 20% hike in the number of households affected by food insecurity. Yesterday, I was not joking when I said we should call it the “Phoenix” food program.

The government cannot continue to hide its head in the sand. Nunavummiut need help and they want answers. Why has this program failed so spectacularly? An inquiry would tell us that and help us find new ways forward to ensure food security for our communities. I call on the Government of Canada to immediately open an inquiry into nutrition north.

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ITALIAN HERITAGE MONTH

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, growing up in an Italian Canadian family taught me the value of hard work and sacrifice, how to face adversity and the importance of being a good neighbour.

[*Member spoke in Italian*]

There are also the contributions we have made to Canada's diverse and rich social fabric.

[*Translation*]

Under this government, ties between Canada and Italy have grown stronger because of our shared values: democracy, social justice, gender equality and national pride.

[*English*]

I see these values in my own riding.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the hard-working Italian Canadians of Vaughan—Woodbridge, the entrepreneurs, business owners, both large and small, and all our incredible seniors.

[*Member spoke in Italian*]

[*Translation*]

I am proud to be Canadian.

[*English*]

I am proudly part of a governing party that tabled Motion No. 64, ratified CETA and is reopening Canada's Milan trade office.

I invite all my colleagues to join me in saying *auguri*. Happy Italian Heritage Month.

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SUMMER IN BANFF—AIRDRIE

Mr. Blake Richards (Banff—Airdrie, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this summer is a perfect time for people the world over to check out the most beautiful riding in Canada. Banff—Airdrie is home to natural beauty that is beyond compare and amazing communities that organize outstanding events.

Throughout June, the world-renowned Banff Centre is hosting events celebrating indigenous peoples, including a drawing workshop, a choreography creation lab and singer Jay Gilday on June 21, National Indigenous Peoples Day.

Cochrane has the always popular RCMP Musical Ride this July. All proceeds will go to the Cochrane and Area Victim Services, the Cochrane Search and Rescue Association, the Lindsay Leigh Kimmett Memorial Foundation and the Cochrane Roping Club.

Who could forget the Airdrie Pro Rodeo coming up on Canada Day weekend? As one of the largest rodeos in the country, it attracts over 10,000 visitors, volunteers and contestants from across North America.

Statements by Members

During the August long weekend, the Canmore Folk Music Festival is taking place. People can see live folk music from some of the best out there at the Stan Rogers, Grizzly Paw and Rocky Mountain Ski Lodge stages, all weekend long.

We look forward to welcoming the world this summer.

* * *

[*Translation*]

SAINT-LAMBERT CHORAL SOCIETY

Mrs. Alexandra Mendès (Brossard—Saint-Lambert, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, 2019 marks the 100th anniversary of the Société chorale de Saint-Lambert.

The SCSL is one of our finest cultural and heritage institutions. It is the oldest active amateur choir in Quebec and one of the oldest in Canada.

The Société chorale de Saint-Lambert was officially incorporated in 1919.

[*English*]

Its history is closely linked to the development of the municipality of Saint-Lambert, which was created in 1857 with the construction of the railway. At the time, concerts accompanied all major ceremonies.

[*Translation*]

David Christiani became the SCSL's director in September 1978 and continued to serve in that capacity until 2014. He created the eclectic repertoire the choir has become known for, drawing on baroque, classical, romantic and contemporary works, spirituals, folk songs and Christmas music.

[*English*]

However, it is more than just an admired and exceptionally talented musical ensemble. The Société chorale de Saint-Lambert has contributed in many and varied ways to the social fabric of the city of Saint-Lambert.

• (1410)

[*Translation*]

I would like to express my heartfelt congratulations to the SCSL on this major milestone.

* * *

SENIORS

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, more and more seniors are experiencing isolation, harassment by people who mean them harm or pressure from loved ones. Intentional or not, this psychological violence leads to manipulation, abuse, bullying, theft and even physical assault. It would be inhumane to turn a blind eye to these realities. Men and women who contribute to society all their lives are worthy of respect and consideration.

I am happy to say that some groups are taking action. As part of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, the Table intersectorielle AMI des aînés is launching its annual campaign to distribute over 20,000 placemats in the area to provide information to vulnerable seniors.

On Saturday, outreach booths will be set up in Lafond Park for a senior wellness event called Unis pour le mieux-être des aînés. I will be there. The event is being organized by the Table de concertation Vivre et vieillir à Rosemont, in collaboration with the Service des loisirs Angus-Bourbonnière. I want to thank them both.

* * *

[*English*]

INTERNATIONAL PLOWING MATCH AND RURAL EXPO

Mr. Marc Serré (Nickel Belt, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am proud that my hometown of Verner, Ontario, is hosting the International Plowing Match and Rural Expo, September 17 to 21.

This close-knit community and municipality of West Nipissing boasts plenty of outdoor activities and wonderful northern hospitality. The amazing staff and volunteers are why this town was perfect to host this international agricultural event, which attracts tens of thousands of people from across Ontario and Canada. It is the second time in 100 years that it is in northern Ontario.

[*Translation*]

I am proud of the municipality of West Nipissing for hosting this incredibly important event. It makes the community so proud. I invite all members to come out to share in our joie de vivre and meet the region's pioneer families, like the Beaudrys, the Éthiers, the Côtés, the Roberges, the Rainvilles, the Miron, the Lepages, the Demerses, the Ducharmes, the Gingras, the Brunets, the Guénettes, the Lebeaus, the Leblancs and the Cazabons. I urge my colleagues to join us in Ontario for the biggest festival of 2019.

* * *

[*English*]

ALBERTA ENERGY SECTOR

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to fight for the people of my riding of Calgary Nose Hill. They work hard and contribute much to the prosperity of Canada.

For many, that means working in a job in the energy sector. However, they have suffered as the Prime Minister vetoed the northern gateway pipeline, purposefully mismanaged the still unbuilt TMX pipeline, chased away any hope of investment in the energy sector with Bill C-69, landlocked Canadian energy with Bill C-48, told the world that he wished he could phase out the energy sector faster, celebrated when his efforts killed the energy east pipeline and refused to reopen the equalization formula after killing our jobs.

This is not nation-building policy. This is anti-Alberta policy. Here is a message to the Prime Minister and the anti-energy left on behalf of the people in my riding: We have had enough. If they continue on this path, they do so at the detriment of our confederation.

*Statements by Members***GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES**

Mrs. Deborah Schulte (King—Vaughan, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians know that to grow a business one must first invest in the business, invest in the people, invest in equipment and invest for the future. Companies do not cut their way to prosperity; they grow it.

Our government knows this. With long-term, sustainable plans, we are funding green infrastructure, tackling climate change, investing in public transit, protecting the environment and helping families with the Canada child benefit and the middle income tax cut, to put more money in the pockets of Canadians. We are making life more affordable and investing to set the stage for a vibrant, successful and green future.

While Premier Ford makes provincial cuts and wages war on labour and middle-class Ontarians, we need a federal government with the right vision and plan to continue to build a more prosperous tomorrow. Now more than ever, we need to invest in Canadians, support business and protect our environment.

Our plan is working and the future of Canada is bright.

* * *

MEMBER FOR AVALON

Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our 42nd Parliament is soon coming to a close as we approach the federal election this fall. I want to take this time to thank the people of Avalon for allowing me the great honour of being their member of Parliament. I hope to once again earn their vote and the privilege to continue to represent them in October and well into the future.

None of us would be able to do our jobs as MPs without the support of our family and our wonderful staff, and I am pleased to have some of those people here today. My wife, Trudy, I am sure deserves a medal for putting up with me. Her love, support and patience has been unwavering. I thank Marg, Raquel and Shannon, who work in my constituency office, for making me look good each and every day. As for Vanessa, who works in my Ottawa office, all I will say is that any one of us should be so lucky as to have a person like Vanessa.

I thank each and every one of them. I would not be here without them.

* * *

•(1415)

[*Translation*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the environment commissioner, the Auditor General, the United Nations and the Pembina Institute have all indicated that the Liberals will not meet the Paris targets. Even their own government's numbers confirm it.

The Liberals' environmental plan is in shambles. They want to ban plastics, but they are investing millions in the industry. They are saying that polluters need to pay, but then they are allowing thousands of tonnes of untreated waste water and raw sewage to be dumped into the St. Lawrence River.

Their carbon tax is not a plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. According to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, the big polluters will pay only 8% of the total revenue generated by the Liberal carbon tax, which means that families and small businesses will have to cover the remaining 92% by paying more for gas, groceries and home heating.

In the next few days, our leader will unveil our plan for the environment. Unlike the Liberal plan, which is not an environmental plan but a plan to raise taxes for Canadians, our plan will contain practical measures to protect our environment while also protecting Canadian taxpayers.

* * *

[*English*]

GOVERNMENT POLICIES

Mr. Omar Alhabra (Mississauga Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in three and a half years, our government's policies have had a positive impact on Mississauga. Here are some examples of that.

The Canada child benefit has supported 140,000 children, who received a total of \$1 billion in benefits. Our housing plan has funded the building and repairing of 3,000 homes and has subsidized 5,000 rental units. Thanks to our government's doubling of the funding for the Canada summer jobs program, 5,000 young Mississaugans were able to find jobs. When we doubled the transfer for the gas tax, Mississauga's portion grew by \$80 million. That is on top of the \$100 million for infrastructure funding that went to transit, water facilities and roads. It could have been more if not for the Ford government stalling more funding.

The results speak for themselves. Our government and the six strong Liberal MPs are fighting for the people of Mississauga.

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PRIDE

Mr. Randy Boissonnault (Edmonton Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today as we begin pride season to share the incredible results our government has delivered for LGBTQ2 Canadians.

We have invested an historic \$20 million over two years in Canadian LGBTQ organizations. We have increased funding to pride events across the country. We have extended legal protections to trans and non-binary Canadians. We have expanded our ability to welcome more LGBTQ refugees to safety in Canada.

[*Translation*]

We have come a long way in the past 50 years, but there is still a lot more work to be done.

Statements by Members

[English]

The opposition leader's refusal to participate in a single event this pride season demonstrates his disdain for LGBTQ2 Canadians. The costs of inaction from the opposition leader and his party are real, when we see some of the highest rates of suicide and homelessness among LGBTQ2 kids.

Our party will lead. Our leader, this plan and our government are much better than advertised.

* * *

FORESTRY INDUSTRY

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as devastating job losses in the forestry industry continue to mount in our province, the Liberals' tone-deaf response shows just how out of touch they truly are. They could have ended this dispute with a renegotiated NAFTA, but failed, saying that it was not a priority.

When asked what the Liberals were going to do for forestry families in British Columbia impacted by their poor decisions, they shamefully say, "Don't worry. It'll be okay".

Yesterday, the member of Parliament from Cloverdale—Langley City proudly proclaimed, "There's no problem, things are great, unemployment is down."

The Liberals say that they stand with the workers. Are they standing with them in the unemployment line? Are they standing with them as they struggle to get by? Are they standing with them when the bank is foreclosing?

Canadians and hard-working forestry families deserve better. This October, they can cut the member for Papineau down to size, because he is just not as advertised.

* * *

[Translation]

PONTIAC

Mr. William Amos (Pontiac, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the people of Pontiac for placing their trust in me in 2015 and for working with me over the past four years to improve our communities.

Our investments have had a positive impact on the quality of life in our regions. This includes everything from the arena in Maniwaki to the Véloroute des Draveurs, the Cantley community centre to the Résidence Meilleur in Chapeau and the Pink Road extension to public transit in Gatineau.

● (1420)

[English]

On the path to reconciliation, we achieved a historic settlement with the Algonquin community of Kitigan Zibi. We have taken huge steps to protect the environment, with \$1.3 billion in conservation funding and tough new measures to prevent plastic pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

I have channelled the voices of our municipalities that, like all of rural Canada, demand better Internet and better cellphone coverage.

We have been hit by tornadoes and floods over the past three years, so we know that bridging the digital divide is still about the economy and public safety.

[Translation]

Thank you for giving me this honour. It is a privilege to serve my constituents.

* * *

[English]

STATUS OF WOMEN

Ms. Irene Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, 2019 marks the 100th anniversary of the Winnipeg General Strike, six weeks that forever changed the landscape for the labour movement in Canada.

Women played an integral role in the movement, which managed to continue public service delivery throughout its six-week duration. It was women who began the strike at 7 a.m., on May 15. Telephone operators, the "Hello Girls", walked off the job. They unplugged the phone lines and even removed the fuses, effectively disrupting communications for the power elite.

While Helen Armstrong, better known as "Ma", receives little mention compared to the male members of the strike committee, she was a pivotal leader, providing food and shelter to women affected by the strike. Helen was arrested and jailed more often than her male counterparts.

The strike changed the lives of workers by enabling them to believe a better world is possible. Today, it is as it was. Women are leading the way to creating that better world. Just watch us.

* * *

FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL RELATIONS

Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is taking our country down a dangerous path.

Yesterday, in response to the united plea of six premiers urging him to accept amendments to Bills C-69 and C-48, he angrily accused the Conservatives of threatening national unity, as though the very real anger and anxiety over these two destructive bills are some kind of Conservative plot against him. This, from a Prime Minister who has made comments backing Quebec separatism if Conservatives stayed in power.

These premiers are not making a threat. They are stating the facts and they are pleading their case.

The Prime Minister is too partisan or too petulant to care. If he is so concerned about national unity, he should look in the mirror. If he does, he will see the greatest threat to national unity of the country staring right back at him. This is not about impressing celebrities or drinking boxed water; this is about doing what is best for Canada.

GOVERNMENT POLICIES

Ms. Gudie Hutchings (Long Range Mountains, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a trip down memory lane of the last three and a half years in my riding of Long Range Mountains, Newfoundland and Labrador, with our leader.

The Veterans Affairs office in Corner Brook was the first of many reopened across the country, after being closed by the Harper government.

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans hired 19 new scientists in Newfoundland and Labrador alone, after the previous government cut science spending and muzzled scientists.

There are numerous communities with better drinking water, safer bridges and a more prosperous economy, with \$39 million invested in infrastructure. Those projects were 10 years on the back burner under the previous government.

I also have to mention our record investments in Parks Canada. Yes, the Harper government slashed funding to Parks Canada as well.

The list goes on: our child care benefit, increases to the guaranteed income supplement, ICE support and so much more. That is much better than advertised.

ORAL QUESTIONS

• (1425)

[*Translation*]

INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister received a letter yesterday from six provincial premiers who want him to accept the amendments to Bill C-69. What was the Prime Minister's response? He called them a threat to national unity. I would like to remind him that the only time Canadian unity is threatened is when the Liberals are in power.

When will he finally show some respect for all the provinces?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to the Leader of the Opposition that he read the letter from the premiers, who themselves talk about the threat to national unity. I agree with him that such comments are completely irresponsible coming from provincial premiers. We know that the only way to move forward is to protect the environment, create partnerships with indigenous peoples and ensure clarity for investors. That is exactly what we are doing with Bill C-69.

[*English*]

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister dismisses the legitimate concerns of premiers who are standing up for out-of-work men and women in the energy sector as playing political games. In fact, all provinces asked for amendments to Bill C-69. Even a letter from the Liberal Newfoundland and Labrador government stated that Bill C-69 would deter investment in the development of the resource sector without improving environmental protection. Therefore, the only person responsible for endangering national unity is the Prime Minister.

Oral Questions

When will he do the right thing and kill Bill C-69?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, it is his Conservative premier friends who brought up the issue of national unity if they did not get their way. This comes from a fundamental difference of opinion between Conservatives and Liberals on how to move forward on resource projects. We believe, particularly having seen the failure for 10 years of Stephen Harper, the only way to move forward is to protect the environment, is to create partnerships with indigenous peoples. They disagree and they want to double down on Stephen Harper's failed approach. We know that the environment and the economy must go together in the 21st century.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is not just Conservatives who recognize that his policies are killing Canada's energy sector. In fact, the former NDP Alberta premier, Rachel Notley, also vehemently opposed the Prime Minister's anti-energy bills and former Liberal B.C. premier, Christy Clark, said that the Prime Minister walks around thinking he is not first among equals, but the only one who has no equal when it comes to the premiers. We know how the Prime Minister gets when he is in a mood like that, when he publicly stated that if he did not win the last election, he would support Quebec separatism.

Will the Prime Minister agree that the only threat to national unity is the Prime Minister?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the fundamental responsibility of any Prime Minister, indeed, anyone who aspires to be prime minister, is to defend national unity and keep the country together. The Leader of the Opposition should condemn the Conservative premiers who so blithely stated and made claims about threats to national unity if they do not get their way. The issue at hand is Conservatives do not think that in order to move forward with resource projects, one has to be mindful of the environment and one has to partner with indigenous peoples. We disagree. Indeed, we think it is the only way to move forward.

* * *

NATURAL RESOURCES

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is causing the problem. He is the one causing divisions between regions and polarizing Canadians. He is acting like someone who sets fire to a house and then lashes out at the people calling the fire department. It is his policies that killed the northern gateway project, that killed energy east and now has had to use taxpayers' dollars to purchase a decades-old pipeline.

When will he realize that it is his policies that are hurting the energy sector and leading to men and women being out of work?

Oral Questions

•(1430)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives' obliviousness to the facts is actually mind-boggling. For 10 years, Stephen Harper and the Conservatives could not get projects built because they marginalized environmental voices and ignored indigenous peoples. We knew that the only way to move forward was to improve the system around which we approve and move forward on projects and give clarity to investors. That is why we are moving forward with Bill C-69: because we know we are going to be able to get projects built by working with indigenous peoples and protecting the environment.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there he goes again just saying things that he knows are not true. The previous Conservative government saw four major pipelines completed and built, including one to tidewater, without taxpayers' dollars. It is his policies that have ignored indigenous concerns; indigenous communities that wanted to be partners in northern gateway. It is his policies that are condemning Canadians to always be reliant on foreign oil coming into our markets.

When will he realize that his policies are phasing out the energy sector and all the jobs that go with it?

The Speaker: I remind the hon. Leader of the Opposition to be judicious in his choice of words.

The right hon. Prime Minister.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives need to be the ones who are careful with the truth because the Kinder Morgan anchor loop, which is the pipeline they refer to consistently as having been built, goes nowhere near a port. We know that we need, and we have needed for a long time, to get our oil exports to markets other than the United States. For 10 years, the Conservatives failed because they ignored environmental concerns and they did not work with indigenous peoples.

We are now putting forward a pathway to do exactly that in Bill C-69, which is going to get projects built the right way. That is what the industry wants. That is what Canadians want. That is what we need to do to grow the economy.

* * *

[Translation]

PHARMACARE

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today, Dr. Hoskins came to the same conclusion many commissions have arrived at, namely that people need universal public pharmacare.

People are making impossible choices. They have to choose between paying rent and paying for their medication. They are cutting up their pills to make them last longer and not getting all their prescriptions filled.

To the NDP it is clear: we stand with Canadians and we will implement a universal pharmacare plan by 2020.

Will the Liberals—

The Speaker: Order. The right hon. Prime Minister.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, no Canadian should have to choose between medication and food. We accept the report by Dr. Hoskins and the advisory council on the implementation of national pharmacare.

We are building on the commitment we made in 2015 and in budget 2019 to improve access to necessary medications. This report is an important step in the potential development of a national pharmacare program. To us, medicare and prescription drugs are for people, but sadly we know that for the Leader of the Opposition, this is always about privatization.

[English]

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, 1993, 1997, 2004, 2015: time and time again Liberals have promised to help deliver a result of lower costs to medication, but they failed to do so. This means four more years of people in emergency rooms because they cannot afford their prescriptions, four more years of Canadians choosing between food and medicine and four more years of Liberals putting pharmaceutical companies ahead of people.

Canadians need help now, so why is the Prime Minister failing to commit to making it more affordable to access medication?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, no Canadian should have to choose between medication and food. That is why we accept the report by Dr. Hoskins and the advisory council on the implementation of national pharmacare. We are building on commitments going back to 2015 and made concretely in budget 2019 to improve access to necessary medications, which has already had an impact on Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

This report is an important step to lay the foundation of a national pharmacare program for us. We are going to continue to make sure that Canadians can afford their medication as we move forward with a national—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Burnaby South.

•(1435)

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the report came to the same conclusion that so many others have already come to. In fact, this recommendation is over 40 years old. Canada needs single-payer pharmacare now.

While Canadians anxiously wait for help, Liberals and Conservatives put pharmaceuticals and insurance companies ahead of people, just like they let rich companies off the hook when it came to tax avoidance and just like they put big telecom ahead of people being ripped off on their cellphone bills. New Democrats have a plan to save families hundreds of dollars.

Oral Questions

Why do Liberals only have a plan to delay?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, over the past four years, we have acted concretely on a broad range of measures to make lives easier for Canadians, not just the kind of wishful thinking that the NDP specializes in but serious, tangible measures like half a billion dollars toward the high cost of drugs for rare diseases and moving forward on a Canada drug agency that is going to be able to lower prices across the country.

We are putting more money in the pockets of the middle class with the Canada child benefit, which has lifted hundreds of thousands of people out of poverty. We are investing in housing—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Burnaby South.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is always making excuses for why he sides with rich corporations instead of ordinary Canadians.

Yesterday, he sided with telecommunications companies by refusing to help Canadians lower their cellphone bills. Today, he is siding with the big pharmaceuticals by refusing to implement a universal pharmacare plan.

When will the Prime Minister side with ordinary Canadians and implement a universal public pharmacare program?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, one of the major differences between the NDP and the Liberal Party of Canada is that we listen to the experts and we know how to do things the right way.

The NDP makes many fine promises that it will never be able to keep because it does not have a plan.

The Liberal Party listens to the experts, like Dr. Hoskins and his report, to identify the best way forward. That approach has lifted 825,000 Canadians and 300,000 children out of poverty in recent years.

We know that the way to help Canadians is to listen to the experts and create a good plan.

* * *

[*English*]

INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, here is what the Prime Minister does. If people raise concerns or disagree with him and what he is doing, he dismisses them, tries to discredit them and calls them names. Members can just ask the former attorney general about what happened to her.

Now the Prime Minister is insulting and dismissing provinces that disagree with his “no more pipelines” Bill C-69. Does the Prime Minister realize that he, and no one else, is the biggest threat to Canada's unity?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this all stems from a deep misunderstanding between the Conservatives and the Liberals.

We think the only way forward in this country, on resource projects, on growing the economy, is to fold in the environment, to respect indigenous peoples, in our thinking, in our processes.

The Conservatives still want to barrel through, ignoring environmental voices, ignoring indigenous peoples. That did not work for 10 years of Stephen Harper, but Conservatives are doubling down right now.

On this side, we are going to get things built.

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is picking a fight with Manitobans by blocking the Manitoba-Minnesota hydro project. He is picking a fight with nine out of 10 provinces that have serious concerns with his “no more pipelines” bill. He is picking a fight with almost 60% of Canadians in provinces that reject his carbon tax.

The Prime Minister's dismissal of provincial concerns is provoking a possible constitutional crisis. Does the Prime Minister not see that his divisive and hostile treatment of these premiers is what is causing the real threat to national unity?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I refuse to take lessons from a member of Stephen Harper's government that refused to hold first ministers' meetings for almost the entire duration of their time in office.

I have sat down with the premiers regularly, individually and collectively, to work together, to listen to their concerns, to move forward on important issues, like internal trade, to move forward on important issues that matter to all Canadians, like creating jobs and lowering unemployment rates. At the same time, we know that protecting the environment and working with indigenous peoples is the only way to get projects built the right way.

● (1440)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this morning the Premier of Quebec, François Legault, said it was unfortunate that the Liberal Prime Minister rejected the Senate's amendments.

Quebec's environment minister expressed concerns about Bill C-69, proposed an amendment and said that the Liberal government was not willing to talk.

I have a simple question for the Prime Minister. How can we maintain good relations with provincial governments if we do not listen to them?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in fact, we were pleased to accept nearly 100 amendments proposed by the Senate. We are always looking to improve our bills. We were happy to work with the provinces. We are always happy to work with the premiers.

Oral Questions

In the meantime, Canadians expect us to move forward in the right way, which involves honouring environmental concerns and working with first nations on the development of major energy projects.

That is exactly what we will continue to do. That is what the Conservatives do not understand. We will always work with the provinces to—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Richmond—Arthabaska.

Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we all recall when the Prime Minister stood in the House and used the word “pandering” when referring to the provinces. Yesterday, he did it again when he said that provincial premiers were being threatening. That is simply unacceptable.

Does the Prime Minister seriously think that the provinces, municipalities, first nations, and Conservative and independent senators, whom he himself appointed, are being capricious and making threats when they disagree with him and propose amendments to Bill C-69?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member across the way is confused. We accepted close to 100 of the amendments proposed by the senators and various groups who wanted to improve Bill C-69.

We understand that the only way to go forward and create new projects is to ensure that we work in partnership with first nations and that we protect the environment. That is what the Conservatives rejected for 10 years and will continue to reject, but we know that to build the economy we must protect the environment at the same time.

[*English*]

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Milton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, while the Prime Minister continues to stand in this House and indicate that his path is the way forward to get pipelines built, he is being told by six premiers in this country, representing 59% of the population, that it is simply not true. This is a very grave situation. The Premier of New Brunswick actually said yesterday that the Prime Minister is underestimating the urgency of this situation.

Will he do the right thing, support Canadian investment, and ensure that every single one of these amendments passes?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, those premiers represent perhaps 59% of the population. My job is to represent 100% of the population. Canadians understand that the only way to move forward on big projects that are needed for jobs and growth is to be mindful of environmental concerns and to work in partnership with indigenous peoples.

The Conservatives' attempts to gut the bill are just a reflection of the path they tried and that failed under Stephen Harper. It did not serve Alberta, it did not serve our industry, and it was not able to get things built.

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Milton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, while the Prime Minister professes that Ottawa knows best, the reality is that the premiers are indicating very clearly that there is a significant problem with this legislation. There is a problem because it is going to scare away business investment. There is a greater problem, of which he was warned by former premier Notley back in February, which is that this is not a way to build a country. Will he do the right

thing and make sure that every one of these amendments passes and give certainty to the provinces in this great country?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have said, we have accepted close to 100 different amendments that strengthen the bill and ensure that we are going to be able to get projects built, but the amendments the Conservatives would have us accept would make indigenous consultations optional, exempt oil sands development and pipeline projects from federal reviews and indeed, even block Canadians from having a say on projects. If those elements sound familiar to Canadians, it is because it was exactly the approach Stephen Harper tried and failed at when he failed to grow our economy and failed to get projects—

• (1445)

The Speaker: I am starting to hear language that is unparliamentary. I remind members to restrain themselves and not to speak when someone else has the floor. The hon. member for Edmonton West will come to order.

The hon. member for Vancouver Kingsway.

* * *

PHARMACARE

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today the Hoskins report on pharmacare was released, and to no one's surprise, it recommends a public, universal and comprehensive pharmacare system, the same conclusion of every task force, committee and study over the last 50 years. Dr. Hoskins said that it is time to implement it. Why? It is because we know that we can cover every single Canadian's medicine needs and save billions of dollars every year by doing so.

