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# House of Commons Debates

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Speaker: The Honourable Greg Fergus



## **CONTENTS**

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

# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, June 17, 2024

The House met at 11 a.m.

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*Prayer*

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## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1105)

[*English*]

### EXCISE TAX ACT

The House resumed from June 7 consideration of the motion that Bill C-323, An Act to amend the Excise Tax Act (mental health services), be read the third time and passed, and of the amendment.

**Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to have the opportunity to take part in the debate at third reading of Bill C-323, an act to amend the Excise Tax Act on mental health services. As we all know, this bill would exempt supplies of psychotherapy and mental health counselling services from the goods and services tax and the harmonized sales tax, or the GST/HST, something which we already support.

In fact, we proposed our own legislation, Bill C-59, which, alongside other affordability measures, would achieve the very same goal of making counselling services more accessible.

We welcome and applaud any initiative that helps make mental health supports more affordable for Canadians, but Bill C-59 was introduced on November 30, 2023, seven months ago. If the Conservatives truly cared about making life more affordable for Canadians and offering support to those seeking psychotherapy and counselling and therapy services, they would have easily supported Bill C-59. Instead, the obstruction and delay tactics have delayed that critical bill, subjecting Canadians to paying the GST/HST on these services for an additional seven months.

I look forward to discussing this impactful legislation, as well as our government's ongoing work to support the mental health and well-being of Canadians and help save lives.

Our government's economic plan is about building a strong economy, one that works for everyone, and Bill C-59 would deliver critical pieces of the 2023 fall economic statement, so we can make life more affordable, build more homes and create good jobs from coast to coast to coast.

A key pillar of this plan is ensuring that Canadians have the mental support they need to thrive and to build a better life for themselves and their family, which is why Bill C-59 also proposes to exempt professional services rendered by psychotherapists and counselling therapists from the GST/HST.

How will this work? Services that assist individuals in coping with an illness or a disorder will be exempt from the GST/HST in a province if it is provided by a person who practises the profession of psychotherapy or counselling therapy and is licenced to practise in that province. Similarly, if a province has no such licensing requirements, psychotherapy and counselling therapy services will also be exempt from the GST/HST model in that province if the services are provided by a person who has the qualifications equivalent to those necessary to be so licensed in another province. Straightforwardly, this measure will change and, quite frankly, save lives.

Bill C-323 was passed unanimously at second reading, and has the support of the House, which recognizes the importance we all place on mental health. The provisions included in Bill C-59 would improve on the already interesting proposals put forward by the hon. member for Cumberland—Colchester.

Notably, Bill C-323's proposal raises concerns as far as “mental health counselling” is not a defined term in some provincial regulations. As a result, if that term were added to the GST/HST definition of “practitioner” for GST/HST purposes, which is what Bill C-323 proposes, it is not clear which mental health counsellors, or even any of them, would actually meet the requirement to be licensed or certified to practise in this profession. This could result in the amendment having no practical effect, and mental health counsellors may continue to be required to collect the GST/HST on a supply of mental health counselling services.

To address this risk, the references to “mental health counselling” and “mental health counselling services” would have to be replaced by “counselling therapy” and “counselling therapy services”, such that the amended text of Bill C-323 would be identical to the text in Bill C-59. In addition, Bill C-59 is likely to provide real tax relief to individuals with mental health issues sooner than the measure under Bill C-323.

*Private Members' Business*

Even if Bill C-323 were to receive royal assent before Bill C-59, the relief under Bill C-59 would begin to apply before the relief measures under Bill C-323, as the measures in Bill C-323 would only apply six months after the date on which it receives royal assent.

That said, I would like to acknowledge and thank my hon. colleague for this important work and for giving us all an opportunity to talk about mental health services that are necessary. Together, we are making steps in the right direction when it comes to breaking down the barriers to mental health care still faced by so many Canadians.

This brings me to our government's achievements and the focus we have put on mental health supports.

Since announcing our historic \$200-billion health care plan last year, we have reached agreements with all provinces and territories to strengthen Canada's universal public health care system, including funding for mental health care. These agreements are delivering \$25 billion in new funding to provinces and territories over the next decade to improve health care for all Canadians.

We are also investing \$2.4 billion to help provinces and territories bolster mental health and substance use services, so help gets to those who need it quickly and effectively. Last fall, we improved access to suicide prevention supports by launching the 988 suicide crisis helpline, which was advanced by my colleague across the way. It is available to Canadians wherever and whenever it is needed, and I am glad that has been done.

More recently, as part of our plan to ensure fairness for every generation, budget 2024 proposed a suite of new investments aimed at improving mental health care for Canadians, including the creation of a new youth mental health fund, which will support community health organizations that provide mental health care to young Canadians. We will also equip those organizations with the tools and resources they need to refer youth to other mental health services in their communities. When we invest in our youth and their mental health, we also invest in helping them reach their full potential. That is so needed at a time when millennials and gen Z feel as if the cards are stacked against them.

Budget 2024 also includes supports that provide continued access to mental health services for indigenous people, including approaches to mental health that are culturally appropriate for first nations, Inuit and Métis.

These transformational investments build on the significant actions that the federal government has taken over the past years to expand access to community-based mental health and addiction services for all Canadians. This includes investing \$359 million over five years in support of the renewed Canadian drug and substance strategy, which is now guiding our government's work to save lives and protect the health and safety of Canadians.

It includes providing \$5 billion over 10 years to provinces and territories, as announced in budget 2017, for mental health and addiction services. It includes providing \$14.25 million in annual funding to the Mental Health Commission of Canada to advance mental health in the priority areas of suicide prevention, mental

health and substance abuse, engagement with Canadians and population-based initiatives.

It also includes supporting the mental health promotion innovation fund with another \$5 million in additional funding to support the delivery of innovative community-based programs in mental health promotion for infants, children, youth and their caregivers, as well as funding to support priority groups susceptible to mental health inequities, like LGBTQ2+ members, and newcomers and refugees.

We are doing all of this because we know that a strong and effective public health care system is essential to the well-being of Canadians and because we know there is simply no health without mental health.

• (1110)

[Translation]

**Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, we are dealing with Bill C-323, which basically seeks to amend the Excise Tax Act.

We know that, in a schedule, this act provides tax exempt status for various health care products and services offered by private practitioners. This includes optometry, naturopathy, acupuncture and midwifery services. These services are currently exempt from the goods and services tax. The bill seeks to add psychotherapy and mental health counselling services to this list of services that are exempt from the goods and services tax.

This bill at least highlights the importance of mental health and the important work to be done in this area to ensure that all—

**The Speaker:** I have to interrupt the hon. member because of a small problem. A political logo is displayed on the back of his sheet. That is not permitted in the House.

**Ms. Louise Chabot:** Mr. Speaker, I understand that I was not entitled to display the logo. I apologize.

I was saying that this bill helps highlight the importance of our social services and mental health services. The need for these services can arise at a very young age. In fact, it is not just individual adults who may need such services. Children, youth, parents and families may need them too. I think that COVID-19 exacerbated the tensions that may have already existed in this regard.

The bill's merit lies in the fact that it exempts professional mental health services from the goods and services tax. In other words, patients obtaining these services in the private sector will no longer have to pay the tax, which will make these services more accessible.

*Private Members' Business*

I do, however, have doubts as to whether exempting a private sector professional from the tax will make these services more accessible. We all know that the cost of these services in the private sector are onerous and that few people have access to them. That is why it is important to work toward making access to these services virtually universal in the public sector. In Quebec, work is under way to do precisely that.

There is also the matter of the definitions. What is psychotherapy? If we define it in simple terms, it is the psychological treatment of a person. What is mental health counselling? That is less clear, in our eyes. For example, psychological treatment services for individuals in Quebec are regulated by professional associations. We call these services “reserved”. There is a reserved title for those practising such professions. Things are less clear with mental health counselling, however. What type of profession are we talking about here?

The Ordre des psychologues du Québec cautioned us about mental health counselling, because that can be pretty much anything. There is little in the way of training, and it is not regulated. If mental health counselling is not better defined, we are not certain that this legislation will strengthen what we are trying to strengthen, which is why we were so interested in studying this bill in committee. As it turned out, though, it was not possible to study it in committee.

This bill should have been studied in the Standing Committee on Finance, but because of economic omnibus bills, such as Bill C-59 or the current Bill C-69, which deals with the budget, the usual 60-day deadline for committee study, after referral of a private member's bill, was not met. Despite a request for an extension, this bill could not be studied.

That is quite troubling. It makes us think about the process of studying bills. We should ensure that a bill passed at second reading in the House also passes at the committee stage. Had that happened, we would have heard from experts and witnesses who could have better defined what the bill seeks to do, especially in terms of psychotherapy and mental health counselling services. That would have been important.

Aside from Quebec, I do not know how mental health services are regulated in the Canadian provinces. What are the definitions for the provinces? Are these regulated professions, or do those professionals have the authority to provide psychotherapy services? In any case, the committee process would have been very important.

• (1115)

Since we were not able to study it in committee, we are now here in the House to pass this bill. The Bloc Québécois nevertheless supports it. We know there is currently a certain inequity in terms of the excise tax exemption. We know it applies to doctors and psychologists. It should apply just as much to these mental health professionals— and I say “professionals” because, for us, that is important—at least when we see the growing number of services in this sector.

I have to say that when it comes to mental health, Quebec was a pioneer in terms of psychotherapy legislation. This also inspired several provinces. We recently saw that the Quebec plan d'action

interministériel en santé mentale 2022-2026 outlined a framework for mental health by focusing on seven specific areas, namely, the promotion of mental health and prevention of mental health problems, services to prevent and respond to crisis situations and actions aimed at youth, their families and their loved ones, in particular.

I do not have the time to list them all, but want to say that mental health is a priority for our social services, which, as we know, have a very strong role and presence in our society. That is also why, with the modernization of legislation on professions, the Ordre des psychologues du Québec has been entrusted to deliver licences to practise to other professionals such as school counsellors and psychoeducators, as well as nurses.

If we had had time to study Bill C-323 at committee, we would have been able to add other types of professionals to the list. That was not possible, so we have to leave it at that. I would remind the House that the definition of “mental health counselling” really needs to be clarified to ensure that we have regulated services by professionals, which is the case in Quebec.

As I said at the beginning, I will close by saying that it is all well and good to address inequity when it comes to the GST, but that is not going to guarantee universal access, which is what people really want when it comes to the services provided by mental health workers and professionals. That will take a major investment in our public services, because Quebec's education sector, its health and social services sector and its community organizations do require significant funding.

The problem is, the federal government is going to fix things by removing a tax while it continues to chronically underfund our health and social services. If the private sector is given a bigger role in our system, which I find unacceptable, I think we really need to ask ourselves how much the federal government needs to invest in health and social services to enable Quebec and the provinces to strengthen their public systems.

• (1120)

[English]

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour and a privilege to rise today to discuss Bill C-323, an act to amend the Excise Tax Act for mental health services. It is great to see the bill come forward. The bill would add psychotherapy and counselling to the list of health care services exempt from point-of-sale taxes, and as members can imagine, New Democrats are very much in support of this.

My colleague from London—Fanshawe tabled Bill C-218, which would also remove GST from psychotherapy services, and the bill is currently outside of the order of precedence. Another of my NDP colleagues tabled a bill for the very same thing in 2017, so we have been fighting for this for years.

*Private Members' Business*

However, I do want to highlight a couple of things. The bill is actually encapsulated in the budget bill, Bill C-69, which the Conservatives who are bringing forward Bill C-323 voted against. It is hypocrisy that the Conservatives are bringing forward a bill that is now in the budget bill. They could support the budget, like we have had to do. We have had to work with the government. There are things that we do not love that the Liberals did not do. I supported the budget and got the firefighter tax credit for volunteer firefighters and search and rescue volunteers doubled. Those are things that we do.

I heard one of my colleagues, the member for Battlefords—Lloydminster, complain that the government stole her bill. Actually, our job in opposition is to bring good ideas to government and have the government see that they are good ideas and then take them. That is the idea. That is a good thing, so today is a good day, when Bill C-323 was encapsulated in Bill C-69, the budget Implementation bill, and it is something, again, that New Democrats have led the charge on.

Regarding the Excise Tax Act, I think back to my predecessors John Duncan, who was an MP in this place for 18 years, and James Lunney, who was an MP for 15 years, both Conservatives, with a total of about 33 years that they sat in this place. They did get one bill passed, and it was actually to change the Excise Tax Act to remove the excise tax on jewellery so people could get their diamonds more cheaply. Those are the people they were fighting for. I cannot even make this stuff up. Therefore it is good to see Conservatives come here today to bring forward legislation that would actually make a difference in people's lives, and not just in the lives of the wealthy and the well-connected.

I will get to the crux of it. We know physical health services are typically included in our universal health care system, or at the very least are exempt from sales taxes. That is critical. We are proud of our universal health care system and we need to do much more. However, mental health care is not included in our health care system. There is a two-tiered health care system in this country right now. We know that Canadians who cannot afford services like therapy and counselling are actually paying taxes on those services.

There should be no tax on health care in this country; it should be covered. It is absolutely absurd to hear about Canadians' having to pay taxes on health care services. We know that they do not have to pay taxes to see an optometrist, a chiropractor or a physiotherapist, so it seems obvious to all of us. Why is it not obvious when it comes to mental health care? Again, it is the stigma; that is why. Mental health is health care and we need to treat it as health care. We need parity in this country when it comes to mental and physical health.

There is a mental health care crisis post-COVID, but actually pre-COVID there was a mental health crisis in this country. Things were exacerbated, as we know, throughout COVID, and now they are exacerbated with the cost of living crisis. A tax exemption would certainly increase access to the services by reducing the costs directly, but it would also help Canadians who cannot afford or can barely afford the services to access care. It might open up a few appointments for them to get a couple of extra sessions that they might not have been able to access before, or maybe they would have less strain on their grocery budget.

However, it is certainly not a complete solution. Lowering the cost would not help those people who still cannot afford it, which is a situation that no Canadian should be in. All health care services, including mental health care, should be available at no cost to Canadians, and as soon as they need them. They should have no-wait support. Again, we are in a mental health crisis, and so many Canadians who cannot afford therapy and counselling services need the support. People are going through their daily lives trying to survive, and they are in serious need of supports.

• (1125)

There should be no barriers in getting them the support if they cannot afford it. Certainly we know that parents often cannot afford it, and children are the most vulnerable. In Ontario, children can wait anywhere from two weeks to two years to get these kinds of supports. That is completely unacceptable when it comes to children.

I am grateful and glad that we could work with the government as New Democrats to get the first federal youth mental health fund launched. It is a \$500-million fund over five years. It will make a difference, getting funding out to community-based organizations at no cost to support children and youth. We have to mitigate and identify, and work with youth when it comes to mental health issues as they arise.

When someone's spouse or other family members need help and mental health care is impossible, we know terrible things can happen. We are forcing Canadians to go through their daily life without the care they need, and we need to turn the tide. This can have both an impact not just on people's mental health but also on their physical health, which is directly related, and their work. People can withdraw. As we know, the impact that can have on families and communities has been identified, and some people will even lose their lives. As New Democrats, we will not accept this until there is true parity.

I know yesterday was Father's Day, and I want to wish all my colleagues from across political lines a happy Father's Day. We have been working on Father's Day on the Hill, my colleagues from the Conservative Party, the Liberal Party, and the Bloc. For seven years we have been working on raising awareness for men's mental health on the Hill so men talk about their issues. We also want to encourage men, who are disproportionately at higher risk of death by suicide or of having depression, which leads to even further challenges around substance use-related issues, to seek help.

Something I just want to raise while we are in this debate today is how important it is that we talk to the men in our lives, and to everybody, but obviously the importance of talking to men is something that we always want to highlight around Father's Day.

We know that provinces and territories are spending far too little when it comes to mental health care. Most provinces are spending between 5% and 7% of their health care budget on mental health. In British Columbia, with the new billion-dollar commitment from the Eby government, it will be at close to 9%. That is still not good enough. We know Ontario is even lower; mental health spending is at 3% of its overall health care spending.

Other OECD countries are spending 12% to 14% of their health care budget on mental health. That is where we need to get to at bare minimum, and we know that the new bilateral agreements will increase funding for mental health, which is something that is part of the confidence and supply agreement that we worked with the government on. It is still not enough; we have to go much further.

To get parity between mental and physical health in our country and universal access to health care is one of our core values as new Democrats. It is something we are always going to support. If somebody breaks their leg, they will never have to worry about paying for the medical treatment they need, but if something happens when it comes to their mental health, they also should not have to wait. We know that is not the case in our country today, and that needs to change.

We are going to fight every single day to make sure people do not have to worry that they are going to have to wait when it comes to their mental health, and I can assure members that there is no one in this country who is not touched by a mental health illness, a mental health-related issue or a substance use-related issue, so we are all in this together. We have to demonstrate this when we support legislation and bills like the one before us and when we roll them into the budget implementation act, so we can fast-track getting supports and breaks. However, we have to go much, much further, and as New Democrats, we will fight every single day until there is parity between mental and physical health.

I want to thank my colleague who sponsored the bill following the bill from the New Democratic Party, and I actually want to congratulate him for turning the tide when they look at changing the Excise Tax Act, in reducing taxes not just on diamond jewellery but actually on mental health. I want to congratulate them on taking this step.

• (1130)

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is always a wonderful honour to rise in the House of Commons to speak on behalf of the people of Peterborough—Kawartha and, of course, all the people across Canada who feel they do not have a voice.

The bill we are talking about today is a private member's bill put forward by my friend and colleague, the member for Cumberland—Colchester, who is a doctor himself. He has seen the implications across this country of not just a health care crisis in access to primary care but also the consequences resulting from inflation, a cost

### *Private Members' Business*

of living crisis and, really, a downfall of leadership. These things are all connected to our mental health.

The summary of Bill C-323 explains that the bill would amend the Excise Tax Act in order to exempt psychotherapy and mental health counselling services from the goods and services tax. Basically, right now, psychotherapists and mental health counsellors are the only ones who have to charge tax, HST. Members can imagine that, for people who do not have coverage, this extra tax that they have to pay out-of-pocket is a really big deal. When we look at people who cannot afford housing or food, this is impacting their mental health; now they cannot afford access to mental health and counselling services.

My colleague, the member for Cariboo—Prince George, has dedicated a lot of his life's work to mental health. He was key in creating the 988 suicide helpline, a critical piece of legislation. It is very simple to use the helpline for suicide awareness. However, the member also amended the bill before us to include massage therapy, so registered massage therapists would not be excluded from this.

It is interesting that, in Canada today, counselling therapists and psychotherapists are the only regulated mental health service providers that must remit tax on their work. I want to talk about this a bit because, many times, we hear people say that this is not political or partisan. However, every single thing in our lives is politics. There is a great saying: "If you do not want to get involved in politics, politics will do you." However, we have seen a massive movement in the last nine years, quite frankly, where people would have otherwise said, "I'm not political, and I don't want to do that", as Canadians are quite friendly, congenial people and do not like confrontation. However, when their lives become miserable and they suffer, they have to stand up, pay attention and get involved, which is what we have seen across this country.

The incidence of mental health issues in our country has drastically increased. All we need to do is go outside and walk the streets. Substance abuse disorder is an illness. There is a reason somebody is using drugs or substances to mask their pain; they cannot manage the feelings, emotions or stress in their life.

Do members know of the shocking stats in Canada? I will read some of these. We have 22 people a day who are dying of overdoses. However, this is not some socio-economic crisis of people who are lower income or something like that. I have people come into my office, moms and dads, whose kids come from loving, beautiful homes, but something happened. There is one story of a young boy in my riding who died of an overdose. His mom came to see me, and we talked about him. She said, "You know, things really changed for him when he started to use marijuana as a teenager." She said, "The doctor said it to him so perfectly that when he used marijuana, he didn't have the same reaction as someone else, and he was basically allergic to it. Some people can have sugar; some people can't."

*Private Members' Business*

This was really profound to me, but the problem is that almost seven million Canadians do not have access to a doctor. They do not have access to somebody who can explain to them what is going on or give it to them in common terms.

• (1135)

There are kids who are lost right now because of a combination of a whole bunch of factors. When parents are not okay, the kids are not okay. Parents are sitting around the dining room table, and they are stressed about trying to pay for housing, trying to afford groceries and every single thing. We have people who are making more than they have ever made in their life, and they are taxed to death. Now we have another tax coming in. It is a job-killing tax. In a doctor shortage crisis, it is going to pull back doctor retention and recruitment in this country even more. People need doctors to refer them to a specialist, and Canadians do not have access to that. What does that come down to? It comes down to more tax.

This is an article from the Canadian Medical Association. It reads:

Increasing the capital gains inclusion rate for corporations will create another barrier to retaining and recruiting physicians in a time when our health system and the providers within it are already under constant strain....

This not only undermines the well-being of health care professionals, it jeopardizes the stability of our struggling health care system. The risk of already overstretched physicians leaving the profession or reducing their hours in response to heightened taxation is real.

Dr. Kathleen Ross of the Canadian Medical Association went on to say that “incorporated doctors are unlike other businesses as the corporation is primarily used as a vehicle for retirement savings or parental and sick leaves.” In response to the Minister of Finance's comments about provincial governments, Dr. Ross said, “We do support remunerating physicians according to their expertise”; however, in her view, “pushing the issue onto other governments is not the right approach.” I am talking about that policy because it is all connected.

Right now we have the lowest GDP per capita of any G7 country. That means people have never been poorer. How did that happen? There has been wasteful spending, but taxation used by the government is also a big piece of it. The Liberals and NDP have a coalition. It spends and spends. The government has to make up that money. This may be the hundredth time I will say this, but the government does not have money. It has our money. It has taxpayers' money. I will keep talking about that in the House of Commons. If the government spends too much of it, it has to make it back in revenue.