Now, will the Liberals finally commit to universal, comprehensive and single-payer pharmacare and immediately get to work on implementing this essential health—

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, we recognize that no Canadian should never have to make the impossible choice between paying for medications or putting food on the table. That is why we have moved forward significantly over the past years on making prescription drugs more affordable, have moved forward on things like a Canada drug agency that would negotiate better prices and moved forward on providing half a billion dollars to reduce the high cost of rare disease drugs.

We know there is more to do. That is why we welcome the report by Dr. Hoskins and look forward to—

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we thought Mr. Dithers was retired.

Oral Questions

We know that delay is poor fiscal policy, because every year we wait costs our country billions of dollars. Worse, delay is bad health policy, because thousands of Canadians get sicker and die every year because of a lack of access to medicines.

The Liberals have had 13 years of government since they promised Canadians public coverage in 1997 and have failed to deliver. The Liberals like to campaign on pharmacare; the New Democrats like to implement it. Why will this government not listen—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I urge all members to avoid language that might be considered insulting.

The right hon. Prime Minister.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, from the beginning of this mandate, we have made historic investments in health transfers, ensuring that Canadians have better access to more quality health care. We have also moved forward significantly to lower the cost of prescription drugs throughout our time in office.

We know that there is more to do. That is why we welcome the report by Dr. Eric Hoskins, which talks about the next steps we can move forward on as we ensure that no Canadian ever has to choose between paying for medications or paying rent.

We know that the NDP is always filled with great ideas, but no idea—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix.

* * *

[*Translation*]

TAXATION

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have finally reached the end of this government's first term in office. Unfortunately, it has cost taxpayers dearly. The Prime Minister has made the cost of living much too high for Canadian families, but he thinks they will forget all about that by October 21.

In addition to raising taxes, he eliminated tax credits for public transit and children's fitness.

Why do Canadians always have to pay more when the Liberals are in power?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, over the past four years, we have lowered costs for middle-class families by \$2,000 by lowering their taxes and increasing taxes for the wealthiest one per cent. We introduced the Canada child benefit, which gives more money to nine out of 10 families and has raised 300,000 children out of poverty. We also announced improved benefits for seniors and investments in housing and public transit. All of these measures have helped families, created a million new jobs and led to the lowest—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Calgary Nose Hill.

• (1450)

[*English*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when asked what his privileged family was personally doing to help protect the environment, the Prime Minister answered with nonsensical blather that could best be interpreted as, “Nothing really, but let them eat cake, from a box.”

Canadians are tired of his ineffectual, carbon-taxing, drink-box, water-bottle expensive virtue signalling. When will the out-of-touch Prime Minister stop telling Canadians to do what he says but not what he does?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will choose to believe that somewhere in there was a question on the environment from the Conservative Party of Canada, which is quite wonderful.

It has been 409 days that we have been waiting for the Conservative Party to put forward a plan to fight climate change, or even to recognize that climate change is a problem, or even to recognize that climate change contributes to extreme weather events.

We know that the time to act is now, because it is not possible to have a plan for the economy without having a plan for climate change.

* * *

TAXATION

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the privileged Prime Minister is simply out of touch with everyday Canadians, which is why he found it so easy to cut their take-home pay by raising payroll taxes, take away their tax credits for textbooks, transit and kids' arts and sports, and slap a carbon tax on everything, making their gas, groceries and heating bills soar.

Canadian families do not have a trust fund to fall back on, and under the Liberal government, they are struggling just to make ends meet.

Why is the Prime Minister so hell-bent on making their lives more expensive?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, four years later and the Conservatives are still reduced to personal attacks and inventing things.

The first thing we did was lower taxes on the middle class and raise them on the wealthiest 1%. We then delivered a Canada child benefit that helps nine out of 10 Canadian families with hundreds of dollars tax-free every month. This benefit has lifted 300,000 kids out of poverty as part of our plan that has lifted 800,000 Canadians out of poverty.

We continue to grow the economy, with over one million new jobs, while at the same time having a low—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Chilliwack—Hope.

Oral Questions

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the facts do not lie. Half of Canadian families are within \$200 of not being able to pay their bills each month. One-third of Canadian families are unable to cover their payments and are falling further into debt.

The Prime Minister has never had to worry about his own money, but Canadian families do. They do not have an extra \$60 to pay for a pack of boxed water, and they certainly cannot afford \$1.60 a litre for gas.

When will the out-of-touch Prime Minister stop making life more expensive for Canadian families, which, under the Liberal government, are struggling just to get by?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite likes to talk about facts, so let us talk about some facts.

Fact: the lowest unemployment rate in Canada in 40 years.

Fact: Canadians have created one million jobs over the last four years.

Fact: 300,000 kids have been lifted out of poverty.

Fact: 825,000 Canadians have been lifted out of poverty.

We have made investments in infrastructure and in communities, investments that have made lives more affordable and better for Canadians from coast to coast to coast. That is a fact.

* * *

• (1455)

[Translation]

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Ms. Brigitte Sansoucy (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this is National Public Service Week, but many public servants do not feel like celebrating.

Céline, a public servant who lives in my riding, told me that, because of the Liberals' and the Conservatives' Phoenix pay system fiasco, she has been owed over \$18,000 for more than a year and a half. Once again, the Liberals are giving hundreds of millions of dollars to a large corporation while problems just keep piling up.

Why have the Liberals still not repaid Céline and the other public servants who are in the same situation?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our public servants deserve to be paid properly and on time. Stephen Harper's Conservatives botched the Phoenix pay system, creating real problems for thousands of public servants who work hard every day.

We are working to find a modern and reliable solution with the help of public servants, experts, unions and suppliers. We have found three suppliers who will carry out pilot projects before the end of the year. That is part of the next step to provide reliable, long-term solutions.

I encourage the member to send us her constituent's information. We will—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Essex.

* * *

[English]

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Ms. Tracey Ramsey (Essex, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Liberals are not being honest with Canadians about the new NAFTA. They are rushing through a deal that will make drugs like insulin more expensive, when Canadians already cannot afford their medication.

Why is the Prime Minister caving to Donald Trump and big pharma? People with diabetes, Crohn's disease and rheumatoid arthritis depend on their government to stand up for them and not rush through a trade deal that will make their medication more expensive.

Why is the Prime Minister choosing to stand up for big pharma over vulnerable Canadians?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, by securing a new NAFTA deal with the United States, we have been standing up for workers, including workers in southwestern Ontario, who are very pleased to see us move forward on this new NAFTA deal. We have protected jobs right across the country.

Of course, the New Democrats are a little all over the place, as usual. In the House of Commons, they criticize the deal, but at private events, they said that the new NAFTA was the best deal possible. They know that the new NAFTA protects millions of jobs that were threatened. Indeed, the MP for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie said that it was “the best deal possible”, and it protects workers all around this country.

* * *

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mr. Neil Ellis (Bay of Quinte, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, veterans homelessness is absolutely unacceptable in Canada. This is why, yesterday, I was proud to bring in my private member's motion on ending veterans homelessness to the House for debate.

My motion called on the government to prevent and end homelessness by 2025. It had the full support of veterans and stakeholders across the country. Unfortunately, members of the opposition failed to allow my motion to go to a vote in the House.

Could the Prime Minister update the House on what our government will be doing to end veterans homelessness in Canada?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Bay of Quinte for his outstanding work for his constituents, and particularly for veterans as the chair of the veterans affairs committee.

I want to thank him for bringing forward this important motion, which we support, to end veterans homelessness by 2025. Unfortunately, last night, the Conservatives put partisanship ahead of helping veterans, which is disappointing but not surprising.

Oral Questions

The Harper Conservatives ignored veterans and ignored people living in homelessness for far too long. Even if the Conservatives will not put partisanship aside, we will continue to work for people across this country.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. Most members from all parties are able to sit through question period hearing things they do not like and not blurt things out when it is not their turn. I would invite the small number who do not do that and repeatedly feel that they have have to interject, not to do so.

The hon. member for Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier.

* * *

[*Translation*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after four years in office, the Liberals cannot even see a problem with the Paris Agreement targets. How can they find solutions when they cannot even see the problem? Let me sum up the Liberals' environmental record. They just announced a spur-of-the-moment decision to ban plastics by 2021. They talk about an environmental emergency, but they cannot bring themselves to admit that the Paris targets will not be met. They spent over \$4 billion on a pipeline.

When will the Prime Minister, the self-proclaimed champion of the environment, admit that Canada is not going to meet the Paris targets?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that is what the Conservatives would like to think, but I can assure Canadians that we are going to meet our Paris targets.

We know that protecting the environment is the only way to protect and create economic growth at the same time. We have announced a plan for putting a price on pollution. We have announced a plan for protecting our oceans. We are moving forward with a concrete plan for creating growth and protecting the environment at the same time.

As for the Conservatives, we have been waiting 409 days for them to unveil the plan that they promised but will never deliver. They know they do not want to take action—

• (1500)

The Speaker: Order. The hon. member for Thornhill.

* * *

[*English*]

ETHICS

Hon. Peter Kent (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a sitting Liberal MP's law firm has been seized by the Law Society of British Columbia. This sitting Liberal member has been removed from the B.C. bar. This sitting Liberal MP's law firm was used by a notorious Chinese drug boss to launder money in a multi-million dollar real estate deal.

When did the Prime Minister become aware of this latest Liberal scandal, and what is he going to do about it?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member in question has addressed these allegations.

We continue to move forward concretely on countering money laundering in B.C. and right across the country. With investments to the CRA, budget 2019 puts forward task forces on real estate audits and makes sure that we are working in partnership with B.C. to crack down on money laundering to ensure that this illegal activity ceases once and for all.

* * *

AUDITOR GENERAL OF CANADA

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the public accounts committee sent a letter to the finance minister. The letter, signed by members of all parties, asked the Liberals to fund the Auditor General so that he can do his important work.

It is not lost on anyone that the Prime Minister is muzzling the Auditor General as an election approaches. So much for accountability and transparency. What is the Prime Minister trying to hide?

The Prime Minister cannot blame Stephen Harper for this one. Will he accept the demands of the committee, including Liberal members, and fund the Auditor General so that he can do his job?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we continue to support the important ongoing work of the Auditor General.

The member opposite mentioned Stephen Harper, and how appropriate that he did. The Harper Conservatives cut nearly \$6.5 million and 60 employees from the Auditor General's budget. We took action to restore that funding. It is interesting to see the Conservatives suddenly taking an interest in the officers of Parliament, especially when the MP for Carleton continues to accuse Elections Canada of partisanship and political interference, when we know it is the Conservatives who know how to break election laws.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let us talk about facts.

One fact is that never in the history of Canada has the Auditor General not been able to complete an investigation due to lack of funding. That has never happened. Another fact is that a parliamentary committee is calling on the government to properly fund the Auditor General. It is also a fact that the Auditor General is the watchdog who keeps an eye on government spending. Let us just say that the Auditor General has his work cut out for him these days, given the Liberal government's track record.

Will the Liberal government make sure that the Auditor General has all the tools he needs to do his job, since it is a taxpayer-funded position?

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, we will always support the important, ongoing work of the Auditor General. It was actually the Stephen Harper Conservatives who slashed \$6.5 million from the Auditor General's budget, which led to 60 positions being cut from his office.

One of the first things we did was restore that funding, because we understand that the Auditor General's work is extremely important and we will always support it.

* * *

[English]

HEALTH

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill—Keewatinook Aski, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this past week Manitoba decided to privatize Lifeflight, our air ambulance service. This goes against the wishes of first nations, Métis and northern communities, and countless doctors and nurses. This move could force crews to take risks for profit rather than be solely concerned with the health of patients.

First nations have asked for the federal government to step in, given that they are very concerned. Let us be clear: Lives are at stake. Will the federal government step in to ensure the health and safety of northern Canadians?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for bringing up this important issue. Indeed, we see it time and time again: Conservative premiers, Conservative politicians see health care as a business. Indeed, that was the name of one of the fundraisers that the Conservative Party of Canada recently held: "The Business of Healthcare."

We know that access to health care is a fundamental right for all Canadians, and we are going to continue to work with provinces and partners to ensure that access to health care is protected as a Canadian right for everyone.

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AUDITOR GENERAL OF CANADA

Mr. David Christopherson (Hamilton Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the 2015 Liberal platform promised this: "We will ensure that all of the officers [of Parliament] are properly funded and accountable only to Parliament."

Now the public accounts committee has unanimously called for the Auditor General's \$10.8-million underfunding to be reversed.

The government promised to respect Parliament, respect its officers and respect its standing committees. I ask the Prime Minister, where is this respect, and, more importantly, where is the money?

• (1505)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, after the Conservative government cut \$6.5 million from the Auditor General's budget, cutting 60 staff, we knew we had to restore that funding, and that is exactly what we did. We support the work of the Auditor General. Indeed, we support our officers of Parliament. We will continue to stand and support the important work they do. We defend our institutions in this country every single

day, despite the attacks by the opposition on the integrity of our officers of Parliament, whether it be the Parliamentary Budget Officer or Elections Canada officials. We know we are going to continue to do that.

* * *

FORESTRY INDUSTRY

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the community of 100 Mile House received very difficult news about the closure of Norbord and the 160 jobs that will go with it. This is 10 days following Canfor in Vavenby, with 180 jobs, and the government is partly to blame. The Liberals had four years to resolve the softwood lumber issue, and they have had no progress. They could have attached it to the NAFTA negotiations, but they did not seem to care. Instead, we have an industry that is moving en masse to the United States.

Can the Prime Minister tell us his plan to support these communities?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have consistently stood up and will continue to stand up for our forestry sector, including working to ensure that the United States ends this softwood lumber conflict. We will continue to do this important work. The reality is that it is humorous to see the Conservatives suggesting that we do more on NAFTA, when their approach, as evidenced by Stephen Harper, whom the Leader of the Opposition regularly listens to, said we needed to capitulate right away on NAFTA to accept any deal, not necessarily a good deal. We disagree and—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable.

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[Translation]

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for five months the Prime Minister has shown complete indifference to the sort of canola and pork producers, denied that the crisis with China is first and foremost political and waited for it to resolve itself, and now he has finally said that he will think about speaking to the Chinese president at the G20 meeting.

For the sake of Canadians detained in China and for the sake of Canada's canola, pork and soya producers, will the Prime Minister commit today to show some backbone and once and for all settle this matter with the Chinese president, yes or no?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, from the outset we have taken the arbitrary detention of Canadians very seriously. We are asking for the immediate release of Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor. We condemn the death sentence handed down to Robert Lloyd Schellenberg, and we are asking for clemency.

We will always defend the rule of law, respect for international standards and the security of Canadians, and we will do so the right way. We already have many allies, including NATO, Australia, the European Union, France, Germany, Great Britain, the Netherlands and others, who are supporting us in this dispute with China. We will continue our efforts to free those Canadians.

* * *

[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Ms. Leona Alleslev (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if the Prime Minister is serious, he needs to do something. With less than a week until the G20 summit, the Prime Minister continues to abandon Canadians by failing to ask for a meeting with the Chinese president. Canadians suffer in Chinese prisons, the farmers are facing financial harm, while tens of thousands protest in the streets of Hong Kong and in cities across Canada over dystopian Chinese extradition law.

Will the Prime Minister finally decide to meet with the Chinese president? Why is he showing such weakness in the face of China?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, from the very beginning of this government, we have remained focused on standing up for and supporting Canadians in trouble overseas. This was a change from the Conservative approach, which was not particularly enthusiastic about sticking up for Canadians around the world. We have done exactly that. That is why we have had positive results throughout this mandate on very difficult situations, and we have done that by moving forward in ways designed not to draw positive headlines but to advance the issues. Sometimes it is done privately, sometimes it is done publicly, but it is always done the right way.

* * *

• (1510)

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Mr. Churence Rogers (Bonavista—Burin—Trinity, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my constituents understand the important duty of the Canadian Coast Guard to keep our oceans and waterways healthy and safe. This year's winter was particularly harsh in Newfoundland and Labrador. We know the Canadian Coast Guard plays a crucial role in keeping our goods moving with its icebreakers. After a decade of cuts by the Harper Conservatives, our government is taking action.

Can the Prime Minister update this House on what our government has done to ensure the Canadian Coast Guard has all the tools it needs to carry out its important work?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member for Bonavista—Burin—Trinity understands well the importance of keeping the Coast Guard well equipped, and we agree. Recently, we welcomed Coast Guard ship *Captain Molly Kool*. It marks the first of three interim icebreakers to join the fleet. After a decade of Conservative cuts, last month we announced the single largest investment in Canadian history to renew our Coast Guard fleet. Canadians can be proud of the women and men in the Coast Guard, who work every day to save lives and protect our coasts.

Oral Questions

NEWS MEDIA INDUSTRY

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Engage Canada has made a \$4 million ad buy to attack the Conservative Party, and the Liberal Party has not had to spend a cent.

Unifor has bragged about donating hundreds of thousands of dollars to Engage Canada and has even publicly asked its membership to donate to the group. This is the same Unifor that is on the panel that will decide which media outlets get \$600 million in bailouts from the Liberal government.

When will the Prime Minister stop stacking the deck in the Liberals' favour and hold a fair election?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we will take no lessons from a party that made it harder for Canadians to vote with its unfair elections act. Indeed, as we all know, it was found guilty of breaking election laws in multiple elections. The Conservatives even made it illegal for Elections Canada to encourage voting. We reversed that ban.

On top of that, we all remember that the MP for Carleton signed a compliance agreement with Elections Canada in 2017 because he had broken an election law in the last election.

We ended the Conservative—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Beloeil—Chambly.

* * *

[Translation]

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Beloeil—Chambly, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we have been calling on the federal government to respect Otterburn Park and its residents for years.

The Prime Minister went to Mont-Saint-Hilaire to prance around and talk about the environment. Telus wants to build a tower in the Mont-Saint-Hilaire Biosphere Reserve green zone, which he visited on Monday.

Will the Prime Minister respect the environment in my riding, listen to residents and ban the tower in Otterburn Park, or will he simply use our green heritage as his backdrop?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government understands that if we want to grow the economy we must protect the environment and listen to the concerns of Canadians.

This is why we are committed to consulting the public before moving forward with projects, and that is what we will always do. We are listening to Canadians, we respect their concerns and, whenever possible, we move forward in the right way. That is what Canadians expect from their government.

*Routine Proceedings***INFRASTRUCTURE**

Mr. Jean Rioux (Saint-Jean, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the people of Saint-Jean know how vital trade is to economic development and to ensuring stability for our small and medium-sized businesses.

The government knows how important it is to reduce travel distances on our highways and to promote sustainable economic development.

Can the Prime Minister inform the House of our most recent investment to extend Highway 35, in order to directly link Montreal and Boston?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Saint-Jean for the work he does for his constituents.

Many tonnes of commercial goods travel on our highways every day. We are investing \$82 million to extend Highway 35, and we continue to build strong, competitive communities. This comes in addition to \$260 million for Highway 19 and \$500 million for the Louis-Hippolyte-LaFontaine bridge-tunnel.

We are working tirelessly so that all Canadians can benefit from market access and travel more safely and efficiently.

* * *

[English]

JUSTICE

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it has been 73 days since the Prime Minister sent me a letter, threatening to sue me for my statements about his corruption and attempted interference in a criminal court case. He is going to get up in a moment and say that he sent the notice to warn me about saying things that he thought were not true. Here is the thing. I have not backed down. I have not apologized for them. In fact, I have repeated those statements, word for word, outside of the chamber.

The Prime Minister knows that if he has to testify under oath, he will be charged with perjury for saying things that are not true. When will he see me in court?

•(1515)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, the opposition leader is doubling down on misleading Canadians. It shows that the Conservatives are still following the Harper playbook.

We put him on notice because he and his party have a history of making false and defamatory statements. That is what he did in December against the Minister of Innovation, where he was forced to swallow his false words and retract his statements. We will not stand by while he misleads Canadians again.

While the members of the opposition are focused on me, we will stay focused on Canadians.

[Translation]

DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this morning the Journal de Montréal published an article about the smell of dirty money in Ottawa.

That fetid smell is coming from the Liberal Party, which is stuffing its pockets with hundreds of thousands of dollars from Bay Street, lobbies, oil companies, banks, religious groups and law firms.

When will the Prime Minister stop working for the interest groups that are paying him off and keep his promise to restore the per-vote subsidy financing system?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we changed and improved Canada's political financing system by requiring even more transparency and accountability so that all Canadians can see who is making donations to the various political parties and how.

We encourage all parties to obey the law that we put in place by holding their fundraising activities in public places and releasing the information. That is exactly what Canadians expect.

We can be proud of the very robust system we have at the federal level, but it is important that all the parties follow the example of the Liberal Party of Canada.

* * *

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I wish to draw the attention of members to the presence in our gallery of Her Excellency Louise Mushikiwabo, Secretary-General of La Francophonie.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

[English]

The Speaker: I would also like to draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the gallery of His Excellency Suhail Mohammed Faraj Al Mazroui, Minister of Energy and Industry of the United Arab Emirates.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there have been discussions among the parties and if you seek it, I think you will find unanimous consent for the following motion:

That the 97th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, presented on June 10, 2019, be concurred in.

The Speaker: Does the hon. government House leader have the unanimous consent of the House to move the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Routine Proceedings

The Speaker: 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*]

Ms. Marilène Gill: Mr. Speaker, I believe that if you seek it, you will find the unanimous consent of the House for the following motion: that, by the end of this Parliament, the House stop reading the daily prayer prior to proceedings—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. To move a motion that requires the unanimous consent of the House, members may give notice to the House so that the motion is added to the Order Paper. However, they may also rise to move a motion when they believe to have obtained the unanimous consent of the various parties for that motion. This is an exceptional rule that allows the House to do certain things more efficiently. Nevertheless, when there is obviously no unanimous consent, that is that.

In this case, there is clearly no unanimous consent for the motion.

* * *

● (1520)

[*English*]

PUBLIC SECTOR INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER

The Speaker: I have the honour, pursuant to section 38 of the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act, to lay upon the table the report of the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner for the fiscal year that ended March 31, 2019. This report is deemed to have been permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates.

* * *

[*Translation*]

CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER

The Speaker: I have the honour to lay upon the table copies of forms “Registered Party’s General Election Return” and “Registered Party Financial Transactions Annual Return” from the Chief Electoral Officer. These forms were amended to reflect the recent changes to the Canada Elections Act. These reports are deemed to have been permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

* * *

[*English*]

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A NATIONAL PHARMACARE PROGRAM

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 32(2) I have the pleasure to table, in both official languages, the final report of the Advisory Council on the Implementation of a National Pharmacare Program, entitled “A Prescription for Canada: Achieving Pharmacare for All”.

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8) I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government’s response to 11 petitions.

* * *

INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

Hon. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1) I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, a report of the delegation of the Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union respecting its participation at the 140th IPU assembly and related meetings held in Doha, Qatar, from April 4 to 10.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Darrell Samson (Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, two reports from the delegation of the Canadian Branch of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie.

The first is respecting its participation in the 31st Regional Assembly of Europe, held in Andorra la Vella from October 21 to 24, 2018.

The second is respecting its participation in the bureau meeting of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie, held in Brussels, Belgium, from January 31 to February 2, 2019.

* * *

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Hon. Denis Paradis (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 16th report of the Standing Committee on Official Languages, entitled “Respect for Language Rights in Ontario: An Issue for all of Canada”.

I want to thank parliamentarians from all parties who sit on the committee, including my colleague from Ottawa—Vanier. I also thank analyst Lucie Lecomte, and Christine Holke, clerk of the committee.

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to the report.

[*English*]

CANADIAN HERITAGE

Ms. Julie Dabrusin (Toronto—Danforth, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 20th report of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage, entitled “Online Secondary Ticket Sales Industry”. This is an issue that impacts fans across all our communities as well as the artists and the athletes.

I want to thank committee members. This is our final report. We worked so well together, and it was wonderful to have such a great clerk and analysts, who worked with us to make these reports.

Routine Proceedings

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Hon. Kevin Sorenson (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 65th report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, entitled “Special Examination Report—Report of the Joint Auditors to the Board of Directors of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, of the 2018 Fall Reports of the Auditor General of Canada”.

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

I also have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 66th report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, entitled “Report 2, Conserving Federal Heritage Properties, of the 2018 Fall Reports of the Auditor General of Canada”.

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

* * *

• (1525)

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-457, An Act to amend the Employment Equity Act.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a private member's bill entitled “An Act to Amend the Employment Equity Act”. The Employment Equity Act was designed to ensure that we achieve equality in employment in the federal public service and among large employers in the private sector that come under federal jurisdiction, yet employment in the federal jurisdiction still fails to represent the diversity of Canada.

As it stands, the act applies to only four groups: women, aboriginal people, persons with disabilities and visible minorities. Members of my community, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and two-spirited Canadians, are left out of the act. My private member's bill would correct that omission.

Adding LGBTQ2 Canadians to the Employment Equity Act would force employers to address this inequality and come up with concrete plans to remove barriers to equal employment for all.

(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed)

Ms. Cheryl Hardcastle: Mr. Speaker, there have been talks among the parties, and I am very hopeful that if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent for the following motion: That the House, (a) extend its condolences to all the victims of violence and war in Sri Lanka; (b) call on the Government of Sri Lanka to promote justice for those affected by the Easter Sunday attacks, protect the rights of religious minorities and defend all places of worship; (c) reaffirm Canada's call for Sri Lanka to implement its obligations within a clearly specified time frame, as mandated under the UN Human Rights Council resolutions 30/1 and 40/1 as well as Canada's support in advancing accountability, peace and reconciliation among all people on the island; and (d) call upon the United Nations to establish an international independent investigation into allegations of genocide against Tamils committed in Sri Lanka, including during the last phase of the armed conflict in 2009.

The Deputy Speaker: Does the hon. member have the unanimous consent of the House to propose the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

* * *

PETITIONS

FALUN GONG

Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to present a petition containing thousands of names. The petitioners point out that Falun Gong is a spiritual practice that consists of the principles of truth, compassion and forbearance. It is practised by millions of people around the world.

The petitioners also point out that Canadian citizen Sun Qian, who is 51 years old, was illegally kidnapped on February 19, 2017, and has been illegally detained in the Beijing First Detention Centre for practising Falun Gong.

The petitioners request that the Canadian government condemn the illegal arrest of a Canadian citizen for practising Falun Gong and call for the immediate and unconditional release of Canadian citizen Ms. Sun Qian.

PALLIATIVE CARE

Mrs. Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am presenting today one more petition on behalf of the member for Langley—Aldergrove. As members know, the hon. member is extremely ill, and palliative care is a very important issue to him. Unfortunately, he finds himself in circumstances of being in need of it. He needs our prayers as well.