The current private member's bill is saying that there has been enough taxation. Forty-six per cent of Canadians' paycheques are going toward taxes. That is unbelievable. One has to work until June to pay for the taxes in this country before one actually even starts making any money. This takes away one's motivation to go to work. Then there is this carbon tax in place. Conservatives have been saying for months that the tax should be axed; we know the carbon tax drives up the cost of every single thing in this country. Fuel is being taxed. We need fuel for everything. Farmers grow the food that has to be trucked to the grocery stores. The business owner has to raise their prices to cover those increased costs.

The Liberals and NDP think that the carbon tax is the best thing for the environment, that everything is great and that they are doing a great job. The Parliamentary Budget Officer wrote a report on the economic analysis of the carbon tax; the report revealed that it is costing \$30 billion more. That is almost \$2,000 per Canadian family. They gagged the PBO. On May 14, the environment minister had his bureaucrat, his deputy minister, write a letter to the PBO, asking him not to release the report.

Conservatives put on the pressure, and the report was released; everything we have said is confirmed. The government is taxing people into a mental health crisis. It is not compassionate. It is not pragmatic. Evil is what it is. It is irresponsible. The most compassionate thing a leader can do is make life affordable and give Canadians the autonomy to make decisions for their lives, to be able to provide for their family, to want to go to work, to have purpose and to feel proud and confident.

This private member's bill is a very simple piece of legislation that removes the tax for psychotherapists, mental health counsellors and massage therapists to ensure that people can access the resources they need. We support it. We ask for the support of the House, and we hope it gets passed and Canadians can afford to live and improve their mental health.

• (1140)

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Cumberland—Colchester has five minutes for his right of reply.

**Mr. Stephen Ellis (Cumberland—Colchester, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I look at the piece of legislation really quite simply in the sense that a health care service is unfairly taxed; people suffer with its cost and with their mental health. Let us make it better. We cannot say it much more simply than that.

It is not about the tax on diamonds or whatever else we have heard. We need to remove the tax on psychotherapy, counselling therapy services and, with the amendment, registered massage therapy services. I hope Canadians understand that it is that easy to do. It is within the purview of the federal government to modify the Income Tax Act and Excise Tax Act. It is well within the business of the House to do that.

There are some complicating factors in the sense that, as mentioned, it was incorporated into the fall economic statement. This meant that the bill was sent to committee and returned in its original form. We believe the addition of registered massage therapy is a significant amendment and, therefore, the bill should be sent back to committee and re-examined from that perspective.



From a Canadian's perspective, this is very important because, as my colleague from Peterborough—Kawartha said previously, there is a mental health crisis in the country at the current time. Canadians have significant unmet mental health needs, and they are not able to access those services in a timely fashion. Historically, such access would probably have started with a visit to a family physician's office. We now know from the Canadian Medical Association that about seven million Canadians do not have access to primary care.

As that has traditionally been the way to access services, for those unable to access a family physician, it becomes exceedingly difficult to see a psychiatrist. Sadly, psychiatrists are also in very short supply in this country. Oftentimes, the family physician is also the gateway to psychology services, which are under the purview of provincial governments and funded therein. This means that people are now accessing private care, and private psychologists are exempt from this particular tax. We are very simply asking, as I mentioned previously, that private psychotherapy, counselling therapy and registered massage therapy services be exempt from the GST on their services as well.

Did those of us on this side of the House vote against the fall economic statement? Yes, we did. Much to the chagrin of others in the House, it is the job of the opposition to oppose those things with which we do not agree. We sit on this side of the House to say that there are several things the government continues to do that have taken us down a significant financial pathway that is unsustainable. It is important for Canadians to hear over and over again that all of us are paying a share of the \$1 billion a week just to service the debt that has been created.

When we look at those things, I believe there is a common-sense voice on this side of the House that needs to say we do not agree with that spending. There are certain things that we need to look at carefully. The bill would allow the tax to be removed from those particular services. Given that, as I said previously, it is very important for Canadians with mental health issues to have access to services without tax associated with them. If we do the math, depending on where one lives, about every eighth session would be free. However, nothing is free. We all know that. We still pay for it; we would just not pay the tax. Therefore, people would get an extra session with the money they would normally have spent anyway.

Let us remove the tax from psychotherapy, counselling therapy and registered massage therapy services.

• (1145)

**The Speaker:** The question is on the amendment.

[*Translation*]

If a member participating in person wishes that the amendment be carried or carried on division, or if a member of a recognized party participating in person wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

[*English*]

**Mr. Stephen Ellis:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to request a recorded division.

### *Government Orders*

[*Translation*]

**The Speaker:** Pursuant to Standing Order 98, the recorded division stands deferred until Wednesday, June 19, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

[*English*]

The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons is rising on a point of order.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I think you will find it the will of the House to suspend until Government Orders at 12 o'clock.

SITTING SUSPENDED

**The Speaker:** The House will be suspended until 12 o'clock.

(The sitting of the House was suspended at 11:49 a.m.)

SITTING RESUMED

(The House resumed at 12:01 p.m.)

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1200)

[*Translation*]

### BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2024, NO. 1

BILL C-69—TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

**Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Minister of Transport, Lib.)** moved:

That, in relation to Bill C-69, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 16, 2024, not more than five further hours shall be allotted to the consideration at report stage and five hours shall be allotted to the consideration at third reading stage of the bill; and

That, at the expiry of the five hours provided for the consideration at report stage and at the expiry of the five hours provided for the consideration at third reading stage of the said bill, any proceedings before the House shall be interrupted, if required for the purpose of this order, and, in turn, every question necessary for the disposal of the said stage of the bill then under consideration shall be put forthwith and successively, without further debate or amendment.

[*English*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Pursuant to Standing Order 67(1), there will now be a 30-minute question period. I invite hon. members who wish to ask questions to rise or to use the “raise hand” function so that the Chair has some idea of the number of members who wish to participate in this question period.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Battle River—Crowfoot.

**Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC):** Madam Speaker, here we are again with time allocation. After a disastrous budget rollout and spring session, instead of the Liberals listening to the feedback that I know Canadians are giving them about their budget, their economic mismanagement and their scandal-plagued affairs, they are slamming their budget down the throats of Canadians even though it is clear they are not buying what the Liberals are selling.

*Government Orders*

I want to ask a very specific question. There are hundreds of billions of dollars in new spending allowances that have been granted through the Liberals' economic agenda. Can the minister articulate very clearly why they had to go beyond and increase the debt allowance and the debt borrowing capacity of this country, which far exceeds the spending proposed in this budget? Can she very clearly articulate why they are demanding so much cash when they are unable to account for where it is going?

**Hon. Filomena Tassi (Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, let us be clear about what this budget is about. It is delivering for Canadians. The member refers to terms in this budget that I absolutely do not agree with. We know that Canadians are struggling, and our government is there to support them every step of the way.

In this budget, we look at programs like affordable child care to get women back to work. Think of the contributions women are making to the workforce. Our government is making it easier for women to share their gifts and to participate to a fuller extent by providing them with affordable child care.

There is a national school food program. I worked in education for 20 years. I can tell members that there is a disparity across the country with respect to the food programs taking place. Yes, some teachers are able to take the time, and they have the resources to do it, but there are schools where children are hungry. We know that when children are hungry, they are not at their best. Our government wants to support children so that when they go to school, they have full stomachs. That means the learning takes place at a higher level. They are now able to learn because their stomachs are full. The fact that they are all accessing this food means there is no stigma by providing this. There are 400,000 students who would benefit from this program.

We want to provide dental care. Seniors have said to me that in their senior years, they have never had dental care. Now, with the dental care program, seniors would have access to dental care. Then, of course, there is pharmacare and housing.

In all of these areas, there are supports that the government would give to Canadians because we know it is a challenging time. At the end of the day, members should think about how these supports would elevate Canadians. We are all better off, and we benefit when we all have an opportunity to succeed—

• (1205)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Questions and comments, the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Madam Speaker, the minister has neglected to say that all of those things that are good things in the budget came as a result of NDP pressure. We had a government that did nothing for a number of years. We now have dental care, thanks to the NDP. We now have pharmacare moving through its last stages. We pushed the government to make up for that disastrous decision by the Liberal government, decades ago, to end the national housing program, and we are finally getting financing for affordable housing and getting national school lunches, all thanks to the NDP.

The minister should be phrasing and adding “thanks to the NDP” for every one of those measures that it brought to the budget. What I do not understand is why Conservatives have fought so ferociously to oppose every one of those measures, including Conservatives who have seen thousands of their constituents step up already for the NDP dental care plan. It is the most successful new government program in decades, with over two million seniors already a part of it.

Why are Conservatives blocking this important legislation?

**Hon. Filomena Tassi:** Madam Speaker, I am a person who has been very clear from the beginning of my time in office that positive politics works and that collaboration works. This is an example of working together to ensure that supports for Canadians have been delivered. Yes, I thank the NDP members for their support in helping us get these measures forward. It is with that support that we are going to get these items across the finish line. These are items which, on this side of the House, we have recognized as so very important for Canadians, whether it is housing, as I have said, or whether it is child care or the food program, and there are also opportunities to foster and to promote economic development, a file that is very close to my heart. This is a budget that demonstrates that we, as a government, believe in Canadians. We believe in the talent they possess. We want to give them the opportunity to flourish to their full potential. That is what this budget does.

**Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC):** Madam Speaker, Budget Implementation Act, 2023, No. 1, Bill C-47, made numerous changes to the Food and Drugs Act, redefining what a therapeutic product is. We now see, in Bill C-69, that there are again further amendments to the Food and Drugs Act. There do not appear to be any appropriations in the budget whatsoever that actually require more spending for Health Canada or for the natural health directorate.

I am wondering why the government is continuing to put major changes into how natural health products are governed and regulated in this country, through budget implementation acts, when there is no budget appropriation for it.

Why are they doing this omnibus backdoor approach, instead of actually consulting with the industry, and leaving them blindsided by these budget changes?

• (1210)

**Hon. Filomena Tassi:** Madam Speaker, it is interesting. Usually, we get criticized for too much consultation, and now we are getting criticized for not enough. In this budget, we have invested \$200 billion in health care. We recognize the importance of providing affordable, good health care to Canadians. We are working with provinces and territories in order to ensure that this health care is provided, that there is access to doctors and that information is shared to help expedite treatment and care. In my own file, in economic development, we are making investments in projects like SOPHIE, the Southern Ontario Pharmaceutical and Health Innovation Ecosystem.

*Government Orders*

These projects are moving health care forward so that we are investing in those research capabilities and also in the commercialization aspect. Health care is a top priority for the government. Our investments have demonstrated that. We are going to continue to deliver the health care Canadians need.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I do appreciate the conversation that is taking place today, and it is always an honour and a privilege to represent the good people of the riding of Waterloo and to hear the comments made by colleagues on the other side. I will just remind the NDP members that it was their party that chose to bring down a Liberal government and that allowed former prime minister Stephen Harper and the Conservative Party to abolish Kyoto, to abolish Kelowna and to abolish early learning and child care education in this country. It is only appropriate that the NDP show up again to make sure that we have it available because it used to be available. It was their electoral expediency that saw them remain in the opposition benches, but it was Canadians who got hit.

I will remind the Conservatives as well that it was the Conservatives who chose to lower the GST by 2%, which actually took a massive toll on the economics of the country. The Conservatives expected seniors to keep working until the age of 67 so that they could help recoup those costs. They said to seniors, who have already given so much, that they expect them to give more. They are now voting against the capital gains, and they are voting against this budget.

What is in this budget that is so important to help Canadians, especially the most vulnerable, and to ensure that our country can succeed and that Canadians can do better?

**Hon. Filomena Tassi:** Madam Speaker, the hon. member mentioned seniors. We, as a government, and I, as the previous minister of seniors, have a passion to ensure that seniors are getting the support they need.

Let us look at some of the measures, such as pharmacare, dental care and taking the GST off purpose-built rentals, which applies to seniors' residences as well. Let me be clear that we have advocated and worked for seniors, as we should, since 2015. I was honoured to serve as the first full minister of seniors in this country.

Let us look at the measures that we have implemented. We doubled the new horizons for seniors program. Seniors from across the country have been in tears, telling me that the programs that were supported have changed their lives, including the social integration, being able to participate and rolling back the age of eligibility for pensions from 67 to 65.

I ask seniors out there to listen to this, as that is two years of support that would have been taken out of their pockets from the ages of 65 to 67. They would not have received those pension supports. Not only did we roll it back so that they do receive it, we have increased the money on the GIS for those most vulnerable seniors, and that has raised hundreds of thousands of seniors out of poverty.

In this budget, there is much for seniors. I am hoping that the official opposition has a change of heart, recognizes that, and actually puts into action the words that they say, such as compassion and

understanding, for Canadians. That is exactly what this budget does.

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am really glad to hear the minister talk about seniors.

I received an email from Patricia from Port Alberni. She sent it on Friday. She talked about saving \$532 at her dentist on Friday. She said that not only did she save that money, but also that this would enable her to pay the property taxes. She thanked the NDP for sticking to its guns for a Canadian dental care plan.

We are sticking to our guns. We know that the Liberals voted against a dental care plan. They voted against a pharmacare plan in the past. However, right now, we are making sure that we put Canadians heart and centre in dealing with combatting inflation and making sure that we expand our health care system.

What do the Conservatives want to do? They want to take away Patricia's dental care plan. We know that. We know Conservative MPs all have a gold-plated dental care plan and pharmacare plan. What do they want to do? They want to take away Canadians' dental care plan. That is what the Conservatives want to do. They want to strip that from Canadians.

• (1215)

**Hon. Filomena Tassi:** Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his advocacy on so many fronts.

As I have said, collaboration is extremely important. In my time here, I want to demonstrate that positive politics work when we work together in the interests of those we serve, not to score political points or to win favour, but to actually roll up our sleeves and get the job done.

This budget presents so many positive measures for Canadians, and of course, we are happy to have the NDP support us on so many measures. I know that mental health is very important to the member opposite, and there is \$500 million for mental health supports in the budget. This is going to make a huge difference. I have three post-secondary institutions in my riding. Mental health is an area that they have raised over and over again.

To students and young people out there, I say, "Keep contributing. Keep giving your opinions and advice." They are on the ground. We want to make things easier for them, whether it is through mental health supports, or through supporting them by taking interest off of their loans, giving them more support in loans or supporting them if they are working and studying in the area of innovation and research. We are with them every step of the way.

Canadians want positive politics. They want collaboration. They do not want division. Let us work together in the House and demonstrate that it is possible and that we are all on a better path. We can elevate each other if we practise positive politics and collaboration.

*Government Orders*

**Mrs. Anna Roberts (King—Vaughan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I would like to ask my colleague across the way a question. Over two million people are using the food bank. Seniors are now living in shelters. They cannot afford to even pay their rents.

What, in the budget, have the Liberals allocated to ensure that seniors are able to live? They have not done anything with a carbon tax. The Liberals planned this dental plan, which is great, but if people do not have food or a place to live, how are they supposed to support themselves?

**Hon. Filomena Tassi:** Madam Speaker, this is interesting because the leader of the official opposition has said that he has not seen any food flow as a result of the budget. That is because it is in the budget. We need to get the budget passed for the national food program to be unveiled, so we can get food to those who need it most.

I have already talked about the support for seniors. I am going to share a story about Kelly, who is a senior in Scarborough. I was just there on Friday. Kelly talked about how she was given the keys to a unit. She was promised a unit. It is an affordable housing unit made possible by the supports from this government. We have supported housing for those who live independently. They are affordable housing units with wraparound supports for those who need supports. It is 24-hour support. That is the type of housing that our government is delivering. Kelly said that, when she found out she was going to have a new place to call home, she cried. She lived in the community, and every day, she walked past the site where the new housing complex was being built. She loved watching it get developed.

I know the opposition members like slogans, and I want to be positive. I have a slogan for them: Let us get the food flowing. Let us get the businesses growing, and let us get the houses showing. That is exactly what the budget does.

• (1220)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ):** Madam Speaker, there will be no suspense here. This is another closure motion which the New Democratic Party will support. I have lost count of the number of gag orders limiting time on questions as fundamental as the budget.

I understand the NDP even less, who continue to insist on limiting parliamentarians' right to speak to the budget. Yes, the budget allows gains to be made. However, when we hear the Liberals speak on the topics of social housing, the new disability benefit, the environment and climate change, they get all worked up.

They are also creating badly written social programs, like dental care, which has been assigned to a private insurance company, rather than recognizing Quebec's expertise and jurisdiction in this area and transferring the money with full compensation. This would have allowed us to enhance our own program.

I am becoming uncomfortable with the fact that parliamentarians, in a democracy, should face repeated closures on substantive issues. It is certain that my political party and I will again vote against this attempt to limit the time to study a budget that does not meet Quebecers' needs.

[*English*]

**Hon. Filomena Tassi:** Madam Speaker, I have great respect for the member. She served as my critic, I believe, when I was the Minister of Labour. I always appreciate not only her advocacy, but also the approach she takes in the House. She is respectful and constructive. I am glad she asked me a question about the amount of time we have to pass the bill. Liberals want to get this budget across the finish line because of all of the things I have mentioned thus far, as well as what we have heard in the House throughout debate.

Let us look at the amount of time we have had to talk about the bill. There have been six meetings at the finance committee. The last meeting was clause by clause on June 4. On May 22, the Conservatives filibustered. That is regrettable because we lost time. Instead of making up time, we were losing time and actually killed time. Filibustering is permitted in this place, but to be honest, I do not understand why we permit it.

On May 30, we had four hours of department witnesses. May 31, we had four hours with many subject matter experts. June 3, we had four hours with many subject matter experts, including the PBO. June 4, we had five hours and clause by clause. We had debate May 6 for two hours. On May 7, we had debate for four hours. On May 8, we had debate for one and a half hours, and on May 20 as well. It has been many hours. The true colours of the Conservatives' position have been made known. Before the budget was presented, and immediately when it was presented, they were in opposition to it. There is opposition to the bill.

Let us be clear about what the position is. I say this as respectfully as I can. It is clear the Conservatives do not want the budget to pass, and they will implement every measure that they can to stop the budget from passing. This is not about having enough time to debate. We do have time to debate, and we have had time.

That is what I would say in response to the member. Again, I thank her for her approach in the House.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Madam Speaker, we have seen fierce opposition from Bloc Québécois members to all the programs Quebecers want. To date, 700,000 Quebecers, more than anywhere else in the country, have shown their full support for the NDP's dental care program by signing up for it. We have also seen a huge coalition form in support of pharmacare. According to this coalition, nearly 2 million Quebecers are calling for the implementation of pharmacare.

The Bloc Québécois has opposed all these measures and now opposes this budget, which would allow affordable homes to be built and provide lunches to schoolchildren. Why does my colleague think Bloc Québécois members so ferociously oppose all the measures Quebecers want, and fail to listen to people in their riding who want dental care, pharmacare, affordable housing and, of course, schoolchildren to actually have the opportunity to eat during the day?

*Government Orders*

• (1225)

[English]

**Hon. Filomena Tassi:** Madam Speaker, I am happy that my colleague has asked me this because I did not have time in responding to the last question to answer it, but I agree completely with what my hon. colleague has just said. There are a number of priorities in the budget that Quebec would love to see implemented. My colleague has outlined a number of them that I think Quebeckers want. In addition to that, I look at some of the supports that we have provided for Quebec. Just last summer, we provided \$1.8 billion in a housing agreement. In budget 2024, we provided \$3.4 billion to support young researchers in Canada and Quebec, \$1.28 billion to fight homelessness, and \$1.5 billion to protect and expand affordable housing.

There are lots of things here, but let me add this as a final point: Yes, Quebec does have some measures that are in place, so let us build on what we have. This does not have to be adversarial or pit one against the other. If we have something that is working, let us continue to work collaboratively, learn from what works and build on what works, but make the investments, not cuts. We do not want cuts.

There are members from the official opposition who are writing me, for example, on CFDCs, which are community future development corporations. They want to see more money into CFDCs. I want to know what they are going to do. Are they going to take that position publicly? Are they going to say that publicly? What dollars are they going to cut because they have this new dollar-for-dollar approach? What is going to be cut? That is what I would ask the official opposition.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I think it is very clear that we have to move time allocation because the Conservatives are just delaying, and that is what they do. For the average person out there watching this from a high level, let us say what happened. The Leader of the Opposition said, before he even looked at the budget, that Conservatives were against it, so they decided they were against it, but then they continued to delay like this. We already know they are voting against it. They have already made it clear they are voting against it, but they are preventing us from voting on it, so I think it is very clear, especially to anybody who watches parliamentary procedure, that we have no choice but to move time allocation because it is not as though they are debating to try to inform policy or change direction. We already know they are against it. They have made that very clear, but they will not let it come to a vote.

I am wondering if the minister can provide her insight into that.

**Hon. Filomena Tassi:** Madam Speaker, I will tell what members are voting against when they vote against this budget because it is not talked about much: investing in economic development.

I have had the opportunity, which is a gift, to travel across southern Ontario and see amazing businesses that the government has supported, which are taking their business to the next level. I look at companies such as Cedar Valley, which started as a grade 10 high school project. This young man went home and talked to his mother, and they created Cedar Valley dressing and chips. With a small investment from our government, this business is now taking it to

the whole next level. They started with a little fryer that they brought out and showed me. It was a Hamilton Beach. I remember it well because of the Hamilton name. I love that. The money that we gave allowed them to buy a big machine, and that allows them to deliver chips now and fulfill their contracts with businesses such as Costco, and they want to go externally. They were on *Dragons' Den* and got \$1 million in support.

These are the businesses. With economic development we have potential, and it is not often talked about, but the potential we have in Canada to support entrepreneurs, to bring their businesses to the next level and to get them exporting to other countries around the world is all there. Supports are in the budget. I cannot wait to go make announcements that would have a result because of what is in this budget.

**Mrs. Anna Roberts (King—Vaughan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I just want to address the situation. As shadow minister for seniors, I get hundreds of emails from seniors across the country. I am going to quote one I received recently. Paul wrote to me and said, “The new capital gains tax is robbery. We are middle class and worked hard all our lives. We managed to scrape together a house and a cottage after 40 years of work. We made modest gains and the Prime Minister wants to take a sizable chunk because he spends money like a drunken sailor.”

Why will the Prime Minister not amend the budget to include that the bottom 99% of Canadians are not impacted?

• (1230)

**Hon. Filomena Tassi:** Madam Speaker, I talked about the supports for seniors that we have implemented, whether it is the New Horizons for Seniors program or the rolling back. When they talk about thousands of dollars being taken, two years of pension supports would have been removed because the eligibility was going to be increased to age 67 by the Conservatives. It is on the record; it was in the works. We rolled that back.

In terms of the capital gains, this is about fairness for everyone. I am the daughter of a steelworker. The steelworker, the PSW, the educational assistant and the nurse all pay tax on 100% of the income they earn. What is being presented with respect to capital gains is an inclusion rate that is going to be increased, but this is asking those who have a little more to pay it, so we can address things like the housing crisis.

What will happen at the end of the day is that we are going to elevate everyone. Think of a country where everybody is elevated and supported, a country that is getting people who are on the streets into a home and getting Kelly, who is living in not very good conditions, into a home, where she is in tears and is proud. This enables people to be at their best, and we want to see that potential revealed. That is exactly why all these supports, like dental care—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Questions and comments, the hon. member for Courtenay—Alberni.

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Madam Speaker, we continue to hear Conservatives today talking about the capital gains tax, when in fact in my riding it is going to impact 118 people. That is who we know the Conservatives are fighting for. They are fighting for the 118 people, just like my predecessors, two Conservatives in my riding. Over 32 years, between the two of them, the only PMB they got passed was for removing the excise tax on diamond jewellery. One cannot even make this stuff up. They did it under a Conservative government majority.

What do the Conservatives want to do today? They want to stop dental care, stop pharmacare and get rid of the school food program. They are here to block getting help to people. They are not here to bring forward solutions—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** I will give the hon. minister a few seconds to answer.

**Hon. Filomena Tassi:** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the member's passion for these programs that are in the budget. I have the same passion. There are measures with respect to capital gains where, in fact, a business, unless it makes over \$6 million, is going to be better off because of the exemptions we have elevated. I agree with the member. There are going to be a few that are impacted, but as I said, let us elevate all Canadians. Let us ensure that everybody has—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** It is my duty to interrupt the proceedings at this time and put forth with the question on the motion now before the House.

[*Translation*]

The question is on the motion.

[*English*]

Shall I dispense?

**Some hon. members:** No.

[*Chair read text of motion to House*]

[*Translation*]

If a member participating in person wishes that the motion be carried or carried on division, or if a member of a recognized party participating in person wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, we request a recorded vote, please.

• (1235)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Call in the members.

• (1315)

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(*Division No. 825*)

YEAS

Members

Alghabra

Ali

Anand  
Angus  
Arya  
Atwin  
Badawey  
Baker  
Battiste  
Bendayan  
Bittle  
Blaney  
Boissonnault  
Bradford  
Cannings  
Casey  
Chahal  
Chatel  
Chiang  
Collins (Victoria)  
Coteau  
Damoff  
Dhaliwal  
Diab  
Dubourg  
Duguid  
Ehsassi  
Erskine-Smith  
Fisher  
Fortier  
Fraser  
Gaheer  
Garrison  
Gerretsen  
Green  
Hajdu  
Hardie  
Holland  
Hughes  
Hutchings  
Idlout  
Jaczek  
Jowhari  
Kayabaga  
Khalid  
Koutrakis  
Kwan  
Lambropoulos  
Lapointe  
Lauzon  
Lebouthillier  
Long  
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)  
MacDonald (Malpeque)  
MacKinnon (Gatineau)  
Martinez Ferrada  
Mathysen  
May (Saarnich—Gulf Islands)  
McGuinty  
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)  
McPherson  
Mendicino  
Miller  
Morrissey  
Naqvi  
Noormohamed  
Oliphant  
Petitpas Taylor  
Qualtrough  
Rodriguez  
Romanado  
Sahota  
Saks  
Sarai  
Schiefke  
Anandasangaree  
Arseneault  
Ashton  
Bachrach  
Bains  
Barron  
Beech  
Bibeau  
Blair  
Blois  
Boulerice  
Brière  
Carr  
Chagger  
Champagne  
Chen  
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)  
Cormier  
Dabrusin  
Desjarlais  
Dhillon  
Drouin  
Duclos  
Dzerowicz  
El-Khoury  
Fillmore  
Fonseca  
Fragiskatos  
Fry  
Gainey  
Gazan  
Gould  
Guilbeault  
Hanley  
Hepfner  
Housefather  
Hussen  
Iacono  
Ien  
Johns  
Julian  
Kelloway  
Khera  
Kusmierczyk  
Lalonde  
Lamoureux  
Lattanzio  
LeBlanc  
Lightbound  
Longfield  
MacAulay (Cardigan)  
MacGregor  
Maloney  
Masse  
May (Cambridge)  
McDonald (Avalon)  
McKay  
McLeod  
Mendès  
Miao  
Morrice  
Murray  
Ng  
O'Connell  
O'Regan  
Powlowski  
Robillard  
Rogers  
Rota  
Sajjan  
Samson  
Scarpaleggia  
Serré

*Government Orders*

Sgro  
Sheehan  
Sidhu (Brampton South)  
Sorbara  
St-Onge  
Tassi  
Thompson  
Turnbull  
Van Bynen  
Vandal  
Virani  
Wilkinson  
Zahid  
Zuberi — 175

Shanahan  
Sidhu (Brampton East)  
Singh  
Sousa  
Sudds  
Taylor Roy  
Trudeau  
Valdez  
van Koeverden  
Vandenbeld  
Weiler  
Yip  
Zarrillo

Scheer  
Seeback  
Shiple  
Sinclair-Desgagné  
Soroka  
Ste-Marie  
Strahl  
Thériault  
Thomas  
Tolmie  
Uppal  
Vecchio  
Vien  
Vignola  
Vis  
Wagantall  
Waugh  
Williams  
Zimmer — 147

Schmale  
Shields  
Simard  
Small  
Steinley  
Stewart  
Stubbs  
Therrien  
Tochor  
Trudel  
Van Popta  
Vidal  
Vierson  
Villemure  
Vuong  
Warkentin  
Webber  
Williamson

**NAYS**

## Members

Aboultaif  
Albas  
Arnold  
Barlow  
Barsalou-Duval  
Bergeron  
Béubé  
Blanchette-Joncas  
Bragdon  
Brock  
Calkins  
Carrie  
Chambers  
Cooper  
Dancho  
DeBellefeuille  
Desbiens  
Doherty  
Dreeschen  
Ellis  
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)  
Fast  
Findlay  
Gallant  
Généreux  
Gill  
Godin  
Gourde  
Hallan  
Jeneroux  
Kelly  
Kitchen  
Kram  
Kurek  
Lake  
Larouche  
Lehoux  
Leslie  
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)  
Lloyd  
Maguire  
Martel  
McCauley (Edmonton West)  
Melillo  
Moore  
Morrison  
Muys  
Normandin  
Paul-Hus  
Perkins  
Poilievre  
Redekopp  
Rempel Garner  
Roberts  
Ruff

Aitchison  
Allison  
Baldinelli  
Barrett  
Beaulieu  
Berthold  
Bezan  
Block  
Brassard  
Brunelle-Duceppe  
Caputo  
Chabot  
Chong  
Dalton  
Davidson  
Deltell  
Desilets  
Dowdall  
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)  
Epp  
Falk (Provencher)  
Ferrerri  
Fortin  
Gaudreau  
Genuis  
Gladu  
Goodridge  
Gray  
Hoback  
Jivani  
Khanna  
Kmieciak  
Kram-Neuman  
Kusie  
Lantsman  
Lawrence  
Lemire  
Lewis (Essex)  
Liepert  
Lobb  
Majumdar  
Mazier  
McLean  
Michaud  
Morantz  
Motz  
Nater  
Patzner  
Pauzé  
Perron  
Rayes  
Reid  
Richards  
Rood  
Savard-Tremblay

**PAIRED**

## Members

Freeland  
Plamondon — 2

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

**REPORT STAGE**

The House resumed from June 11 consideration of Bill C-69, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 16, 2024, as reported (with amendments) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

**Mr. Andy Fillmore (Halifax, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is with mixed emotions that I rise to speak in the chamber today for the last time as the member for Halifax. I have informed the Prime Minister that when the House of Commons resumes in the fall, I will not be returning. I rise today to share some reflections as this chapter of my service to Halifax comes to a close. What a chapter it has been: three elections, nine years full of learning, hard work, new friendships, unexpected adventures, plenty of ups, a few downs and, according to the Library of Parliament, 2,414 votes. It is incredible. It is difficult to put into words just how much it has all meant.

After a 20-year career as a city planner, I arrived in Centre Block as the first city planner ever elected to Canada's House of Commons. That career instilled in me the value of thoughtful planning to the well-being of Canadians who call our communities home. I saw what poor planning, neglect and underfunding of our communities were doing to Canada, which ultimately was my call to run, that and a convincing conversation with my dear friend and mentor, Halifax's own Dale Godsoe, herself a member of former prime minister Paul Martin's advisory task force on cities and communities. Dale is just now celebrating her 80th birthday. I wish Dale a happy birthday.

I ran for office because I wanted to be a voice for Canadian communities like mine, to make the case that our cities and towns could propel Canada toward its best days if we just unlocked their potential. As I have pursued that goal here, I have so many people to thank who have supported me along the way, first and foremost, my incredible daughter, Daisy Isabella Fillmore.

*Government Orders*

We all know too well the immense burden that our lives in politics place on our family and loved ones. That burden is greatest on the teenagers who grow up with a parent in politics. When I was nominated in 2014, Daisy was seven years old. She was eight at my 2015 election. She is now a magnificent 17-year-old off to university in the fall. Through it all, she has been loving, wise beyond her years and mostly patient. She was my beautiful little shadow at constituency events as a preteen and not at all interested in me or my events as a teen. Now, as a brilliant young adult, she has come back to me and supports me in what comes next. I am so profoundly proud of her and forever grateful. She teaches me something new every time we sit down and have a talk. She has been and will always be my north star. I love her beyond my ability to express it.

• (1320)

I also want to thank my family. My big sisters, Jenny Hawes and Julia Doughty, sat on our beloved Bayswater Beach, back in 2014, and told me to go for it, so I did. My mom and greatest champion, Anne Ellen Fillmore, did not live to see her son sit in this place, but she is with me every day that I am here. My father, Peter Fillmore, always demonstrated the importance of being guided by purpose.

Now to my political family, beginning with my remarkable staff team. In Halifax, that is the indefatigable Joanne Macrae, Alec MacKinnon, Mackenzie Lambert and Lew Rogers. Previously, it was Dakota Kochie, Jennifer Drillio, Sarah Dobson, Cameron Lusby and, most recently, Will Regan. Here in Ottawa, it is Breton Cousins and, earlier, Jared Valdes, Matt Conley and Nicholas McCue. From the very first day until the last, seven parliamentary interns, or PIPs, have been a critical part of our team. My thanks to Etienne Grandmaison, Claire Sieffert, Andrew Walker, Enya Bouchard, Angelica Kalubiaka, Sarah Rollason-MacAulay and Camille Cournoyer. In politics, as in life, there is nothing of greater value than teammates who have each other's back, and that has been us for nine years. My team has always been there for me, and I will always be there for them.

In Ottawa, I have been fortunate to chair the indigenous and northern affairs committee and to serve as parliamentary secretary to four ministries: democratic institutions, Canadian heritage; infrastructure and communities; and innovation, science and industry. I want to sincerely thank each of those ministers and teams for their work and their support.

Coming back to Halifax, I am incredibly grateful to have been backed by an electoral district association led by current chair Martha Reynolds, past chairs Joanne Bouchard and Michelle Daigault, and indeed everyone who served on the board of the association throughout my time as their candidate. I would not have walked these halls for nine years were it not for an extraordinary team of campaign volunteers of every age and background who joined me on the doorsteps, on the phones and at countless events. It takes real guts to climb the stairs to a stranger's door and engage them in the political process, and yet that is what this team has done for over 100,000 doors over three election cycles. These are the people who power Canadian politics: tireless, selfless volunteers.

My final thanks is for those to whom I owe it all: the good people of Halifax who took a chance on me and then renewed their trust in me twice more. I came here to be their champion. Whether

they voted for me or not, I hope in the end that I have served our city well. Looking back now, we achieved a lot together. We moved Halifax's share of federal funding from the bottom of the pack to eighth out of 338 ridings in Canada. With shipbuilders, we stood up for good shipbuilding jobs and closing the work gap. With community partners, we saved our beloved Northwest Arm from harmful infilling.

With provincial partners, we reopened Georges Island in Halifax Harbour after generations of closure. With longshoremen, we defended the Port of Halifax. With veteran advocates, we revived the veteran's ID card. With advocates across the country, we created Canada's first national active transportation strategy and associated fund.

With colleagues here in the House, we passed Motion No. 45, my private member's motion that put a green lens on federally funded infrastructure projects. With government and industry partners, we brought NATO's Defence Innovation Accelerator of the North Atlantic, DIANA, to Halifax.

With indigenous partners, we secured funding for a new Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre in downtown Halifax. And with the Royal Canadian Navy, we established the first-ever Halifax International Fleet Week.

These are just some of the projects that I have had the chance to work on and lead as Halifax MP, and yet there is still more to do, like my current effort to open up Canada Post lands in Halifax for housing. Rest assured, my colleagues here and back at home in Halifax will continue to hear from me on this.

I also want to express my deepest thanks to my dear colleagues in this place. This experience has taught me not just about the inner workings of Parliament and politics, but about Canada itself. What a unique experience it is to sit in a room with 338 people representing every corner, every single community of our vast nation. In the 42nd Parliament, my seatmate was former MP Pam Goldsmith-Jones, the member for West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country. There we were representing the west coast and the east coast, separated by 4,400 kilometres and yet, sitting side by side at the same desk in this chamber, we found so much in common in the Canadians that we represented and in their shared hopes and in their aspirations.

In moments of intense debate in this House, when I struggled to see the other side, the thing that helped me make sense of this place was to remember that each of us here in this chamber together represented every single Canadian, regardless of background or persuasion, and that is the beauty of our Canadian democracy. Let us never forget that we do this job in service to every single one of them.



*Government Orders*

• (1325)

This job has taught me a lot about my hometown too. It has taken me into places I may never otherwise have been. I have been welcomed into people's homes, their places of worship, community centres, businesses, workplaces and backyards. I have forged new friendships with communities of every kind, seeing Halifax in a way that has inspired me over and over again.

I spoke earlier about the potential of our country's cities and towns to propel Canada toward its best days if only we unlock their potential. I believe there is nowhere in Canada that is more true than in Halifax, a municipality bursting with hard-won potential. Over the last two decades, so many Haligonians have rolled up our sleeves, linked arms and put our collective ambition into action. Together, we have turned the tides of stagnation that had haunted our municipality for decades and turned Halifax toward prosperity and growth.

Today that growth has brought many opportunities, but it has also brought its share of challenges, and so today, while I find myself reflecting on the past nine years, my sights are firmly set on the future, because the job is not finished at home. There is still work to do for Halifax, and I intend to see to it.

**Mr. Chris d'Entremont (West Nova, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is highly unusual for me to ask a question or even make a comment, but I just wanted to reflect a little on the hon. member's speech when he talked about family. All of us come with some of the very same kinds of challenges when we come here, where we leave family behind in order come back and would like to be able to spend more time with them. What the hon. member is doing is trying to find another opportunity to spend more time at home.

I do congratulate him in making his decision on putting his name forward, I think, for mayor of Halifax. I keep hearing that. That is the story going around in the community.

With all the things the hon. member has listed, what is the project he looks most forward to that he did not have the chance to do as the member of Parliament for Halifax?

**Mr. Andy Fillmore:** Madam Speaker, indeed, this place can be very hard on families. I am so grateful that, as a result of COVID, we were able to innovate some virtual protocols such as voting by app, which have made this place more hospitable, friendly and welcoming to family and people with children. This is very important. Collectively, moving forward I hope this place protects those hard-won abilities to do so.

As for what is next in Halifax, like the rest of the country, there are a lot of houses to build. There are a lot of people to support in all kinds of different ways. However, there is tremendous optimism in my city, and I look forward to propelling that and keeping the good momentum we have built through hard work going into the future.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I am honoured to rise to celebrate my colleague from Halifax's career in federal politics. I really enjoyed working with him, particularly on the Standing Committee on Industry and Technology. I believe it is possible to be friends with and trust the

people with whom we work. I even believe that, together, we could have gotten Bill C-27 passed, if we still had similar responsibilities.

That being said, he talked about the many things that have been accomplished in Halifax, but he forgot one: Halifax hosted the Memorial Cup in 2019, which gave the Rouyn-Noranda Huskies the opportunity to win not one, but two cups, the President's Cup and the Memorial Cup, against the Mooseheads. Perhaps I should not mention that here. Perhaps now is not the time. I am sorry.

I really appreciate my colleague's ambition in running for mayor. I would like him to tell us what particular thing he is most proud of.

What is the greatest legacy he is leaving his city and this Parliament?

• (1330)

[*English*]

**Mr. Andy Fillmore:** Madam Speaker, I would tell my dear friend, the member for Abitibi—Témiscamingue, that of course my greatest accomplishment was making sure his Huskies could have a place to win in the Memorial Cup in Halifax. I hope it is a great legacy for both of us from my time in this place.

I am very proud of my work with the member on the Standing Committee on Industry and Technology. We worked together on all kinds of matters, such as critical minerals, quantum computing, the Copyright Act modernization, blockchain technologies, crypto and fair competition across industries. We did an awful lot together.

If I were to answer the member directly, my greatest accomplishment was done as a team with everyone in the House who achieved the great things for Canadians that are propelling them forward through what has been a difficult time and have set them up for a strong economy looking forward. We all did that together in so many different ways, and that is the thing I am proudest of.

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Madam Speaker, it is huge honour and privilege to rise after the final speech of my friend from Halifax. We have done many things together.

When he was the parliamentary secretary to the environment and climate change minister, he worked with me on a national strategy to combat plastic pollution and helped get his caucus to unanimously support that. We also worked together on cycling. I had a bill on a national cycling strategy. I remember getting the call the night before the announcement of the first-ever \$400 million dedicated to active transportation and an active transportation strategy.

*Government Orders*

The member also supported a health-based approach to the toxic drug crisis. He even broke away from his party and supported my bill. Last, he worked with me to double the firefighter tax credit and the tax credit for search and rescue.

I cannot say enough about the member's ability to work across political lines. I appreciate his dedication to the people of Halifax. I know he will be at home watching the last blow on a gale. He will not be missing it anymore. I had to use a maritime comment.

Will he be reaching out to the NDP, if he becomes the mayor of Halifax, in ways that we can continue to work together on things that are going to help benefit Canadians and the environment?

**Mr. Andy Fillmore:** Madam Speaker, I really do appreciate working with the member for Courtenay—Alberni. We have done very well together over a long period of time.

If I think back to the harmful plastics ban, it was about a week before that bill passed that my daughter, who I spoke about earlier today and who at that time was about 12 years old or so, texted me when I was here and asked me if there was anything I could do about helping sea life, given all the plastic bags and everything. A week later, I was able to tell her that, in fact, we had passed that bill with the member's help.

I want to finish with the firefighters' tax credit, an absolutely remarkable thing. I thank the member for the help that he applied to that. In fact, it doubled the credit from \$3,000 to \$6,000. That had everything to do with the advocacy of the member and other members. We are in a position now where we know the skills of firefighters are going to be called upon more and more frequently throughout the course of the year, and we need to do everything we can to position them for success. Again, collectively, we can all feel good about the way we have been able to position them for that success.

**Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise today to debate Bill C-69.

Here we are again. Another year, another NDP-Liberal budget, and every budget it seems is worse than the one before. This year's iteration of the budget is falsely titled "Fairness for Every Generation". The title is ironic because, after nine years of the government, virtually every generation in the country is worse off. In fact, I cannot think of a single demographic, other than the Liberal insiders, that is better off in nine years.

Our youth can only dream of affording a home after the government has allowed a housing shortfall. According to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, we would need to build 1.3 million homes to close the housing gap. Both renters and homeowners are struggling to pay their bills after the cost of housing has been allowed to double under the leadership of the Prime Minister.

Our seniors are seeing their pensions ravaged by inflation. Not that long ago, it used to be that their old age security, CPP and whatever other savings they might have could see them through on a monthly basis. That is no longer the case. The government has directly driven up that inflation, making life unaffordable by continuing to overspend. By piling on another \$61 billion of new spending this year, piling on to our already enormous debt, it has proven that it does not plan on changing course any time soon.

Parents are struggling with affordability, and it is now difficult for many families to feed their children. We are seeing yearly inflation rates for many food products in the double digits, while a record two million Canadians had to use a food bank in a single month last year, which is incredible.

Let us not forget the pesky carbon tax that compounds through the economy, costing over \$30 billion of economic activity, as recently highlighted by the Parliamentary Budget Officer. Therefore, not only is it costing us every time we make a purchase, but it is costing our economy \$30 billion in output. After nine years of the government creating intergenerational poverty, that would be a more apt name for this budget.

We know things are bad for the government when former Liberal Bank of Canada governor David Dodge has called it the worst budget since 1982, when the current Prime Minister's father was the prime minister. Like father, like son, as they say.