The petitioners point out that hospice palliative care is an approach that improves the quality of life of patients and their families facing the problems associated with life-threatening illness through the prevention and relief of suffering by means of early identification and assessment in the treatment of pain and other problems: physical, psychological and spiritual.

The petitioners point out that hospice palliative care provides relief from pain and other distressing symptoms, affirms life, regards dying as a normal process and intends neither to hasten nor postpone death. Hospice palliative care is not specifically mentioned in the Canada Health Act and is not accessible and available to all Canadians.

The petitioners request that the House of Commons specifically identify hospice palliative care as a defined medical service covered under the Canada Health Act so that provincial and territorial governments would be entitled to funds under the Canada health transfer system to be used to provide accessible and available hospice palliative care for all residents of Canada in their respective provinces and territories.

I know my colleagues—

Routine Proceedings

• (1530)

The Deputy Speaker: There are quite a few members rising on petitions today, and we have only 12 and a half minutes remaining. A brief summary of the petition would be great. If hon. members could do that, we should get through all of them.

VISION CARE

Ms. Sheri Benson (Saskatoon West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to present a petition on behalf of many constituents in my riding and right across Saskatchewan. The petitioners call on the Canadian government to commit to acknowledging eye health and vision care as a growing public health issue and to respond to it, particularly for Canada's vulnerable populations: children, seniors and indigenous people.

The petitioners would like the government to develop a national framework for action to promote eye health and vision care.

HUMAN ORGAN TRAFFICKING

Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table a petition today to supporting Bill S-240. This legislation would make it a criminal offence for Canadians to go abroad to receive an organ without the consent of the patient.

WILDERNESS CONSERVATION

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am presenting a petition today on behalf of residents of my community. The petitioners point out that the heating of our atmosphere and oceans endangers plants and animal species, including humans. They also point out that economic development and population growth endanger natural habitat and that trees, vegetation and soils in wilderness areas sequester atmospheric carbon.

The petitioners call on the government to add an additional \$100 million annually to expand and enhance wilderness conservation areas, including marine reserves.

PHYSICIAN-ASSISTED DYING

Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have 17 petitions to present from seven provinces, including my own province of Saskatchewan.

The petitions address the issue of Bill C-14, which prohibits compelling health care providers or institutions to provide medical assistance in dying but lacks clarity for effective enforcement.

Bill C-418 would provide that protection and make it an offence to intimidate a health care professional for the purpose of compelling him or her to take part in the provision of assisted suicide or to affect his or her employment.

The petitioners call on the Government of Canada to ensure that the conscience rights of medical personnel are protected by passing Bill C-418.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have three petitions to present to the House today.

The first petition is e-petition 2172. It contains the signatures of 1,836 Albertans. The petitioners call on the government to enact my bill, Bill C-438, which proposes to establish a Canadian environmental bill of rights, which would extend to all Canadians the right to a clean, healthy and ecologically balanced environment.

PHARMACARE

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the next two petitions are from more than 100 Albertans, who are calling on the government to immediately implement a universal prescription drug plan that would cover everyone, regardless of income, age or where one lives.

SMALL BUSINESS

Mr. Len Webber (Calgary Confederation, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have a couple of petitions to present.

The first is a petition from people in and around Calgary. These petitioners are very concerned about the way the Liberal government is taxing small businesses. They are concerned that current tax policies make it more difficult for small businesses to be profitable.

Canada's small businesses are the primary job creators in Canada. The petitioners believe that Canada's small businesses are facing continual increases in payroll taxes and carbon taxes, and all this makes it harder and harder to run a successful business.

They are asking that the government reconsider its tax changes that are targeting Canada's small businesses and the jobs they create.

• (1535)

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Len Webber (Calgary Confederation, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my second petition comes from residents throughout southern Alberta. The petitioners are asking that the government recognize the historical practice of allowing farmers to freely save, reuse, select, exchange, condition, store and sell seeds. The petitioners assert that restricting these activities is harmful to farmers and society alike. They are asking Parliament to enshrine these rights in legislation through their Save Our Seed campaign.

EQUALIZATION

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today, on the day the Prime Minister rejected the advice of six provinces and over 59% of the population to accept the amendments on Bill C-69, I am pleased to present a petition on behalf of people in my province. They ask the government to cancel Bill C-69 and launch a study into the economic impact of equalization and an examination of the formula.

Others agree with these petitioners that the equalization formula cannot continue in its current form as long as the government keeps putting policy forward to kill the energy sector.

Routine Proceedings

[Translation]

FORCED MIGRATION

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to present a petition calling on us to address the underlying causes of forced migration, including armed conflict, climate change and persecution.

Canadians are asking us to do more by supporting grassroots organizations that promote peace, democracy and human rights and investing more in diplomatic and peaceful solutions to armed conflicts.

This may be the last time I rise in the House. There is no greater honour for me than to take this final opportunity to present this petition.

[English]

TRANS MOUNTAIN PIPELINE

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to present petitions from residents throughout Saanich—Gulf Islands calling on the government to cease and desist from supporting or expanding the Trans Mountain pipeline.

HUMAN ORGAN TRAFFICKING

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present three petitions today.

The first is in support of Bill S-240, on organ harvesting. Petitioners want to see that bill pass. It would make it a criminal offence for someone to go abroad to receive an organ for which there has not been consent. It would also deal with the issue of admissibility to Canada of someone who has been involved in the horrific practice of harvesting and trafficking in human organs.

AFGHAN MINORITY COMMUNITIES

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the second petition draws attention to the plight of religious minorities in Afghanistan, in particular the Hindu and Sikh communities, and calls on the government to take necessary action to support them.

The petitioners call on the Minister of Immigration to use his powers to support the private sponsorship of these vulnerable minorities using a special program as the mechanism. It also calls on the Minister of Foreign Affairs to raise the persecution faced by this community with her Afghan counterparts and to strongly advocate for more to be done to protect them.

HUMAN ORGAN TRAFFICKING

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the third petition is also in support of Bill S-240.

STATUS OF WOMEN

Ms. Tracey Ramsey (Essex, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to present petitions, signed by hundreds of signatories, calling on the government to better fund feminist women's organizations.

The petitioners highlight the need for reliable, long-term, stable operational funding and direct investment to help women. They say that the current program funding from the Government of Canada is

insecure and competitive and takes workers' time away from helping women. The petitioners call on the government to immediately provide secure, multi-year core operational funding to feminist women's organizations.

CRIMINAL CODE

Mr. Dane Lloyd (Sturgeon River—Parkland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of my constituents signed by over 1,600 Canadians. It calls on Parliament to enact Bill C-437.

There are dozens of cases in this country in which killers have refused to disclose the location of their victims' remains. This includes the case of Lyle and Marie McCann of St. Albert, Alberta, who went missing in July 2010.

The petitioners understand that this continued refusal to reveal the location of victims' remains is traumatic to families. They are calling on this Parliament to enact laws to bring justice to families and to help us find the remains of victims.

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

Ms. Cheryl Hardcastle (Windsor—Tecumseh, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of petitioners who are concerned about the rights and welfare of children, specifically highly mobile children.

The degree of flexibility afforded to provinces and territorial governments has led to significant variances in services and programs across the country, and this is in direct violation of Canada's obligations as a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Specifically, children are ineligible for benefits and certain payments because they are in informal caregiving arrangements.

Therefore, the petitioners are asking that the welfare of children be first and foremost, and that we remedy this barrier to those funds.

● (1540)

POVERTY

Mr. Paul Manly (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, GP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present two petitions today.

The first petition calls upon the House of Commons to adopt a national poverty elimination strategy thereby ensuring Canadians a suitable quality of life and opportunity to succeed.

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mr. Paul Manly (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, GP): Mr. Speaker, the second petition calls upon the Minister of Veterans Affairs to remove any statutory limits on back pay eligibility for the disability allowance and to work with individual veterans to achieve just and due compensation for disability allowance in a timely manner.

*Routine Proceedings***QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER**

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Nos. 2429, 2431 and 2432.

[Text]

Question No. 2429—**Ms. Linda Duncan:**

With regard to Canada's Official Development Assistance (ODA): (a) what is the total ODA to gross national income (GNI) ratio arising from the 2019 budget; (b) what were Canada's total ODA to GNI ratios for each of the last ten fiscal years; (c) what is the government's position on delivering Canada's outstanding commitment to deliver on the United Nations' target of 0.7% ODA to GNI; and (d) if the government is committed to delivering the 0.7% of GNI, what is the government's timeline for delivering this commitment?

Hon. Maryam Monsef (Minister of International Development and Minister for Women and Gender Equality, Lib.): In response to (a), the ratio of official development assistance, ODA, to gross national income, GNI, arising from budget 2019 is not yet available. Investments in ODA-eligible activities stemming from budget 2019 would only begin to be captured in Canada's ODA/GNI ratio once 2019 preliminary figures are released in April 2020. In addition, budget 2019 announced commitments that may affect Canada's ODA in the future, such as an additional \$700 million in 2023-24 to the international assistance envelope. This builds upon budget 2018's announcement of \$2 billion to the international assistance envelope over a five-year period, starting in 2018-19.

The ODA/GNI ratio is calculated by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, OECD, annually on a calendar year basis. Preliminary figures for the previous calendar year are usually released in April, with final figures confirmed in December. The latest preliminary OECD figures, for 2018, were released in April 2019, and Canada was identified as having an ODA/GNI ratio of 0.28% for 2018.

Canada's 2018 preliminary ODA/GNI ratio, calculated by the Development Assistance Committee, DAC, of the OECD using a new grant equivalent methodology, was 0.28%. In 2018, the OECD-DAC began calculating ODA using a new "grant equivalent" methodology, which differs from the historical series, which was calculated on a cash basis. Canada is in the top 10 major DAC donor countries.

In response to (b), Canada's total ODA/GNI ratios for each of the last 10 years for which final figures are available, 2008-17, are the following: for 2008, 0.33%; for 2009, 0.30%; for 2010, 0.34%; for 2011, 0.32%; for 2012, 0.32%; for 2013, 0.27%; for 2014, 0.24%; for 2015, 0.28%; for 2016, 0.26%; for 2017, 0.26%.

In response to (c) and (d), in 1970, UN member states, including Canada, agreed to UN General Assembly Resolution 2626 (XXV).

Question No. 2431—**Ms. Linda Duncan:**

With regard to the Global Fund's sixth replenishment to step up the fight against AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria: (a) is the government committing \$1 billion to the Global Fund's sixth replenishment for 2020-2022; and (b) will this funding be in addition to the total official development assistance promised in the 2018 and 2019 budgets?

Hon. Maryam Monsef (Minister of International Development and Minister for Women and Gender Equality, Lib.): Mr.

Speaker, the following reflects a consolidated response approved on behalf of Global Affairs Canada ministers. The global effort to combat AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria remains a priority for the Government of Canada. The Global Fund is a key partner of Canada in tackling the fight against AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. The Global Fund has achieved significant results with contributions from Canada and other international donors, helping to save more than 27 million lives since 2002.

In 2016, Canada was pleased to host the Global Fund's Fifth Replenishment Conference, where Canada's leadership helped secure over \$12 billion U.S. to support its work to end these epidemics, and where Canada pledged \$804 million for the 2017-19 period, a 24% increase over the previous period, 2015-17.

Canada is collaborating with France and other donors to help ensure that the upcoming Sixth Replenishment Conference in France will also be a success. The Government of Canada is still in the process of determining the level of the next pledge and expects being able to announce this pledge in advance of the Sixth Replenishment Conference in October 2019.

The information about the source of the funding will depend on the final amount and will be made available following the announcement.

Question No. 2432—**Ms. Linda Duncan:**

With regard to Canada's commitment to the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and the Feminist International Development Policy: (a) what portion of Canada's official development assistance in 2019-20 will be committed to water, sanitation and hygiene as a foundation for women's health; (b) does Canada intend to increase its investment in the global water, sanitation and hygiene sector; (c) will Canada join the 72 other countries working together to stimulate political dialogue and leadership through the Sanitation and Water for All partnership; and (d) is the Feminist International Assistance Policy now being applied to projects for global water, sanitation, and hygiene, and, if so, will there be additional funding to serve the priority needs of women and girls, and for consultation with women and girls on their needs?

Hon. Maryam Monsef (Minister of International Development and Minister for Women and Gender Equality, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the following reflects a consolidated response approved on behalf of Global Affairs Canada ministers. In response to (a), funding for fiscal year 2019-20 has not yet been fully allocated at the sectoral level. For a complete listing of approved and currently operational projects related to water supply and sanitation, please refer to Project Browser: <https://w05.international.gc.ca/project-browser-banqueprojets/?lang=eng>.

In response to (b), in light of competing priorities, Canada will likely not increase its investment in the global WASH sector. However, in addition to Canada's direct investment in water and sanitation through development assistance, Canada's support to the delivery of maternal and child health, sexual and reproductive health services, and international humanitarian assistance often also includes the provision of WASH.

Routine Proceedings

In response to (c), Canada recognizes the importance of collaboration to tackle global issues, including water supply, sanitation and hygiene. Global Affairs Canada has not participated in the Sanitation and Water for All partnership in recent years due to competing priorities and commitments. Canada will be able to reassess our ability to participate when the next Sector Ministers' Meeting is called.

In response to (d), Canada's feminist international assistance policy, FIAP, recognizes the importance of addressing water and sanitation issues, particularly as it relates to their disproportionate impact on women and girls. This includes investments in sustainable access to appropriate WASH systems, as well as integrated water resource management. Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls is the core action area under the FIAP, which prioritizes gender equality for all sectors covered under the FIAP. As a result, gender equality considerations related to water and sanitation are systematically integrated into all WASH programming.

* * *

[English]

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if the government's responses to Questions Nos. 2426 to 2428, 2430, and 2433 to 2438 could be made orders for returns, these returns would be tabled immediately.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 2426—Mr. Arnold Viersen:

With regard to the government's CC-150 (Airbus), since July 1, 2017: what are the details of the legs of each flight, including (i) date, (ii) point of departure, (iii) destination, (iv) number of passengers, (v) names and titles of passengers, excluding security or Canadian Armed Forces members, (vi) total catering bill related to the flight?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2427—Ms. Rachel Blaney:

With regard to Tax-Free Savings Accounts (TFSA) in Canada, for the three most recent tax years available: (a) what is the total number of persons with at least one TFSA, broken down by age groups (i) 18 to 24, (ii) 25 to 34, (iii) 35 to 54, (iv) 55 to 64, (v) 65 and above; (b) what is the total number of persons with TFSAs, broken down by Fair Market Value Bracket (i) under \$100,000, (ii) \$100,000 to \$250,000, (iii) \$250,000 to \$500,000, (iv) \$500,000 to \$1,000,000, (v) \$1,000,000 and above; and (c) what is the total Fair Market Value of TFSAs, broken down by age groups (i) 18 to 24, (ii) 25 to 34, (iii) 35 to 54, (iv) 55 to 64, (v) 65 and above?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2428—Mr. Mario Beaulieu:

With regard to federal spending in the riding of La Pointe-de-l'Île since 2015: what was the total amount of federal investments, broken down by year, department and project in the riding?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2430—Ms. Linda Duncan:

With regard to Canada's commitment in the Feminist International Assistance Policy to join global partnerships that promote sexual and reproductive health and

rights (SRHR) for women and girls: (a) what steps is the government taking to ensure support for this work is sustained and scaled up beyond 2020; (b) does the government intend to commit to the Future Planning Initiative's call for \$1.4 billion per year for ten years for SRHR initiatives, including \$500 million per year for the neglected areas of SRHR; and (c) will this funding be in addition to the official development assistance promised in the 2018 and 2019 budgets?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2433—Mr. John Barlow:

With regard to the 2019 Canada Summer Jobs Program: (a) what was the total number of applications; (b) how many applications were (i) approved for funding, (ii) rejected or denied funding; and (c) what is the number of applications that were (i) approved for funding, (ii) rejected or denied funding, broken down by riding?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2434—Mr. Alexandre Boulerice:

With regard to the \$450 million Champions stream of the Low Carbon Economy Fund: (a) how many potential applicants submitted an expression of interest to Environment and Climate Change Canada, broken down by (i) small and medium-sized businesses, (ii) large businesses, (iii) provinces and territories, (iv) potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; (b) how many organizations were invited to submit a formal proposal, broken down by (i) provinces and territories, (ii) municipalities, (iii) Indigenous communities and organizations, (iv) small and medium-sized businesses, (v) large businesses, (vi) not-for-profit organizations, (vii) potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and (c) how much has been spent to date, broken down by (i) business name, (ii) province and territory, (iii) potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions for each business funded?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2435—Mr. Alistair MacGregor:

With regard to the Phoenix pay system, and specifically with respect to problems experienced by constituents in the riding of Cowichan—Malahat—Langford: (a) how many open cases currently exist in the riding, and has a case officer been assigned to each; (b) what is the length of time each case has been open; (c) how many cases have been resolved within the current prescribed service standards dating back to the introduction of the Phoenix pay system; and (d) how many cases have not been resolved within the current prescribed service standards dating back to the introduction of the Phoenix pay system?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 2436—Ms. Hélène Laverdière:**

With regard to the handling by Canada's National Contact Point for the OECD Guidelines (NCP) of a Request for Review from the not-for-profit Bruno Manser Fonds (BMF) of Switzerland regarding the Ottawa-based multinational Saktó Corporation and the role of the Department of Justice in this case: (a) following receipt of the Request for Review from the BMF in January 2016, did any person who was a member of, or associated with in any capacity, the NCP committee receive written or verbal notification of potential legal action from Saktó against any members or persons associated with the NCP committee, the NCP as an institution, federal employees, Cabinet ministers or ministers' staff, or the government as a whole, in regard to this Request for Review; (b) what are the names and institutional positions of the persons who received and are aware of such notifications of potential legal action, and what are the names and institutional positions of persons and institutions of the government, ministers, or federal employees against whom such potential legal action was directed; (c) what was the stated cause or basis of potential legal action for the Request for Review in (a); (d) what role did the threat of legal action play in the NCP change of position from its draft initial assessment of October 2016 to dismissal of the case in March 2017 in a draft final statement; (e) which Members of Parliament were implicated by Saktó, and who engaged these Members of Parliament on behalf of Saktó during the NCP assessment process; (f) what are the names and institutional positions of the persons, including any ministers, who were approached by these Members of Parliament, and what actions did those persons who were approached take, including details of written or verbal communications with the NCP committee and its staff, in particular; (g) were members of the NCP committee, their staff and associated civil servants urged, encouraged or instructed by any Member of Parliament or minister, or their staff, to dismiss or consider dismissing the Saktó case that was under review and, if so, by whom; (h) what are the names and positions of the persons who challenged the NCP's jurisdiction on behalf of Saktó, and what was the nature of this challenge, including actions and details of written or verbal communications with the NCP committee and its staff, or others, and what are the names and positions of the persons who were aware of Saktó's challenge of the NCP's jurisdiction; (i) what is the name of the Deputy Minister of Justice to which Saktó's made submissions, including details of the submissions, and what action, verbal or written communication did the Deputy Minister of Justice undertake in response; (j) why did the NCP decide to take the decision of removing a published final statement that had been posted on its web site for ten months; (k) on what legal basis did the Department of Justice issue cease and desist letters regarding documents issued by the NCP related to the Saktó Request for Review to BMF and OECD Watch; (l) on what legal basis did the NCP issue a cease and desist letter to MiningWatch Canada; (m) why and at whose request did the Department of Justice and the NCP issue these letters; (n) how did the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities and the Minister of International Trade Diversification explain the process followed by the NCP in this case, and what are the details of the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities' and the Minister of International Trade Diversification's written or verbal responses to the Secretary General of the OECD, or any other staff of the OECD; and (o) has the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities or the Minister of International Trade Diversification briefed or discussed the Saktó Request for Review with the Prime Minister, any staff now or previously employed in the Office of the Prime Minister, or any staff now or previously employed by the Privy Council Office, and, if so, what are the names and positions of these persons, what exactly was communicated to each of these persons by the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities and the Minister of International Trade Diversification regarding the Saktó Request for Review and the topics raised in this question?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2437—Ms. Hélène Laverdière:

With regard to the Canada–Mexico Partnership, Canada's relationship with Mexico in the areas of mining, energy and the environment, and visits between both countries, since October 2018, with members of the administration of Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador: (a) what are the agreements reached between Canada and Mexico with regard to training, technical support, exchanges and other types of support pertaining to consultation of Indigenous peoples and other mining-affected communities and their participation in natural resource development projects; (b) what are the agreements reached between Canada and Mexico with regard to training, technical support, exchanges and other types of support pertaining to increasing public confidence in mining; (c) what are the agreements reached between Canada and Mexico with regard to training, technical support, exchanges and other types of support pertaining to good governance and best practices in the mining sector; (d) is there a guide, guidelines, model or other document that outlines what the government considers as good governance and best practices, used in this or other similar collaborations; (e) what are the agreements reached between Canada

and Mexico with regard to training, technical support, exchanges and other types of support pertaining to security and human rights in mining and energy activities; (f) is there a guide, guidelines, model or other document that outlines what the government considers to be exemplary in terms of security and human rights in mining and energy development projects, used in this or other similar collaborations; (g) what are the agreements reached between Canada and Mexico with regard to training, technical support, exchanges and other types of support pertaining to sustainable mining; (h) is there a guide, guidelines, model or other document that outlines what the government considers to be sustainable mining, used in this or other similar collaborations; (i) have there been or will there be training or capacity building sessions between Canada and Mexico in the areas of consultation of Indigenous peoples and other mining-affected communities and their participation in natural resource development projects, increasing public confidence in mining, good governance and best practices in the mining sector, sustainable mining, or security and human rights in mining and energy activities and, if so, (i) when have these taken place during the administration of President Enrique Peña Nieto, (ii) when have these taken place with members of the incoming administration of President Andrés Manuel López Obrador, between October 1 and December 1, 2018, (iii) when have these taken place or are scheduled to occur after December 1, 2018; (j) what are the objectives of the training or capacity-building sessions being provided in the areas of consultation of Indigenous peoples and other mining-affected communities and their participation in natural resource development projects, increasing public confidence in mining, good governance and best practices in the mining sector, sustainable mining, or security and human rights in mining and energy activities; (k) what is the nature of the technical support or capacity building that Canada is providing or envisions providing to Mexico in the areas of consultation of Indigenous peoples and other mining-affected communities and their participation in natural resource development projects, increasing public confidence in mining, good governance and best practices in the mining sector, sustainable mining, or security and human rights in mining and energy activities, including (i) who is providing such training or capacity building, (ii) who is participating on the part of both countries, (iii) what funds have been allotted for this work, (iv) what is the source of these funds; (l) what exchanges have taken place or are planned or envisioned to take place between Canada and Mexico in the areas of consultation of Indigenous peoples and other mining-affected communities and their participation in natural resource development projects, increasing public confidence in mining, good governance and best practices in the mining sector, sustainable mining, or security and human rights in mining and energy activities, including (i) who is participating on the part of both countries, (ii) what funds have been allotted for this work, (iii) what is the source of these funds; (m) what was the program and related agenda of Mexican public officials from the López Obrador administration who visited Canada in October and November of 2018, including (i) meetings held, (ii) mine sites visited, (iii) other events, (iv) guests present, (v) main takeaways and agreements reached, (vi) whether informal or formal; (n) what policies, norms or official guidelines do Canadian public officials need to respect with regard to security and human rights of communities affected by mining and energy projects when collaborating with the Mexican government in these areas; (o) what policies, norms or official guidelines do Canadian public officials need to respect with regard to security and human rights of communities affected by mining and energy projects when engaging with the private sector for related activities and investments or potential investments in Mexico; and (p) what mechanisms exist in the case where there are complaints as a result of violations on the part of Canadian public officials of the policies, norms or official guidelines delineated in (n) and (o)?

(Return tabled)

*Government Orders*Question No. 2438—**Ms. Irene Mathysen:**

With regard to the decision of the Canadian Armed Forces to refuse to extend peer support services to survivors of military sexual trauma: (a) what are the research and resources the department used to make this decision; (b) what is the title and date of each report; and (c) what is the methodology used for each report?

(Return tabled)

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I ask that all remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all notices of motions for the production of papers be allowed to stand.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

POINTS OF ORDER

USE OF UNANIMOUS CONSENT MOTIONS

Mr. David Sweet (Flamborough—Glanbrook, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have a point of order that I was considering researching for a question of privilege, but I am going to leave it in your worthy hands to research.

I have noticed, over the last few months, an escalation in the requisition for unanimous consent motions. My concern is not with the request for a unanimous consent motion, but it is when a member stands up and says, “There have been consultations among all parties”. I am not pointing to any particular member in this case, but I have seen instances where it is either stated specifically or presumed that there have been consultations, and then a unanimous consent motion is requested on issues that are very important to everyone.

The reason I was considering that it could possibly be a question of privilege is that when someone stands up and claims that there have been consultations, or says “If you seek it, you will find that there will be unanimous consent”, there is an assumption that there have been consultations. However, if I am not here and have not been able to hear that motion, but another colleague assumes that I might be in agreement with it, that binds the entire House, which means that I then have to answer for that unanimous consent motion to the constituents I represent. It is very troubling to me and very troubling to a number of colleagues that I have spoken to.

Therefore, I would ask, Mr. Speaker, that you check on the actual Standing Orders in that regard to see, in those cases when someone says that there have been consultations directly or even when they say “If you seek it you will find unanimous consent”, if there should be reasonable efforts made.

I go back to a judgment that was made earlier by the Chair in regards to voting, in that every member has a duty to be honourable when it comes to voting and to be truthful that they have actually been here for the question. I think this goes to the duty and honour of individual members that when they stand up they should have the good practice and decency to have actually consulted with other members.

I will leave that in your worthy hands, Mr. Speaker, to get back to the House in that regard.

The Deputy Speaker: I thank the hon. member for Flamborough—Glanbrook for his comments on the issue. I will draw his attention to a decision that was given to the House on June 3 in respect of this very subject. In fact, earlier today, the hon. Speaker spoke of the manner in which unanimous consent motions would be considered by the House. I think his additional comments on the matter are helpful and we will get back to the House as necessary.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1545)

[English]

IMPACT ASSESSMENT ACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of amendments made by the Senate to Bill C-69, An Act to enact the Impact Assessment Act and the Canadian Energy Regulator Act, to amend the Navigation Protection Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts.

The Deputy Speaker: Before we proceed with the motion, as members know, before a motion can be considered, it must first be found to be in order. It must be moved and seconded, and after that, it is presented to the House by the Chair.

Not unlike a circumstance we had a couple of weeks ago, when that motion is very long we put a question to the House to see if the House would be agreeable to dispensing with the reading of the motion, that last segment, if you will, before we actually begin debate on the motion.

Today's Senate amendments on Bill C-69 are quite lengthy. I would draw attention to the fact that the motion itself, of course, is in its entirety on today's Order Paper. We can make available copies at the table, if members need it.

I seek unanimous consent to dispense with the reading of the motion in its entirety.

Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

[Chair read text of motion to House]

• (1550)

[Translation]

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.) moved:

Government Orders

That a Message be sent to the Senate to acquaint Their Honours that, in relation to Bill C-69, An Act to enact the Impact Assessment Act and the Canadian Energy Regulator Act, to amend the Navigation Protection Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, the House:

agrees with amendments 1(b)(i), 1(c)(vi), 1(g)(iv), 1(g)(v), 1(h)(iii), 1(h)(iv), 1(i)(i), 1(i)(iii), 1(k)(x), 1(o)(iv), 1(p)(ii), 1(q)(i), 1(q)(ii), 1(r)(f), 1(t)(i), 1(t)(ii), 1(t)(iii), 1(u)(f), 1(u)(ii), 1(v)(i), 1(v)(iii), 1(w)(i), 1(w)(ii), 1(w)(iii), 1(y)(iii), 1(y)(iv), 1(ab)(iv), 1(ac)(i), 1(ad), 1(ae), 1(af)(i), 1(af)(iii), 1(ai)(i), 1(aj)(ii), 1(ak)(ii), 1(ak)(iii), 1(al), 1(am)(ii), 1(aq), 1(ar), 1(as), 1(at)(i), 1(at)(ii), 1(au)(i), 1(au)(ii), 1(aw)(i), 1(aw)(ii), 1(ax), 1(ay)(i), 1(bb), 1(bc), 6(l), 6(o)(i), 6(p)(i), 6(p)(ii), 6(q), 6(r), 10, 11(a), 11(d)(i), 11(e)(ii) and 16 made by the Senate;

respectfully disagrees with amendments 1(a)(i), 1(a)(ii), 1(a)(iii), 1(a)(iv), 1(b)(ii), 1(c)(i), 1(c)(ii), 1(c)(iii), 1(c)(v), 1(d)(i), 1(d)(ii), 1(d)(iii), 1(e)(i), 1(e)(ii), 1(g)(i), 1(g)(iii), 1(h)(i), 1(h)(ii), 1(h)(v), 1(i)(ii), 1(j)(i), 1(j)(ii), 1(j)(iii), 1(k)(i), 1(k)(ii), 1(k)(iii), 1(k)(iv), 1(k)(v), 1(k)(vi), 1(k)(vii), 1(k)(viii), 1(l)(iii), 1(l)(iv), 1(m)(i), 1(m)(ii), 1(m)(iii), 1(m)(iv), 1(m)(v), 1(m)(vi), 1(m)(i), 1(n)(ii), 1(n)(iii), 1(n)(iv), 1(n)(v), 1(o)(i), 1(o)(ii), 1(o)(iii), 1(p)(i), 1(p)(iii), 1(r)(ii), 1(s)(i), 1(s)(ii), 1(v)(ii), 1(x), 1(y)(i), 1(z)(i), 1(z)(ii), 1(z)(iii), 1(aa)(i), 1(aa)(ii), 1(ac)(ii), 1(ac)(iii), 1(ac)(iv), 1(ag)(ii), 1(ag)(iii), 1(ag)(iv), 1(ag)(vi), 1(ag)(vii), 1(ag)(viii), 1(ah)(i), 1(ah)(ii), 1(ah)(iii), 1(ah)(iv), 1(ah)(v), 1(ai)(ii), 1(aj)(i), 1(aj)(iii), 1(ak)(i), 1(am), 1(an)(i), 1(an)(iv), 1(av)(i), 1(av)(ii), 1(ay)(ii), 1(ay)(iii), 1(az)(i), 1(az)(ii), 1(ba), 6(a), 6(b), 6(c), 6(d)(i), 6(d)(ii), 6(e), 6(f), 6(g)(i), 6(g)(ii), 6(g)(iii), 6(h)(i), 6(h)(ii), 6(h)(iii), 6(i)(i), 6(i)(ii), 6(i)(iii), 6(i)(iv), 6(j)(i), 6(j)(ii), 6(k), 6(m)(i), 6(n), 6(o)(ii), 6(s), 7, 8, 9, 11(b), 11(c)(i), 11(c)(ii), 11(d)(ii), 11(e)(i), 12(a), 12(b), 13, 14(a), 14(b), 15(a), 15(b), 17(a), 17(b) and 17(c) made by the Senate;

proposes that amendment 1(c)(iv) be amended by replacing the text of the amendment with the following:

“(b.1) to establish a fair, predictable and efficient process for conducting impact assessments that enhances Canada’s competitiveness, encourages innovation in the carrying out of designated projects and creates opportunities for sustainable economic development;”;

proposes that amendment 1(f) be amended by deleting subsections (4.1) and (4.2);

proposes that amendment 1(g)(ii) be amended by deleting the amendments to subsection 9(1) and deleting subsection 9(1.1);

proposes that amendment 1(k)(ix) be amended by replacing the text of the amendment with the following:

“assessment of the project that sets out the information or studies that the Agency requires from the proponent and considers necessary for the conduct of the impact assessment; and”;

proposes that amendment 1(k)(xi) be amended by replacing the text of the amendment with the following:

“(1.1) The Agency must take into account the factors set out in subsection 22(1) in determining what information or which studies it considers necessary for the conduct of the impact assessment.

(1.2) The scope of the factors referred to in paragraphs 22(1)(a) to (f), (h) to (l) and (s) and (t) that are to be taken into account under subsection (1.1) and set out in the tailored guidelines referred to in paragraph (1)(b), including the extent of their relevance to the impact assessment, is determined by the Agency.”;

proposes that amendment 1(l)(i) be amended by replacing the text of the amendment with the following:

“(3) The Agency may, on request of any jurisdiction referred to in paragraphs (c) to (g) of the definition jurisdiction in section 2, extend the time limit referred to in subsection (1) by any period up to a maximum of 90 days, to allow it to cooperate with that jurisdiction with respect to the Agency’s obligations under subsection (1).

(4) The Agency must post a notice of any extension granted under subsection (3), including the reasons for granting it, on the Internet site.

(5) The Agency may suspend the time limit within which it must provide the notice of the com-”;

proposes that amendment 1(l)(ii) be amended by renumbering subsection (7) as subsection (6);

proposes that amendment 1(o)(v) be amended by replacing the text of the amendment with the following:

“(2) The Agency’s determination of the scope of the factors made under subsection 18(1.2) applies when those factors are taken into account under subsection (1).”;

proposes that, as a consequence of Senate amendment 1(q)(ii), the following amendment be added:

“1. Clause 1, page 24: Delete lines 8 and 9”;

proposes that amendment 1(r)(iii) be amended to read as follows:

“(iii) replace lines 20 to 26 with the following:

(8) The Agency must post on the Internet site a notice of the time limit established under subsection (5) and of any extension granted under this section, including the reasons for establishing that time limit or for granting that extension.

(9) The Agency may suspend the time limit within which it must submit the report until any activi-”;

proposes that amendment 1(r)(iv) be amended by deleting section 28.1;

proposes that amendment 1(y)(i) be amended by replacing the text of the amendment with the following:

“of reference and the Agency must, within the same period, appoint as a member one or more persons who are unbiased and free from any conflict of in-”;

proposes that amendment 1(z)(iv) be amended by replacing the text of the amendment with the following:

“net site — establish the panel’s terms of reference in consultation with the President of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission and the Agency must, within the same period, ap-”;

proposes that amendment 1(z)(v) be amended by replacing the text of the amendment with the following

“President of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission.

(4) The persons appointed from the roster must not”;

proposes that amendment 1(aa)(iii) be amended by replacing the text of the amendment with the following:

“net site — establish the panel’s terms of reference in consultation with the Lead Commissioner of the Canadian Energy Regulator and the Agency must, within the same period, ap-”;

proposes that amendment 1(aa)(iv) be amended by replacing the text of the amendment with the following:

“Lead Commissioner of the Canadian Energy Regulator.

(4) The persons appointed from the roster must not”;

proposes that amendment 1(ab)(i) be amended by replacing the text of the amendment with the following:

“referred to in section 14.

50 (1) The Minister must establish the following rosters:”;

proposes that amendment 1(ab)(ii) be amended by replacing the text of the amendment with the following:

“(2) In establishing a roster under paragraph (1)(b), the Minister must consult with the Minister of Natural Resources or the member of the Queen’s Privy Council for Canada that the Governor in Council designates as the Minister for the purposes of the Nuclear Safety and Control Act.

(3) In establishing a roster under paragraph (1)(c), the Minister must consult with the member of the Queen’s Privy Council for Canada that the Governor in Council designates as the Minister for the purposes of the Canadian Energy Regulator Act.”;

proposes that amendment 1(ab)(iii) be amended to read as follows:

“(iii) replace lines 30 and 31 with the following:

opportunity to participate meaningfully, in the manner that the review panel considers appropriate and within the time period that it specifies, in the im-”;

proposes that amendment 1(af)(ii) be amended to read as follows:

“(ii) replace lines 20 to 23 with the following:

(a) determine whether the adverse effects within federal jurisdiction — and the adverse direct or incidental effects — that are indicated in the report are, in light of the factors referred to in section 63 and the extent to which those effects are significant, in the public inter-”;

Government Orders

proposes that, as a consequence of the amendment to amendment 1(af)(ii), the following amendment be added:

“1. Clause 1, page 41: Replace lines 25 to 27 with the following:

(b) refer to the Governor in Council the matter of whether the effects referred to in paragraph (a) are, in light of the factors referred to in section 63 and the extent to which those effects are significant, in the public interest.”;

proposes that amendment 1(af)(iv) be amended by replacing the text of the amendment with the following

“the Minister under section 59, the Minister, in consultation with the responsible Minister, if any, must refer to”;

proposes that amendment 1(af)(v) be amended to read as follows:

“(v) replace lines 36 to 39 with the following:

whether the adverse effects within federal jurisdiction — and the adverse direct or incidental effects — that are indicated in the report are, in light of the factors referred to in section 63 and the extent to which those effects are significant, in the public interest.”;

proposes that amendment 1(af)(vi) be amended by replacing the text of the amendment with the following:

“(1.1) For the purpose of subsection (1), responsible Minister means the following Minister:

(a) in the case of a report prepared by a review panel established under subsection 44(1), the Minister of Natural Resources or the member of the Queen’s Privy Council for Canada that the Governor in Council designates as the Minister for the purposes of the Nuclear Safety and Control Act;

(b) in the case of a report prepared by a review panel established under subsection 47(1), the member of the Queen’s Privy Council for Canada that the Governor in Council designates as the Minister for the purposes of the Canadian Energy Regulator Act.

(2) If the report relates to a designated project that includes activities that are regulated under the Canadian Energy Regulator Act, the responsible Minister must, at the same time as the referral described in subsection (1) in respect of that report is made,

(a) submit the report to the Governor in Council for the purposes of subsection 186(1) of that Act; or

(b) submit the decision made for the purposes of subsection 262(4) of that Act to the Governor in Council if it is decided that the certificate referred to in that subsection should be issued.”;

proposes that amendment 1(ag)(i) be amended to read as follows

“(i) replace lines 6 to 9 with the following:

whether the adverse effects within federal jurisdiction — and the adverse direct or incidental effects — that are indicated in the report are, in light of the factors referred to in section 63 and the extent to which those effects are significant, in the public interest.”;

proposes that amendment 1(ag)(v) be amended to read as follows:

“(v) replace lines 19 to 22 with the following:

(b) the extent to which the adverse effects within federal jurisdiction and the adverse direct or incidental effects that are indicated in the impact assessment report in respect of the designated project are significant.”;

proposes that amendment 1(an)(iii) be amended by renumbering subsection 94(1) as section 94;

proposes that amendment 1(ao)(i) be amended by replacing the text of the amendment with the following:

“95 (1) The Minister may establish a committee – or autho-”;

proposes that amendment 1(ao)(ii) be amended by replacing the text of the amendment with the following:

“(2) The Minister may deem any assessment that provides guidance on how Canada’s commitments in respect of climate change should be considered in impact assessments and that is prepared by a federal authority and commenced before the

day on which this Act comes into force to be an assessment conducted under this section.”;

proposes that amendment 1(ao)(iii) be amended by replacing the text of the amendment with the following:

“may be, must take into account any scientific information and Indigenous knowledge — including the knowledge of Indigenous women — provided with respect to the assessment.”;

proposes that amendment 1(ap) be amended by replacing the text of the amendment with the following:

“meaningfully, in a manner that the Agency or committee, as the case may be, considers appropriate, in any assess-”;

proposes that amendment 1(at)(iii) be amended by replacing the text of the amendment with the following:

“(a.2) designating, for the purposes of section 112.1, a physical activity or class of physical activities from among those specified by the Governor in Council under paragraph 109(b), establishing the conditions that must be met for the purposes of the designation and setting out the information that a person or entity — federal authority, government or body — that is referred to in subsection (3) must provide the Agency in respect of the physical activity that they propose to carry out;

(a.3) respecting the procedures and requirements relating to assessments referred to in section 92, 93 or 95.”;

proposes that amendment 2 be amended by replacing the text of the amendment with the following:

“site — establish the panel’s terms of reference in consultation with the Chairperson of the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board and the Agency must, within the same period, ap-”;

proposes that amendment 3(a) be amended by replacing the text of the amendment with the following:

“tabish the panel’s terms of reference in consultation with the Chairperson of the Canada–Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board and the Agency must, within the same period, appoint the”;

proposes that amendment 3(b) be amended by deleting subsection (3.1);

proposes that, as a consequence of the amendment to amendment 3(b), the following amendment be added:

“1. Clause 6, page 94: Replace lines 32 and 33 with the following:

Petroleum Board.”;

proposes that amendment 4(a) be amended to read as follows:

“(a) On page 95, replace lines 33 to 36 with the following:

(b.1) a roster consisting of persons who may be appointed as members of a review panel established under subsection 46.1(1) and

(i) who are members of the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board and who are selected by the Minister after consultation with the Minister of Natural Resources, or

(ii) who are selected by the Minister after consultation with the Board and the Minister of Natural Resources.”;

proposes that amendment 4(b) be amended to read as follows:

“(b) On page 96, replace lines 3 to 7 with the following:

(d) a roster consisting of persons who may be appointed as members of a review panel established under subsection 48.1(1) and

(i) who are members of the Canada–Newfoundland and Labrador Petroleum Board and who are selected by the Minister after consultation with the Minister of Natural Resources, or

(ii) who are selected by the Minister after consultation with the Board and the Minister of Natural Resources.”;

proposes that amendment 5 be amended by replacing the text of the amendment with the following:

“8.1 (1) Subsection 61(1.1) of the Act is amended by adding the following after paragraph (a):

(a.1) in the case of a report prepared by a review panel established under subsection 46.1(1), the Minister of Natural Resources;

(2) Subsection 61(1.1) of the Act is amended by adding the following after paragraph (b):

(c) in the case of a report prepared by a review panel established under subsection 48.1(1), the Minister of Natural Resources.”;

Government Orders

proposes that, as a consequence of Senate amendment 6(l), the following amendment be added:

"1. Clause 10, page 208: Replace line 39 with the following:
section 37.1 of that Act;"

proposes that amendment 6(m)(ii) be amended by replacing the text of the amendment with the following:

"within 90 days after the day on which the report under section 183 is submitted or, in the case of a designated project, as defined in section 2 of the Impact Assessment Act, 90 days after the day on which the recommendations referred to in paragraph 37.1(1)(b) of that Act are posted on the Internet site referred to in section 105 of that Act. The Governor in Council may;"

proposes that, as a consequence of the amendment to amendment 6(m)(ii), the following amendment be added:

"1. Clause 10, page 208: Replace line 7 with the following:

ter the day on which the Commission makes that recommendation or, in the case of a designated project, as defined in section 2 of the Impact Assessment Act, 90 days after the day on which the recommendations referred to in paragraph 37.1(1)(b) of that Act are posted on the Internet site referred to in section 105 of that Act, either approve"

proposes that, as a consequence of Senate amendment 1(bb), the following amendment be added:

"1. New clause 36.1, page 281: Add the following after line 24:

36.1 For greater certainty, section 182.1 of the Impact Assessment Act applies in relation to a pending application referred to in section 36."

•(1615)

[*English*]

She said: Mr. Speaker, before I begin today, I wish to acknowledge that we are on the traditional territory of the Algonquin—

Mr. John Nater: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. There is no quorum. We see how seriously the Liberals take this subject.

The Deputy Speaker: I am not seeing quorum.

And the count having been taken:

The Deputy Speaker: We have quorum.

The hon. Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

Hon. Catherine McKenna: Mr. Speaker, before I begin, I wish to acknowledge that we are on the traditional territory of the Algonquin and Anishinabe peoples.

Today, I am pleased to address the chamber in support of our government's bill for better rules for the review of major projects, Bill C-69. The act would put in place better rules that would restore trust, protect the environment, advance reconciliation and would ensure that good projects could go ahead in a timely way.

•(1620)

[*Translation*]

I want to thank senators and members of Parliament for their careful consideration of this bill, in particular those senators who have worked productively to strengthen and improve the bill.

[*English*]

I would reserve special thanks for Senator Grant Mitchell, who has worked tirelessly as a sponsor of the bill throughout the Senate process.

Thousands of people across Canada have come forward to share their perspectives since January 2016. This is extremely important legislation, and I appreciate how engaged everyone has been.

Hundreds of major resource projects, worth an estimated \$500 billion over the next decade, are possible across Canada, creating jobs from coast to coast to coast. It is imperative that we get this right.

[*Translation*]

These better rules are designed to protect our environment while restoring public trust in the process and improving investor confidence. These rules will also make the Canadian energy and resource sectors more competitive. They will build on Canada's strong economic growth and historic job numbers.

[*English*]

We are keeping our promise to Canadians, a promise we made in 2015 to fix our broken environmental impact assessment system.

In 2012, Stephen Harper's Conservative government gutted the rules for major projects, ignored science, trampled on indigenous rights and removed environmental protection. Those changes eroded public trust in how decisions were made and ultimately led to the polarization and paralysis we see today. It also ended up with us in court.

When good projects cannot get built because the process is in court, we have to admit the system is broken.

Our bill for better rules for the review of major projects, along with the amendments that we are proposing to accept, will change that. We will put in place better rules for major projects, like mines, pipelines and hydro projects, to protect our environment, improve investor confidence, strengthen our economy and create good, middle-class jobs.

Since we have formed government, we have worked very hard to restore public trust while providing certainty to business. Better rules are the key to rebuilding trust and confidence in how decisions about major projects are made. The amendments we are proposing to accept will enhance that effort.

Our bill for better rules reflect public input, respect indigenous rights, increase transparency and ensure that decisions are made by robust science, evidence and indigenous traditional knowledge.

The new impact assessment process will look at a project's potential impacts not just on our environment, but also its health, social and economic impacts over the long term, and the potential impacts to indigenous peoples.

We will also consider how projects are consistent with our environmental obligations and national climate plan. We will do proactive regional assessments to evaluate big picture issues and the cumulative effects of development. When making decisions, we will consider whether companies are using the best available technologies and practices to reduce impacts on the environment.

Project reviews will be completed through a more efficient and predictable process, with shorter legislated timelines that will lead to more timely decisions.

Government Orders

By increasing coordination with other jurisdictions, we will cut red tape and avoid duplication and delays.

● (1625)

[*Translation*]

Our goal is one project, one review.

[*English*]

We first introduced the bill after 14 months of consultations with provinces and territories, indigenous peoples, companies, environmental groups and Canadians across the country. We heard loud and clear that Canadians wanted a modern environmental and regulatory system that protected the environment, supported reconciliation with indigenous peoples, attracted investment and ensured that good projects go ahead in a timely way to create new jobs and economic opportunities for the middle class. We heard from investors and companies that they wanted a clear, predictable and timely process.

That is what our bill for better rules and the proposed amendments provide.

In January 2016, we introduced interim principles to guide how our government would review major projects until we could put better rules in place. We knew we could not keep approving projects under the Harper government's flawed rules, but we also knew that we could not put our economic development on hold for two years while we worked on new rules.

Our interim principles were the first step toward delivering on one of our high-priority platform commitments, which was to review and fix Canada's broken environmental assessment process and to restore confidence in how decisions about major resource projects were made.

Those interim principles made it clear that decisions would be based on robust science, evidence and indigenous traditional knowledge, that we would listen to the views of Canadians and communities that could be affected by proposed projects, that indigenous peoples would be consulted in a meaningful and respectful manner, that decisions would take into account the climate impacts of proposed projects and that no project already under review would be set back to the starting line.

[*Translation*]

Since we have formed government, we have worked very hard to restore public trust while providing certainty to business.

[*English*]

Today, we are putting before the House a bill that expands those interim principles into better rules.

This bill has gone through months of consultation and expert review. People across the country have provided input, including industry, academia, environmentalists and our indigenous, provincial and territorial partners. We held hundreds of meetings, received hundreds of written submissions and considered thousands of comments from individual Canadians.

Expert panels and parliamentary committees have conducted studies, heard witnesses and reviewed comments from the public. Senators themselves took the rare step of criss-crossing the country

to hear a diversity of views on how to improve the broken system we inherited.

This bill has attracted attention across the country. Last September, someone hired a plane to fly over my office with a flag that read "Kill Bill C-69". Then, in April, students in Quebec City gathered with signs that read "Go C-69", decorated with hearts.

There are those who say this bill goes too far, and then there are those who say this bill does not go far enough. Our task as a government is to listen carefully to all voices and find a reasonable middle ground, moving us all forward together.

While we have been working hard to develop better rules, there has been a concerted misinformation campaign from the opposition. Members of the Conservative opposition have used this bill to stoke conflict, pitting one region against another, as if we are not one country, Canada, trying to build the best possible future for our kids and grandkids.

Conservatives in the House and the Senate want to replace environmental reviews with pipeline approvals. They want to replace legitimate public discussion with unilateral decisions. They do not want a better review process; they want to hand decisions over to oil lobbyists, ignore climate change and make the consideration of indigenous peoples' constitutional rights optional. Their goal has been to weaken the rules, and we all know where that road leads.

The opposition would pursue economic development at all costs and put the interests of oil lobbyists ahead of the interests of Canadians. That is exactly why we need better rules, ones designed to measure the impacts of major projects on all Canadians: environmental impacts, climate impacts, community impacts, economic impacts, impacts on indigenous peoples' rights, and impacts on Canada's reputation as a country where good projects can move ahead in a timely and transparent way that protects the environment and helps to build a better future for all Canadians.

● (1630)

[*Translation*]

The Senate has proposed 229 amendments to this bill. Of these, we are accepting 62 and amending 37, for a total of 99 amendments.

That leaves 130 amendments that we cannot accept, ones that would, for instance, make public consultation optional, remove consideration of a project's impacts on climate change, undermine the rule of law and make it more difficult for Canada to attract investment.

Government Orders

[English]

Here is a little parliamentary history for my colleagues. Going back to 1940, when the Library of Parliament began consistently indexing information, the highest number of Senate amendments ever concurred in by the House was 67, in 1946, to Bill No. 195, An Act respecting the Control of the Acquisition and Disposition of Foreign Currency and the Control of Transactions involving Foreign Currency or Non-Residents. In other words, this bill will be one for the history books.

I think it is fair to say that this has been a long and careful process and that we have worked diligently to create better rules. We thank the Senate for providing a variety of thoughtful improvements to the bill. We are accepting amendments that maintain the integrity of the bill and make it stronger.

For example, we are accepting amendments that increase the independence of the agency and minimize the potential for political interference. Instead of ministerial discretion on timelines, or who would be on a review panel, this power will be transferred to the agency.

We also support an amendment to make it clear that the minister cannot direct the head of the agency. We also support additional clarity on how the impact assessment agency will look at the environmental, health, economic and social factors to ensure that the focus is on the most significant issues.

We will make sure that the biggest projects with the biggest potential impacts are the ones requiring a federal impact assessment. We are supporting improvements to regional assessments and how we work with provinces to get to one project, one assessment.

●(1635)

These amendments would protect our environment and put sustainability at the heart of how we approach growing our economy and creating good, middle-class jobs. They would reduce the potential for political interference introduced by the Harper government's changes, and they would give companies and investors the certainty they need with a more timely process, clear timelines and transparent decisions. Together, these amendments would help to rebuild public trust, respect indigenous people's rights and protect our environment, while strengthening our economy and attracting investment to Canada.

[Translation]

We will be rejecting changes that weaken the act, including those that limit Canadians' access to the courts, increase political interference in decision-making, limit Canadians' input into the process, make it optional to consider how a project would affect Canada's ability to meet its environmental commitments, such as fighting climate change, and make it easy for future governments to ignore our constitutional duty to consult indigenous peoples, an approach that would land us exactly where we are today: in court.

The changes we are not accepting would take us backward, increase polarization and make it harder to get good projects built.

[English]

Conservatives want to keep the same system, the one that led to so many challenges, including with the Trans Mountain expansion, as an example. It is a system that weakened environmental protections, failed to properly consult indigenous peoples and limited public discussion. Canadians know that the environment and the economy go together, but these amendments would mean pursuing economic development at all costs. We cannot accept them, because they are, quite frankly, unacceptable to us and to Canadians.

[Translation]

Stephen Harper's approach put both the environment and the economy at risk. It failed to protect the environment. It destroyed the public trust. It paralyzed major projects. It is the system that created all the problems and polarization we see today.

Meanwhile, the current Leader of the Opposition has told oil lobbyists that he would kill this bill for better rules if he is elected. That is a recipe for economic risk, increased conflict and environmental damage. It is the same recipe that Stephen Harper tried. It did not work then and it will not work now.

●(1640)

[English]

As leading resource companies know, in the 21st century, we have to protect the environment and grow the economy at the same time. Canadians expect no less. It is not just the sustainable way forward; it is the smart way.

As I mentioned before, hundreds of major resource projects, worth an estimated \$500 billion, are being planned across Canada. We want to see good projects get built. These are projects that grow our economy and represent tens of thousands of good, middle-class jobs.

Our government is committed to building a strong economy. One million jobs have been created since we took office, and unemployment is at historic lows. Last year, Canada's foreign direct investment grew by 60%.

The official opposition has been talking down Canada's economic success, stoking fear and uncertainty, an act that I remind members has real consequences for investment in Canadian companies. Meanwhile, our government has been working to attract and promote investment in Canada. We know that these better rules will provide investors with the certainty they need and will lead to more good jobs for Canadians.

In 2019, we cannot have a plan for the economy without having a plan for the environment. It is essential to be competitive and attract investment in today's world.

Investment in Canada is rising, and jobs are being created in Canada, in part because businesses want to invest in countries that see the future, countries that take sustainability seriously. Customers expect it. Our trading partners expect it. Canadians expect it.

Government Orders

Combined, the amendments we are accepting will produce better rules for major projects in Canada, rules that are clear, fair and predictable, with shorter legislated timelines and sustainability at their core. These rules will make sure that Canada remains a great place to live, to work and to invest.