Instead of cutting back spending, the government has continued to be irresponsible and is spending money that Canadians no longer have. This has forced the Bank of Canada to raise interest rates. The cost to service the debt is now \$54.1 billion. One must wonder what \$54.1 billion could have been spent on instead of servicing the debt.

Like many Liberal bills, the budget has been turned into an omnibus bill to push forward strange and unusual requests that have little to do with budgets or measures, that are so controversial that if tabled on their own would not likely get the support of this chamber.

This year's boondoggle is the new tax on capital gains, a direct attack on business owners. It is only after the Conservatives pushed back that the government relented and put the capital gains changes into a separate bill. I chalk this up to pure incompetence, as the government continues to wedge, stigmatize and divide Canadians, and has open class warfare in our tax system.

The government claims that this change will bring fairness into the tax system essentially to target the richest 0.13%. Nothing could be further from the truth. What it conveniently ignores is how this tax will likely impact, and only impact, middle-class Canadians. This includes tradesmen, farmers who are worried about the succession of their family farms and small business owners who worry that it may not be worth growing their businesses in Canada anymore after these changes. The immigration stats are proving this to be true.

*Government Orders*

This would not be the typical 1%, but in fact would not be any of the 1% at all. Rather, they are our neighbours, friends and family members, the people who put food on our table and build our homes, and those industrious small business owners who employ people in our local communities and, meanwhile, sponsor the T-shirts for our kids' soccer teams.

I would also like to focus the attention of members on another underhanded change in the budget implementation act, and that is the newest changes to the Food and Drugs Act. The NDP vacated its role as an opposition party in March 2022, and instead of holding the government to account, its members have decided to help ease the passage of budget Bill C-47, which was the budget implementation act of 2023.

• (1335)

The ghastly bill was a direct attack on Canada's natural health product industry, one of the safest and best regulated industries on Planet Earth. These changes came as part of a push to radically change Health Canada's regulatory framework. Health Canada claimed that the changes were necessary to safeguard public health, but we simply know, with all the powers that it has, that this simply is not true.

The major alteration to the act was to change the definition of a therapeutic product to include natural health products. A therapeutic product is essentially a synthetic drug and it has little in common with food, which is the closest commonality that natural health products actually have. This would essentially put natural health products in the same regulatory framework as pharmaceutical drugs. It would also force the industry to pay for Health Canada's costly bureaucratic overhead with expensive new licensing fees and fines.

Essentially, by putting a self-funding model in place, what the government would be doing is just taxing the industry with that self-funding regulatory model so that it could free up the \$50 million a year, which it already uses to manage the natural health product space, and use that money on some other misguided priority of the government.

Previously, natural health products were exempt from much of the regulations in the Food and Drugs Act, as a common understanding is that natural health products are a much lower risk to one's health than a pharmaceutical drug. That is why I introduced my private member's Bill C-368 to repeal these changes to the Food and Drugs Act and return to the status quo, maintaining the distinction between natural health products and therapeutic products.

However, if my private member's bill fails to pass, this new budget may also have a big impact on the natural health products industry. That is because division 31 of part 4 of this new budget implementation bill has introduced new ministerial powers pertaining to therapeutic products. Once again, it would be another change to the Food and Drugs Act and Health Canada. Instead of putting it in its own bill, it is tucked into part of an omnibus budget implementation act.

The most concerning of these changes is to allow the minister to make unilateral changes on therapeutic products without any basis

in science demonstrating risk. Proposed subsection 30.01(1) of the bill states:

Subject to any regulations made under paragraph 30(1)(j.1) and if the Minister believes on reasonable grounds that the use of a therapeutic product, other than the intended use, may present a risk of injury to health, the Minister may, by order, establish rules in respect of the importation, sale, conditions of sale, advertising, manufacture, preparation, preservation, packaging, labelling, storage or testing of the therapeutic product for the purpose of preventing, managing or controlling the risk of injury to health.

That might seem innocuous, however, proposed subsection 30.01(3) states, "The Minister may make the order despite any uncertainty respecting the risk of injury to health that the use of the therapeutic product, other than the intended use, may present." It states "despite any uncertainty", so there would be no scientific rationale needed anymore, if the bill passes, for the minister to pull any product he or she wants off of the shelf. That is uncontrolled power. The powers that would be given to the ministers are concerning, but what is even more concerning is the combined effect of both budgets on our homegrown natural health product industry. The effect would be catastrophic. Not only is the industry reeling from the changes in the last budget implementation bill, but this one has introduced the element of arbitrary power in the hands of the minister.

There is little worse in business than uncertainty, and natural health products are only a small part of what is wrong with this bill and with industries across Canada. Small businesses are closing across our country, and yet, instead of supporting our entrepreneurs, the government uses every budget it has to target them.

We need a budget that empowers small business owners instead of penalizing them. In essence, I say not to buy into the budget title. If the last eight budgets from the Prime Minister are any indication, fairness for every generation is simply a pipe dream. As Winston Churchill once noted, "The inherent virtue of Socialism is the equal sharing of miseries." If by promoting fairness, the government means promoting intergenerational poverty, then in its own way, I guess it is fair, but absolutely nobody is better off.

Only the Conservatives can restore Canada's fiscal house to order. Instead of saddling Canadian families, tradesmen, small enterprise operators and entrepreneurs with ever-growing regulation and taxation, we would axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime. Canada has a vast and untapped economic potential and it is time for a Conservative government to unleash that potential.

• (1340)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is about fairness for generations. What we have witnessed is the Conservatives being consistent. Members will recall that when it came to having an additional tax on Canada's wealthiest 1%, the Conservatives voted against that a few years back. When it came time for a tax break for Canada's middle class, the Conservatives voted no for that too.

*Government Orders*

When we can look at the capital gains tax and what has been proposed, less than 1% would be affected, some of the wealthiest people in the country, and the Conservatives again are voting no. Where in the platform of the Conservatives does it imply any sense of fairness to Canadians? What I see are cuts, cuts and cuts.

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** Madam Speaker, the question from my colleague is sadly preposterous and hilarious in its own right. If we take a look at the wealthiest Canadians, we see that their wealth has actually doubled under the leadership of the Prime Minister. It is the middle class and those who are desperately trying to cling to it who are just hanging on, which is why the government continues to raise taxes to provide solutions to the problems it created in the first place.

I do not believe that Canadians want the government to do everything for them. Canadians used to be able to save for their own retirement, buy their own home and pay for their own health care, like dental plans and so on. They used to be able to buy their kids food. The Liberal government brags that there are now 400,000 kids in Canada who need the government to buy them lunch. I dream of a day when the government does not have to do any of that for any Canadians and when Canadians can look after themselves.

• (1345)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ):** Madam Speaker, of course there are partisan speeches and there are the repercussions they have on people in real life. I would like my colleague to tell me what tools are being given to communities in this budget so they can take charge of their lives, especially as concerns the question of housing and other issues. We need to find a way to decentralize management and trust our people on the ground. There are growing problems. Témiscamingue, for example, needs levers to take charge of its economic development, especially in the forestry sector.

Can my colleague commit to making sure that more power and means are given to communities that want to take charge of their development and invest in their economy if we have a change of government in the next election?

[*English*]

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** Madam Speaker, I am from Alberta, and like a Quebecker, I have very similar thoughts about how much control Ottawa should have on our daily lives.

I do believe, as my colleague is from Quebec, that he was trying to say thanks for the millions of dollars that his province receives in equalization and transfers. My province does not receive any of that.

However, we do not need to belabour those particular issues. If we actually cut the size of the federal government and allow our provincial governments to do the jobs that they are constitutionally empowered to do, get out of the way and just focus on economic growth and opportunity, reduce the red tape and the gatekeepers, as the leader of my party says, Canadians, including Quebeckers, will be better off.

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I applaud my colleague for his work on natural health products in particular.

I was interested to hear him deride the use of omnibus budget bills, because omnibus bills are a bit of a dark art that has been perfected by successive Conservative and Liberal governments. In fact it was a government under Stephen Harper that tabled a budget bill that was 880 pages in length. By comparison, the budget we are debating is 416 pages, including the annexes.

My question is a simple one: Has the Conservative Party decided to oppose the use of omnibus budget bills?

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** Madam Speaker, the irony of the question is that I have been here for 18 years and remember a time when the NDP used to actually keep count of how many times time allocation had been used, and they said they would never, ever do it. However, here we are; the NDP is just going along with every time allocation motion moved by the government across the way. We would have plenty of time to have the debate if we did not have time allocation on Bill C-69.

I will remind my colleague that when Stephen Harper was the prime minister, we cut taxes over 130 times. That required a fairly big budget implementation act.

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, is a real pleasure for me to stand here on behalf of my constituents in the riding of Davenport to speak to Bill C-69, the budget implementation act.

It is legislation that would deliver on key measures from budget 2024, a budget that would advance our government's plan to build more homes faster, make life cost less and grow the economy in a way that helps generations get ahead. Budget 2024 is a plan to build a Canada where people of all generations have a fair chance to build a good middle-class life, a Canada where Canadians, especially young Canadians, can get ahead, where their work pays off and where there are homes that they can afford.

Fairness matters. Budget 2024 matters. Bill C-69 matters.

[*Translation*]

The bill we are studying allows us to implement several elements of the last budget, as well as policies that the government announced in recent months. I am thinking in particular of the housing sector, because giving a fair chance to the next generation begins with housing.

• (1350)

[English]

One of the key elements of the plan is that it would improve the homebuyers' plan. This is one of the programs that can help Canadians buy their first home. It allows people to withdraw money tax-free from their RRSP to make a down payment for their first house. Homebuyers then pay themselves back over the years by putting the money back into their RRSPs. The program has been in place for over 30 years, and it has enabled thousands of Canadians to become homeowners. I am one of them; I used the program to buy my own home, and I am delighted that we are expanding the program.

Across the country, especially in major cities, home prices have gone up steeply. With rising prices, the amount needed for a down payment is now much greater. The housing market facing today's young families is different from what it was when the homebuyers' plan was created, a time when many of today's young buyers had not yet been born.

We still need to help first-time buyers save, but the support must keep pace with market prices. Currently, a person can withdraw \$35,000 from an RRSP to use in the homebuyers' plan. As announced in budget 2024, we have proposed to increase the limit to \$60,000 per person.

[Translation]

For couples, if both spouses meet the eligibility requirements of the home buyers' plan, the maximum withdrawal limit will go from \$60,000 to \$120,000. This will allow more Canadians to buy the first home of their dreams.

[English]

In addition, we are proposing to temporarily extend the grace period during which homebuyers are not required to repay their home buyers' plan withdrawals, from two years to five years. This extension would apply to those who made a first withdrawal between 2022 and 2025 inclusive.

[Translation]

In reality, whoever buys a house in 2024 would not have to start paying it back until 2029. In the medium and long term, the building of new housing will drop real estate prices in Canada. This is why in April's budget we presented a plan to make 3.87 million new homes available by 2031.

We must also act in the short term. That is what improvements to the home buyers' plan will do: help Canadians buy a home and enjoy a middle-class quality of life.

[English]

Liberals want to help Canadians put a roof over their head. Building more housing is one way. Helping Canadians buy their first home is another. We also need to ensure that homes are for Canadians to live in, not to be used as speculative assets for investors. Platforms such as Airbnb and Vrbo are keeping tens of thousands of homes off the market, homes that Canadians cannot buy or rent on a long-term basis.

We need to crack down on short-term rentals that do not comply with provincial and municipal restrictions. In last year's fall eco-

### *Government Orders*

nomie statement, we announced that we would introduce a measure to support provincial and municipal efforts in this area. Bill C-69 proposes legislation to do just that. Under the proposed legislation, tax deductions would no longer be available in computing income from a short-term rental if the property is located in a province or municipality that has rules that prohibit or restrict the operation of short-term rentals and the property does not comply with those rules.

[Translation]

That income would be subject to tax without an offsetting deduction. By ending these tax deductions, the government is eliminating a financial incentive to non-compliant short-term rental properties. The changes will be retroactive to January 1, 2024.

We are also proposing adding an incentive for short-term rental property owners who revert their properties to the long-term rental market.

• (1355)

[English]

This too would make more homes available for Canadians.

Another way to help Canadians find a place to live is to limit the number of homes that are left empty and often kept only as a passive asset. To counter this practice, an annual 1% tax is applied on the ownership of vacant or underused housing in Canada; this has been in place since 2022. The tax generally applies to foreign owners. However, Canadians who own their residential property indirectly, like via a corporation, partnership or trust, have been required to file an annual return even if they did not have to pay the tax. Bill C-69 proposes changes first announced last fall to facilitate the application of the law while ensuring that the tax would be applied as intended.

[Translation]

The change would make it possible for more Canadian owners to be excluded from application of the law, particularly those who own their property through entities that are substantially or entirely Canadian. They would no longer have to file an annual return on underused housing or pay the tax.

We also propose to implement a new exception for houses that serve as employee lodging in rural areas with around 30,000 residents. We are proposing these changes in response to constructive suggestions sent to us by Canadians.

*Statements By Members**[English]*

Finally, Bill C-69 would extend by two years the existing ban on foreign buyers of Canadian housing, something we promised we would do in January. The ban was set to expire January 1 of 2025. Bill C-69 would extend it to 2027.

*[Translation]*

That means even more homes on the market for Canadians and less upward pressure on the price. Every exception in place will remain in effect, including those for non-Canadians who will be settling in Canada to build a new life.

*[English]*

Bill C-69 would help to make housing more affordable for every generation. For years and years in this country, if one found a good job, worked hard and saved money, they could afford a home. For today's young adults, that is under threat.

*[Translation]*

Bill C-69, like budget 2024, seeks to ensure that the dream of joining the middle class remains accessible to everyone and that Canadians, including millennials and those who are part of generation Z, have the means to buy a home.

**Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech. I really appreciated the fact that she delivered some of it in French.

My colleague talked about housing initiatives. There is one for the first nations. As members know, the Auditor General of Canada released a scathing report. We need to encourage initiatives by, for and with indigenous people, particularly the Yānonhchia' initiative.

Will my colleague commit, with the Minister of Finance and her colleagues, to exert pressure to support these opportunities for first nations?

*[English]*

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz:** Madam Speaker, we know that we need to build more housing for indigenous peoples here in Canada. We need to build more on reserves. We are very committed to doing that. We have committed and will continue to commit a significant amount of money to building the homes they need.

**STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS**

● (1400)

*[English]***BRAZILIAN CANADIANS**

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, on April 29, disaster struck the state of Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil. Flash floods and heavy rains, three times higher than normal, led to the worst flooding that residents of the state have seen since 1941. More than 2.3 million people across 471 municipalities have been impacted, 600,000 have been displaced and over 100 people have died. Half a million people continue to be in shelters and cannot get back to their homes.

This is a tragedy of enormous proportions, but the Brazilian community is strong and resilient. Brazilian Canadians quickly came together to assemble 85,000 kilograms of goods for those impacted in record time. In addition, Brazilian leaders hosted a Life For Lives fundraiser to raise funds to support rebuilding efforts for those who have lost their homes.

Canada also moved quickly to work with trusted international partners, World Vision and Red Cross, to hand out life-saving kits and to give hundreds of thousands of dollars for immediate emergency aid to those affected by flooding. I want to thank everyone who stepped up to help. Canada will continue to be there for Brazil as it continues to deal with this difficult crisis.

Viva Brazil, and viva Canada.

\* \* \*

**SUMMER EVENTS IN CARIBOO—PRINCE GEORGE**

**Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is my favourite time of year. Starting next week, the Cariboo will be home to fast-paced, world-class rodeo action.

It's the ropes and the reins, the joy and the pain.  
It's the bulls and the blood, the dust and the mud.  
The roar of the Sunday crowd,  
And the Let R Buck Saloon playing country music just a little too loud.

Bucking Bronc Fun under the Hot Quesnel Sun,  
Whether it is the Williams Lake Stampede, Billy Barker days or the Quesnel Rodeo, you're sure to have some fun.

It's boots and chaps, it's cowboy hats,  
Wild horses and the Smoke Show.

It's the broncs and the blood, the steers and the mud  
Mr. Speaker, we call it rodeo.

It is time to rope that dream, blow off some steam, and head down to the greatest shows on dirt. I hope to see everyone at the 96th Annual Williams Lake Stampede and the 57th Annual Quesnel Rodeo. Yee-haw.

\* \* \*

**DAVID CHIAPIN TANG**

**Mr. Wilson Miao (Richmond Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life and legacy of a remarkable community leader, Dr. David Chiapin Tang, who sadly passed away on May 31 because of a COVID-19 virus.

As the chief executive officer of Tzu Chi Foundation Canada, David dedicated himself to building a better community for everyone. Beyond his professional accomplishment, David was a source of inspiration and wisdom for all who knew him. He immigrated to Canada in 2006 and started volunteering for Tzu Chi. In 2019, he moved to Vancouver with the hope of building a home for his family and serving the community, where he touched the lives of many with his values of compassion and service. He lived a life of volunteerism that embodied the Buddhist teaching of compassion, kindness and genuineness.

To the family of David, especially his wife and two sons, I would like to extend my heartfelt condolences.

Let us work together to preserve and to continue his legacy to build a better, more compassionate and inclusive Canada for everyone.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### LOUISE BOURGEOIS

**Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to pay homage to a very special person who passionately invests in my riding and throughout Quebec. I am referring to Louise Bourgeois, president for more than 20 years of the Fédération des Mouvements Personne d'Abord du Québec, and a member for more than 30 years of the Sainte-Thérèse movement.

Mrs. Bourgeois is a great activist who is involved in the collective defence of the rights of people with intellectual disabilities. She lends her voice tirelessly to those who, like her, promote the fact that everyone has the same rights and that we need to do more and do better. Mrs. Bourgeois's expertise, dedication, compassion and tenacity make her an exceptional person who is making a significant contribution to a fairer, more inclusive society. I would like to congratulate her and thank her for her commitment.

\* \* \*

[English]

#### CONVERSION THERAPY

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my private member's bill, Bill C-404, an act to establish a national conversion therapy awareness day, would establish a national day of awareness for conversion therapy on January 7 of each year, which is the date the law banning this harmful practice came into force in Canada in 2022.

Two people inspired the creation of this bill: Ben Rodgers, who is from the Kingston area, and Veronica Merryfield from Cape Breton—Canso.

Ben is the founder of the group C.T. Survivors Connect, a first-of-its-kind support group for conversion therapy survivors. Survivors come together to support one another and to access and share support resources.

I thank Ben and Veronica for their work and inspiration.

I hope all parliamentarians will support Bill C-404, which is intended to assist the incredible work to support those affected by this

#### Statements By Members

horrific practice of conversion therapy and to bring awareness to the legacy effects that still exist.

\* \* \*

● (1405)

#### CALGARY STAMPEDE

**Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, cowgirls and cowboys should dust off their boots. The greatest outdoor show on earth is about to begin. From July 5 to 14, Calgary will welcome visitors from around the globe to celebrate our western way of life.

The Stampede Parade kicks off 10 action-packed days, including exciting chuckwagon races and rodeo, as well as live music and entertainment. We have world-class agricultural exhibits, weird and wonderful snacks, a huge midway and an amazing display of evening fireworks, as everyone two-steps the night away at Cowboys or Ranchman's. This year, people can also visit the beautiful, newly expanded BMO Centre, the largest event complex in western Canada. No Stampede experience would be complete without trying one of the many free pancake breakfasts or barbecues held across the city.

Calgary's white hat hospitality extends to one and all, and no matter who one is or where one is from, I wish them all a very happy stampede.

\* \* \*

#### GRADUATION CONGRATULATIONS

**Ms. Jean Yip (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, congratulations to the class of 2024 in Scarborough—Agincourt and across Canada. Whether students are graduating from kindergarten, high school, college, university or any level in between, they can be proud of what they have accomplished.

As graduates go forward, it is important to continue to be curious, to be helpful to others and to be willing to explore new paths. They have gotten here with years of dedication, hard work and perseverance. Life is not always easy, so it is important for them to stop and recognize the effort they have put in to get here. I would also like to acknowledge their families, their teachers and their school staff for their roles in students' monumental achievements.

May their journey ahead be filled with continued growth and endless possibilities.

*Statements By Members***LONDON JOURNALISTS**

**Mr. Peter Fragiskatos (London North Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we know that changes in the digital environment have impacted news media. What is also true is that large media organizations have tended to, unfortunately, put profit ahead of people, including some of the most loyal employees. One of those is Jim Knight, who, for 43 years, worked at CTV News London and its predecessors.

I first met Jim when he was behind the camera and, sometimes, as a journalist when a media reporter was not available. The reality is that this is someone who served loyally, not just his community but also his country. We tend to forget that people behind the scenes are instrumental in helping news media happen and in helping those stories come together that tell the stories of everyday people. Jim was one of those.

In the end, it is not just about Peter Mansbridge, Lisa LaFlamme or Lloyd Robertson. It is about people who help to shape the news. Jim Knight was one of those. We thank him for his service, today and all days.

We wish Jim all the very best in the future.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**HOUSING**

**Mr. Bernard Généreux (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the housing crisis is untenable in Quebec. The housing shortage is being felt by people throughout Quebec. Homelessness is spreading and is more visible than ever before.

While Quebecers suffer, the Bloc Québécois voted with the Liberals against the bill introduced by the Conservative Party aimed at building housing units. It also voted for \$500 billion in centralizing and inflationary budgetary appropriations.

Quebeckers' cries for help can be heard across Quebec. Homelessness is everywhere in Rouyn-Noranda, and community service agencies in Rimouski are barely able to serve their growing client base. While Quebec needs help now more than ever, the Bloc Québécois is refusing to listen to their pleas.

Here on this side of the House, we hear them loud and clear. The common-sense Conservatives will continue to introduce measures to improve the quality of life of all Canadians, even if we are the only ones in the House to do so.