To vote for the bill for better rules is to vote for strong environmental protection, transparent science- and evidence-based decision-making, predictable and timely reviews that create certainty for companies and for investors, recognition and respect for indigenous peoples' rights and knowledge and advancing reconciliation, less red tape and better coordination with provinces, a single agency that will provide consistent and efficient assessments, and a full package of measures that will protect our environment, support good, middle-class jobs and attract new investment to Canada.

With better rules, we will restore Canadians' trust in how decisions about major projects are made. We will restore investors' confidence in Canada as a great place to do business. We will restore our reputation as a country that knows we can fight climate change, protect the environment and respect indigenous rights, while growing the economy and creating good jobs.

We are so lucky to live in Canada. There is so much opportunity before us. Now is the time for all of us to reach out to investors around the world and say, "Canada is the place to invest. We have fair, predictable rules with legislated timelines."

These better rules will make that possible. Any politician or company saying otherwise is, quite frankly, undermining the opportunity we have to attract investment. That is not in the interest of Canada and that is not in the interests of Canadians.

[*Translation*]

We are extremely lucky to live in Canada. Now is the time for all of us to reach out to investors around the world and tell them that Canada is the place to invest. In the 21st century, as leading resource companies know, we can protect the environment and grow the economy at the same time if we work together to make that happen.

[*English*]

Please join me in voting to pass the bill. We owe it to Canadians. We owe it to our economy. We owe it to our environment and we owe it to our kids and grandkids.

• (1645)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for her speech.

I think she is well aware that the NDP has always been critical of Bill C-69, which we find inadequate in many respects. However, I must congratulate her for rejecting most of the Conservative senators' amendments, which would have hindered the progress made in Bill C-69. This is good news. Unfortunately some positive amendments were also rejected. I am talking about respect for the provinces and municipal urbanization plans.

Today my question pertains to one of my biggest concerns. We have been critical of the process, which is very complicated. The best environmental assessment process in the world is useless if it does not assess actual projects. We are really concerned that the

majority of projects will be exempt because their scope is not broad enough to be subject to federal environmental assessment criteria. If the projects are not assessed, then the assessment process is useless. Take, for example, projects that may be small but could have a big impact on ecosystems or on certain communities. We are particularly worried about the new generation of nuclear reactors, which are very small and would not be assessed under the process that is before us now.

Can the minister assure us that any nuclear-plant project would be subject to the federal assessment process?

Hon. Catherine McKenna: Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank my hon. colleague for his question.

I appreciate his acknowledgement that we accept amendments that make sense, and not those from Conservative politicians, who would take the process back to the Harper era. I know that the NDP does not want that either.

We have always said that the environmental assessment system would consider the federal projects with the greatest impacts. That is exactly what we are doing. In addition, we are working with the provinces and territories, which are also responsible for assessing projects through an environmental lens. We are working very closely with the Quebec government. I think that what we have done, much like the list of projects that will be considered, is part of this approach. This approach makes sense. It will protect the environment and grow our economy.

[*English*]

Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC): Mr. Speaker, oil and natural gas is developed in my riding of Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies in an environmentally sound way, with some of the best practices in the world, frankly, to produce good energy for the global markets. The one thing that confuses constituents in my riding is the hypocrisy of the environment minister and the Prime Minister, with probably a bigger carbon footprint than any prime minister or environment minister before them.

I have a simple question and I hope to get an answer, because often she responds with another question. I am asking a question and expect an answer. Would the minister explain her hypocrisy to Canadians?

Hon. Catherine McKenna: Mr. Speaker, I am trying to understand the question in relation to the most important changes we are making to environmental assessments in a decade. I like riding my bike, if that is what the member of Parliament would like to hear.

Government Orders

However, I will talk to the people in his riding because this is such an important piece of legislation. I agree that we need to get our resources to market. That is critically important. We have a \$500-billion opportunity to develop our natural resources. The only way one will be able to develop one's resources in the 21st century is to do it in a way that has the trust of the public. One has to engage and consult in accordance with our constitutional obligations with indigenous peoples, make sure to look at the environmental and economic impacts, and of course have a system that ensures good projects can go ahead in a timely way.

That is exactly what we have done with the bill. We think it is a very good bill for the residents of his riding and residents across Canada.

• (1650)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, several of the amendments that were rejected came directly from the oil lobby. However, some of the amendments would have affirmed respect for the provinces' rights and municipalities' land use plans. Why were these amendments rejected? The Bloc Québécois proposed similar amendments in committee.

Why must the provinces' rights and municipal land use regulations always be ignored?

Hon. Catherine McKenna: Mr. Speaker, it is very important to work with the provinces and territories. That is why our bill recognizes the principle of one project, one review.

There is no question that we must work with the provinces, but the federal government also has the duty to review projects under federal jurisdiction.

We always work together with the provinces and territories.

[*English*]

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for her presentation, and I also thank the other place, especially Senator Mitchell for his leadership on this file. The Senate used to be an echo chamber of the Harper government, but now we have an independent Senate bringing forth value. There is still some Conservative partisanship in what we see coming back, but we have come a long way in terms of governance.

In terms of the investments in Canada, we now have the lowest marginal effective tax rate in the G7, which is a full five points below the U.S. We now have a better governance model in Canada in terms of assessing projects and moving forward. We still have partisanship getting in the way, which adds uncertainty, but independence is now being introduced through our Parliament and our assessment process going through the projects.

Could the minister comment on the value of independent assessment as well as the favourable climate we have toward investment in Canada?

Hon. Catherine McKenna: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his tireless work on the environment. I know he works extremely hard in his riding, but he also works very hard in the House to make sure we are doing everything we can to protect the environment and tackle climate change. I also want to recognize

Senator Mitchell and the senators who worked really hard to improve the bill.

I absolutely agree that this shows that the way we reformed the Senate is working. We have listened to amendments that improve and strengthen legislation, which is a very good thing. Look at the opportunity we have. We have an opportunity to attract \$500 billion in investment to this country. Last year, we had the largest foreign direct investment in our history on record. We created a million jobs. We have the lowest unemployment rate in four decades.

Now we have an environmental assessment process that will help attract the investment we want to create jobs and opportunities all over the country. Having independence in the way decisions are made, the approach taken with an impact assessment agency, makes a huge difference. It increases the certainty, predictability and respect for the system. It creates a system that, quite frankly, is going to do a much better job than the system that was gutted under the Harper government, where good projects could not go ahead. They just ended up in court.

The Deputy Speaker: Before we go to resuming debate, it is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member Elmwood—Transcona, Pensions; the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands, Public Safety; and the hon. member for Kootenay—Columbia, Parks Canada.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Lakeland.

• (1655)

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is with grave concern for the future of our whole country that, on behalf of the official opposition, I rise to address the Liberal government's response to the 187 Senate amendments to the Liberal's no-more-pipelines bill, Bill C-69. It is likely the last time I will debate this proposed legislation in the House of Commons on behalf of the residents of Lakeland and the provinces, territories, municipalities, indigenous communities, economists, public policy experts, business owners and workers across this country who oppose Bill C-69 and its many negative and widespread impacts on Canada.

I will start by reviewing what has brought us to this day. I will say that Canadians can be forgiven for asking just the what the heck is going on here, because it is, frankly, unconscionable that within days of the House adjourning for the summer and five months away from an election, the Liberals are rushing through debate on their response to 187 amendments, which were also supported by Liberal-appointed senators.

Government Orders

These amendments were an attempt to rescue such flawed but consequential legislation that it will have significant economic impacts and ramifications for the private sector in resource development, in construction, in manufacturing and all the spin-off impacts for related sectors, as well as for provincial and indigenous governments, for infrastructure and for municipalities. It is unbelievable that the Liberals have chosen to reject the majority of the substantive and meaningful amendments passed by the Senate that private sector proponents, provinces and indigenous leaders said would at least make this very significant legislation “workable”, which is not a ringing endorsement as it is.

The response by the Liberals, tabled around midnight last night, will only exacerbate the uncertainty they have caused since 2015, which has driven nearly unprecedented levels of money, jobs, businesses, innovation and resource development out of Canada.

Let us all remember, as the minister just reminded us, that the Liberals started consultations on the bill in January 2016, when they started the regulatory vacuum for major resource development in this country. They introduced it in the House of Commons and rushed it through a year and a half ago. However, at that time, they ignored the dire warnings from committee witnesses, ignored input from expert panels and then subsequently rejected every single amendment put forward by opposition members of all parties, except for one amendment from me that mandated transparency on the reasons for holding a public meeting on discretionary matters and one amendment from the NDP.

They rammed it through the House in such a flawed, wrong-headed and disastrous state that it now faces near universal opposition across the country from a broad and diverse coalition and it requires all these amendments from the Senate, which, thankfully, was able to do a more thorough review and seek a wider scope of feedback and scrutiny than the Liberals allowed when they pushed the bill through the House of Commons so many months ago.

So much for all that rhetoric, nearly four years ago, about the importance of consultation, basing decisions on facts and evidence, and working collaboratively with opposition MPs. Sunny ways have certainly turned into very dark days under the Liberals. The Leader of the Opposition and all Conservatives in both the House and the Senate have opposed Bill C-69 from the very beginning, because, just like the Prime Minister, the bill is not as advertised.

The Canadian Energy Pipeline Association already did warn a year and half ago that Bill C-69, in its original state, would ensure that no new pipeline was ever proposed in Canada again. However, it is clear today like never before, by the Liberals' response to the Senate amendments, that their objective always was and is to dramatically hinder energy development, to interfere in other jurisdictions on resource development by imposing federal reviews on municipal and provincial infrastructure projects, and to make things even more difficult for farmers, rural municipalities, villages and cities by imposing federal reviews on things like irrigation and infrastructure.

To be clear, Bill C-69 is not only opposed by six Conservative premiers fighting to protect their jurisdiction, as the Prime Minister implies, but in fact, nine out of 10 provinces and the governments of

all three territories have raised grave concerns with Bill C-69 in the past several months. It is opposed by private sector proponents across the economy in every corner of the country.

Bill C-69 would not provide certainty or clarity for investors. It would actually create duplication between federal and provincial reviews. It would politicize decisions by granting extensive opportunities for political and ideological interference instead of grounding decisions on science, facts and evidence, and on the technical and economic merits of individual proposals. It would implement open-ended timelines and vague criteria for major resource projects and crucial infrastructure. It would potentially expose all kinds of resource development that is within provincial jurisdiction to federal reviews. It would drive jobs, businesses and investment out of Canada and into competing countries, like the United States, and so many other countries with much lower environmental standards and performance than Canada.

● (1700)

Bill C-69 exposes major Canadian resource and infrastructure proposals within Canada to literally anyone, anywhere in the world, to intervene on those reviews. It removes all parameters for public participation, even reasonable limits like the requirement of a community or individual being locally impacted, and specific technical expertise or knowledge.

That is something the Senate amendments actually improved, increasing the weight of testimony from indigenous communities for example directly impacted by the project, which the Liberals have rejected.

Bill C-69 undermines the principles of fairness, predictability, certainty and clarity for major resource proponents with disproportionately harmful consequences for particular provinces and regions.

All of these reasons are why the Senate had to propose 187 amendments. It is absolutely reckless for the Liberals to reject those key amendments proposed by senators from all regions and on both sides of the political spectrum.

The proposed amendments taken together represent the bare minimum for private sector proponents to operate under, and 100% of those amendments proposed by the Senate to Bill C-69 must be accepted in their entirety. A failure to implement all of the amendments would hinder the entire Canadian economy from coast to coast to coast, which is why a future Conservative government would repeal and replace Bill C-69.

The reality is that Bill C-69 is not only an attack on pipelines and on the energy sector. It is an attack on the economic well-being of the entire country.

Government Orders

Canadians expect their Prime Minister and a federal government to unite and to be a champion for the best interests of all Canadians for oil and gas or refinery workers in western and Atlantic provinces and Ontario and the North, for assembly-line and manufacturing workers across central Canada and Quebec, and for hard-working Canadians and small businesses in all the other sectors that depend on the energy sector, the number one private sector investor in the Canadian economy and Canada's biggest exporter in every corner of the country.

The Liberals pit Canadians against each other over resource development in a way that has not been done since the 1980s, and they have put the whole Canadian economy at risk.

The losses in the energy sector are rippling through other sectors across Canada, whether it is manufacturing in Ontario and Quebec, financial services and banking across the country, railroads, shipping, ports and all the indirect and induced jobs in other sectors. This Liberal attack will touch every corner of the country.

The sad fact is that the Liberals are killing Canadian innovation and killing Canadian jobs. The economic and social consequences are immense: spikes in personal and business bankruptcies, foreclosures, increased food bank use, crime and substance abuse, family breakdowns, suicides, a loss of hope, and a loss of dreams and dignity. All of that is the result of the Liberals' attacks on Canada's natural resource sector and the thousands of good-paying jobs that have been killed by their anti-energy, anti-resources, anti-business policies and legislation.

Through Bill C-69, the Liberals will steamroll the provinces, giving themselves unprecedented power over even highways, passenger trains, recycling plants; over the regulation of non-renewable resources like the oil sands under provincial jurisdiction and other developments like wind, hydro, solar and natural gas. They will take over joint responsibilities like offshore oil and gas exploration.

Unbelievably, the Liberal Prime Minister dismisses provincial advocacy and concerns as being partisan. He says the outcries and the warnings are irresponsible, but that is just not true. The Liberal response of rejecting the majority of the Senate amendments today actually goes directly against requests from the Liberal premier of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Liberal premier of Nova Scotia. It is indicative of what the former Liberal premier of B.C. pointed out, that the "Ottawa knows best" Prime Minister considers himself not to be a first among equals, but to actually have no equals among the provinces, or anyone else for that matter.

Nine out of 10 provinces and all three territories demanded major changes to this legislation, changes the Senate proposed, which the Liberals are rejecting today.

The Liberals have given a single minister the ability to determine what projects require federal review without any prior notice or regulation. This means any future project in principal jurisdiction could require a lengthy and expensive federal review at the last minute without warning. That will not create certainty for investors and it will kill jobs in Canada.

The Liberals are taking projects away from expert life-cycle regulators with a depth and breadth of experience and knowledge

and putting them under a new federal regulator without the same level of expertise while expanding opportunities for political and ideological interference.

• (1705)

What is really galling, and we heard it again here today, is that the Liberals have justified this legislation, while they deliberately undermine and attack Canada's reputation with ongoing and coordinated consistent attacks on confidence in Canada's formerly world-renowned regulator, on Canada's world-leading track record of independent science and evidence-based environmental reviews, and on Canada's leadership on indigenous consultation and the incorporation of traditional knowledge for which Canada has long been renowned, for decades.

It is a pattern. The Liberals constantly divide Canadians, pitting regions and provinces against each other for Liberal partisan purposes at any and all costs, while they say one thing and do another. This time, the Liberals' cynical tactics have backfired. Canadians do not always agree on everything, and thank goodness for that. People across Canada are united in their opposition to this disastrous bill.

On Monday, those premiers that the Prime Minister attacked yesterday, the premiers of the Northwest Territories, New Brunswick, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, representing 59% of Canada's population and 63% of the GDP, called on the Prime Minister to seriously consider their concerns and accept all the Senate amendments in Bill C-69, because "the damage it would do to the economy, jobs and investment will echo from one coast to the other."

They say, "Bill C-69, as originally drafted, would make it virtually impossible to develop critical infrastructure, depriving Canada of much needed investment."

They talk about the fact that "the planned investment value of major resource sector projects in Canada plunged by \$100 billion" between 2017 and 2018, "an amount equivalent to 4.5 per cent of Canada's gross domestic product. To protect Canada's economic future, we, collectively, cannot afford to overlook the uncertainty and risk to future investment created by Bill C-69."

The premiers also issued a stark public warning of the impact of Bill C-69, and its impact on national unity if it is passed without 100% of the Senate amendments. They say their "governments are deeply concerned with the federal government's disregard, so far, of the concerns raised by our provinces and territory related to these bills."

Government Orders

Talking about Bill C-69, as well as Bill C-48, they say:

As it stands, the federal government appears indifferent to the economic hardships faced by provinces and territories. Immediate action to refine or eliminate these bills is needed to avoid further alienating provinces and territories and their citizens and focus on uniting the country in support of Canada's economic prosperity.

They raised real concerns about the willingness of the Liberal government to trample on the provinces. They remind the Prime Minister:

Provinces and territories have clear and sole jurisdiction over the development of their non-renewable natural resources, forestry resources, and the generation and production of electricity.

They continue:

Bill C-69 upsets the balance struck by the constitutional division of powers by ignoring the exclusive provincial powers over projects relating to these resources.

The premiers call on the federal government to adopt all of these amendments or "risk creating a Constitutional crisis."

What is crazy about this is the Prime Minister's response to the premiers yesterday. That was a complete failure of leadership. He dismissed their concerns as partisan and attacked them for being irresponsible. The scale and the intensity of alienation and frustration captured in the premiers' cautions reflect the views and experiences of the people they represent. That is a direct consequence of this Prime Minister's divisive, calculated, regionalized and anti-energy, anti-resource development agenda.

Let me remind the Prime Minister, again, it is not only those six premiers who have opposed Bill C-69 in recent months. The only government that did not speak out is an anti-energy, anti-resource NDP-Green coalition government that is not even representing the majority view of its citizens when it comes to pipelines, and oil and gas. It, of course, is no accident that provincial Liberal leaders request the Liberal Prime Minister to steer clear of their provinces during provincial elections, whether in Atlantic Canada or in western Canada.

The provinces have been very clear about the economic consequences of the Liberals' Bill C-69.

The Government of Saskatchewan, in talking about Bill C-69, said, "[T]he uncertainty and the non-transparency that it would introduce is really disastrous."

The Government of Quebec said, "Bill C-69 gives the federal government substantial powers, the equivalent of a veto over Quebec's economic development and the management of its natural resources."

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador says Bill C-69 is an "unnecessary regulatory burden", potentially undermining development opportunities and the global competitiveness of the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador offshore area.

The Government of Nunavut says Bill C-69 may "muddy or lengthen the processes, potentially leading to a reduction in investor confidence in Canada and Nunavut."

• (1710)

The Government of Nova Scotia says the new assessment criteria in Bill C-69 "raise significant uncertainty and there is risk that they

may not be interpreted similarly in different offices across the country."

The Government of Ontario says Bill C-69 is "fundamentally contradictory to several of Canada's long-term strategic goals and it effectively hinders natural resource related economic development within the country."

The Government of New Brunswick says Bill C-69 "represents an unacceptable risk, an unacceptable impediment to Atlantic Canada's and New Brunswicker's future prosperity."

The Government of Manitoba says Bill C-69 will "drive down investment, compound economic losses...and sacrifice jobs."

The Government of Alberta called Bill C-69 completely "unacceptable" and has announced it will launch a constitutional challenge against it.

The premiers are speaking out because they must represent their provinces. They are simply voicing the rising alienation, frustration, anger, anxiety and experiences of the people whom they represent. They are making the plea to protect their jurisdictions with good reason. One of the amendments from the Senate that the Liberals are rejecting was the implementation of an exemption list of projects to ensure that projects under provincial jurisdiction would not be exposed to federal review. That is an amendment that the Liberals are rejecting.

Let us talk about the areas that are potentially open for review, under Bill C-69 as the Liberals want to pass it: the construction, operation, decommissioning or abandonment or expansion of a new facility, plant, structure, or thing for recovering oil sands by drilling or other in situ recovery operations; the construction, operation, decommissioning, abandonment or expansion of existing or of new pipelines other than an offshore pipeline or other than pipelines across interprovincial jurisdictions; the construction, operation, decommissioning or abandonment or expansion of new or existing facilities, plants, structures or things for the generation of wind electric power or solar electric power; the same for a facility, plant, structure or thing for the refining, manufacturing or processing of natural gas, natural gas liquids or petroleum to produce refined products or other light hydrocarbon components or products; and the same for generating units that use natural gas as their primary fuel for coal-to-gas generation and for simple cycle turbines.

This is the reason that premiers are speaking out and raising such grave concerns about this almost unprecedented intervention into provincial jurisdiction.

Government Orders

However, the impact of Bill C-69 will not stop at the provinces. The Liberals' "Ottawa knows best" approach will even impose costly and time-consuming federal reviews on municipalities. The mayor of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo and the mayor of the MD of Bonnyville lead a coalition of at least 20 municipalities that say Bill C-69 would impede municipal infrastructure projects and would fail to provide the necessary clarity on municipal land-use planning, waterway use, indigenous consultation and federal grants.

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities says, "[T]he proposed Bill could result in more municipal infrastructure projects falling under federal review. This could add additional financial and administrative costs to municipal operations."

The Prime Minister committed to a "collaborative relationship" with provinces and territories, and he promised Canadians that he would maintain an ongoing partnership with provincial, territorial and municipal governments. However, when those governments sent the Prime Minister a letter with a plea for due diligence and for serious consideration of their concerns and a warning about the consequences for Canada, he essentially told them to get bent. He patronized and condescended to them, dismissed the substance of what they said, and both ascribed and criticized their motivations and really all of the hundreds of thousands of Canadians whom they represent. What a contrast it is to four years ago, and what a disheartening and bitter legacy.

What is even more hypocritical is the intensely partisan use of separatism in the past by this very Liberal Prime Minister. In 2012, he threatened to become a Quebec separatist if Canadians did not do as he liked. He said, "I always say if there comes a point where I thought Canada really was Stephen Harper's Canada...maybe I'd consider making Quebec a country. Oh yes, absolutely. I know my values very well, even if I no longer recognize Canada."

That is why his response to nine out of 10 provinces and three territorial governments raising these very serious concerns, that they either do what he wants or they get kicked to the curb, is absolutely mind-boggling. For him to have the gall to suggest the premiers are being irresponsible and threatening national unity if they, in his words, "don't get their way" or "do not get everything they want" is unbelievable. What kind of a sorry, divisive, petulant, flippant response is that from a Prime Minister?

● (1715)

In his case, and on this subject in particular, what profound hypocrisy Canadians do and should expect more from their Prime Minister. The Prime Minister should be rising to the occasion and providing the leadership that Canadians so desperately need right now, but, again, he is not as advertised. Make no mistake, the actual clear and present danger, the real threat to national unity and the risk of a constitutional crisis, is the Liberal Prime Minister.

There may be no better example of how he is not as advertised than how he treats indigenous communities.

The Prime Minister likes to claim his most important relationship is with indigenous people, but even in that respect, he is divisive and, in turn, dismissive when it suits him. The Liberals claim Bill C-69 would improve consultation with indigenous people and somehow would expand the rights of indigenous people to consultation or

would enhance the Crown's duty to consult and accommodate, but it does not.

Hundreds of indigenous communities and indigenous business owners represented by the national chiefs council, the Indian Resource Council, the Eagle Spirit Chiefs Council, the Alberta Assembly of Treaty Chiefs and the majority of Treaty 7 First Nations oppose Bill C-69.

Roy Fox, chief of the Blood Tribe First Nation, said, "I don't have any confidence in Bill C-69. I am fearful, and I am confident, that it will keep my people in poverty."

Steven Buffalo, the president and CEO of the Indian Resource Council, said, "Indigenous communities are on the verge of a major economic breakthrough, one that finally allows Indigenous people to share in Canada's economic prosperity. Bill C-69 will stop this progress in its tracks."

The 35 first nations in B.C. and Alberta involved in the Eagle Spirit Chiefs Council said that they would take the government to court over Bill C-69 because it could make it "impossible to complete a project" and because the removal of the standing test for participation and project reviews could lead to foreign interests "overriding the interests of aboriginal title holders."

Like most Canadians, indigenous leaders are concerned about the total lack of parameters that allows anyone anywhere in the world to intervene in impact assessment processes, significantly reducing the voices of local indigenous communities and risking the aspirations of local communities to be drowned out by distant and activist commentators. A lack of discretion to determine how different groups will participate in reviews will make processes more vulnerable to legal challenges in the case of any slight differentiation or disagreement between parties.

Yesterday, the Prime Minister claimed that the Senate amendment made indigenous consultation "optional". Not only is that completely false, but the Liberals' rejection of Senate amendments will have a detrimental impact on locally impacted indigenous communities that want to meaningfully participate and seek accommodation in consultations on major resource projects, for which the Crown has a rock solid, undisputed primary duty.

The amendments the Senate made to Bill C-69 would have helped ensure that review panels, the agency and the Canadian energy regulator would have the discretion to hear from and prioritize those directly affected by a project and to consider the information, expertise and opinions of other experts as they would see appropriate.

Government Orders

As a representative of nine indigenous communities, almost all of which are involved in oil and gas, as a person of Ojibway descent myself and as a Conservative who is more interested in action, concrete measures and actual positive outcomes in the lives and well-being of the indigenous and all Canadians, it is very frustrating to listen to the Liberals and the left talk about the real crippling poverty and the particular socio-economic challenges and barriers facing indigenous Canadians, while they impose policies and laws, like Bill C-69, Bill C-48 and others, that will block economic reconciliation and self-sufficiency through financial opportunities and that actively undermine years of efforts and work of those indigenous communities to secure agreements and build businesses through responsible resource development to benefit their communities' elders, youth and futures.

Legal experts agree with the assessment that Bill C-69 would not enhance or enforce expanded meaningful consultation with indigenous communities on major resource projects.

A University of British Columbia law professor, who specializes in indigenous law, says that there is nothing in Bill C-69 that improves meaningful dialogue with indigenous communities. He says, "the courts have said for 15 years that you need to have meaningful dialogue [and] there is nothing in [Bill C-69] that seems to do that."

For the Prime Minister to stand in the House and say that indigenous consultation is weakened or made optional by the Senate amendments demonstrates either his basic lack of knowledge on indigenous consultation or he is deliberately misleading Canadians for political purposes.

• (1720)

Indigenous consultations are a constitutional requirement, a duty of the Crown. Nothing—

The Deputy Speaker: I will remind the hon. member for Lakeland that the expression "deliberately misleading" has generally been found to be unparliamentary in that it essentially is saying indirectly what members otherwise could not say in the House in a direct fashion. Saying "deliberately misleading" crosses the line, and I ask the hon. member to perhaps rephrase that part of her text.

The hon. member for Lakeland.

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Speaker, I apologize. I would say that it demonstrates his basic lack of knowledge on indigenous consultation and the impact of Bill C-69. Nothing in the legislation or Senate amendment package would change the current situation.

For decades, Canada has been a world leader in the incorporation of indigenous knowledge and expertise in project reviews and partnerships with indigenous communities, particularly of the top 10 major oil-producing regions in the world. Without a doubt, governments must improve their execution of their duties in this regard. However, the Prime Minister is wrong about this issue and Bill C-69.

The proposed Senate package and the specific amendments the Liberals rejected responded to the concerns of indigenous communities to elevate and amplify their locally impacted voices in early engagement and throughout the review process.

Mark Wittrup, vice-president of environmental and regulatory affairs at Clifton Associates, reinforces that point. He says that Bill C-69 "will create significant delays, missed opportunities and likely impact those that need that economic development the most: northern and Indigenous communities."

The Liberals have caused uncertainty around resource development in the past three and a half years, with their imposition of layers of costs and red tape in policies like the carbon tax. Canada is the only country out of the top 10 oil producers in the world to adopt one.

The Liberals' new fuel standard is a reckless experiment, with severe cost consequences for refining, petrochemical processing, manufacturing and others. Then there is their unilateral imposition of the offshore drilling ban and unilateral prohibitions of activity on wide swathes of land. Their shipping ban, Bill C-48, is a direct attack on a specific industry, particularly damaging to a specific region of the country. It has already driven jobs, businesses and capital out of Canada at a nearly historic rate, resulting in a complete failure to build a single new inch of in-service pipeline.

The consequences of the Liberals' deliberate rejection of constructive suggestions from private sector proponents, economists, regulatory experts and various governments will be measured in more lost jobs, more cancelled projects, more missed contracts and more investment lost for a generation.

Energy companies are warning about the devastating impact on their workers and operations. This is in light of the oil and gas sector, which has already lost more than 100,000 jobs. It is likely closer to 200,000, if the statistics reflected employed individuals in the south. Over \$100 billion in energy projects have been cancelled since 2015.

To put this in context, it is important to note that these numbers are the equivalent of losing the jobs created by the entire aerospace sector and almost all the auto sector. It is the equivalent of losing eight times the annual GDP generated by the aerospace sector and five times the GDP generated by the automotive sector.

If either of those two sectors were to face the same job losses and collapse in investment, we can bet, as there ought to be and has been, that there would be full attention and action from the federal government. However, the response to the devastation of the energy sector, of oil and gas workers and of their families has been empty rhetoric and platitudes, as well as a piling on of policies and laws, like Bill C-69, that are out right hostile and make things so much worse.

Concerns about Bill C-69 span sectors and regions.

Government Orders

A joint letter from the Association of Canadian Port Authorities, the Calgary Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers, the Canadian Energy Pipeline Association, the Canadian Gas Association, the Chemistry Industry Association of Canada, The Explorers and Producers Association of Canada, the Independent Contractors and Businesses Association of B.C. and the Petroleum Services Association of Canada says that Bill C-69 will:

lead to greater uncertainty in the assessment and review processes [because it] requires assessment and decisions based on broad public policy questions that are beyond the scope of individual projects. It introduces longer timelines, and vague criteria that will increase the risk of legal challenges.

This is what the private sector proponents are warning.

They also take issue with the fact that Bill C-69 “gives the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada broad discretionary powers, which could further increase uncertainty for major infrastructure projects.” It also “put[s] at risk the investment needed for Canada to create the jobs and government revenues that support our quality of life.”

Certain criteria are essential to attracting and retaining investment in Canada, such as certainty in regulations, permanence of regulations, certainty in the form of timelines, performance-based policies that ensure benefits to communities by tying incentives to performance-based measures, such as job creation, research and development, innovation and capital investment.

• (1725)

Those criteria were hallmarks of Canada's regulatory framework for decades, with the most rigorous assessment, comprehensive consultation, high standards and strongest environmental protections in the world. However, from the beginning of the consideration of Bill C-69, starting when the Liberals rushed the bill through the House a year and a half ago, proponents raised major concerns on each of these key elements. One of those elements is timelines.

Bill C-69, as it is going to be passed by the Liberals, would create a potential for a delay that would allow the Governor in Council to extend timelines without providing justification. There is no hard time cap for the overall process. The criteria for making such an extension will be defined in regulations. Even after the Liberals ram the bill through the House, there will still be uncertainty around timelines, which we developed after the fact.

Literally, therefore, the cabinet will be the only power to decide when to delay a project. That is clear further politicization of the process and introduces further uncertainty for proponents considering a new project. That is why so many of the Senate amendments are dearly needed. They introduce legislative maximum time frames, they remove the ability for Governor in Council to extend timelines indefinitely and force the Governor in Council to provide reasons for suspending timelines. Maximum timelines set in law reduce uncertainty for investors, because time is money.

The Liberals' rejection of the Senate amendments clearly shows their intention to return to open-ended timelines. According to their legislation, the federal cabinet can keep resetting the process, forcing proponents to go through the same stage multiple times. That is the definition of “death by delay” now being implemented in law by these Liberals, which is a term and a tactic that anti-resource activists call their campaigns to kill Canadian resource projects.

Bill C-69, without accepting the amendments from the Senate, would also grant a single minister the power to refuse to undertake an assessment at all. It would grant a single minister complete discretion regarding whether to designate a project under Bill C-69's lengthy and uncertain assessment process. That would result in considerable uncertainty for proponents, even where proposed projects would not be included on the project list. They simply could be added to it by a single minister, the Minister of Environment.

That sort of political uncertainty is unacceptable. Therefore, a single minister could kill a project by adding years of delay and hundreds of millions in additional costs. It does not really get any more political than that. This is why so many of the Senate amendments must be preserved to make this legislation workable.

That is, of course, related to one of the major concerns from industry, provinces and municipalities, and the Conservatives have been warning about it, which is the uncertainty around vague project criteria. As originally worded by the Liberals, who are again intending to ram through Bill C-69, it would increase the length and the uncertainty of regulatory and judicial processes that already pose significant challenges to a timely completion on major resource projects.

Regulatory reviews already require significant commitment and exceptional due diligence by proponents, communities, as should be the case, but they are often extremely complex, duplicative and expensive and sometimes result in deep divisions.

Clear and concise criteria that projects are measured against ensures predictability for all parties and that ensures approved projects can actually get built, instead of having to repeat key parts of the process or spending years in court defending in approval.

However, the Liberals' Bill C-69 would add numerous additional criteria that would not be within the direct control of the proponent and criteria that would be so vague that it would be difficult to determine what they even would involve precisely, never mind for proponents to be able to determine how to incorporate them or how to account for them in their project proposals.

The Senate amendments, while not even as concise as the Conservatives would make them, are a vast improvement over the original Liberal wording. They would remove broad political debates from the formal review process and focus the fact and evidence-based review on criteria that would be measurable, quantifiable and predictable.

The concern with the Liberals' criteria that they are proposing in Bill C-69 by rejecting all the Senate fixes is that they are requiring the panel conducting the review to make determinations on matters that are subjective, that relate to the subjective policy priorities of the government and are inherently political.

Private Members' Business

• (1730)

How can a project proponent proposing a physical project based on engineering realities and the technical, economic, environmental and safety merits of a specific project anticipate and account for the particular political objectives of the current government of any given day? The answer is that it cannot. That uncertainty will stop proponents from proposing big projects and crucial infrastructure in Canada.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Unfortunately, I have to interrupt the member. She will have unlimited time the next time this matter is before the House.

The hon. government House leader is rising on a point of order.

NOTICE OF TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, an agreement could not be reached under the provisions of Standing Orders 78(1) or 78 (2) with respect to the consideration of certain amendments to Bill C-69, An Act to enact the Impact Assessment Act and the Canadian Energy Regulator Act, to amend the Navigation Protection Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts.

Under the provisions of Standing Order 78(3), I give notice that a minister of the Crown will propose at the next sitting a motion to allot a specific number of days or hours for the consideration and disposal of proceedings at the said stage.

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**CANADA–UNITED STATES–MEXICO AGREEMENT
IMPLEMENTATION ACT**

BILL C-100—NOTICE OF TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, an agreement could not be reached under the provisions of Standing Orders 78(1) or 78 (2) with respect to second reading stage of Bill C-100, An Act to implement the Agreement between Canada, the United States of America and the United Mexican States.

Under the provisions of Standing Order 78(3), I give notice that a minister of the Crown will propose, at the next sitting, a motion to allot a specific number of days or hours for the consideration and disposal of proceedings at the said stage.

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IMPACT ASSESSMENT ACT

BILL C-69—NOTICE OF CLOSURE MOTION

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, with respect to consideration of the Senate amendments to Bill C-69, An Act to enact the Impact Assessment Act and the Canadian Energy Regulator Act, to amend the Navigation Protection Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, I wish to give notice that at the next sitting of the House, a minister of the Crown shall move, pursuant to Standing Order 57, that debate be not further adjourned.

**CANADA–UNITED STATES–MEXICO AGREEMENT
IMPLEMENTATION ACT**

BILL C-100—NOTICE OF CLOSURE MOTION

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, with respect to second reading stage of Bill C-100, An Act to implement the Agreement between Canada, the United States of America and the United Mexican States, I wish to give notice that at the next sitting of the House, a minister of the Crown shall move, pursuant to Standing Order 57, that debate be not further adjourned.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): It being 5:32 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]

FEDERAL TRADES STRATEGY

Mr. Vance Badawey (Niagara Centre, Lib.) moved:

That the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development, and the Status of Persons with Disabilities be instructed to undertake a study of the creation of a federal trades strategy, to consider, amongst other things, (i) regional labour shortages in the skilled trades, (ii) the impact that labour shortages could have on major projects across Canada, (iii) how skills shortages are exacerbating these labour shortages by preventing workers from being able to find employment.

He said: Madam Speaker, I stand in the House today to call attention to the enigma of our time. Too many Canadians are seeking good, quality, secure jobs with too little help. At the same time, too many industries are in desperate need of skilled workers. Therein lies the opportunity. As such, I am tabling this motion to establish a federal trade strategy to consider, among other things, regional labour shortages in the skilled trades, the impact labour shortages could have on major projects across this great nation, and how skill shortages are exacerbating these labour shortages by preventing workers from being able to find employment.

We have made remarkable strides since being elected almost four years ago. One of our greatest achievements, on which we have all worked so diligently together, is that by working together, we have established an environment in which to create one million new jobs since November 2015. However, as we celebrate this achievement, we know that there is much more work to do to further progress.

Some provinces and regions across this great country are struggling to find enough workers to fill open positions. Niagara is no exception. This is what I will speak to today: the severe shortage of skilled trades workers and how important it is that we take action now.

Private Members' Business

Niagara, not unlike other jurisdictions, is beginning to experience a skilled trades shortage. There is a need for welders, pipefitters, boilermakers, seafarers, tile setters, plumbers, technicians, cooks, chefs, and other hands-on, hard-working skilled tradespeople. I have heard from our business community, our overall community, residents and others, as well as union partners across Niagara, as have my colleagues here in the House, that there is an immediate and severe lack of skilled tradespeople.

The Ontario Construction Secretariat conducted a survey in the first few months of this year to understand key issues affecting the industrial, commercial and institutional construction sector in the province of Ontario. Of the 500 contractors surveyed, 72% identified a skilled labour shortage and the recruitment of skilled workers as the main challenge facing the industry. Not surprisingly, this problem has had wide-ranging impacts, including increased project delays and costs, the need to turn down work and overall slowed growth.

Our government can help. Our government will help.

Thanks to the efforts of the hon. Patti Hajdu, the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour—

• (1735)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Order. The hon. member knows that he is not to mention the names of MPs or ministers who sit in the House. I would ask him to be mindful of that.

The hon. member for Niagara Centre.

Mr. Vance Badawey: Madam Speaker, thanks to the efforts of the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, our government has significantly boosted federal support to provinces and territories, by \$2.7 billion over six years. This is to help more unemployed and under-employed Canadians access the training and employment supports they need to find and keep good jobs. We have also invested \$225 million over four years to identify and fill skills gaps in the economy to help Canadians be best prepared for the new economy.

However, we cannot do it alone. We have worked with our partners to bring forward federal support. It is critical that our working relationship continues well into the future.

Although we have momentum to build on, we, as a government and as a country, must continue to listen. We must be engaged with our partners, employees and employers to best understand their unique needs. By engaging with and encouraging people to tell their stories, we promote understanding and create the framework we can use to work toward our common goals.

As one of our partners put it, “Nothing about us without us”. Thankfully, employers and employees alike see the value in working together.

Hassan Yussuff, president of the Canadian Labour Congress and one of our many partners, said, “Workers need to retool and upgrade their skills in order to be successful and to succeed in Canada’s rapidly changing labour market, but far too often, they’re not getting the support they need. Today Canada’s public spending on training is about half the OECD average, and in real terms, employers invest less in per-employee training and adult learning than they did 25

years ago. Too many employers simply do not invest in on-the-job training and vocational education for workers, and it is holding us back.

“Employers need a new generation of skilled workers to replace retiring baby boomers, and workers need access to skills training as well as upgrading to cope with the technological change and the impact of climate change policies. We can overcome the skills shortages, but we need to listen to stakeholders and learn what works in other jurisdictions.”

Support for this motion and the creation of a federal trade strategy is wide-ranging and spans industries.

Arlene Dunn, of Canada’s Building Trades Unions, said, “It is absolutely crucial that the Government of Canada instruct the appropriate body and include the appropriate stakeholders to undertake a study of the creation of a federal trades strategy to ensure Canada remains both nationally and globally competitive and well prepared for the future while utilizing all resources available.”

However, a federal trades strategy does not help where demand outpaces the supply of workers. For example, Canada’s marine industry is thriving, and in Niagara, home of the Welland Canal within the St. Lawrence Seaway system on the Great Lakes, there are more applicants than jobs, yet there are struggles with access to the necessary training to open opportunities to new workers.

Jim Given, president of the Seafarers’ International Union of Canada, said, “Though we have seen a surplus of applications for Canadians and permanent residents interested in joining the industry, continued access to proper training, funding for education and providing upgrading opportunities for current seafarers is essential.

“In having government work with labour organizations to identify current labour and skills gaps, we can together ensure that the future needs of our country’s marine transportation industry are met and that these good-paying middle-class jobs are made available to Canadians both entering the labour market as well as those looking to transfer current skills to this growing industry.

“We are encouraged to see this government take the necessary steps to undertake a study to identify labour shortages in the industry with a view to developing and creating a federal trades strategy that will, among other things, assist our industry to ensure our mariners have access to the resources necessary to retain and improve the skill sets needed for the industry as well as to recruit and train the next generation of seafarers.”

Private Members' Business

● (1740)

There is, however, one aspect of partnerships that we have yet to discuss, and that is the how. While it is certainly critical to identify skills gaps and the need to train new workers, we also need to consider how we will accomplish this. In one sense, the answer is deceptively simple: Invite our partners, our high schools, our post-secondary institutions, the private sector, the unions and all levels of government to the table.

During my former life as a mayor, we worked with our partners as just described, and we were successful in putting in place a program that brought students together, beginning at the secondary school level, into the skilled trades.

Today, we continue to work with our partners to further the interests of employers as well as employees. Dialogue has begun to contribute to the context of what a federal skilled trades strategy will look like and what we would like to work toward. For example, through consistent dialogue with our partners, we have heard, loud and clear, and recognize that balancing parental roles and work life in the construction industry is critical, as is balancing multiple priorities, making trade-off decisions and placing high value on tradespeople who are in fact raising families.

Retirements and an aging population are beginning to have an impact on the future of our industries. Knowledge and technical transfer to strategically support the processes to innovate and adapt to changing environmental, safety, production and market conditions are factors that must be a priority.

Unions have taken leadership roles in the work of skilled trades promotion and advocacy. Many of them have hired in-house rank and file member expertise whose jobs it is to focus entirely on the promotion of their trade and raising its public profile.

We need to work with them to do more education, educating young people about the opportunity to access well-paid, in-demand, highly valuable training, and teaching them about the economics associated with belonging to the skilled, organized trades, such as the exemplary pensions included, as well as health and welfare benefits and the ability to obtain a rewarding career.

If we are going to succeed in making a real tangible difference for under-represented groups, we must in fact advocate for the implementation of strategic tools that build community wealth and human capacity, which is beneficial for under-represented groups, veterans and persons with disabilities, offering them tremendous opportunities that unfortunately might not exist otherwise. In doing so, we create the opportunity to learn from experts in education, as well as training, and identify existing programs that can be adapted or changed to meet local and national industry needs, as well as attaching safety training at a younger age to ensure safer working environments.

In Niagara, we are extremely fortunate and proud to have Niagara College and Brock University working to this end. As good corporate citizens, responsible neighbours and community leaders, these institutions do an amazing job of not only providing education but also understanding the unique needs of the community they serve.

A common thread for Niagara College and Brock University are well-developed, tried-and-true, co-operative education programs through which students learn in a hands-on environment taught by industry experts. Applying classroom knowledge to real world, on-the-job experiences better prepares students to be successful in the workforce. Consequently, employers are more confident that their needs can be met and spend less money retraining or compensating for a lack of skilled workers.

Secondary schools can also be a big part of this equation. Through programs such as the specialist high skills major program, which is part of the Ministry of Education's student success initiative in the province of Ontario, dual credit and co-op program students are better prepared to transition successfully into the workforce, whereby co-op programs at the secondary school level can begin.

● (1745)

Mark Cherney, business manager of the IBEW Local 303 and president of the Niagara and Haldimand Building Trades Council, tells us, "Shortages in the skilled trades are a genuine concern. With a national strategic skilled trades plan, we could better predict where and when these shortfalls will occur and how labour mobility from across the country can serve to mitigate shortages. A study on how labour mobility strategies can be explored, as well as attracting and retaining more women, indigenous people, youth and new Canadians to a career path in the skilled trades, is needed. The current government has done a great job investing in the skilled trades. Now is the time for the next step, and that is for a national strategy."

In summary, Mark Cherney says, "A unified national Red Seal standard for compulsory skilled trades will go a long way to tackle the concerns of skills shortages."

It has been a great pleasure this evening to present this motion to my colleagues in the House. I look forward to seeing what we can accomplish by working together to find solutions to such challenges.

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill—Keewatinook Aski, NDP): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his efforts on an issue that many of us care about.

My concern is really about the substance of what is being proposed. He and other colleagues on the Liberal side have felt that calling for a study on an important issue is good enough and that is simply not the case. I remind him and his colleagues that they are part of a government that could be taking action on a number of key issues facing working people, including labour shortages and access to the trades.

I have many more questions on my mind. Why are we not studying the stagnating wages afflicting so many working people? Why are we not addressing the root causes of the shortages that they face?

Would the member be open to broadening the topic of this study to issues other than labour shortages in order for the committee to have the full scope of the issues and for a trades strategy to truly be meaningful and make a difference for Canadians?

Mr. Vance Badawey: Madam Speaker, quite frankly, we have already begun through the efforts of the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour. Once again, our government has significantly boosted federal support to the provinces and territories by \$2.7 billion over six years.

There is no doubt that as we move forward together, not only members on this side of the House but members on all sides of the House, as well as all our partners, we look forward to hearing those very comments the member brought up so that the strategy is all encompassing, not only including the best interests of employees but also those of employers and those who are under-represented so that all interests can be included within a federal trades strategy.

• (1750)

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Madam Speaker, I appreciate that my colleague from Niagara Centre brought this motion forward.

If this was such a huge issue for him and his constituents and certainly for his region, earlier this year the member for Mississauga East—Cooksville brought up a similar motion to study the skilled labour shortage in the greater Toronto and Hamilton areas. At that time, Conservative members of the committee asked why we would not expand this study to include a Canada-wide study into the skilled labour shortage, and the Liberals at that time refused that amendment.

If it is important now, why was it not just as important then? We could have started this study in committee in this session, had the Liberals supported that amendment.

Mr. Vance Badawey: That was a great point, Madam Speaker.

Once again I will repeat what I said earlier. We have already begun this process. This is a process that I began in my former life as a mayor, working with our local partners, industry and education, as well as unions and others, to put forward strategies to ensure that we introduced the trades to our younger students so that they could get introduced to something that they might be interested in doing as a career.

Now working with the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, we extended that by giving federal support to different jurisdictions throughout the country. Yes, there was a lot of financial support but also support through other programs and other ministries that were also put in place to look after this program.

What is most important is that we do receive not only some tangible evidence but also action plans to attach to deliverables that, ultimately, will be attached to a federal strategy.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for touching on a topic that is near and dear to my heart as a mechanical engineering technologist from Red River College in Winnipeg.

Private Members' Business

We looked at the issue of funding through the EI program, through budget 2019. Maybe earlier this year, that was just rolling out. However, there is more than financial issues. There are also ratios between journeymen and apprentices that vary from province to province. Would coordinating some efforts across Canada be something that the member would be willing to consider in this study?

Mr. Vance Badawey: Madam Speaker, in one word, I say absolutely. Just recently, the minister and I met with all of the building trades of Ontario, which I mentioned earlier. That subject was brought up and that we would be looking at those very issues. This is not just the obvious. There is a lot of work to be done here. Although the minister has started, our job right now is to continue, to take it to the next level and to ensure that a trades strategy is all-encompassing.

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is great to stand and speak about a very important issue tonight, and that is the lack of access or inability for some regions of this country to access the very important skilled labour they need to ensure that their businesses are successful and that Canada can build the important infrastructure it needs.

I know I asked this question of my hon. colleague in the question and answer portion, but I want to highlight the frustration of Conservative and NDP colleagues at committee when, earlier this year, we were debating Motion No. 190, looking at labour shortages in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area. We asked the sponsor of that motion, the Liberal member for Mississauga East—Cooksville, whether he would be open to an amendment to the motion that the HUMA committee study labour shortages and imbalances, especially in the skilled trades, not just in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area, but in the entire country. I was really surprised that the Liberals continue to talk, and again tonight, about how critical this issue is, but at that time, the Liberal members of the committee and the sponsor of that motion said that the Liberal Party was not going to support that amendment, and it was refused.

Had that amendment been approved at that time, we very likely could have had this study completed by the end of this session. Unfortunately, since my colleague from Niagara Centre has brought up this motion so late in this Parliament, it is very unlikely that any work will be done on this study. I am disappointed that something as important as this will not get addressed in this Parliament because his colleagues refused to expand on an earlier study at committee, which is truly unfortunate.

Private Members' Business

There are labour shortages in the skilled trades that are more in demand, certainly as our population ages. I think all of us here would agree, and we know from meetings with stakeholders across the country, that our aging population is going to be putting a very real stress on our labour situation. From the numbers we have heard, over 400,000 jobs in Canada are unfilled. That is why I was really proud to see the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle, bring forward a policy or a platform that we are going to be undertaking a government-wide initiative on addressing labour shortages, and a big part of that will be appointing a minister of internal trade.

The focus of that will be to remove interprovincial trade barriers, which are really holding back our economy and our ability to grow our economy in Canada. From the statistics we have seen, this is costing our Canadian economy \$130 billion in lost GDP, but it is also impacting the ability of skilled tradespeople to move from one province to another when their certifications are not recognized from one province to another. There have certainly been some issues with labour mobility that we also could have addressed as part of a study on a nationwide strategy.

The idea of having a dedicated minister of internal trade also builds on the work of previous Conservative governments, which brought forward the apprenticeship incentive grant in 2009 and the apprenticeship completion grant, also in 2009. We provided funding for more than 530,000 apprenticeship grants, totalling almost \$700 million, to ensure that Canadians could complete their training.

I was really proud, in 2014, to be part of a government that created the Canada apprentice loan. I remember distinctly that at that time, as we were having the discussion in the House, we heard that more than 50% of Canadians who start an apprenticeship program never complete it. That was a huge void that we saw under our Conservative government, and we tried to address it by initiating the Canada apprentice loan program. It was there to provide Canadians with the opportunities to finish their programs.

As my colleague mentioned in his intervention as well, we should not have more welders or pipefitters in Alberta right now. There is a surplus of these very skilled tradespeople. Earlier this year, I was in a training facility for the boilermakers and pipefitters union in Edmonton, and 70% of their members are out of work. I could discuss why that is the case, and certainly Bill C-69 and the tanker ban are very distinct reasons for why that is the case. Cancelling the northern gateway pipeline, bungling the Trans Mountain expansion and regulating energy east out of existence are three very big reasons why we are facing this job crunch in Alberta.

● (1755)

That being the case, having these skilled tradespeople unemployed and not working in Alberta when they are desperately needed in other parts of the country, it just goes to show that we have some issues we should be addressing.

I wonder if my colleague from Niagara Centre would be open to amending his motion. I do not want to read the entire motion, as we have a minimal amount of time, but I would like to add the word “imbalances” to his first bullet point so that it would read, “regional labour imbalances in the skilled trades”.

I would also like to add a fourth section to his motion. I hope he would be amenable to approving this amendment. I would like to add:

(iv) how interprovincial harmonization of professional and trades certifications and training could assist unemployed and underemployed workers in the skilled trades find work in other regions by encouraging greater labour mobility and portability of qualifications in Canada.

I think that something all of us in this House could agree we have heard from many of our stakeholders is the inability to have the certifications of trades workers recognized from one province to another. The encouragement of labour mobility is a huge issue that I would like to see us try to address. We could have addressed it had we been able to do a study earlier, which is unfortunate.

This goes to a larger narrative with the current Liberal government when it comes to doing what it says and saying what it does. To bring this up so late in this Parliament almost ensures there is not going to be any significant work done on it.

However, it also brought out the Canada skilled training program. I was really interested to ask the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour about this program when she was at committee. One of the stipulations of this program, which is supposed to be part of the skilled trades strategy, is that it does not proceed unless there is an agreement with all the other provinces. The provinces would have to amend their leave provisions in their own labour code to ensure that the skilled training program would even work. When I asked the minister if she had these agreements in place, she could not answer that question. I asked the officials and they said they had not started those negotiations. Therefore, this pillar of the 2019 budget, which is supposed to address the skilled trades shortage across the country, very likely will not happen.

Certainly, the discussions we have heard from the premiers over the last two days, and their relationship with the current Liberal government and the Prime Minister, is that he is calling them out as a threat to Canadian unity and confederation. I am very confident that a lot of these premiers are not going to be in a big rush to sign an agreement on a Liberal labour initiative when they have to change their own labour code. There is a lot of window dressing and things that come out that the Liberals want to try to address, but when it comes to the actual work of governing, they fall woefully short.

In saying that, I want to assure my colleague from Niagara Centre, who has brought this motion forward, that even if he does not support the amendment I have proposed, we will be supporting this motion because I believe that addressing the issue of a lack of skilled trades is important.

I toured the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology and its new new construction campus and petroleum engineering campus last week. It is an incredible facility. It just shows the opportunities we have and that the training facilities are there. We just have to ensure Canadians understand that these are opportunities that are well paid. Going into the skilled trades is not a demeaning career choice. This is an outstanding career choice with incredible opportunities and very high incomes. We just have to ensure we change some of those misperceptions about what goes on there.

Private Members' Business

One of the areas where we do have a real opportunity is in attracting more women into the skilled trades. One of the more interesting studies I have done here as a parliamentarian, when we were in government, was at the status of women committee on encouraging women to get into the skilled trades. I have read through that study. It had some outstanding testimony and recommendations from our stakeholders. Less than 5% of the participation in many of these skilled trades is by women. We have seen in northern Alberta where heavy-duty mechanics and the people driving that large equipment are women. Therefore, I think we have some great opportunities there.

I wish we could have done this study and found some resolution to this.