\* \* \*

• (1410)

[*English*]

**INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION**

**Hon. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the International Day of Parliamentarism is celebrated every year on June 30. This year, June 30 also marks the 135th anniversary of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the IPU.

Having begun as a small group of parliamentarians in 1889, today, the IPU is a thriving international organization of 180 national

parliaments, open to 46,000 parliamentarians. While Canada first joined the IPU in 1912, the current Canadian group was established in 1960. As president of the Canadian group and of the IPU Standing Committee on UN Affairs, I have the privilege of experiencing first-hand the incredible work the IPU does to make the world a better place, especially in relation to peace, democracy and human rights.

On behalf of all 130 Canadian members of the Canadian group, congratulations to the IPU on this 135th anniversary.

\* \* \*

**ETHICS**

**Mrs. Rachael Thomas (Lethbridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after nine years, it is just as we suspected. The Prime Minister is not worth the crime and certainly not worth the corruption. Recently, the Auditor General reported that more than 180 conflicts of interest were committed at the Prime Minister's green slush fund. Corrupt directors actually funnelled taxpayer money to the tune of \$336 million. That is \$336 million to companies those directors own themselves. If that is not a textbook definition of corruption, I am not sure what is.

Conservatives have successfully pushed to try to bring action forward in order to make sure this corruption is exposed, and now, the RCMP is investigating it. It has also informed us it has the ability to actually get that money back. It just takes a little bit of political will. Canadians certainly deserve that much, at least. The Prime Minister must get that taxpayer money back, and he must act now.

Only common-sense Conservatives will continue to demand transparency from the Prime Minister and end this type of Liberal corruption that exists, right here, in Ottawa. May Canadians be well served by the next government.

\* \* \*

**TAXATION**

**Mr. John Williamson (New Brunswick Southwest, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after nine years of raising taxes, the Liberal-NDP government is doing it again with a new job-killing tax on health care, homes, farms, small businesses and fishing communities. Members heard me right. The taxaholics are again digging deeper into the pockets of Canadian taxpayers. The NDP-Liberals are raising taxes on doctors during a doctor shortage, on farmers while we have a food price crisis, on home builders in a housing shortage and on small businesses during a cost of living crisis that the federal government created.



To Liberals, hard work pursuing the Canadian dream should be punished, not rewarded. A common-sense Conservative government will fix this mess. We will introduce lower, fairer and simpler taxes to restore the Canadian dream. We will make sure hard work delivers strong paycheques that can buy affordable food, energy and homes in safe neighbourhoods. Conservatives will bring it home.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### LORRAINE HENDERSON

**Mr. Francis Drouin (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to highlight the work of an exceptional member of the House of Commons' broadcasting team who, after a career spanning more than 32 years, will be retiring in the next few days.

Lorraine Henderson began her career at the House of Commons in 1992. She quickly gained her co-workers' confidence after establishing high broadcasting standards that fulfilled members' expectations. Over the years, she has contributed to the success of many important events, including visits by President Biden, Prime Minister Rutte and Malala Yousafzai.

A pioneer in a non-traditional occupation, she was one of the first women to be appointed television production director for the House of Commons. She inspired many women to join the broadcasting team. Her professionalism and dedication over the years have been exemplary.

Her legacy at the House of Commons will live on, and we are extremely grateful.

I wish her a happy retirement and thank her for her service.

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[English]

#### TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to humbly offer new thoughts on an aging tradition. Canada is bright-eyed and bushy-tailed at 157 years old. Happy birthday, kid. However, like any good coming of age story, there is much internal conflict. We, indigenous peoples and settlers alike, are at the convergence, or better said, at the place where rivers meet, perhaps again. All which has kept us from each other has now led us to one another.

Although our experiences over the last 157 years are vastly different, we can today see each other more clearly. We can hear each other more soundly, and we can understand each other more emotionally. Indigenous peoples History Month and Canada Day are often a reminder for me of just how far we have truly come, even in my short time. It is also a painful reminder of just how much more work there is to be done, but justice begins with truth. It is where wisdom, redemption and forgiveness live. Reconciliation is not a policy, but a journey toward that truth that we all must take.

I want to thank all those who are offering truths about these lands, especially our youth and our elders. *kinana'skomitina'wa'w.*

#### Statements By Members

Let us continue to heed these truths, and in time, we can become a worthy nation.

\* \* \*

• (1415)

[Translation]

#### NATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY

**Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, this week, let us all celebrate National Indigenous Peoples Day together.

The presence of first nations and their influence on our society have been overlooked for far too long. It is essential that we recognize their contributions and the richness of their cultures and languages. It is as much a matter of truth as it is of reconciliation.

Without their knowledge of medicinal plants and especially without their support, the first Europeans in North America would never have been able to survive, let alone prosper. Let us not forget that, according to many historians, the first nations were ones who first laid the foundations for democracy in the Americas, with the council circle.

June 21 is really the perfect day on which to celebrate their heritage since it is the summer solstice, the longest day of the year.

I would like to wish a happy National Indigenous Peoples Day to all the Abenakis, Anishinabe, Atikamekw, Cree, Huron-Wendat, Inuit, Innu, Maliseet, Mi'kmaq, Mohawk and Naskapi peoples with whom we share this land.

\* \* \*

[English]

#### CARBON TAX

**Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the NDP-Liberal carbon tax is costing northerners billions. We found out that the radical minister's carbon tax will cost Canadians over \$30.5 billion per year, and that will be \$2,000 per family by 2030. Last week, I was in Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk, where the carbon tax has caused diesel to rise to \$2.73 per litre. High fuel costs are the reason food is so expensive in the Arctic. A can of Heinz beans is \$7, a loaf of bread is \$8, a regular bag of peas is \$10, and a four-litre jug of milk is \$18.

A local teacher from Inuvik told me that, by the end of the month, money is running short because of high food and heating costs. Judy, a local grandmother, told me that many cannot afford healthy food, so they rely on high-calorie junk foods, such as chips, chocolate and pop, to survive. In Tuktoyaktuk, Tina, a mother of four, told me she struggles to afford even the basics, such as milk, sugar, coffee and salt.

As such, will the radical environment minister finally resign?

*Oral Questions***CUTEST PETS ON PARLIAMENT HILL**

**Mr. James Maloney (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.):** Speaker, I rise today to highlight a special event that took place last week on Parliament Hill: the second annual Cutest Pets on Parliament Hill contest.

I thank the Canadian Animal Health Institute for organizing this contest, and I congratulate all the nominees and winners. Of course, I would like to congratulate my Walnut, who won cutest dog; I would also like to recognize the runner-up, owned by none other than the deputy leader of the Conservative Party. She showed me a picture of her beautiful dog, Winston, and the look on her face can only be compared to the look she has during question period when she is looking at her leader.

There are lessons to be taken away from this. Walnut and Winston were competitors. It was friendly. They were friends before, and they are friends after. It was not personal. The other lesson that can be taken away from this is that it does not matter how we dress up our dog or how many poles they sniff along the way; the campaign is what matters.

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**ORAL QUESTIONS***[Translation]***TAXATION**

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am hoping someone can explain something to me. The leader of the Bloc Québécois voted for a Liberal motion to raise taxes. The same day, he posted on X that the tax also significantly affects people who have been saving their entire lives, many of them pensioners, whose property is their retirement fund. Now he opposes the tax hike. He wants to amend it in committee, but the motion will not go to committee. The tax will be implemented within a week.

Can the Prime Minister explain to his counterpart in the Bloc-Liberal coalition how Parliament works?

- (1420)

**Hon. Anita Anand (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in budget 2024, we are proposing an economic plan for our country. The other side of the House has no plan. We have a plan for the economy, for families, for seniors, for children. Those folks over there have no plan at all.

I hope everyone will vote in favour of our plan this week.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we are talking about a so-called sovereignist party in Quebec that wants to take money from Quebec entrepreneurs, Quebec farmers, Quebec home builders and Quebec doctors and funnel it to the massive, centralist Liberal government.

How is that common sense?

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duolos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, how can the Conservative leader and chief insult-hurler explain the nonsense of asking someone who earns \$500,000 in capital gains to pay less tax than a nurse who

earns \$50,000? How can he claim that it is common sense to ask middle-class families to pay more tax than those who make huge capital gains?

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*[English]***CARBON PRICING**

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we always knew the Prime Minister was not worth the cost after nine years, but now his carbon tax cover-up has been exposed. We forced him to release data showing that, in addition to the higher bills at the pumps and on home heating that Canadians pay directly in the tax, there is also going to be a \$30-billion-a-year hit to our economy. That is \$1,800 in lost wages and higher prices for Canadian families.

Now that we have caught the Liberals hiding the true cost of their tax, how can we believe anything else they say about any other tax hike?

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, facts are facts. The facts are that eight out of 10 Canadian families get more money back from carbon pricing than they pay. It is a fact that climate change is going to cost Canadians \$35 billion by 2030. In fact, right now, eastern Canada is seeing a second heat wave before the summer has even started.

People are being evacuated in the Northwest Territories. What is the Conservative response? It is to let the planet burn. It is immoral. We will not have that on this side of the House. We will work with Canadians. We will help them. We will be there for them. Unfortunately, the Conservative Party of Canada will not.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the fanatical rhetoric of the extremist minister will not change anything, nor will his carbon tax change the weather. His carbon tax is not going to eliminate a single forest fire, a single drought or a single heat wave. All it will do is turn up the heat on Canadian taxpayers. Now we know that the Liberals' talking point about eight out of 10 Canadians does not include a \$25-billion hit to the economy, which works out to almost \$2,000 in lost wages and higher prices for families. Again, if they have been hiding this, what else are they hiding about their other tax hikes?

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, last week, I noted my colleague's newfound interest in what economists have to say. Three hundred economists across this country actually validated the fact that eight out of 10 Canadians get more money back.

What is appalling is the complete disregard and ignorance of the effects of climate change and the costs of climate change. I do not know whether the hon. member is a climate denier or whether he just does not think climate change is very important, but his willingness to compromise the future of our children is absolutely appalling.

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### TAXATION

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, now that we have caught them covering up the real cost of their carbon tax and who will pay it, it raises the question about their job-killing tax on home builders, health care, small business and farmers. The president of real estate company RE/MAX said that “it’s just not true” that just the rich will pay; it will “penalize...average Canadians”.

The Canadian food professor says farmers will pay, which means that anyone who eats will pay.

Why will they not just clear all this up and accept an amendment to their capital gains tax hike to exclude anyone who is making less than \$120,000 in income from paying a single cent in higher tax?

• (1425)

**Hon. Anita Anand (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, actually, a new report out today says that housing starts are up by 10%. We are now on track to build over 50,000 housing starts this year. We can compare this to when the Leader of the Opposition was the housing minister. Can we count how many housing units were built? That would be six. I wonder about those stats.

On this side of the House, we actually have a plan to build housing; the units continue to go up.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, we are back to square one in the foreign interference saga. One leader is telling us that everything is fine and dandy. Another leader is telling us that things could not be worse and that the house is on fire. Both ask for our blind trust in their judgment.

Their public statements prove, however, that when judgment was being handed out, there were at least two people in this room who were at the end of the line. The whole thing was pointless. Now there is a risk that doubt will be cast on the Hogue commission if the justice does not arrive at the same findings as our two chatterboxes. Is it asking too much to allow justice to run its course?

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from La Prairie for his question and the work he is doing with me. As I said time and again last summer to other colleagues, we mandated the Hogue commission to specifically examine all the questions surrounding foreign interference and our democratic institutions. We were heartened by the commission's willingness to review the questions that the committee of par-

### Oral Questions

liamentarians examined. We very much look forward to collaborating with the commission in this regard.

**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, things would not be where they are had the Prime Minister been worthy of trust in this file. He has been receiving intelligence briefings on foreign interference for years, but by his own admission he does not even read the files.

The Prime Minister has the report on foreign interference with elected officials. He has had it since the month of March. He has done nothing to date. It had to come out in the newspapers for him to finally care. That is really discouraging. How is the public to trust that he will be responsible enough to clean up his caucus if need be? He never does anything.

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our colleague from La Prairie normally practises an optimistic brand of politics, and I do not wish to discourage him. Our government took the foreign interference threats seriously right from the get-go. He knows full well that we worked with parliamentarians just recently to pass a very important bill to strengthen our security institutions. I thank my colleagues for this non-partisan effort. We will continue as a government to take our responsibilities seriously when it comes to strengthening our democratic institutions against foreign interference.

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[English]

### INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it has been nine long years since the truth and reconciliation report was released. The Prime Minister claimed that the indigenous communities were his most important relationship. Today, the commissioners say that progress is too slow. The Prime Minister has turned his back on indigenous people, and every broken promise means that indigenous people have to wait even longer for clean drinking water, for adequate housing, for health care and for the services they need for justice.

When will the Prime Minister stop turning his back on indigenous people?

**Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have come a long way since 2015. In fact, we have seen an increase of 185% in spending on indigenous priorities. Just today, I stood with a national chief, who talked about the improvement of the relationship between Canada and first nations people. We made an announcement that we would support Ontario to deliver health care in the Weeneebayko health area for \$1.2 billion. We will continue to work on reconciliation with colleagues across the country.

I want to thank all the first nations and indigenous leaders who are working so hard.

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals only take action when New Democrats force them to.

• (1430)

[Translation]

It has been nine years since the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada issued its report. The commissioners are sending a clear message today. The Liberals' progress is too slow. Every day that passes is another day without housing, clean water or justice.

Will the Prime Minister admit that if CEOs were the ones asking, he would not be dragging his feet?

**Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am honoured today to be working with our indigenous partners.

[English]

We work with first nations people every single day to do the kinds of things that the member opposite is talking about, closing infrastructure gaps and lifting boil water advisories. Ninety-six per cent of first nations now live in communities with access to clean water, and we will not rest until it is done.

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**CARBON PRICING**

**Mr. Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, only after relentless pressure from Conservatives did the Liberals finally end their carbon tax cover-up.

The numbers show the NDP-Liberal carbon tax is going to blow a hole of \$30 billion a year once they fully quadruple the carbon tax. That is nearly \$2,000 per family per year. The radical environment minister knew that all along. Instead of publishing the report, he gagged and ridiculed the independent Parliamentary Budget Officer.

Will the never-ending tax hikes finally stop or, better yet, will the minister just resign?

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, eight out of 10 Canadians do better where the federal system applies.

The Conservative Party of Canada, after campaigning to put in place carbon pricing during the last election, has now turned its back on it, just as Conservatives have turned their backs on Canadians. Their only answer to climate change is to ignore it and to let the planet burn. This is immoral.

We will not let that happen on this side of the House. We will be there to support Canadians, unlike the Conservative Party of Canada.

**Mr. Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after nine years, the Liberals do not have an environmental plan; they have a tax plan, and it is a tax plan they were trying to hide from Canadians.

It was Conservatives who finally got the answers that show the \$30-billion-a-year hole it is blowing in our Canadian economy,

a billion-dollar tax increase to farmers coming up, and a quadrupling of the carbon tax to 61¢ a litre on the price of gas. It is out of touch. It is arrogant. It is punishing Canadians when they need help.

Will the minister get with reality and finally stop increasing the carbon tax, or again, better yet, just fire himself?

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, what we have is a comprehensive plan to address the threat of climate change, one of the most comprehensive in the world. We also have a plan for the economy, one that will ensure economic jobs and economic prosperity in a low-carbon world.

What is astonishing is the fact that the Conservatives have neither. They have neither an environmental plan to save the planet from burning, nor an economic plan. With the height of hypocrisy, that member over there actually campaigned on putting a price on pollution. Where were they?

**Mr. Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Liberals knew that the carbon tax was costing Canadians billions of dollars. They knew and they covered it up.

The cost is \$25 billion a year. That works out to \$1,800, each and every year, cost for every single Canadian family. If Canadians wonder why it is hard to pay for things, this is why. If the average Canadian went to work, lied and covered something up, they would be fired.

Will the Prime Minister fire the radical environment minister, who tried to cover this all up from Canadians?

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if anyone should resign in this House, it is the people who are misleading Canadians about the benefit of carbon pricing.

There is 25 million tonnes less pollution in this country because of carbon pricing. We have a plan to work with Canadians to help them better prepare to face the impacts of climate change.

The Conservatives have nothing: no plans for adaptation, no plan to reduce the amount of pollution, and no plan for the economy. If anyone should resign, it should be them over there.

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, if we want to talk about misleading Canadians, the Liberals pretend they have an environmental plan when greenhouse gas emissions actually went up year over year. Canada is now ranked 62nd out of 67 for emissions reduction performance. We are now ranked with the low-performing countries. All the while, the government is bankrupting Canadians while the limousine Liberals drive around and preach that Canadians should just take it. It is all a pack of lies.

The environment minister should be fired for covering up the truth of the cost of the carbon tax from Canadians. Will he resign?

• (1435)

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would invite the member to update his speaking notes, which date back many months.

We just received, in fact, the Climate Scorecard 2024 Government Climate Leadership Award for one of the best performances in terms of greenhouse gas emissions reduction since 2019 in all of the G7 countries, something that has never happened under a Conservative Government of Canada and will never happen under a Conservative government.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the radical environment minister must either resign or be fired, full stop. First he misled Canadians by falsely claiming that the carbon tax would financially benefit them, and then he hid from Canadians a study from his own department that said the opposite. When the Parliamentary Budget Officer found out about it, the minister put a gag on him, preventing him from disclosing or referencing the study. Next, he tried to ruin the PBO's reputation. His report clearly shows that the economic damage from the carbon tax will cost every Canadian family \$2,000 a year.

When will the minister be fired for his economic extremism?

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if anyone in the House ought to resign, it is the member who just spoke. Back in 2021, he campaigned on a promise of putting a price on pollution and introducing a clean fuel standard.

What are the Conservatives doing today? They have turned their backs on those promises. They are the ones flip-flopping. They have no plan for the economy. They have no plan for helping Canadians deal with the impact of climate change. They have no plan for combatting climate change.

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, does everyone know what the minister did? He desperately tried to hide the fact that Quebecers are paying dearly for the federal carbon tax, which is supported by the Bloc Québécois. Despite his claims that Quebecers do not pay the carbon tax, his own figures, which he would not reveal until the Conservatives forced him to, tell a different story. The report that he was so anxious to conceal shows that the economic cost of the carbon tax for Quebecers is \$5 billion.

Are these not five billion reasons for the minister to resign?

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is sad to see the Conservative Party of Canada continue to display its complete ignorance on the issue of climate change.

The member should just turn around and speak to the member behind him. She was part of a provincial government in Quebec that introduced a price on pollution long before the federal government did. As he knows full well, or should know by now, the federal price does not apply in Quebec. It applies to other provinces.

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## CLIMATE CHANGE

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, this week's forecast calls for temperatures that feel like 45°C. This is the weather forecast not for Arizona, but for my home region, southern Quebec. The planet is heating up and the climate is changing, yet the federal government plans on giving oil companies a further \$83 billion in tax handouts over the next 10 years. It is doing this not to help with the just transition away from oil, but to try and mask the impact of boosting oil production. While Quebec burns, Ottawa is going to help fund 10 more years of increased production of dirty oil.

Has the time not come to just stop?

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague, who recognizes the importance of combatting climate change. However, I disagree with the premise of her question, since Canada is the only G20 country to have eliminated subsidies for fossil fuels. We did this two years sooner than any of our G20 partners. We even went further by committing to also eliminating public subsidies from Crown corporations for fossil fuel production.

We are the only G20 country to have made this commitment, and we will do it by the end of the year.

• (1440)

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it is 45°C in southern Quebec, and Environment Canada is predicting an abnormally hot summer.

Unprecedented heatwave conditions were recorded last year in 90% of the world's oceans, according to the UN, and our own St. Lawrence River was not spared. Quebec climate change experts predict that the north will heat up by 7.6°C, five times higher than the Paris Agreement target.

Meanwhile, Ottawa is giving oil companies \$83 billion in tax breaks and spending a further \$34 billion to buy a pipeline.

*Oral Questions*

Would these billions of dollars not be better spent on climate change adaptation?

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I again thank my colleague for her question. I would remind her that last year, for the first time in Canada's history, we adopted a national adaptation strategy. The provinces, territories, indigenous peoples and experts worked together to develop this strategy to help us prepare for the impacts of climate change.

In fact, all the provincial, territorial and federal ministers are scheduled to meet in two weeks to work on implementing this national adaptation policy.

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, that is not all. According to a federal greenhouse gas inventory report, the dirty oil industry is even dirtier than we thought.

The federal government realized that it was miscalculating fugitive emissions from sources like wells, pipes and torches. As a result, the 2021 emissions retroactively shot up by 38 megatonnes. It is good news that Ottawa can now keep track better, but it is bad news for the planet.

Is investing \$117 billion in dirty oil that is even dirtier than expected really the disgraced environmentalist minister's solution to climate change?

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I said it earlier in English, but for the benefit of my colleague, I will say it in French. Canada just received the 2024 Climate Scorecard award for its performance in the fight against climate change. Between 2019 and now, we have been a top performer in the G7 when it comes to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

I completely agree with her that more needs to be done. That is why we continue to move forward with our plan. Over the next year, we will be capping greenhouse gas emissions from the oil and gas sector to ensure that that sector, like the others, is doing its part to reduce emissions.

\* \* \*

[English]

**CARBON PRICING**

**Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, common-sense Conservatives got proof that the Liberals kicked and screamed to hide, but most Canadians already know that after nine years, the NDP-Liberals' carbon tax is not worth the cost. It will gouge Canada's economy for about \$30 billion. That is almost \$2,000 for every household each year.

In Lakeland, a family farm paid nearly \$500 in carbon taxes in one month. An agricultural group paid \$5,000 in just six months. Both were before the April 1 hike.

Will the environment minister finally just admit that his failed carbon tax is a cash grab and resign?

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would invite my hon. colleague to

have a conversation with the 300 economists who have validated that eight out of 10 families get more money back, that the price on pollution is a driver of innovation and is a driver of investment in our economy.

Across the aisle, we have a Conservative Party in the country that denies the existence of climate change and has no economic plan to ensure prosperity in the future for people from coast to coast to coast. It is truly a shame. It is abandoning the future of our children and the future of our country.

**Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, he should actually listen to what Canadians are pleading with him about, because emissions are up and so is the price of everything. It is all a sham. The truth is that not once did the 1,200-page analysis show that Canadians were better off with the carbon tax and rebate.

The worst thing is the Prime Minister fought to hide the real costs of his agenda, even though he has never had to worry about affording anything in his entire life. He has the gall to tell Canadians that paying more for gas, heat and groceries makes them better off, just like he claims that hiking taxes on small business and farmers makes Canadians better off. None of it is true and none of it is worth the cost or the cover-up.

If the fibbing environment minister will not resign, will the Prime Minister finally just fire him?

**The Speaker:** The hon. member is an experienced member, and that is getting very close to the line in terms of what is acceptable parliamentary behaviour. I will look at that question a bit more carefully.

The hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources.

● (1445)

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague and her colleagues across the aisle may be entitled to their own opinions, but they are not entitled to their own facts. The fact is that emissions are down in a significant way. The fact is that 300 economists, experts in their field, say that eight out of 10 Canadians get more money back. Those are facts.

What is also a fact is that the party across the way has no plan to address climate change and no plan for the economic future of the country. It is also the case that they all campaigned on putting a price on pollution. If anybody should resign, it is those members opposite.

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the fix is in. Last week Conservatives forced the reveal of the secret report that the Prime Minister and his carbon-tax-obsessed environment minister covered up, which confirmed that the carbon tax costs families almost \$2,000 per year, and every year \$30 billion is lost in economic productivity. Liberals are so desperate to hide the truth, they publicly smeared and gagged the independent budget officer.

When will the minister of economic and environment vandalism resign, or better yet, get fired?

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, that question has been asked and answered several times already today. My question for the Conservatives is this: Why should a dollar earned from working, whether it be as an insurance broker, a fish plant worker, a construction worker or a cashier, be taxed higher than a dollar received as profit from the sale of an investment? Why is it that a person flipping burgers pays a higher tax rate than a person flipping stocks?

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**INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS**

**Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, the more that Inuit regain their pride, the more identity fraud we see. The problem is being made worse from inside the Prime Minister's caucus. The parliamentary secretary of northern affairs recently said her government would recognize the constitutional rights of NunatuKavut, despite the court ruling differently. Johannes Lampe, president of Nunatsiavut, has called for the demotion of the parliamentary secretary.

Will the Prime Minister show his commitment to Inuit and protect legitimate communities from identity fraud?

**Hon. Dan Vandal (Minister of Northern Affairs, Minister responsible for Prairies Economic Development Canada and Minister responsible for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government is fully engaged in making sure that all section 35 rights are developed and exercised with everybody who deserves section 35 rights. We will continue engaging. We will continue talking to communities, be they first nation, Inuit or Métis, and we will make sure that section 35 rights are respected.

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**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, in Union Bay on Vancouver Island, a massive ship full of toxic chemicals is being broken up in the high tide zone in the same waters that half of B.C. shellfish come from. Recent tests show that this area has become a toxic wasteland with copper levels 15 times higher than they should be. Local government, first nations and the province are calling for the federal government to act, but the Liberals are instead green-lighting the dumping of toxic waste on our coast.

When will the Liberals finally put an end to this harmful ship-breaking and protect local health and the economy?

[Translation]

**Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government is keenly aware of the environmental impact that abandoned vessels can have on Canadians and their communities.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada is committed to working with local communities and harbour authorities to reduce the number of abandoned vessels.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada's efforts are paying off. Since 2017, more than 584 hazardous vessels have been removed.

Whether it is by following the rules or reporting any offences, we all have a role to play in keeping our waterways safe.

\* \* \*

● (1450)

[English]

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

**Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians from across the country are concerned about the rising levels of auto theft. This is an issue that our government takes very seriously, and we have taken meaningful action to combat it. Yesterday, our government announced the deployment of a mobile X-ray scanner in the GTA to combat auto theft. This scanner will enable the CBSA to recover even more stolen vehicles and help our law enforcement partners to crack down on crime.

Can the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs tell Canadians about the action our government is taking in the GTA to combat auto theft?

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday's announcement adds to multiple measures our government has taken to counter auto theft and crack down on organized crime. The deployment of an X-ray scanner is an important step in combatting auto theft and organized crime, not only in the GTA but also right across the country. The scanner will allow law enforcement to intercept stolen vehicles before they go to ports to leave Canada.

While Conservatives were in power, they cut the CBSA and its capacity to counter organized crime. We will continue to crack down on organized criminals.

*Oral Questions*

[Translation]

**HOUSING**

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, July 1, moving day in Quebec, is fast approaching, and it is set to be a disaster because of the housing crisis. The government, supported by the Bloc Québécois, created this situation with its exorbitant, inflationary spending, and we are now seeing homelessness in places like Trois-Rivières, Rimouski, Rouyn-Noranda and Sept-Îles. All these towns are located in Bloc ridings.

To alleviate the housing crisis, can the Prime Minister and the Bloc Québécois commit to stop wasting taxpayers' money?

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it has been a while since we reminded my colleague from Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles that his Conservative leader built six affordable housing units across the country during his entire career as minister responsible for housing, while there are 222 in his riding alone and, in the next few days, we will be announcing the Habitations Charles IV housing project right in his riding.

Would my colleague care to invite me for a tour of those units? There will be far more than the six his Conservative leader built.

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois voted for \$500 billion in budget appropriations, which contributed to the current housing crisis. The Bloc also voted with the Liberals against the bill introduced by the leader of the Conservative Party of Canada, who was trying to make housing more affordable.

Numerous newspaper articles are now reporting that homelessness is going up sharply in ridings represented by the Bloc Québécois. Quebeckers are suffering and have lost confidence in this government and its Bloc buddies.

Will the government do the right thing and call an election today?

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what we can do today is go visit some of the 222 affordable homes built in his riding over the last few months. That figure does not include the thousands of homes that will be built there in the coming years with the support of the Quebec government.

Unfortunately, this stands in stark contrast to the six affordable homes that his Conservative leader built during his entire tenure as minister responsible for housing. I am referring to the chief insult-hurler, who insults Quebec municipalities by calling them incompetent in matters of housing.

**Mrs. Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after nine years of this Liberal government, Quebeckers are going through housing hell. The lack of affordable housing throughout Quebec is forcing many women to remain in abusive situations.

The Bloc Québécois has made the housing crisis worse by voting for \$500 billion in spending. On top of that, it voted with the Liber-

als against the Conservative leader's bill, which was aimed specifically at speeding up housing construction.

Can this Prime Minister, supported by the Bloc Québécois, stop forcing Quebeckers to live in misery by voting against measures designed to make their lives better?

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would not want to compare the records of Conservative MPs in the Quebec City region. In her own riding of Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, 205 affordable housing units have been built in recent years.

That is slightly less than the 222 affordable housing units in Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, but it is far more than the six affordable housing units that our colleague, the MP for Carleton and Conservative leader—and chief insult-hurler, since he calls everyone incompetent—built in this country during his entire career as minister responsible for housing.

• (1455)

**Mr. Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, with moving day two weeks away, Quebeckers are worried. Many of them are looking for a new place to live. In Saguenay, skyrocketing rent costs have families believing they will end up living on the streets.

Despite it all, the Bloc Québécois and the Liberals voted against our common-sense bill to build housing. The Bloc would rather support the government and vote for the \$500 billion in budget allocations that helped fuel the housing crisis in the first place. Voting for the Bloc Québécois is costly, especially in Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean.

When will the Liberals and their Bloc Québécois supporters listen to us?

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have bad news for the member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord. A hundred and eighty-one affordable housing units have been built in his riding.

Now for the good news: 181 affordable housing units is 30 times more than the six units that the Conservative leader built across the whole country during his entire career as housing minister.

He got six affordable housing units built. I know people might not believe us, but that is a fact. Fortunately, 181 affordable housing units have been built in the member's riding over the past few months, with more on the way in the months to come.

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**EMPLOYMENT**

**Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Quebeckers are joining forces and speaking out against \$145 million in cuts to workforce training in Quebec.



*Oral Questions*

The Quebec government and labour market partners have asked Ottawa to back down in a letter signed by the Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec, the Confédération des syndicats nationaux, the Centrale des syndicats du Québec, the Conseil du patronat du Québec, youth chambers of commerce, as well as manufacturers and exporters. They are all speaking with one voice.

The Minister of Labour is scheduled to meet with his counterpart today. Will he announce that he is cancelling these cuts?

**Hon. Soraya Martinez Ferrada (Minister of Tourism and Minister responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question. It is extremely important that our government invest in training. We are making historic investments in training.

We will continue to work with businesses across Quebec. As the minister responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, that is exactly what I am doing. I am working very closely with my colleague, the Minister of Labour, who is investing record amounts in training.

**Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, we know how the Liberals operate. They give money hand over fist to oil companies and to firms like McKinsey for untendered contracts. However, they count their pennies when it comes to helping unemployed workers, young people, people with disabilities and others join the workforce.

The \$145 million in cuts represent 16% of federal labour transfers to Quebec. It makes no sense. The government needs to reverse course.

Will it cancel the cuts?

[English]

**Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government is making record investments to create record jobs, with \$50 billion in the auto sector alone, creating tens of thousands of jobs. We are also investing record amounts in skills training, amounting to billions of dollars each and every year for labour market transfers to the provinces, sectoral workforce programs, doubling the UTIP union training and \$1 billion supporting apprentices annually.

No government has delivered more for training and jobs than this Liberal government has.

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**TAXATION**

**Mr. Tony Baldinelli (Niagara Falls, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Niagara Falls is powered by tourism, and I am already hearing concerns from small business operators about the Liberal-NDP government's new capital gains tax. Simply put, after nine years, the Liberals do not care about small business. We should remember that it was the government that called them tax cheats. Now, these small businesses are falsely being targeted by the NDP-Liberal coalition as the top one percenters who need to pay more.

How many family-run businesses are going to be unfairly taxed and face ruin because of the government's policy?

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would invite my colleague opposite to look into the important small business tax exemption that is also coming into effect.

I would like to know why the Conservatives would rather slash the pensions of our seniors than ask the wealthy to pay just a little more. I would like to ask the Conservatives why they would rather cut school lunches for over 400,000 children than to ask the one per cent in our society to pay just a little more.

• (1500)

**Mr. Tony Baldinelli (Niagara Falls, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the member should be speaking to Nick and his family, who recently sold their tourism retail business after 40 years in operation. The price they negotiated this past winter did not account for the surprise, massive and unfair Liberal tax hike they will now be facing. In fact, Nick wrote to me that the sale was for the retirement of four families and that the extra loss of income, which they did not anticipate, is utterly unfair.

Why is the Minister of Finance targeting small family-run businesses and ruining their retirement dreams?

**Hon. Rechie Valdez (Minister of Small Business, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, unlike the Conservatives, who continue to mock the supports we provide small businesses and actually vote against all the supports we have provided to small businesses, on this side of the House we will continue to support small businesses. In fact on this side of the House we reduced small business taxes from 10.5% to 9%.

We will continue to support small businesses and be there for them to start, grow and scale their businesses.

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**HEALTH**

**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, millions of Canadians are without a family doctor. The shortage is even more severe in rural and remote communities. The carbon tax already punishes them for driving long distances when they have no other choice. Now the Prime Minister's job-killing tax on health care will make it even harder to find a doctor.

It is not fair that Canadian families have to go without a doctor. How many more Canadians will lose a family doctor just to pay for the Prime Minister's out-of-control spending?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Mark Holland (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, of course, asking for a more fair and equitable tax system where those who are the very wealthiest pay a little bit more in taxes so we can have money for doctors and nurses and to make investments into our health care system is actually the answer, not the problem.

The problem is Conservative cuts, the fact that the Conservatives want to attack our health care system with deep cuts that would create much worse problems. Of course, the world has faced big challenges in health care coming out of COVID. What we have seen in Canada is leadership, with 26 agreements, \$200 billion, dental care, pharmacare and action across the board.

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**WOMEN AND GENDER EQUALITY**

**Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos (Saint-Laurent, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, at this time two years ago, *Roe v. Wade* was overturned in the United States. The fear and uncertainty this has caused millions of women cannot be minimized. It is a reminder that here in Canada, choice for women is paramount. While Conservative MPs celebrated the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, our government stood committed to ensuring that choice for women remains a fundamental right.

Could the Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth share the importance of this work?

**Hon. Marci Ien (Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, two years ago, *Roe v. Wade* was overturned in the U.S., and so many thought that was an impossibility. However, it taught us that vigilance everywhere is imperative.

This past weekend, I met Liz, a self-described old feminist in Thunder Bay. Liz wanted me to remind Canadians that the right to an abortion is a human right and always worth fighting for. That is exactly what we will continue to do on this side of the House. That side of the House cannot say the same.

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**TAXATION**

**Mr. Larry Brock (Brantford—Brant, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the government's capital gains tax is killing jobs in health care, home building, small businesses and farming. An agriculture producer in my riding is deeply concerned that the tax is undermining the profitability and sustainability in an already volatile business environment. Their current transition of ownership is severely impacted by these tax changes, rising input costs and softening markets.

The minister is raising taxes without even passing a law, which begs this ultimate question: How many more surprise tax hikes will the government spring on Canadians?

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would just like to make very clear one important point, and that is that the changes we have introduced in the budget are just not going to affect the paycheques of Canadians. Anybody taking home a salary in Canada is not going to see a change based on what we have presented for capital gains. In fact what we are asking is with respect to those who do not make a salary, who have

their money working for them, who make incredible profits on the investments that they sell. They will be paying a little bit more.

\* \* \*

● (1505)

**DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

**Mr. Marty Morantz (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia—Headingley, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, anti-Semitism has become a plague on university campuses. Hamas sympathizers camping out at McGill are promoting the “revolutionary summer program”, featuring images of kaffiyeh-clad fighters brandishing machine guns. It is appalling.

Summer camp used to be about campfires and canoeing. After nine years of the Prime Minister, it has become “Bring your machine gun to camp to threaten and harass Jewish students.” It must be stopped. What is the government going to do about it?

**Hon. Kamal Khera (Minister of Diversity, Inclusion and Persons with Disabilities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think every single Canadian and every single member of the House condemns anti-Semitism.

We know that combatting anti-Semitism and hate takes concrete action. That is why in this particular budget we are investing \$273 million toward Canada's first-ever action plan on combatting hate. We have also invested more than \$200 million toward Canada's anti-racism strategy. We have launched a community resiliency fund. We are working with the Minister of Public Safety. We are going to continue to do everything possible to make sure we combat hate in this country and around the world.

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**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Foreign Affairs told CBC News, last week, that it was news to her that Russian warships were docked alongside one of our Canadian naval vessels in Havana celebrating the Cuban Communist dictatorship. This morning, the Minister of National Defence was asked whether he had told the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and of course he denied it.

It is both reckless and dangerous for the Liberals to honour Cuba, Russia's junior partner, and once again they are undermining our relationship and support for Ukraine.

Why is the Minister of National Defence using our navy to cozy up to the Communist regime in Cuba with our Russian adversaries?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to act surprised that the Conservatives are politicizing the Royal Canadian Navy deployments, but frankly I am not.

To be very clear, it was a military mission. Along with our American allies, the Canadian Navy and Air Force have been tracking the movements and activity of a Russian naval flotilla along the eastern seaboard and into Cuba with our Aurora aircraft and the HMCS *Ville de Québec*. Upon the advice and at the request of the Royal Canadian Navy and the Canadian Joint Operations Command, I authorised the HMCS *Margaret Brooke* to visit Havana. We were well aware that the Russians would be present at the same time and we planned our mission accordingly.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

**Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians know that auto theft is a growing problem and that organized crime is constantly reinventing itself to foil the tactics of our police forces. Yesterday, our government announced the deployment of a mobile X-ray scanner that can scan cargo containers to find stolen vehicles.

Can the Minister of Public Safety tell the House what our government has done to intercept more stolen vehicles and thwart the organized crime groups behind auto theft?

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank our colleague from Vaughan—Woodbridge for his work on this issue and for speaking French.

The deployment of an X-ray scanner to detect stolen vehicles inside cargo containers is an important tool for the CBSA in the fight against organized crime across the country. When the Conservatives were in power, they cut the CBSA's funding, reduced the capabilities of our law enforcement agencies to fight organized crime and cut services for Canadians. We are doing the opposite. We will protect Canadians.

\* \* \*

[English]

**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, It has been three years since Kabul fell, and for Afghans life gets worse every day. Canadians want to help Afghans living under the horrific Taliban rule, but the Canadian government is getting in the way. The flawed bill that the Liberals passed a year ago, Bill C-41, has not been implemented. There has been no guidance and no funding for any Canadian organization, nothing.

As Afghan girls face gender apartheid and as people starve, the incompetence of the Liberals is staggering. Why is the government delaying the much-needed aid to save lives?

● (1510)

**Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of International Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in June of last year, Bill C-41, which created a

humanitarian exception as an authorization regime, was passed. The new legislation facilitates Canada's engagement to address humanitarian crises and advance human rights globally while also ensuring strong counterterrorism financing provisions. There is no doubt that any delays on such an important matter are frustrating for all of us. We are hopeful that this will launch in the near future.

\* \* \*

**DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS**

**Mr. Kevin Vuong (Spadina—Fort York, Ind.):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister once said that he thought NSICOP was well suited to examine foreign interference in Canada's democracy and democratic institutions, but apparently not anymore. Why the change? Was it an NSICOP report that shed some redacted light on the willing involvement of Liberals guilty of seeking political and financial benefit?

Does the Prime Minister still feel that “Canadians need to have faith in their institutions and deserve answers and transparency”, or have his party's Beijing masters called for a reversal?

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our colleague should be careful before he simply makes up stuff in question period and asserts things that he knows are absolutely false. He knows very well that our government created, for the first time ever, a committee of parliamentarians to oversee the work of our security agencies.

We think it is important for parliamentarians from every political party and from the other place to do this important work. We have acted on their recommendations. We thank them for this important contribution to the fight against foreign interference and for a series of other measures that are important for assuring the national security of all Canadians.

\* \* \*

**PRESENCE IN GALLERY**

**The Speaker:** I wish to draw the attention of Lib members to the presence in the gallery of the Hon. Ryan Straughn, Minister of Finance, Economic Affairs and Investment of Barbados.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** I would also like to draw the attention of members to the presence in the gallery of the Hon. Lennox Andrews, Minister for Economic Development, Planning, Agriculture and Lands, Forestry, Marine Resources and Cooperatives of Grenada.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!

*Government Orders*

**The Speaker:** Finally, I would like to draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the gallery of the Hon. Penelope Beckles-Robinson, Minister of Planning and Development of Trinidad and Tobago.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!

**Ms. Heather McPherson:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. There have been discussions among the parties and, if you seek it, I believe you will find unanimous consent for the following motion.

**The Speaker:** I regret to inform the hon. member that there have been several noes. I will say this once again, that to ensure we use the time efficiently, if it is possible, that a member get agreement before rising to seek unanimous consent.

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

### MISCARRIAGE OF JUSTICE REVIEW COMMISSION ACT (DAVID AND JOYCE MILGAARD'S LAW)

The House resumed from June 14 consideration of Bill C-40, An Act to amend the Criminal Code, to make consequential amendments to other Acts and to repeal a regulation (miscarriage of justice reviews), as reported (with amendments) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

**The Speaker:** It being 3:14 p.m., the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at report stage of Bill C-40.

Call in the members.