● (1800)

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill—Keewatinook Aski, NDP): Madam Speaker, I rise today to discuss the matter of the motion on a federal trades strategy, Motion No. 227, put forward by my colleague from Niagara Centre. This motion proposes a study of the creation of a strategy that would consider labour shortages in the skilled trades as well as the impact these shortages could have on major projects across the country.

We in the NDP welcome initiatives to gather more information and data on labour issues and shortages, and we will support this motion, but reluctantly, because this motion's stance is nowhere near what we need to tackle the problems Canadian trades workers and Canadian workers are facing.

First, this motion is missing a key fact, which is that rampant labour shortages in the skilled trades industries are not happening all across our country. There are labour shortages in some regions, and they need to be documented, but the context of these shortages needs to be appropriately discussed. While there are shortages in specific sectors and regions, it is not an industry-wide phenomenon across the country.

Focusing on the overall unemployment rate or job growth data is not acceptable when this data does not include important facts, such as the unemployment rate being higher among both youth and older workers, for example. We know that 10% of young people in Canada are unemployed, as opposed to 5% of the overall population.

It is also important to consider the perspectives of all parties in the study my colleague is putting forward. Any study on labour shortages must include vigorous consultation with unions and labour representatives, including rank and file labour activists, to understand the unique issues facing different industries, because it would be an uneven perspective otherwise. If one asks workers, they will say that despite labour shortages, wages are not increasing, which should clue the government in to the fact that the issue is not simply one of shortages across the country.

It is still taking Canadians just as long to find jobs as it did during the great recession of 2008. The average duration of unemployment during the great recession was 21 weeks, while the average duration of unemployment in 2008 was 15 weeks. In 2018, the average duration of unemployment was 19 weeks. It is taking workers four weeks longer to find work now than it did 10 years ago.

The CFIB put out a business barometer that found that nearly 47% of small and mid-sized businesses are being held back by a lack of skilled labour in several provinces. We know that in British Columbia, for example, multiple large-scale construction projects that are under way are facing a serious labour shortage. Provinces such as Ontario expect a shortage of 100,000 skilled workers within the next 15 years. Considering that unemployment is at a 43-year low, it is concerning that Canadian businesses are saying that they struggle to fill job vacancies, while at the same time, we know that Canadians are struggling to find employment. This kind of situation cannot stand.

● (1805)

[*Translation*]

What is the context for these labour shortages? FTQ Construction, the largest construction union in Quebec, told us about how industry workers are faring. Despite the labour shortages announced in the sector, the average construction worker in Quebec makes \$38,853 per year. This compares rather poorly to the Quebec median income of \$59,822. Moreover, 43% of construction workers make less than \$29,999 per year, which is the living wage in Quebec for an adult with a child. FTQ Construction is right to affirm that “we will continue to say that there is no labour shortage so long as there are families who cannot make ends meet because they are not working enough hours”.

[*English*]

Basing the motion on broad labour shortages is simply not sufficient. If the government has not identified the problem correctly, it is not going to be able to find the proper solutions, no matter how hard it looks into labour shortages. There are solutions, but this pointless motion from the Liberals will not lead us to any of them. If we follow their lead on this, we will just be running in circles, and working-class families will continue to suffer from government inaction.

[*Translation*]

We must stand up for workers and their families. This motion will do nothing to help them, and it will not help anybody looking for a job to find one. Workers deserve a government that shares their concerns and takes wage stagnation seriously.

[*English*]

A recent OECD report found that 13.5% of jobs in Canada were at risk of automation and that 28.6% were at risk of significant changes due to increased automation in industries. Overall, more than 40% of the Canadian workforce is at risk of being replaced by automation in the next two decades.

Automation is a threat to the jobs of many workers and insisting that job shortages are a problem, while being unwilling to recognize the effect automation will have on employment, shows that the government does not get it and does not care about the workers who are most at risk of unemployment. Increasing access to both post-secondary education and jobs training will lessen the impending problems automation will pose in the future.

Private Members' Business

[Translation]

The NDP has solutions for helping workers. Canada's rural regions need help attracting labour, and that is why we are proposing to offer a tax credit directly to people who agree to move to our country's rural areas and stay there long-term.

We want to foster worker retention by offering a helping hand directly to workers. That is the kind of action that is needed to solve the problem.

[English]

We must also focus on finding legitimate answers as to why there may be shortages in the skilled trades. While it may be easy for Liberals to assume labour shortages are due to a lack of skilled workers, more research and data are necessary to reach conclusions on industries that have low job security. However, we will not find the solutions we need by proposing a motion where the premise of the study is that the only challenge the trades industry is facing is job shortages. The solution for labour shortages is to provide incentives that work for workers, not just for employers.

Furthermore, the topic of labour shortages is already under study in the human resources committee as of May 2019. This motion in front of us just shows that the Liberals are so dedicated to avoiding the real problems Canadians are facing that they would rather sponsor repetitive motions that will burden the HUMA committee and fail to help workers, than actually doing anything. Working-class Canadians deserve a government that is focused on supporting them with better education and living wages, not one that is just listening to employers by proposing motions under the incorrect assumption that the only obstacle the trades industry is facing is a country-wide labour shortage. This is simply not true.

It is not that a study to gather more information on the trades industry is a bad idea. It is just that this motion would not do anything worthwhile to solve the actual issues that are driving the labour shortage in the first place. Studying what should be a potential federal trades strategy should be seen as a good opportunity to help workers and promote investment in skills training. Any study that does not involve considerations of child care and access to education and training is not a study that would completely look at this issue.

Finally, this motion should prioritize workers' needs such as the right to make a decent living with a decent wage. Instead, it is just another meaningless gesture from the current Liberal government to feign its concern for the working-class people of Canada. The NDP believes that more can be done and we are proud to be on the side of working people in the fight against labour shortages and the fight for a decent living for working people.

• (1810)

Mr. Terry Sheehan (Sault Ste. Marie, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to start by thanking my colleague, the hon. member for Niagara Centre, for bringing forward such an important motion and I am very pleased to have the opportunity to speak to the merits of Motion No. 227 today. This motion presents an opportunity to explore solutions aimed at increasing participation and success in the skilled trades.

Today, I would like to highlight the measures our government is taking to enhance training and apprenticeship opportunities for Canadians in the skilled trades. Our government introduced the innovation and skills plan to build on Canada's strengths and address areas of concern along the innovation continuum, from people and skills, to building innovative ecosystems, to exporting and scaling up globally competitive companies across all sectors of the economy.

The innovation and skills plan includes measures to build a more diverse and inclusive trades workforce and help Canadians improve their skills and upgrade their credentials as they transition through their careers. Careers are now about lifelong learning. The trade trajectory is not just up and down as it used to be, but now we see lateral moves reflecting shifts in the economy and changes in the workplace, and this has been generally accelerating over the last few years.

One of the recurring ideas that came up during the study on my recent motion, Motion No. 194 on precarious employment in Canada, is the idea of lifelong learning and training. We heard from Andrew Cardozo from The Pearson Centre for Progressive Policy, who said budget 2019's "support for lifelong learning is great." Our government has moved toward adopting a more robust national strategy for skills development, which is critically important to prepare Canadians for future work because this is the new normal.

Through the government's innovation and skills plan, the Canada training benefit will give workers more money to help pay for training, provide income support during training and offer job protection so that workers can take the time they need to keep their skills relevant and in demand and to ensure we have a skilled workforce available for employers when needed. Budget 2019 really is a skills budget, in that the government not only recognizes the shift away from traditional, lifelong, single-prong careers, but is actively responding through policy measures to the need for retraining in our workforce to develop alongside our advances in technology and innovation. The very factors changing the face of the workplace, innovation, AI, etc., and the types of skills required by employers to keep up with these shifts will change often over a person's working lifespan.

We are also investing \$25 million annually to support union-based apprenticeship training, innovation and enhanced partnerships in the Red Seal trades through the union training and innovation program, UTIP. This program not only helps unions purchase equipment, it also supports innovative projects that break down barriers to getting into the trades, particularly for women, people with disabilities and indigenous people. In addition to UTIP, in budget 2018, we invested in other federal initiatives, such as the skilled trades awareness and readiness program, the apprenticeship incentive grant for women and the women in construction fund.

The skilled trades awareness and readiness program, an investment of \$46 million over five years and \$10 million per year thereafter, encourages Canadians, particularly those facing barriers, including women, indigenous people, newcomers, persons with disabilities and youth, to explore and prepare for careers in the skilled trades. In my riding of Sault Ste. Marie, the local chamber of commerce has been a champion of increasing indigenous participation in the trades. As we know, the population is growing significantly in all of northern Ontario.

We know that being a woman in a male-dominated industry can pose several barriers and can be specifically difficult for women who are unsure about how to break into the industry. That is why we want to encourage women to pursue careers in well-paying Red Seal trades and to ensure that they are increasingly able to model leadership to other aspiring female tradespeople.

To achieve this goal, we launched the apprenticeship incentive grant for women in December 2018. This new grant provides \$3,000 per year or trade level to registered women apprentices who have successfully completed their first or second year or level of an apprenticeship program, up to a maximum of \$6,000 in eligible Red Seal trades where women are under-represented. We allocated approximately \$20 million over five years to pilot this program, which is expected to provide support to approximately 5,000 women over a five-year period of time.

We also invested \$10 million over three years, starting in 2018-19, for the women in construction fund. This fund builds on existing models that have proven to be effective in attracting women to the trades. It provides supports such as mentoring, coaching and tailored supports that help women progress through their training and find and keep jobs in the trades.

● (1815)

Recently, I attended a skills trade forum organized by the Algoma District School Board in my riding, which was attended by unions, industry, parents, teachers and students. We heard from Jamie McMillan, an iron worker, who spoke enthusiastically about the positivity of being a woman in the skilled trades. Everyone was moved by her presentation as she spoke passionately about loving her work.

We also know that more needs to be done to help young Canadians get a good start in their working lives. That is why we are taking steps to make education more affordable by lowering the interest rates on Canada student loans and Canada apprenticeship loans, as well as eliminating interest charges entirely during the six-month grace period. Because we know that it is important to attract young workers to the skilled trades, we are making more investments

Private Members' Business

in apprenticeship programs that support a skilled, mobile and certified skilled trades workforce.

For example, budget 2019 proposes to provide Skills Canada with \$40 million over four years, starting in 2020-21, and \$10 million per year ongoing to encourage more young people to consider training and work in the skilled trades. This investment will enable Skills Canada to continue to promote skilled trades and technologies to young people through skills competitions and by providing resources to better equip them for careers in the skilled trades.

We also propose to invest \$6 million over two years, starting in 2019-20, to create a national campaign to promote the skilled trades as a first-choice career for young people.

According to Sarah Watts-Rynard, a former executive director of the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum:

78% of those who pursued apprenticeship were not considering it while they were in high school.

Simply put, apprenticeship has not been promoted as an equal pillar of post-secondary education.

We need to change this perception around careers in the skilled trades, promoting their merits, including high demand, high wages and continual professional development.

Before I was an MP, I was an employment training consultant with the Ministry of Training, College and Universities. I was affectionately known as the "Apprenticeship Guy". Therefore, I could not agree more that a national strategy for the skilled trades will help achieve the goal of promoting the fantastic benefits of working in the skilled trades.

Finally, budget 2019 proposes to develop an apprenticeship strategy to ensure that existing supports and programs available to apprentices will address the barriers faced by those who want to work in the skilled trades and support employers who face challenges in hiring and retaining apprentices.

Another great tool to increasing our skills trades people in Canada, for which I have been strongly advocating, is a northern and rural immigration program.

Since 2015, we have made it a priority to help people get the education and training they need to find good jobs and build better lives for themselves and their families. The proposed federal trades strategy will support the building of the skilled trades capital that Canadians and employers need.

Our government supports this motion. I will be supporting it. I encourage all members of the House to provide their support as well. I thank to the member for bringing the motion forward.

Private Members' Business

● (1820)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alupa Clarke (Beauport—Limoilou, CPC): Madam Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise in the House. As usual, I want to say hello to all the residents of Beauport—Limoilou who are watching right now. I had the honour of meeting thousands of them last weekend at the Grand bazar du Vieux-Limoilou, where I had a booth, as the local member of Parliament. It was a fantastic outdoor party, and the weather co-operated beautifully.

Before I discuss the motion, I just want the people of Beauport—Limoilou to know that we will have plenty of opportunities to meet this summer at all the events and festivals being held in Beauport and Limoilou. As usual, I will be holding my annual summer party in August, where thousands of people come to meet me. We often eat hot dogs, chips and popcorn from Île d'Orléans together. It is a chance for me to get to know my constituents, talk about the issues affecting the riding, and share information about the services that my office can provide to Canadians dealing with the federal government.

I also want to say that this may be the last speech I give in the House during the 42nd Parliament. It was a huge honour to be here, and I hope to again have that honour after election day, October 21.

I plan to run in the upcoming election and I hope to represent my constituents for a long time to come. I am extremely proud of the work I have done over the past four years, including the work I did in my riding, on my portfolio, Canada's official languages, and during debates.

I am asking my constituents to do me a favour and put their trust in me for another four years. I will be here every day to serve them.

Today we are debating Motion No. 227, a Liberal motion to conduct a study in committee. It is commendable to do a study at the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities. This is a very important House of Commons committee. A Liberal Party MP is proposing to conduct a study on labour shortages in the skilled trades in Canada.

As soon as I saw that I wanted to say a few words about this motion. Whether it be in Quebec City, Regina, Nanaimo, or elsewhere in Canada, there is a crisis right now. The labour shortage will affect us quite quickly.

We have heard that, a few years from now, the greater Quebec City area will need an additional 150,000 workers. This remarkable shortage will be the result of baby boomers retiring. Baby boomers, including my parents, will enjoy a well-deserved retirement. This is a very important issue, and we must address it.

I would like to remind the House that, in January, February and March, I asked the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour about the serious labour shortage problem in Canada. Each time, she made a mockery of my question by saying that the Liberals had created 600,000 new jobs. Today, they say one million.

I am glad that this motion was moved, but it is more or less an exercise in virtue signalling. Actually, it is more of an exercise in public communications, although I am not questioning my

colleague's sincere wish to look into the issue. In six or seven days, the 42nd Parliament will be dissolved. Well, the House will adjourn. Parliament will be dissolved in a few months, before the election.

My colleague's committee will not be able to study the motion. My colleagues and I on the Standing Committee on Official Languages are finishing our study of the modernization of the Official Languages Act. We decided that we would finalize our recommendations tomorrow at noon, to ensure that we are able to table the report from the Standing Committee on Official Languages in the House.

In essence, this is a public communications exercise, since the committee will not be able to study the issue. However, I think it would be good to talk about the labour shortages in the skilled trades with the Canadians who are watching us. What are skilled trades? We are talking about hairdressers, landscapers, cabinetmakers, electricians, machinists, mechanics, and crane or other equipment operators. Skilled trades also include painters, plumbers, welders and technicians.

● (1825)

I will explain why the labour shortage in the skilled trades is worrisome. When people take a good look around they soon realize that these trades are very important. Skilled tradespeople build everything around us, such as highways, overpasses, waterworks, subways, transportation systems like the future Quebec streetcar line that we have talked about a lot lately, the railroads that cross the country, skyscrapers in major cities like Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver, factories in rural areas, tractors, equipment and the canals of the St. Lawrence Seaway, which were built in the 1950s.

China, India and the United States are making huge investments in infrastructure. For example, in recent years, the U.S. government did not flinch at investing \$5 billion to improve the infrastructure of the Port of New York and New Jersey, which was built by men and women in the trades. In Quebec, we are still waiting for the Liberals to approve a small \$60-million envelope for the Beauport 2020 project, now called the Laurentia project, which will ensure the shipping competitiveness of the St. Lawrence for years to come.

There has been a lack of infrastructure investment in Canada. The Liberals like to say that their infrastructure Canada plan is historic, but only \$14 billion of the \$190 billion announced have actually been allocated. That is not all. Even if the Liberals were releasing the funds and making massive investments to surpass other G20 and G7 countries, the world's largest economies, they would not be able to deliver on their incredible projects without skilled labour. Consider this: even Nigeria, with a population of 200 million, is catching up with us when it comes to infrastructure investments.

It is about time that we, as legislators, dealt with this issue, but clearly that is not what the Liberals have been doing over the past few years, although I have heard some members talk about a few initiatives here and there in some provinces. The announcement of this study is late in coming.

I would also remind the House that this is a provincial jurisdiction, given that provincial regulations govern the training of skilled workers. That said, the federal government can still be helpful by implementing various measures through federal transfers, such as apprenticeship grants and loans, tax credits and job training programs. This all requires a smooth, harmonious relationship between the provinces and the federal government. Not only do the political players have to get along well, but so do the politicians themselves.

If, God forbid, the Liberals get another four-year term in office, taxes will increase dramatically, since they will want to make up for the huge deficits they racked up over the past four years. In 2016, they imposed conditions on health transfers. Then, they rushed ahead with the legalization of marijuana even though the provinces wanted more time. Then, they imposed the carbon tax on provinces like New Brunswick, which had already closed a number of coal-fired plants and significantly reduced its greenhouse gas emissions. The Liberals said that they still considered the province to be an offender and imposed the Liberal carbon tax. Finally, today, they are rushing through the study of Bill C-69, which seeks to implement regulations that are far too rigid and that will interfere with the development of natural resources in various provinces, even though six premiers have stated that this bill will stifle their local economies.

• (1830)

How can we hope that this government will collaborate to come to an agreement seeking to address skilled trades shortages when it has such a poor track record on intergovernmental relations?

[English]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Before I go to the next speaker, I want to remind that speaker that I will unfortunately have to interrupt her in a couple of minutes.

The hon. member for Humber River—Black Creek.

Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to have a minute or two to voice my support for Motion No. 227. Updating the federal labour standards is way overdue and should have been done a long time ago. It should have been done before, never mind dealing with a motion on the eve of Parliament, but at least maybe we are starting to move in that particular area. We have been consulting and now we are attempting to act.

There was a review done by the previous Liberal government in 2004. After a decade of inaction by the Conservatives, we are trying to pick it up where we left off. Again, there is only so much that we can do in three and a half years, and we cannot deal with all of the issues that we want to deal with. Therefore, we do the best we can to get things moving in the direction we want to be able to protect Canadian workers and help set the stage for good, quality jobs.

We need labour standards that reflect current workplace realities that will also help employers recruit and retain employees while

Government Orders

looking after their well-being. It is a win for everyone. It is why the member for Niagara Centre put forward a motion that the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities be required to undertake a study of the creation of a federal trades strategy to consider the labour shortages in the skilled trades, which we know are a high priority for our government, but they are also a high priority for the country.

We have already moved forward with some changes, and here are just a few examples. One of the first priorities our government had was to pass Bill C-4, restoring fairness, balance and stability to labour relations, which was an important thing that we did.

I see that you are standing, Madam Speaker. Thank you very much for allowing me to have one minute to make a point. I look forward to seeing this motion move forward.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member will have eight minutes remaining the next time this matter is before the House.

It being 6:32 p.m., the time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE ACT

The House resumed from May 29 consideration of the motion that Bill C-98, An Act to amend the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act and the Canada Border Services Agency Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is a privilege, as always, to rise in the House and speak to legislation. As we near the end of this parliamentary session, one that precedes an election, we really should be wrapping up work rather than starting new work, as we all know.

Bill C-98 proposes to repurpose and rename the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP to the “Public Complaints and Review Commission” and expand its mandate to review both the RCMP and the Canada Border Services Agency.

In 2017, I began working as a member of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security. In studies on the border agency and when the agency came up in discussions on another bill, Bill C-21, the issue of oversight and complaints was discussed. Professor Wesley Wark, from the University of Ottawa, who was previously a special adviser to the president of the Canadian border security agency said:

Government Orders

[T]he committee should encourage the government to finalize its plans for an independent complaints mechanism for CBSA. There have been discussions under way about this for some considerable time now.

We were told that the minister already had a plan back then, was already dealing with it and that we did not need to. During his appearance at the Senate committee regarding the border security's oversight, the minister said:

The CBSA, however, does not have independent review of officer conduct, and that is a gap that definitely needs to be addressed...

Mr. Chair, while I agree absolutely with the spirit behind Bill S-205, I cannot support its detail at this time for—

● (1835)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I hate to interrupt, but I notice that the hon. member is wearing a button that he should not be wearing in the House. I ask him to remove it so that he can continue his speech. The member is not to promote that in the House.

The hon. member for Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner.

Mr. Glen Motz: Madam Speaker, I will continue with the public safety minister's comment at committee:

[T]he government is launching, almost immediately, a public consultation process on our national security framework that will touch directly on the subject matter of this bill, and I need that consultation before I can commit to specific legislation.

Well, that was almost three years ago. To say that the bill is late would obviously be an understatement. It has taken the minister over three years to bring forward this legislation. That is quite a long time for a minister who said he was already working on something in 2016.

In keeping with his recent history on consultations, there appears to have been little or no external consultation in preparation for the bill. Hopefully, at committee, the government will be able to produce at least one group or organization outside of the government that will endorse the legislation. However, I am not holding my breath.

The government even hired a former clerk of the Privy Council to conduct an independent report. Mel Cappe conducted a review and provided his recommendations in June 2017. It was only because of an access to information request by CBC News that Parliament even knows of this report.

A CBC News article noted:

The June 2017 report by former Privy Council Office chief Mel Cappe, now a professor at the University of Toronto, was obtained by The Canadian Press through the Access to Information Act...

[A] spokesman for [the] Public Safety Minister...would not comment directly on Cappe's recommendations, but said the government is working on legislation to create an "appropriate mechanism" to review CBSA officer conduct and handle complaints.

The proposed body would roll in existing powers of the civilian review and complaints commission for the RCMP.

The government and the minister had the recommendations two years ago, yet they are bringing this forward at the last minute. It appears to be an afterthought. Again, in February of this year, the minister said that they continue to work as fast as they can to bring forward legislation on oversight for the CBSA.

Perhaps the Liberal government was just distracted by its many self-inflicted wounds. It created many challenges for Canadians, and

now it is tabling legislation in the 11th hour that deals with real issues and asking parliamentarians to make up for the government's distraction and lack of focus on things that matter to Canada, Canadians and our democracy. These are things like public safety, national security, rural crime, trade, energy policies and lower taxes.

There is an impact to mismanagement and bad decision-making. The Liberals' incompetence has had a trickle-down effect that is felt at every border crossing and also across many parts of the country.

We know that RCMP officers had to be deployed and dedicated to dealing with illegal border crossings. When the Liberals set up a facility to act as a border crossing in Lacolle, Quebec, RCMP officers were there covering people entering into Canada. Those RCMP officers were not commissioned that day. They were pulled from details across the country. They were pulled from monitoring returned ISIS fighters and from monitoring and tackling organized crime. They were taken and redeployed, most likely, from rural detachments across the country. We know that in my province of Alberta, the RCMP is short-staffed by nearly 300 officers. It is not a surprise, then, that there was a rise in rural crime while this was going on. Rural crime is now rising faster than urban crime.

However, it is not just the RCMP that has been impacted by the mismanagement at the border. It is also border officers, who will have the added oversight created through Bill C-98.

CBSA officers told me and many other MPs about more shifts and about workers being transferred to Manitoba and Quebec. The media reported that students were taking the place of full-time, trained border officers at Pearson airport. This is the largest airport in Canada, and the impacts of having untrained and inexperienced officers monitoring potentially the top spot for smuggling and transfer of illegal goods are staggering.

We have a serious issue in Canada at our borders, one that is getting worse. We know from testimony given during the committee's study of Bill C-71 that the vast majority of illegal firearms come from the U.S. They are smuggled in. At the guns and gangs summit, the RCMP showed all of Canada pictures of firearms being smuggled in as part of other packages. The minister's own department is saying there is a problem with smuggled goods, contraband tobacco and drugs coming across our borders.

● (1840)

Rather than actually protect Canadians, we are looking into oversight. Do not get me wrong. Oversight is good, but it is not the most pressing issue of the day.

Government Orders

The media is now reporting that because of the Liberals' decision to lift visas, there are many harmful and potentially dangerous criminals now operating in our country. This comes on the heels of reports that there are record-high numbers of ordered deportations of people who are a security threat. There were 25 in 2017. There are also record-low removals. Deportations were about or above 12,000 to 15,000 per year from 2010 to 2015, but that is not what we are seeing now. The Liberals, even with tens of thousands of people entering Canada illegally, are averaging half of that.

We know that the CBSA is not ignoring these issues and security threats. It just lacks the resources, which are now dedicated to maintaining an illegal border crossing and monitoring tens of thousands more people.

This failure is not just my opinion. It is the opinion of many Canadians.

A Calgary Herald headline from last August read, "Confidence in [The Prime Minister's] handling of immigration is gone". The Toronto Sun, on May 29 of this year, wrote, "AG report shows federal asylum processing system a mess". Another reads, "Auditor General Calls out Liberal Failures". The news headlines go on and on.

This is not something the minister did when he implemented reforms in Bill C-59, the national security reforms. Under that bill, there would be three oversight agencies for our national security and intelligence teams: the new commissioner of intelligence, with expanded oversight of CSIS and CSE; the new national security and intelligence review agency, and with Bill C-22, the new parliamentary committee. This is in addition to the Prime Minister's national security adviser and the deputy ministers of National Defence, Foreign Affairs and Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness.

Oversight can be a good thing. Often, because of human nature, knowing it is there acts as a deterrent. From my career, knowing that police are nearby or ready to respond can deter criminals, and knowing that someone will review claims of misconduct will add credibility to an already reputable agency, the CBSA.

It is probably too bad that this was not done earlier, because it could have gone through the House and the Senate quite easily. It could have been a law for a year or two already, perhaps even more. Sadly, the late tabling of the bill seems to make it a near certainty that if it reaches the Senate, it might be caught in the backlog of legislation there.

The House and the committee can and should give the bill a great deal of scrutiny. While the idea seems sound, and the model is better than in other legislation, I am wary of anything the government does on borders. It has not managed our borders well and has not been up front with the House or Canadians about that. In 2017, the Liberals told us that there was nothing to worry about, with tens of thousands of people crossing our borders illegally. They said they did not need any new resources, security was going well and everything was fine.

Well, the reality was that security was being cut to deal with the volume, provinces and cities were drowning in costs and overflowing shelters, border and RCMP agencies were stretched and refugee screenings were backing up. According to the ministers, everything was fine. Then, in the budget, came new funding, and in

the next budget, and in the one after that. Billions in spending is now on the books, including for the RCMP, the CBSA and the Immigration and Refugee Board.

What should we scrutinize? For one, I think we should make sure to hear from those people impacted by this decision, such as front-line RCMP and CBSA officers who will be subject to these evaluations.

A CBC article had this to say:

The union representing border officers has heard little about the proposal and was not consulted on the bill. Jean-Pierre Fortin, national president of the Customs and Immigration Union (CIU), said the president of the CBSA also was left in the dark and could not inform the union of any details of the legislation.