*And the bells having rung:*

• (1535)

**The Speaker:** The question is on Motion No. 1. A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 2 to 20.

• (1540)

[*Translation*]

(The House divided on the motion, which was negatived on the following division:)

(*Division No. 826*)

### YEAS

#### Members

Aboultaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Arnold	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Berthold	Bezan
Block	Bragdon
Brassard	Brock
Calkins	Caputo
Carrie	Chambers
Chong	Cooper
Dalton	Dancho
Davidson	Deltell
d'Entremont	Doherty
Dowdall	Dreeshen
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Ellis

Epp	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Falk (Provencher)	Fast
Ferrieri	Gallant
Généreux	Genuis
Gladu	Godin
Goodridge	Gourde
Gray	Hallan
Hoback	Jeneroux
Jivani	Kelly
Khanna	Kitchen
Kniec	Kram
Kramp-Neuman	Kurek
Kusie	Lake
Lantsman	Lawrence
Lehoux	Leslie
Lewis (Essex)	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Liepert	Lloyd
Lobb	Maguire
Majumdar	Martel
Mazier	McCauley (Edmonton West)
McLean	Melillo
Moore	Morantz
Morrison	Motz
Muys	Nater
Patzner	Paul-Hus
Perkins	Poilievre
Redekopp	Reid
Rempel Garner	Richards
Roberts	Rood
Ruff	Scheer
Schmale	Seeback
Shields	Shipley
Small	Soroka
Steinley	Stewart
Strahl	Stubbs
Thomas	Tochor
Tolmie	Uppal
Van Popta	Vecchio
Vidal	Vien
Viersen	Vis
Vuong	Wagantall
Warkentin	Waugh
Webber	Williams
Williamson	Zimmer— 118

### NAYS

#### Members

Ali
Anandasangaree
Arseneault
Ashton
Bachrach
Bains
Barron
Battiste
Beech
Bergeron
Bibeau
Blair
Blaney
Boissonnault
Bradford
Brunelle-Duceppe
Carr
Chabot
Chahal
Champoux
Chen
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Cormier
Dabrusin
DeBellefeuille

Desbiens  
Desjarlais  
Dhillon  
Dong  
Dubourg  
Duguid  
Ehsassi  
Erskine-Smith  
Fisher  
Fortier  
Fragiskatos  
Fry  
Gainey  
Garrison  
Gazan  
Gill  
Green  
Hajdu  
Hardie  
Holland  
Hughes  
Hutchings  
Idlout  
Jaczek  
Joly  
Julian  
Kelloway  
Khera  
Kusmierczyk  
Lalonde  
Lamoureux  
Larouche  
Lauzon  
Lebouthillier  
Lightbound  
Longfield  
MacAulay (Cardigan)  
MacGregor  
Maloney  
Masse  
May (Cambridge)  
McDonald (Avalon)  
McKay  
McLeod  
Mendès  
Miao  
Miller  
Morrissey  
Naqvi  
Noormohamed  
O'Connell  
O'Regan  
Petitpas Taylor  
Qualtrough  
Robillard  
Rogers  
Rota  
Sajjan  
Samson  
Savard-Tremblay  
Schiefke  
Sgro  
Sheehan  
Sidhu (Brampton South)  
Sinclair-Desgagné  
Sorbara  
Ste-Marie  
Sudds  
Taylor Roy  
Therrien  
Trudeau  
Turnbull  
Van Bynen

Desilets  
Dhaliwal  
Diab  
Drouin  
Duclos  
Dzerowicz  
El-Khoury  
Fillmore  
Fonseca  
Fortin  
Fraser  
Gaheer  
Garon  
Gaudreau  
Gerretsen  
Gould  
Guilbeault  
Hanley  
Hepfner  
Housefather  
Hussen  
Iacono  
Ien  
Johns  
Jowhari  
Kayabaga  
Khalid  
Koutrakis  
Kwan  
Lambropoulos  
Lapointe  
Lattanzio  
LeBlanc  
Lemire  
Long  
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)  
MacDonald (Malpeque)  
MacKinnon (Gatineau)  
Martinez Ferrada  
Mathyszen  
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)  
McGuinty  
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)  
McPherson  
Mendicino  
Michaud  
Morrice  
Murray  
Ng  
Normandin  
Oliphant  
Perron  
Powlowski  
Rayes  
Rodriguez  
Romanado  
Sahota  
Saks  
Sarai  
Scarpaleggia  
Serré  
Shanahan  
Sidhu (Brampton East)  
Simard  
Singh  
Sousa  
St-Onge  
Tassi  
Thériault  
Thompson  
Trudel  
Valdez  
van Koeverden

### Government Orders

Vandal	Vandenbeld
Villemure	Virani
Weiler	Wilkinson
Yip	Zahid
Zarrillo	Zuberi — 206

### PAIRED

Members

Freeland Plamondon — 2

**The Speaker:** I declare Motion No. 1 defeated.

I therefore declare Motions Nos. 2 to 20 defeated.

\* \* \*

[English]

### IRAN

**Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to seek unanimous consent for the following motion:

That the House:

(a) condemn the death sentence of Iranian musician and vocal critic of the Iranian regime, Toomaj Salehi;

(b) urge the Government of Canada to impose targeted sanctions on the thirty-one judges, prosecutors, and investigators of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Courts included on the "TOOMAJ" list, who are responsible for sham trials, torture, and the inhumane treatment of Iranian protesters and political dissidents;

(c) condemn gender apartheid, violations of civil liberties, killings, intimidation, and acts of violence initiated by the Islamic Republic against the people of Iran; and

(d) reiterate its unconditional support for Iranians advocating for human rights and democracy as part of the Women, Life, Freedom movement.

● (1545)

**The Speaker:** All those opposed to the hon. member moving the motion will please say nay.

The House has heard the terms of the motion. All those opposed to the motion will please say nay.

(Motion agreed to)

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### MISCARRIAGE OF JUSTICE REVIEW COMMISSION ACT (DAVID AND JOYCE MILGAARD'S LAW)

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-40, An Act to amend the Criminal Code, to make consequential amendments to other Acts and to repeal a regulation (miscarriage of justice reviews), as reported (with amendments) from the committee.

**Hon. Soraya Martinez Ferrada (for the Minister of Justice)** moved that the bill, as amended, be concurred in.

**The Speaker:** If a member participating in person wishes that the motion be carried or carried on division, or if a member of a recognized party participating in person wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon:** Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded division.

*Government Orders*

● (1555)

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

*(Division No. 827)***YEAS****Members**

Alghabra	Ali
Anand	Anandasangaree
Angus	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Atwin	Bachrach
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Barron
Barsalou-Duval	Battiste
Beaulieu	Beech
Bendayan	Bergeron
Bérubé	Bibeau
Bittle	Blair
Blanchette-Joncas	Blaney
Blois	Boissonnault
Boulerice	Bradford
Brière	Brunelle-Duceppe
Cannings	Carr
Casey	Chabot
Chagger	Chahal
Champagne	Champoux
Chatel	Chen
Chiang	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Collins (Victoria)	Cormier
Coteau	Dabrusin
Damoff	DeBellefeuille
Desbiens	Desilets
Desjarlais	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Diab
Dong	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Erskine-Smith	Fillmore
Fisher	Fonseca
Fortier	Fortin
Fragiskatos	Fraser
Fry	Gaheer
Gainey	Garon
Garrison	Gaudreau
Gazan	Gerretsen
Gill	Gould
Green	Guilbeault
Hajdu	Hanley
Hardie	Hepfner
Holland	Housefather
Hughes	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacomo
Idlout	Ien
Jaczek	Johns
Joly	Jowhari
Kayabaga	Kelloway
Khalid	Khera
Koutrakis	Kusmierczyk
Kwan	Lalonde
Lambropoulos	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Larouche
Lattanzio	Lauson
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Lemire	Lightbound
Long	Longfield
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacGregor
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Martinez Ferrada	Masse

Mathysen	May (Cambridge)
May (Saarich—Gulf Islands)	McDonald (Avalon)
McGuinty	McKay
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod
McPherson	Mendès
Mencicino	Miao
Michaud	Miller
Morrice	Morrissey
Murray	Naqvi
Ng	Noormohamed
Normandin	O'Connell
Oliphant	O'Regan
Pauzé	Perron
Petitpas Taylor	Powlowski
Qualtrough	Rayes
Robillard	Rodriguez
Rogers	Romanado
Rota	Sahota
Sajjan	Saks
Samson	Sarai
Savard-Tremblay	Scarpaleggia
Schieffe	Serré
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Simard
Sinclair-Desgagné	Singh
Sorbara	Sousa
Ste-Marie	St-Onge
Sudds	Tassi
Taylor Roy	Thériault
Therrien	Thompson
Trudeau	Trudel
Turnbull	Valdez
Van Bynen	van Koevorden
Vandal	Vandenbeld
Villemure	Virani
Weiler	Wilkinson
Yip	Zahid
Zarrillo	Zuberi— 206

**NAYS****Members**

Abouttaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Arnold	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Berthold	Bezan
Block	Bragdon
Brassard	Brock
Calkins	Caputo
Carrie	Chambers
Chong	Cooper
Dalton	Dancho
Davidson	Deltell
d'Entremont	Doherty
Dowdall	Dreeshen
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Ellis
Epp	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Falk (Provencher)	Fast
Ferri	Findlay
Gallant	Généreux
Genuis	Gladu
Godin	Goodridge
Gourde	Gray
Hallan	Hoback
Jeneroux	Jivani
Kelly	Khanna
Kitchen	Kmieciak
Kram	Kramp-Neuman
Kurek	Kusie
Lake	Lantsman
Lawrence	Lehoux

*Speaker's Ruling*

Leslie	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
Lloyd	Lobb
Maguire	Majumdar
Martel	Mazier
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McLean
Melillo	Moore
Morantz	Morrison
Motz	Muys
Nater	Patzer
Paul-Hus	Perkins
Poilievre	Redekopp
Reid	Rempel Garner
Richards	Roberts
Rood	Ruff
Scheer	Schmale
Seeback	Shields
Shipley	Small
Soroka	Steinley
Stewart	Strahl
Stubbs	Thomas
Tochor	Tolmie
Uppal	Van Popta
Vecchio	Vidal
Vien	Viersen
Vis	Wagantall
Warkentin	Wagh
Webber	Williams
Williamson	Zimmer— 118

● (1600)

[*Translation*]

On June 6, 2024, the member for Saskatoon West rose on a point of order to apologize for misspeaking during the debate. He said that he had realized his mistake immediately after his speech and therefore requested the change when the blues came out.

The House leader of the official opposition subsequently intervened on this matter, outlining the purpose of the blues and the role of editors in producing the Debates. Given the apologies offered by the member for Saskatoon West and his admission that he had misspoken, thereby properly correcting the record to reflect the intention of his remarks, the House leader suggested that the matter be considered closed.

[*English*]

The Chair is hesitant to deal with concerns about the editing of the Debates. The work of the editors is based on a standard of professional excellence and performed independently from political pressures. However, when members complain about the accuracy of the Debates, the Chair also has a duty to assess whether the record accurately reflects the proceedings of the House. If not, the Chair can ask that the Debates be modified.

Regarding the editing process, *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, third edition, at page 1229, states the following:

It is a long-standing practice of the House that editors of the *Debates* may exercise judgment as to whether or not changes suggested by Members constitute the correction of an error or a minor alteration. The editors may likewise alter a sentence to render it more readable but may not go so far as to change its meaning

[*Translation*]

On October 29, 2009, in a ruling on a similar matter, which can be found at page 6356 of the Debates, Speaker Milliken said:

As all members know, the *Debates* are not a verbatim ad literatum transcription of what is said in this House. When producing the *Debates*, House of Commons editors routinely edit interventions for clarity and clean up our grammatical and syntactical lapses. They also of course consider corrections and minor alterations to the blues submitted by the member to which words are attributed.

Any editorial changes, either suggested by a member or made by the editors themselves, must remain faithful to the original meaning of the statement as a whole, as spoken on the floor of the House. Editors are also expected to exercise judgment in assessing any potential change. The final word on the change does not rest with the member requesting it, but with the editors.

## PAIRED

Members

Freeland Plamondon— 2

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

## PRIVILEGE

RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE HOUSE—SPEAKER'S RULING

**The Speaker:** I am ready to rule on the question of privilege raised on June 6, by the member for Winnipeg Centre, concerning editorial changes to the Debates of June 4.

In raising this matter, the member asserted that a substantive change was inappropriately made at page 24440 of the Debates of June 4, 2024. According to the member, that day's Debates do not accurately reflect the content of the speech given by the member for Saskatoon West during the consideration at report stage of Bill C-20, an act establishing the public complaints and review commission and amending certain acts and statutory instruments. She explained that the member for Saskatoon West had stated that a certain individual “was likely to reoffend because of his racial background.”

However, the Debates read that the same individual “was likely to reoffend regardless of his racial background.”

She stated that replacing the word “because” with the word “regardless” significantly altered the meaning of the member's intervention. In making this point, the member referenced a recent ruling in which the Chair indicated that revisions should not alter the substance and meaning of what members say in the House.

*Privilege**[English]*

Just recently, on May 30, the Chair ruled on a complaint about the editing process for the Debates of April 30. In that ruling, which can be found at page 24087 of the Debates, the following is stated with respect to the independence of Parliamentary Publications, “The editors of the Parliamentary Publications team craft a record that, in their judgment, best corresponds to the proceedings, without political interference and in a completely non-partisan manner.”

Exercising due diligence, the Chair assessed the facts of the present situation by inquiring with Parliamentary Publications. The question editors faced when preparing the Debates on June 4 was whether substituting “regardless” for “because” would distort the meaning of the intervention or clarify it. That day, even before the member for Saskatoon West requested a change, editors had already begun to investigate the issue and analyze the overall context of his intervention. They had found through their fact-checking that the member was paraphrasing an assessment made by the Parole Board that did not seem to align with the term used.

Furthermore, the member's use of the word seemed illogical in the context of the rest of his speech. The request from the member for Saskatoon West to modify the blues ostensibly confirmed their suspicion as to his apparent intention. The editors concluded he had misspoken and it was on that basis that the editorial change was made. In retrospect, the editors might have handled the situation differently as they always have the option to leave an intervention as is, even if it is incoherent. However, their ultimate objective is for the transcript to make sense.

- (1605)

*[Translation]*

Members should not be surprised to learn that editors occasionally make changes and replace words to ensure that members' interventions remain coherent for the reader, while attempting to ensure they accurately reflect what was said. This is not unusual. These changes are made by editors on their own initiative, but also at the request of members from all parties. Accordingly, editors must have the latitude to navigate perilous interpretation exercises, though they do not have free rein, as they must be equally careful not to change the meaning of what is said.

*[English]*

Admittedly, some situations are more complex than others and, indeed, the present case has caused some degree of controversy. The member for Saskatoon West undoubtedly used the word “because” in his intervention. He admitted the mistake himself and apologized for having misspoken. His initial use of the word is now on the record.

The Chair is, nonetheless, satisfied with the explanations provided by Parliamentary Publications and the reasoning behind the replacement of the disputed word. While the decision does appear to change the meaning of the intervention, their motivation was clearly to make the text more coherent.

I hope members can accept that the editors have a challenging job and that the correction was made in good faith. As a result, the

Chair concludes that this matter does not constitute a question of privilege and, therefore, considers the matter closed.

I thank all members for their attention.

\* \* \*

**PRIVILEGE**

ALLEGED PREMATURE RELEASE OF SPEAKER'S RULING ON SOCIAL MEDIA

**Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am rising on a question of privilege. I have a concern. As you were giving us the ruling today, we noticed on Twitter that the ruling was already published. The idea that members of this House should get that ruling before anyone else is quite clear and the fact that Twitter got the ruling before the member for Winnipeg Centre or any of the members of this House is inappropriate.

**The Speaker:** I thank the hon. member for Edmonton Strathcona.

*[Translation]*

Before I recognize the member for Salaberry—Suroît, who may be rising on the same point of order, I would like to clarify the following.

*[English]*

I would note that the member is right. We do not normally publish the ruling before it is given in the House. After the ruling is given, we distribute it by email to members, as well as note on social media that a ruling has been given.

Given that the hon. member has raised this issue quite appropriately, we will look at this and come back to the hon. member.

*[Translation]*

The hon. member for Salaberry—Suroît.

**Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Salaberry—Suroît, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, to follow up on my colleague's point of order, this is not the first time we have seen one of your rulings posted on social media before you delivered it orally from your chair.

If you do some checking, it is important that you and your team look into this to avoid repeating what the member just pointed out to you.

**The Speaker:** I thank the hon. member for Salaberry—Suroît. The table and I believe this is the first time that a Speaker's ruling has been published in the media before it was delivered in the House of Commons.

We are going to check to make sure it does not happen again.

The hon. member for Winnipeg Centre on a point of order.



[English]

**Ms. Leah Gazan:** Mr. Speaker, my point of order is about parliamentary behaviour. We cannot use such words as “shit” or “fuck” in this place, but we can say such things as “because of [somebody’s] racial background”. We can perpetrate racism in the House, and it is treated less seriously than swearing is. It is deeply troubling for me that we do not find it terribly troubling when one’s racial background is blamed for criminality. That seems quite unparliamentary to me.

• (1610)

**The Speaker:** I am going to invite the hon. member for Winnipeg Centre to take the opportunity to look more carefully at the ruling. The door is always open to speak to the hon. member and to speak to any member who has any concerns about the language that is used or that is acceptable in the House.

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

### 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)(a) I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government’s response to nine petitions. These returns will be tabled in an electronic format.

While I am on my feet, I move:

That the House do now proceed to orders of the day.

**The Speaker:** If a member participating in person wishes that the motion be carried or carried on division, or if a member of a recognized party participating in person wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded division.

**The Speaker:** Call in the members.

• (1655)

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 828)

#### YEAS

Members

Alghabra	Ali
Anand	Anandasangaree
Angus	Arseneault
Arya	Atwin
Bachrach	Badawey
Bains	Baker
Barron	Battiste
Beech	Bendayan
Bibeau	Bittle
Blair	Blaney
Blois	Boissonnault
Boulerice	Bradford
Brière	Cannings
Carr	Casey
Chagger	Chahal

Champagne	Chatel
Chiang	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Collins (Victoria)	Cornier
Coteau	Dabrusin
Damoff	Davies
Desjarlais	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Diab
Dong	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Erskine-Smith	Fillmore
Fisher	Fonseca
Fortier	Fragiskatos
Fraser	Fry
Gaheer	Gainey
Garrison	Gazan
Gerretsen	Gould
Green	Guilbeault
Hajdu	Hanley
Hardie	Hepfner
Holland	Housefather
Hussen	Hutchings
Iacono	Idlout
Ien	Jaczek
Johns	Joly
Jowhari	Julian
Kayabaga	Kelloway
Khalid	Khera
Koutrakis	Kusmierczyk
Kwan	Lalonde
Lambropoulos	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Lattanzio
Lauzon	LeBlanc
Lebouthillier	Lightbound
Long	Longfield
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacGregor
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Martinez Ferrada	Masse
Mathysen	May (Cambridge)
McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty
McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLeod	McPherson
Mendès	Mendicino
Miao	Miller
Morrissey	Murray
Naqvi	Ng
Noormohamed	O’Connell
Oliphant	O’Regan
Petitpas Taylor	Powlowski
Qualtrough	Robillard
Rodriguez	Rogers
Romanado	Rota
Sahota	Sajjan
Saks	Samson
Sarai	Scarpaleggia
Schiefke	Serré
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Singh
Sorbara	Sousa
St-Onge	Sudds
Tassi	Taylor Roy
Thompson	Trudeau
Turnbull	Valdez
Van Bynen	van Koevorden
Vandal	Vandenbeld
Virani	Weiler
Wilkinson	Yip
Zahid	Zarrillo
Zuberi— 173	

*Government Orders*

## NAYS

## Members

Aboultaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Arnold	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Barsalou-Duval	Beaulieu
Bergeron	Berthold
Bérubé	Bezan
Blanchette-Joncas	Block
Bragdon	Brassard
Brock	Brunelle-Duceppe
Calkins	Caputo
Carrie	Chabot
Chambers	Champoux
Chong	Cooper
Dalton	Dancho
Davidson	DeBellefeuille
Deltell	d'Entremont
Desbiens	Desilets
Doherty	Dowdall
Dreeshen	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Ellis	Epp
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Fast	Ferreri
Gallant	Garon
Gaudreau	Généreux
Genius	Gill
Gladu	Godin
Goodridge	Gourde
Gray	Hallan
Hoback	Jeneroux
Jivani	Khanna
Kitchen	Kmicic
Kram	Kramp-Neuman
Kurek	Kusie
Lake	Lantsman
Larouche	Lawrence
Lehoux	Lemire
Leslie	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
Lloyd	Lobb
Maguire	Martel
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	Mazier
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McLean
Melillo	Michaud
Moore	Morantz
Morrice	Morrison
Motz	Muys
Nater	Normandin
Patzer	Paul-Hus
Pauzé	Perkins
Perron	Poilievre
Redekopp	Reid
Rempel Garner	Richards
Roberts	Rood
Ruff	Savard-Tremblay
Scheer	Schmale
Seebach	Shields
Shipley	Simard
Sinclair-Desgagné	Small
Soroka	Steinley
Ste-Marie	Stewart
Strahl	Stubbs
Thériault	Therrien
Thomas	Tochor
Tolmie	Trudel
Uppal	Van Popta
Vecchio	Vidal
Vien	Viersen
Vignola	Villemure
Vis	Vuong

Wagantall  
 Waugh  
 Williams  
 Zimmer— 147

Warkentin  
 Webber  
 Williamson

## PAIRED

## Members

Freeland

Plamondon— 2

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I declare the motion carried.

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[*Translation*]

**ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION ACT**

BILL C-65—TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.)** moved:

That, in relation to Bill C-65, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act, not more than five further hours shall be allotted to the consideration at second reading stage of the bill; and

That, at the expiry of the five hours provided for the consideration at second reading stage of the said bill, any proceedings before the House shall be interrupted, if required for the purpose of this order, and, in turn, every question necessary for the disposal of the said stage of the bill shall be put forthwith and successively, without further debate or amendment.

[*English*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Pursuant to Standing Order 67.1, there will now be a 30-minute question period.

● (1700)

[*Translation*]

I invite hon. members who wish to ask questions to rise in their places or use the “raise hand” function so that the Chair has some idea of the number of members who wish to participate in this question period.

[*English*]

The hon. member for South Shore—St. Margarets.

**Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I would like to ask the government House leader why he has imposed a record number of closures and time allocations, I think, in the history of Canada. Why does he feel it necessary to constantly shut down debate, especially, ironically, on an election bill, or what some might call the “pension” bill? I would like to understand why the government continues to use closure more than any other government in history.

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I know that my friend, the member for South Shore—St. Margarets, will be devastated that it is not the government House leader answering the question. He will have to take the answer from me, and I cannot imagine that is not a source of immense happiness for him.

*Government Orders*

It is somewhat ironic that a member of the Conservative Party would find something strange about using time allocation or closure. I often tease my seatmate, who is the government House leader, that Peter Van Loan, when he was House leader, actually left affixed to the top of the desk the motion that my colleague read, because no previous government in Canadian history used these parliamentary tactics more than the Harper government.

We are facing dilatory tactics from the Conservatives. We are trying to get this legislation to committee and do the business of the Canadian people.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** We have 30 minutes for questions and comments. I would ask members to please hold off on their questions and comments until they have the floor.

[*Translation*]

Order.

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 for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, Public Services and Procurement; the hon. member for Spadina—Fort York, Democratic Institutions.

[*English*]

**Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP):** Madam Speaker, my question for the minister is around the fact that we need to be moving forward to strengthen our democracy, to ensure that Canadians have access to be able to vote barrier-free. There is a lot of work that has to happen, and there is a lot of good content in the bill.