How reliable is legislation when the agency it would actually impact and involve was left out of the loop?

● (1845)

It seems odd that the Liberals would appoint one union, Unifor, to administer a \$600-million media bailout fund just after they announce a campaign against Conservatives, and, yet, the border services officers union is not even consulted about legislation that impacts it. I would hope that consultations are not dependent on political donations and participation.

That is why Parliament should be careful about who sits on this new agency. We do not need more activists; we need experienced professionals. We need subject matter experts. We need people with management expertise. We need to make sure that the people who work on these review organizations are appropriately skilled and resourced to do their work. We need to make sure that frivolous cases do not tie up resources, and that officers do not have frivolous and vexatious claims hanging over the heads.

We need to make sure that Canadians do not need to hire lawyers to get access to the complaints commission and its process.

We need to make sure that the minister and his staff, and other staffing leaders across the public safety spectrum cannot get their hands inside the processes and decisions of these bodies. We need the agency to have transparent, clear processes and systems that are fair to applicants and defendants alike. We need to make sure that these processes do not eat away resources from two agencies that are already strapped for bodies.

I hope there is time to do this right. I hope there is the appropriate time to hear from all the relevant witnesses, that legal advice is obtained, and that we have the appropriate time to draft changes, changes that, based on the minister's track record, are almost certainly going to be needed.

Government Orders

As the House begins its work on this legislation, I trust the minister and his staff would not be directing the chair of the public safety committee to meet their scripted timeline, which seems a little difficult to be done now with only a week remaining. Knowing that the chair is a scrupulous and honoured individual, he certainly would not suggest that legislation needs to be finished before we can hear the appropriate testimony.

There is a lot of trust and faith needed for the House to work well on legislation like this and many other pieces, trust that is built through honest answers to legitimate questions, trust that is reinforced by following integrity and the need to get it right, rather than the need to just be right.

I hope, perhaps just once in this legislative session, we could see the government try to broker such trust on Bill C-98, but I will not hold my breath.

Mr. Paul Manly (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, GP): Madam Speaker, it is a great honour to get up and speak to this important issue. I would like to start by recognizing the voters in Nanaimo—Ladysmith and thank them for seeing fit to elect me; and my team, my volunteers and my family, for supporting me through this process. This is my first time to have an opportunity to speak in Parliament. This is an interesting bill to get up and speak to.

My sister is a police officer. She has served some 23 or 24 years with the Ontario Provincial Police. She knows that when police are caught doing things they should not be doing it reflects poorly on all police officers. We need to respect the work that our men and women in uniform do: members of our armed forces, members of our police forces and members of the Canada Border Services Agency. It is very important to have oversight of these bodies, so that when there are legitimate complaints from citizens, they do not taint an organization.

I have just been reading a news article about a woman who was strip-searched coming into Canada and treated very poorly. There are many cases like this. When we cross the border, we enter a legal no man's land where we have no rights and we must do what we are told. When we are asked to hand over our cellphone and computer and give over the passwords, we are giving away some of our most personal information and letting people dig into our lives. When people are disrespected in this process, they need a proper way to complain about how they have been treated.

Bill C-98 would create an independent review and complaints mechanism for CBSA. This is very important. The objective is to promote public confidence in the system and for the employees. Those employees deserve to have confidence in their work and what they do. They deserve confidence and they deserve the respect of the public. The existing Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP would assume responsibility for review and complaints for the CBSA as well. It would be renamed as the public complaints and review commission, and be divided into RCMP units and a CBSA unit with similar powers, duties and functions and some modifications.

Why do we need this bill? Why do we need this oversight body? The CBSA is the only federal law-enforcement agency without an oversight body. It holds significant powers, including to detain,

search, use firearms, arrest non-citizens without a warrant and conduct deportations.

We had a case in which the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands had to defend an indigenous man who was handcuffed, detained and taken away from his home during Christmas because he had an issue with his citizenship. He had been a resident of Penelakut Island and he was an indigenous person who has rights across the border. Indigenous communities and first nations in some cases do not recognize the border because the border is a false line that runs through their territories. For this person to be treated in this way, being bound, detained and forced from his home in this ruthless way, was highly problematic. It is important to have a complaints commission and somebody to review these kinds of cases and look at the conduct of the officers who were involved.

● (1850)

It is reported that the CBSA investigated over 1,200 allegations of staff misconduct between January 2016 and mid-2018. The allegations included sexual assault, criminal association and harassment. At least 14 people have died in custody since 2000. Those are incredible statistics, and a good reason why we need some oversight over this agency.

The public complaints commission would respond to a review conducted as a result of PMB S-205 in the 42nd Parliament and the 2015 Senate report “Vigilance, Accountability and Security at Canada's Borders”.

In the fall of 2016, the Minister of Public Safety announced the government's intention to address gaps in the CBSA's framework for external accountability, a feature already present in countries like the U.K., Australia, New Zealand and France.

I know we are getting late in this Parliament and we are early in the stages of this bill, but I think it is very important that we work on getting this through so that we can pass it before the House rises so there would be proper oversight of the Canada Border Services Agency. Then people would have a process to go through where they would have confidence, and other members of the CBSA would know there is a way for people who are bad apples in the system to have proper oversight over the kinds of actions they have taken, and the citizens of this country and the people travelling here can be confident that they will be treated with respect and dignity at our borders.

● (1855)

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate my colleague and the other half of the Green Party caucus in this place on his first speech. I also thank the voters of Nanaimo—Ladysmith for growing us as a party, as well as the individual efforts of this particular community leader to be in this place and speak out as he has.

I want to add to the context around the story that he relayed.

Adjournment Proceedings

Richard Germaine, in December 2013, was, for members in this place listening to the shocking story, taken from his home just before Christmas. His wife was a survivor of residential schools. Uniformed men, with no warning, showed up at his door, took him from his home and put him in leg irons to transport him to a holding cell. We were able to mobilize because, thankfully, he had some contact with academics, University of Victoria anthropologists and those working on biological anthropology with respect to developing community gardens based on the traditional knowledge of the indigenous people of Penelakut Island. We got a lawyer, we paid for the lawyer and we got Richard Germaine out of a holding cell where he was about to be deported. The previous minister of immigration, Chris Alexander, was helpful. We regularized his citizenship because he was an indigenous person from the United States.

That was a horror story. I will never forget it. It made me realize, as my hon. colleague from Nanaimo—Ladysmith said, most of the people working in uniform in this country are fine and upstanding, but that story shook me to my core, especially when Richard Germaine told me that all the other people in that holding cell were deported within 24 hours and the guards there said, “Who do you know? How did this happen? Nobody gets out of here.”

I want to thank my hon. colleague from Nanaimo—Ladysmith. I am making a comment, not so much a question.

I have a feeling there are other events this evening of a less weighty nature, so I will end there, unless my hon. colleague wants to add anything.

Mr. Paul Manly: I thank you for relating that story again. I remember talking about that experience.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I just want to remind the member to make those comments, questions or debates through the Speaker.

The hon. member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith.

Mr. Paul Manly: Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for relating that story again and the importance of ensuring that we have the proper oversight to make sure those honourable men and women in uniform have the respect and confidence of our citizens and the people travelling to this country. Our borders are a legal no man's land and we need to make sure we have that proper oversight for people who do have legitimate complaints when they are mistreated at the border.

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security.

(Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I suspect if you were to canvass the House, you would find unanimous consent to call it midnight.

• (1900)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

[*English*]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I rise to raise a question I initially asked on May 30, not long ago.

While the procedures for Adjournment Proceedings call for being allowed to ask for such a debate when the answer received is not sufficient, I think I am within the rubric of our rules in asking for this further debate on the issue. However, for the record, the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness answered my question fully, capably and responsibly. My concern was that we learn from this experience.

I will repeat what I asked back on May 30. There was, and remains, a very terrifying episode for the community of Pikangikum First Nation, which is way out west in Ontario, so far that it is almost in Manitoba. It is a fly-in, remote community. Approximately 4,000 people live in this first nations community. The people there were surrounded by fire.

When I rose to ask the question that day, I had just heard that the chief and the community had called out for help. She actually called out for my seatmate, the hon. member who used to be the minister of Indigenous Services. Through her, I heard that the planes had not been able to land. A Hercules that was flying in to rescue people could not land because of the smoke. It was clearly a terrifying emergency situation. My question for the minister was what was the federal government doing.

The mobilization of resources to help that community was impressive. With the fire less than one or two kilometres from the community, thousands of people were removed to safety, with the Hercules aircraft flying in and out over a period of days.

My question is this. What have we learned from this? One of the things that struck me about it, when I read the newspaper reports, was that the community had lost power, had lost land lines, had lost cell service and it was surrounded by smoke. There was an immediate health issue.

Adjournment Proceedings

This is exactly what happened the summer before last in Ashcroft, British Columbia, where my husband is from. I talked to the deputy fire chief. People were on an evacuation alert. They had to be ready to be evacuated because of the fire. At that moment, they were without electricity, without cellphones and without land lines. They only had one road out of town. They also had an acute health issue, because people could not breathe.

The deputy fire chief told me to be prepared for these events in the future and that people were talking about what they should do when they lost power and the use of cellphones and land lines. She concluded that Ashcroft, B.C. needed to get a really big bell and put it at the fire station to warn people of evacuations. It so resonated with me.

I held my town hall meetings in the Gulf Islands in January. On December 20 of last year, we had a windstorm so severe that trees were down in the roads. This lasted 10 days, through Christmas. There was no power, no land lines, no cellphones. Just like in Ashcroft, the community self-organized, got chainsaws out and removed the trees on the roads, which we know is illegal. However, since there was no power, people felt they were safe. People took the trees off the roads, they self-organized and they went to check on their neighbours and friends.

My point is this. We are in a climate emergency. The things we think we can count on, such as our devices and our electricity, will be gone. We will be dealing with tornadoes, floods and fires. What is Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness doing to prepare for what is happening now?

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Madam Speaker, before I get to the answer for my hon. colleague for Saanich—Gulf Islands, I want to offer my heartfelt condolences to the family, friends and community of Kelsey Strang who had been evacuated from Pikangikum. The Minister of Indigenous Services has reached out to the community leadership at this difficult time. While no words are adequate to respond, my heart aches for those who knew and loved her.

We will always help Canadians affected by wildfires and other disasters. We know that climate change is making natural disasters more severe, more frequent, more damaging and more expensive. Our government always stands ready to help.

The government operations centre engages with federal, provincial and territorial partners concerning fires and flooding across the country in order to be ready to respond should federal assistance be required. Emergency response is handled first at the local level. If local first responders need assistance, they can request it from neighbouring municipalities or from their province or territory. However, if an emergency escalates beyond their response capabilities, provinces or territories can request assistance from the federal government.

There is a well-established process in place for managing requests for federal assistance, which is facilitated by the Public Safety Canada regional offices through the government operations centre, and it includes interdepartmental consultation as it pertains to resources. This process ensures that municipal, provincial and territorial jurisdictions are respected, that emergency response is well

coordinated and that the provision of assets and resources can be expedited at the national level when needed.

Regarding the situation of the Pikangikum First Nation, I will share some information about the events that took place recently.

On May 29, Indigenous Services Canada informed the government operations centre through the Ontario provincial emergency operations centre, that a fire was affecting the community of Pikangikum. As members may be aware, Pikangikum First Nation is a fly-in community of about 4,000 residents located in Ontario, about 70 kilometres from the Manitoba border. That same day, on May 29, a state of local emergency was declared due to the impact of smoke and fire. A request for aircraft and evacuation assistance from the Canadian Rangers and the Canadian Armed Forces was issued by the Province of Ontario to the federal government.

On May 30, in concurrence with the acting minister of National Defence, we accepted the request for the affected communities. Evacuation of the community began on the same day, on May 30. Airspace around Pikangikum was restricted to ensure the safety of Canadian Armed Forces operations and fire suppression. Ontario was not able to accommodate all the evacuees on such short notice and requested assistance from the Province of Manitoba, and that was graciously provided.

The evacuation has been suspended. The evacuation order was cancelled by the Chief of Pikangikum on June 9 due to the improving conditions.

I want to reassure Canadians that we remain committed to community safety.

● (1905)

Ms. Elizabeth May: Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. parliamentary secretary for the update.

The loss of life is tragic, but I thank God it was not so much worse, and it could have been with 4,000 people surrounded by fire. However, this is not the last time this is going to happen, and so there is a question of risk mapping.

The Province of Quebec, when Lucien Bouchard was premier, started risk mapping in response to the climate crisis years ago. We need it nationally. If we are going to have an adaptation strategy, we also need to have a prevention strategy.

There is standing dead forest throughout northern B.C. because of the pine beetle. There is no economic value in getting those forests out. Can we not have an effort to create fire breaks so that we are prepared for what is going to happen and protect communities before the fires get going? We also need to be prepared for more flooding. We need not to develop into flood plains.

We need to be much more prepared. We are living in a climate emergency. We have to go off fossil fuels, prevent the worst and prepare for what is inevitable.

Adjournment Proceedings

• (1910)

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: Madam Speaker, the Government of Canada is always going to stand with Canadians every step of the way as they deal with these kinds of disasters.

We agree that collaborative effort is absolutely essential. We work shoulder to shoulder with all levels of government in Canada, first responders, volunteers, other NGOs, government departments, provinces and territories, municipalities and industry to identify collaborative actions in support of disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery.

Through Public Safety Canada's newly developed emergency management strategy, Canada will be in a better position to predict, prepare for, respond to and recover from weather-related emergencies and natural disasters.

PARKS CANADA

Mr. Wayne Stetski (Kootenay—Columbia, NDP): Madam Speaker, again I rise in the House to speak about the perpetual nightmare that is the Phoenix pay system, which continues to impact Parks Canada employees in my riding of Kootenay—Columbia.

It has now been over three years since this disaster was forced upon the public service. Despite never working from the beginning, those who implemented the system received performance bonuses. Meanwhile, thousands of hard-working public servants have not been paid what they have earned, when it is owed to them.

This pay system was ill-conceived from the beginning. It was taken off the shelf, with no consideration given to special circumstances such as acting pay, overtime or leave without pay. Parks Canada employees were especially impacted because many of them work under different pay statuses throughout the year, going from full time in the summer to part time or casual in the shoulder seasons. Every change in status brings concern to staff. Will they get paid next week? Will Phoenix issue a seemingly random payment amount?

My colleague from Berthier—Maskinongé brought up a Parks Canada Phoenix case from her riding yesterday during question period. That Parks Canada worker has not been paid since March. This week, and it is only Wednesday evening, I have received two new Phoenix casework files in my office, both from Parks Canada employees.

The NDP has raised this issue many times, both in and out of the House, since the problems started cropping up. We have proposed solutions, like paying employees the amounts owed directly to them, while keeping records. That way, hard-working Canadians are accurately paid the funds that they are owed by their employer.

It is starting to feel like these suggestions, these pleas, are falling on deaf ears. How many more times will constituents have to contact their MPs when they are at the end of their ropes, both financially and emotionally?

The previous Conservative government touted that the Phoenix pay system would save millions of dollars per year. Instead it is estimated that the government has spent more than \$1.1 billion dealing with this broken system, and that number continues to grow. That is money that could have been spent improving the lives of

Canadians or dealing with the climate crisis, if the Liberals had not rushed to roll out the Phoenix pay system despite warnings that it was not ready. Conservative and Liberal governments both own a piece of this failed system.

The Treasury Board president was quoted in a CBC article this morning saying, “We may have to have the old system in parallel with the new pay experiments as we go forward.” What are “pay experiments”? Meanwhile, we still do not know how long it will take to replace Phoenix or how much this debacle will cost.

When a new system is implemented, the government must ensure employee files are 100% accurate before they are transferred to the new system. Otherwise, errors will persist.

I do not want this to be a totally negative speech, so I want to take a minute to thank the Parks Canada employees and other federal public servants who have continued to provide excellent public service to Canadians while suffering under what at times must seem like a horror system. Their loyalty to Canada and their commitment to serving our country must be recognized and should be rewarded in collective agreements.

It is shameful that the government of a developed G7 country cannot pay its own employees properly and that it has let this problem persist for more than three years.

How will the government ensure that Phoenix's replacement is delivered in a timely way and will not be another failed, expensive experiment?

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for Kootenay—Columbia for his concern that our public servants have the kind of pay system they deserve.

I am pleased to be able to highlight some of the things that Parks Canada has tried to do to mitigate the pay issues created by the implementation of the Phoenix pay system. We cannot underestimate these challenges, which is why ensuring that employee files are handled properly and accurately is a high priority for Parks Canada. I can assure the member that this work is being done to identify and address pay issues as efficiently as possible.

Given the special nature of Parks Canada's operating model, the agency, in collaboration with Public Services and Procurement Canada, has been at the forefront of the search for solutions that work for Parks Canada employees, including seasonal employees, students and other types of employment.

Many actions are being initiated by Parks Canada to improve the Phoenix pay system issues. The agency has worked diligently to simplify its business processes, including establishing a special team dedicated to data management and integrity. This team now does all pay entries into the pay system, thus ensuring greater consistency and reliability of the data. This is only one example of initiatives under way.

Adjournment Proceedings

The agency is also working with PSPC to resolve the issues. In early 2018, PSPC introduced pay pods, which are dedicated teams specific to departments and agencies, as a new approach to efficiently provide pay administration services. These pods are being rolled out to all departments and agencies served by PSPC. Parks Canada has been served by a full pay pod since February 21, 2019. Backlogged pay issues in February 2019 decreased by 30% from then to now.

Also the Minister of Environment remains actively involved in the working group of ministers on achieving steady state for the pay system, which is taking a whole-of-government approach to address these pay issues. By all working together, we can make the kind of progress that members of Parks Canada deserve.

● (1915)

Mr. Wayne Stetski: Madam Speaker, I thank the parliamentary secretary for the information and update.

The first call I had on this was in August 2016. The call was from a young woman working for Parks Canada who was going back to university. It was August. She had been employed since April and she still had not received a paycheque. She was concerned she was going to have to drop out of university because she did not have the money for her tuition. We were able to intervene successfully on her behalf.

There were other issues like people getting overpaid. The problem is that people might get overpaid by \$1,000 and the government wants that \$1,000 back, but they only get \$700 on their paycheque, which leaves \$300 that they have to try to get back from EI, Canada pension and other organizations. That is really not fair. Other people got paid an additional amount the next year, which put them into a

different tax bracket for that year, unfairly. These are very serious issues affecting people. I have talked to Parks Canada and other employees who will not take assignments because of this.

Is there a time limit in mind for this to end?

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: Madam Speaker, there is a lot of work that needs to be done in terms of finding the replacement for the Phoenix pay system.

We rely on our public servants. They do the hard work. They are dedicated. They are the ones who deliver the programs and services that benefit all Canadians, and we recognize their contributions and their commitments. That is why we will continue to treat the mitigation of pay issues created by the implementation of the Phoenix pay system as a top priority.

The process to replace the system overall is also under way. The pilot projects are going to show us the way forward as to which of the systems we are looking at will best serve all of our public servants.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member for Elmwood—Transcona is not present to raise the matter for which adjournment notice has been given. Accordingly, the notice is deemed withdrawn.

[*Translation*]

The motion that the House do now adjourn is deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m. pursuant to order made Tuesday, May 28, and Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 7:20 p.m.)

CONTENTS

Wednesday, June 12, 2019

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS			
Nutrition North		Mr. Trudeau	29030
Mr. Tootoo	29025	Mr. Scheer	29030
Italian Heritage Month		Mr. Trudeau	29030
Mr. Sorbara	29025	Pharmacare	
Summer in Banff—Airdrie		Mr. Singh	29030
Mr. Richards	29025	Mr. Trudeau	29030
Saint-Lambert Choral Society		Mr. Singh	29030
Mrs. Mendès	29026	Mr. Trudeau	29030
Seniors		Mr. Singh	29031
Mr. Boulerice	29026	Mr. Trudeau	29031
International Plowing Match and Rural Expo		Mr. Trudeau	29031
Mr. Serré	29026	Intergovernmental Relations	
Alberta Energy Sector		Ms. Bergen	29031
Ms. Rempel	29026	Mr. Trudeau	29031
Government Priorities		Ms. Bergen	29031
Mrs. Schulte	29027	Mr. Trudeau	29031
Member for Avalon		Mr. Rayes	29031
Mr. McDonald	29027	Mr. Trudeau	29032
The Environment		Mr. Rayes	29032
Mr. Paul-Hus	29027	Mr. Trudeau	29032
Government Policies		Ms. Raitt	29032
Mr. Alghabra	29027	Mr. Trudeau	29032
Pride		Ms. Raitt	29032
Mr. Boissonnault	29027	Mr. Trudeau	29032
Forestry Industry		Ms. Raitt	29032
Mr. Doherty	29028	Mr. Trudeau	29032
Pontiac		Ms. Raitt	29032
Mr. Amos	29028	Mr. Trudeau	29032
Status of Women		Pharmacare	
Ms. Mathysen	29028	Mr. Davies	29032
Federal-Provincial Relations		Mr. Trudeau	29032
Mr. Barrett	29028	Mr. Davies	29032
Government Policies		Mr. Trudeau	29033
Ms. Hutchings	29029	Taxation	
		Mrs. Boucher	29033
		Mr. Trudeau	29033
		The Environment	
		Ms. Rempel	29033
		Mr. Trudeau	29033
		Taxation	
		Mr. Strahl	29033
		Mr. Trudeau	29033
		Mr. Strahl	29034
		Mr. Trudeau	29034
		Public Services and Procurement	
		Ms. Sansoucy	29034
		Mr. Trudeau	29034
		International Trade	
		Ms. Ramsey	29034
		Mr. Trudeau	29034
		Veterans Affairs	
		Mr. Ellis	29034
		Mr. Trudeau	29034
ORAL QUESTIONS			
Intergovernmental Relations			
Mr. Scheer	29029		
Mr. Trudeau	29029		
Mr. Scheer	29029		
Mr. Trudeau	29029		
Mr. Scheer	29029		
Mr. Trudeau	29029		
Natural Resources			
Mr. Scheer	29029		

The Environment		(Motion agreed to)	29039
Mr. Godin	29035		
Mr. Trudeau	29035		
Ethics			
Mr. Kent	29035		
Mr. Trudeau	29035		
Auditor General of Canada			
Mr. Brassard	29035		
Mr. Trudeau	29035		
Mr. Deltell	29035		
Mr. Trudeau	29036		
Health			
Ms. Ashton	29036		
Mr. Trudeau	29036		
Auditor General of Canada			
Mr. Christopherson	29036		
Mr. Trudeau	29036		
Forestry Industry			
Mrs. McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)	29036		
Mr. Trudeau	29036		
International Trade			
Mr. Berthold	29036		
Mr. Trudeau	29036		
Foreign Affairs			
Ms. Alleslev	29037		
Mr. Trudeau	29037		
Public Services and Procurement			
Mr. Rogers	29037		
Mr. Trudeau	29037		
News Media Industry			
Mrs. Kusie	29037		
Mr. Trudeau	29037		
Telecommunications			
Mr. Dubé	29037		
Mr. Trudeau	29037		
Infrastructure			
Mr. Rioux	29038		
Mr. Trudeau	29038		
Justice			
Mr. Scheer	29038		
Mr. Trudeau	29038		
Democratic Institutions			
Mr. Barsalou-Duval	29038		
Mr. Trudeau	29038		
Presence in Gallery			
The Speaker	29038		
ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS			
Committees of the House			
Procedure and House Affairs			
Ms. Chagger	29038		
Motion for concurrence	29038		
Public Sector Integrity Commissioner			
The Speaker	29039		
Chief Electoral Officer			
The Speaker	29039		
Advisory Council on the Implementation of a National Pharmacare Program			
Ms. Petitpas Taylor	29039		
Government Response to Petitions			
Mr. Lamoureux	29039		
Interparliamentary Delegations			
Mr. McGuinty	29039		
Mr. Samson	29039		
Committees of the House			
Official Languages			
Mr. Paradis	29039		
Canadian Heritage			
Ms. Dabrusin	29039		
Public Accounts			
Mr. Sorenson	29040		
Employment Equity Act			
Mr. Garrison	29040		
Bill C-457. Introduction and first reading	29040		
(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed)	29040		
Petitions			
Falun Gong			
Ms. Sgro	29040		
Palliative Care			
Mrs. Wagentall	29040		
Vision Care			
Ms. Benson	29041		
Human Organ Trafficking			
Mrs. Block	29041		
Wilderness Conservation			
Mr. Gerretsen	29041		
Physician-Assisted Dying			
Mr. Anderson	29041		
The Environment			
Ms. Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)	29041		
Pharmacare			
Ms. Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)	29041		
Small Business			
Mr. Webber	29041		
Agriculture			
Mr. Webber	29041		
Equalization			
Ms. Rempel	29041		
Forced Migration			
Ms. Laverdière	29042		
Trans Mountain Pipeline			
Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	29042		
Human Organ Trafficking			
Mr. Genuis	29042		

Afghan Minority Communities	
Mr. Genuis	29042
Human Organ Trafficking	
Mr. Genuis	29042
Status of Women	
Ms. Ramsey	29042
Criminal Code	
Mr. Lloyd	29042
Children's Rights	
Ms. Hardcastle	29042
Poverty	
Mr. Manly	29042
Veterans Affairs	
Mr. Manly	29042
Questions on the Order Paper	
Mr. Lamoureux	29043
Questions Passed as Orders for Returns	
Mr. Lamoureux	29044
Motions for Papers	
Mr. Lamoureux	29046
Points of Order	
Use of Unanimous Consent Motions	
Mr. Sweet	29046

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

Impact Assessment Act	
Motion	29046
Ms. McKenna	29046
Motion	29046
Mr. Boulterice	29052
Mr. Zimmer	29052
Ms. Pauzé	29053
Mr. Longfield	29053
Mrs. Stubbs	29053
Notice of time allocation motion	
Ms. Chagger	29060
Canada–United States–Mexico Agreement Implementation Act	
Bill C-100—Notice of time allocation motion	
Ms. Chagger	29060

Impact Assessment Act	
Bill C-69—Notice of Closure Motion	
Ms. Chagger	29060
Canada–United States–Mexico Agreement Implementation Act	
Bill C-100—Notice of Closure Motion	
Ms. Chagger	29060

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Federal Trades Strategy	
Mr. Badawey	29060
Motion	29060
Ms. Ashton	29062
Mr. Barlow	29063
Mr. Longfield	29063
Mr. Barlow	29063
Ms. Ashton	29065
Mr. Sheehan	29066
Mr. Clarke	29068
Ms. Sgro	29069

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act	
Bill C-98. Second reading	29069
Mr. Motz	29069
Mr. Manly	29072
Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	29072
(Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to a committee)	29073

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

Public Safety	
Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	29073
Mrs. McCrimmon	29074
Parks Canada	
Mr. Stetski	29075
Mrs. McCrimmon	29075

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