I find it pretty rich to see the Conservatives' response to the bill. There was a problem with the bill, which I identified, and I put forward an amendment. I am going to be putting forward an amendment, of course, to make sure that we move the date back to the original election date so that we do not see the consequence of MPs' pensions being impacted. However, instead of moving forward with solutions, the Conservatives, in true fashion, have been trying to cut and gut the entire bill to not see Canadians able to move forward with having as few barriers as possible in participating in the elections.

Does the minister think it is because the current system benefits the Conservatives that they would want to cut and gut this legislation, and why is it important that we see this bill go through?

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc:** Madam Speaker, I thank our colleague from Nanaimo—Ladysmith for the work that she and her colleagues in the New Democratic Party did with us, in a collaborative way, to bring this legislation before Parliament.

When the Prime Minister and the leader of the New Democratic Party signed the supply and confidence agreement, one of the elements in that agreement was exactly as our colleague from Nanaimo—Ladysmith indicated: ways to amend the Canada Elections Act to make voting more accessible. I had the privilege of working with our former colleague, Daniel Blaikie, when we wanted to, for example, make campus voting a permanent fixture of the

Elections Act and make it easier for people to register online for mail-in ballots. We think that it is important for Canadians to have access to the electoral process and be able to participate, obviously while ensuring the integrity of our system.

The Conservatives take their page from Donald Trump, trying to suppress votes, trying to make sure it is more difficult to vote and putting barriers in front of people voting. We saw that with Mr. Harper, and now they are doing the same thing here.

● (1705)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Madam Speaker, the minister decided to change the election date so as not to disrupt a religious holiday, but clearly he did not consider the fact that he would be disrupting municipal elections.

The former president of the Union des municipalités du Québec, Daniel Côté, who also just happens to be the mayor of Gaspé, pointed out to me that 37 of the 45 days of municipal election campaigns would take place at the same time as the federal election campaign.

The minister knows as well as I do that there is a low turnout for municipal elections. Is he not concerned that democracy will suffer if there are two simultaneous elections in Quebec?

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc:** Madam Speaker, in principle, I share my colleague's concern about the difficulty of determining a date that does not disrupt municipal elections in her province, as she rightly said. I believe that Quebec's municipal election day falls one week after the date proposed in the bill, which is October 27.

I, too, have a constructive relationship with the mayor of Gaspé. I saw him in the Gaspé last summer, and I hope to return in the coming weeks. I spoke to the mayor of Longueuil, Ms. Fournier, who contacted me about this issue. I am very aware of their views and appreciate the concern.

It is difficult to revert back to the original date of October 20, however, because the municipal elections in Alberta will be held on that same day. I am not talking about the election campaign, but the actual date of the Alberta municipal elections. There is also the religious holiday. That is the challenge of choosing a date. Obviously, we are going to rely on the judgment of parliamentarians.

[*English*]

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the minister's comments, especially when it comes to making voting more accessible for more Canadians. Something I hear in the riding of Waterloo is how we will ensure that Canadians receive good information, real information, and people often remind me of the Conservative history, such as robocalls to ensure that people did not know where to vote. I think the Conservatives were also notorious for even stealing a ballot box one time. I believe that member, the minister, got to see a Conservative taken out of this place in shackles.

*Government Orders*

I would love to hear from the minister why we are having to use time allocation for a second time today and the importance of Canadians having accessible voting and ensuring that more Canadians are able to vote and participate in democratic institutions.

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc:** Madam Speaker, my colleague from Waterloo, as always, identified a serious concern that I think many parliamentarians share.

The Conservative Party has a long history of seeking to make voting more difficult by putting barriers in front of people, whether it is to register to vote or whether it is appropriate identification to ensure the integrity of people presenting themselves at the polls. In this case, one thing about this legislation that we think is very positive is that it would ban, for example, disinformation intended to disrupt the conduct of an election. It would remove a time frame limit for offences involving impersonation or false statements: for example, as my colleague from Waterloo noted, attempting to impersonate an official with Elections Canada or another candidate to create confusion around what is the appropriate place to vote.

We are happy to work with members of this House, of course. We think it is important to ensure the integrity of our electoral system, but also to ensure that it is accessible and fair for everyone.

**Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP):** Madam Speaker, I will start by making clear that Greens support this bill, notwithstanding this one silly provision with respect to pensions. We, too, will be working across party lines to remove that from this bill.

When it comes to time allocation, by my count, a total of five members have spoken to this bill at second reading. In fact, I think the minister himself only spoke to the bill when he rose to introduce it originally. Earlier in the day, when it came to time allocation on the budget bill, the Greens supported that, recognizing there are some dilatory tactics at play this time of year. However, this particular bill has been up for debate one time, on a Friday, for a couple of hours.

How does the minister justify time allocation on this particular bill?

• (1710)

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc:** Madam Speaker, I think our colleague, the member for Kitchener Centre, understands the parliamentary process well. He knows that when this legislation gets to committee, it will be an opportunity for members on the committee and others who want to attend the committee to hear from expert witnesses. Obviously, the Chief Electoral Officer and others will be important witnesses for the committee. It will come back to the House at report stage and third reading.

We are also conscious of the importance of adopting legislation like this in a timely way to allow Elections Canada to be ready to implement these provisions. We appreciate that our colleague from Kitchener Centre supports this legislation. We would not, obviously, think that he would, in some cynical way, as the Conservatives do, pretend to take more time precisely to ensure that Elections Canada does not have reasonable time to be ready to implement these changes.

These are discussions I have had with the Chief Electoral Officer. We think it is time for Parliament to consider this legislation at committee as a result of today's proceeding.

**Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC):** Madam Speaker, this is about as cynical as it gets. This is a pension bill under the guise of an elections bill. It ought to be called the “loser Liberal pension protection act”, because that is precisely what it is doing. It is designed to pad the pockets of soon-to-be loser Liberals so that they can secure pensions that they otherwise would not be entitled to. The government is literally giving the middle finger to everyday Canadians who are struggling as Liberals pad their pockets. Is that not the reason why the government House leader is moving to expedite this legislation?

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc:** Madam Speaker, absolutely not. My friend should be concerned about the municipal election in Alberta that would happen on the day that the legislation originally contemplated the election, on October 20. There is also an important religious holiday, Diwali.

We look forward to the committee hearing from witnesses. No matter what date one chooses, any time that fixed election legislation contemplates a day, it will bump into significant religious holidays or some municipal, provincial or territorial elections. If we move the legislation back, for example, to October 20, that is the municipal election day in Alberta. We heard from our colleagues from the Bloc Québécois. They think seven days before the Quebec municipal election is too much time in terms of an overlap.

If the committee in its judgment wants to hear from witnesses and look at this issue, the government will obviously be happy to work with the committee. We think it is important to pass this legislation to make voting more accessible.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Madam Speaker, we received this proposal to push back the date of the next federal general election by a week, on the pretext that the current date coincides with a Hindu holiday.

Unless someone can prove otherwise, the options to vote by advance polling or at the office of a returning officer are specifically intended for voters unavailable to vote on election day. I do not think anyone would be offended by that.

However, as we know, by delaying the date of the election for a week, members elected in 2019 would qualify for a pension. Not only would it be a generous parting gift for some of them, but it might be an opportunity to renew the team and attract new candidates.

Are the Liberals showing their elected members the door so that they can shop around for a better team, or are they in ethnocultural vote-buying mode? I think it is probably both.

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc:** Madam Speaker, I never thought I would hear such a cynical question as that from a Bloc Québécois colleague.

*Government Orders*

His colleague just asked a question about the importance of respecting municipal elections in Quebec. Obviously, we considered the representations of the Union des municipalités du Québec. Municipal elections are also being held in Alberta, as are provincial elections in Newfoundland and Labrador and territorial elections in Nunavut. My colleague chose to base his argument on a religious holiday. That is up to him.

We are also concerned about municipal elections scheduled in certain provinces at the same time. However, as I said, we hope that the committee will study the matter. If it decides to change the date, we will be happy to comply with its decision.

• (1715)

[English]

**Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, first of all I would like to commend the great work of the commissioner of Canada elections, who has reached out to my office a few times regarding preparing for the next federal election, based on the work that I had started by introducing my bill, Bill C-297, to amend the Elections Act with respect to indigenous languages. I just want to use this time to follow up and ask the minister what kind of work is being done as a pilot project to make sure that indigenous languages are also on the ballot.

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc:** Madam Speaker, our colleague from Nunavut again raises a very important point. We were inspired by the work she did in terms of indigenous languages' being included on the ballots. Having had a number of conversations with the Chief Electoral Officer and other colleagues, I was struck by the number of indigenous persons who when they would go to vote would be in a circumstance where, again, their ability to properly exercise their democratic right would be negatively affected by their inability to understand, whether it was English or French, what was on a ballot.

Therefore we thought that the legislation before us, to a very considerable extent inspired by the work of our colleague from Nunavut, would give Elections Canada precisely the authority and the ability to ensure that people in her territory, her constituency and other indigenous communities are able to exercise their rights, including having a ballot in their own language.

**Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I would like to just put one question really clearly to the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs. With respect to the clause in the bill that would extend the voting date by one week so a number of Liberal MPs who are about to lose, by one week, their ability to attain a pension, was it put in the bill to appease the minister's caucus and the members who are about to lose their seat? It is a simple question: yes or no?

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc:** Madam Speaker, no, and it certainly was not put in there to benefit the 32 Conservative MPs who would benefit by that change as well. Therefore the answer is no to both of those questions.

[Translation]

**Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I would like to ask my colleague a question. Bill C-65 contains interesting elements, but it would require that Elections Canada offer online registration. However, we know that

Canada has experienced foreign cyber-attacks, and that there have been interference and attempts at fraud. Those actors are trying to sow chaos. Russia has been particularly active on this front.

Would online registration not make us more vulnerable? Have special measures been considered to protect Canadians' data? I think that, in today's context, we are taking a risk. I would like to hear more from the minister on this.

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc:** Madam Speaker, our colleague from Abitibi—Témiscamingue raises a question that should concern all members of Parliament. I had this discussion with the Chief Electoral Officer. I know that senior public servants in the Privy Council Office who work with Elections Canada are also concerned. I, too, am concerned.

However, I have been reassured by our cybersecurity services, in particular at the Department of National Defence. I was told that there is indeed a way of ensuring the integrity of the process.

Canadians must register to receive a ballot by mail. I think it is important to make that distinction. We are not allowing people to vote online. We are talking about having people register online to receive a ballot, which they can then return by mail or drop off in an appropriate box at Elections Canada. I look forward to hearing from the witnesses in committee and getting a better grasp of the issue.

[English]

**Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Madam Speaker, in my riding there is a very large college, Fanshawe College, and I am always very concerned about students and their ability to vote. Could the minister talk about how important it is to ensure that we are constantly making it more accessible for students to have that right? This is especially important because often they are voting for the first time, and they are voting away from home. This would solidify consistency throughout their lifetime of exercising their right.

\* \* \*

• (1720)

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

**Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I request that the ordinary hour of daily adjournment of the next sitting be 12 midnight, pursuant to order made Wednesday, February 28.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Pursuant to order made Wednesday, February 28, the minister's requests to extend said sitting is deemed adopted.

*Government Orders***ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION ACT**

## BILL C-65—TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, our colleague from London—Fanshawe again identifies one of the things we think is very important in the legislation. We worked on this with our colleagues in the NDP caucus. Our leader and her leader agreed, for example, regarding campus voting, whether at Fanshawe College or Mount Allison University in Sackville, New Brunswick, in my riding, on allowing students, for the reasons our colleague from London— Fanshawe correctly identified, to be able to easily access campus voting and making the campus voting program permanent in the election legislation, as well as making it easier for persons living with disabilities to be able to access voting.

We think these are important changes that we hope will garner the support of all parliamentarians, and I totally totally share the view of our colleague from London—Fanshawe about the importance of having young persons, when they leave home and are living away from home for college or university, getting in the habit and easily being able to cast their democratic ballot in a way that we should make more accessible, obviously while ensuring the integrity of the system.

**Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC):** Madam Speaker, a talking point the minister often likes to use is that Alberta is going to have a municipal election in 2025. He uses the talking point repeatedly despite the fact that the Local Authorities Election Act allows any council across Alberta to move the election from the Monday to the Saturday just with a bylaw change. I would hope the minister's staff would go back and do their homework so they can better inform the minister that this is not a problem in Alberta. Albertans will figure it out on their own, as we have in the past.

Is it not the case then that the piece of legislation before us is strictly about protecting the pensions of loser Liberal MPs in the next general election?

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc:** Madam Speaker, I answered that question a moment ago. Absolutely not, nor is it about protecting the pensions of the 32 Conservatives who would be eligible with this particular scenario.

We have made it clear that if the committee, in its study of the legislation, wants to look at this particular date, obviously it is within the purview of the committee to do that. In my discussions with Elections Canada, it is clear that there are significant religious holidays that bump into any one of these potential dates. In some cases, there are municipal elections. Again, if colleagues at the committee want to study the issue and hear from the appropriate witnesses, the government will obviously be very happy to work with the committee.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, at the get-go, I want to recognize Elections Canada and the outstanding work it does. It is recognized around the world as an agency that does a fantastic job in protecting Canada's democracy. When I think of the legislation, what I see, put very simply, is

that it would enable more people to participate in the voting process, by simplifying it.

One of the areas is long-term care facilities. The minister has pointed out others. I would like to get his overall thoughts on how important it is that as a democracy we continue to take steps forward at enhancing our democracy, which is exactly what the legislation would do.

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc:** Madam Speaker, the parliamentary secretary to the House leader has said it very well. We on this side, with the co-operation of some opposition parties, I hope the New Democratic Party and the Bloc Québécois, think it is important to offer thoughtful ways to enhance citizens' ability to participate in the democratic process.

Our colleague from Winnipeg North referred to long-term care homes. We just discussed the importance of campus voting and persons with disabilities. We talked about indigenous languages, for example, in a territory as vast as Nunavut. All of these are very important, thoughtful and balanced ways to ensure that Canadians are easily able to access the democratic process, obviously while at all times ensuring the integrity of the process.

I also share our friend's view with respect to the importance of Elections Canada and the terrific work it does, which is recognized around the world.

• (1725)

**Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC):** Madam Speaker, Bill C-65 is filled with nothing but rank hypocrisy. First the Liberals talk about giving voters access to voting, yet it was the Prime Minister and the minister who sat around the cabinet table and chose to call an election when they promised not to disenfranchise hundreds of thousands of Canadians, including students by not allowing campus voting in the last election. That is on the Prime Minister and the minister. The rank hypocrisy is simply stunning.

When it comes to misinformation and disinformation, the Deputy Prime Minister had a video flagged on Twitter. Also, the member for Calgary Skyview stole his Conservative opponent's election literature. There are many other examples where we have seen the Liberals stop at nothing to try to gain a political advantage.

My question is very simple. This is not an elections bill but truly a pension bill. At any point in time, did the minister get feedback from his caucus, his department officials or anybody within the Liberal Party about the consequences of adjusting the election date so that losing Liberal MPs would qualify for a pension? I have heard from many constituents who want a clear answer from the minister about the pension bill.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I want to remind the hon. member to be extremely careful about making accusations about members in the House of Commons. He used the word "stole", and I would ask him not to do that again.

The hon. minister.

*Government Orders*

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc:** Madam Speaker, in spite of the manufactured indignation from our colleague, he knows very well that the Conservatives are experts at the very words the member used. I will not repeat the words my colleague used, because of your admonishment, which I obviously take seriously.

Former prime minister Harper introduced, with the current Leader of the Opposition as the minister responsible for democratic institutions, a series of measures deliberately designed to suppress the vote and to make voting more difficult. They were deliberately designed to ensure that some people, whether students or persons with disabilities, were not able to easily access voting.

Liberals think it is important. We have worked happily with our colleagues in the New Democratic Party as our two leaders committed to doing in their supply and confidence agreement. We think there are a number of very important and significant steps to making voting more accessible in Canada. We look forward to hearing from colleagues in committee and when the legislation, we hope, comes back to this place.

**Mr. Damien Kurek:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. You referred to some of the words that I had stated in the preamble to what was ultimately my question. However, I would ask for clarification from the Chair whether anything I said was untrue because everything that I—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** There is no clarification on the point of order, and the hon. member is actually challenging the Chair. I would ask him to be very careful.

Before I go to other questions, I want to remind members that I did ask how many individuals wanted to speak to this. Before I go to a second round of questions, I need to get through the first round.

The hon. member for York—Simcoe.

**Mr. Scot Davidson (York—Simcoe, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I have been listening to the minister tonight. This is coming from a government that called an election in the middle of a pandemic, and now it is worried about voting. This is about moving a vote date for an election.

I have been out in my riding knocking on doors, and I can make it really simple for the minister. The people of York—Simcoe would love an election, a carbon tax election, tonight. We can make it very simple and go to an election tonight.

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc:** Madam Speaker, I am not sure that there was a question in the comments from my colleague from York—Simcoe.

Liberals think Canadians want the House and the government to focus on the important issues that matter to them. We think one of the fundamental issues for Canadians is having an electoral system that is accessible, open and fair, obviously while ensuring all of the important elements of integrity. We have a lot of confidence in the work of Elections Canada.

We think there is an opportunity here for parliamentarians to come together. As my friends across the aisle, not from the Conservative Party of course but from other political parties, have said, this is an opportunity to do something significant to improve our democratic process.

• (1730)

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I thank this place for having a meaningful discussion about democracy, which I think is something we should be talking about frequently. I know that holistically, when we look at the bill, most of the things do strengthen our democracy, and I think there are some good steps that have been taken. Obviously, the Conservatives have a concern about their 32 members who will be eligible for a pension. I know that our member who is the critic for democratic reform has been very clear that she will be moving an amendment to remedy that issue by moving the date of the election back.

I am wondering if the minister would share with this place if the Liberals would be supporting that amendment.

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc:** Madam Speaker, I had the opportunity to discuss this very issue with the member's colleague, the critic for democratic institutions. As I have said in previous answers, if the committee in its wisdom wants to look at this issue and wants to hear from witnesses and from the Chief Electoral Officer, who may have some views, we would obviously abide by the consensus of the committee. We do think it is important for people, however, to recognize that at any moment, when we move that date, we are going to bump into significant religious holidays and some municipal, or potentially provincial or territorial elections. However, obviously, if the consensus of the committee is to adjust the date, the Liberal Party would, of course, be happy to go along with that consensus.

[*Translation*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** It is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith the question necessary to dispose of the motion now before the House.

The question is on the motion.

If a member participating in person wishes that the motion be carried or carried on division, or if a member of a recognized party participating in person wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

[*English*]

**Mr. Tom Kmiec:** Madam Speaker, I would like to ask for a recorded division.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Call in the members.

• (1815)

[*Translation*]

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(*Division No. 829*)

YEAS

Members

Alghabra  
Anand  
Angus  
Arya  
Bachrach

Ali  
Anandasangaree  
Arseneault  
Atwin  
Badawey

*Government Orders*

Bains	Baker	Tassi	Taylor Roy
Barron	Battiste	Thompson	Trudeau
Beech	Bendayan	Turnbull	Valdez
Bibeau	Bittle	Van Bynen	van Koeverden
Blair	Blaney	Vandal	Vandenbeld
Blois	Boissonnault	Virani	Weiler
Boulerice	Bradford	Wilkinson	Yip
Brière	Cannings	Zahid	Zarrillo
Carr	Casey	Zuberi— 173	
Chagger	Chahal		
Champagne	Chatel		
Chen	Chiang		
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Collins (Victoria)		
Cormier	Coteau	Aboultaif	Aitchison
Dabrusin	Damoff	Albas	Allison
Davies	Desjarlais	Arnold	Baldinelli
Dhaliwal	Dhillon	Barlow	Barrett
Diab	Drouin	Barsalou-Duval	Bergeron
Dubourg	Duclos	Berthold	Bérubé
Duguid	Dzerowicz	Bezan	Blanchette-Joncas
Ehsassi	El-Khoury	Block	Bragdon
Erskine-Smith	Fillmore	Brassard	Brock
Fisher	Fonseca	Brunelle-Duceppe	Calkins
Fortier	Fragiskatos	Caputo	Carrie
Fraser	Fry	Chabot	Chambers
Gaheer	Gainey	Champoux	Chong
Garrison	Gazan	Cooper	Dalton
Gerretsen	Gould	Dancho	Davidson
Green	Guilbeault	DeBellefeuille	Deltell
Hajdu	Hanley	Desbiens	Desilets
Hardie	Hepfner	Doherty	Dowdall
Holland	Housefather	Dreeshen	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Hughes	Hussen	Ellis	Epp
Hutchings	Iacono	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Idlout	Ien	Fast	Ferreri
Jaczek	Johns	Findlay	Fortin
Joly	Jowhari	Gallant	Garon
Julian	Kayabaga	Gaudreau	Généreux
Khalid	Khera	Genuis	Gladu
Koutrakis	Kusmierczyk	Godin	Goodridge
Kwan	Lalonde	Gourde	Gray
Lambropoulos	Lamoureux	Hallan	Hoback
Lapointe	Lattanzio	Jeneroux	Jivani
Lauzon	LeBlanc	Kelly	Khanna
Lebouthillier	Lightbound	Kitchen	Kmiec
Long	Longfield	Kram	Kramp-Neuman
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacAulay (Cardigan)	Kurek	Kusie
MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacGregor	Lake	Lantsman
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney	Larouche	Lawrence
Martinez Ferrada	Masse	Lehoux	Lemire
Mathysen	May (Cambridge)	Leslie	Lewis (Essex)
McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	Lloyd	Lobb
McLeod	McPherson	Maguire	Majumdar
Mendès	Mendicino	Martel	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
Miao	Miller	Mazier	McCauley (Edmonton West)
Morrissey	Murray	McLean	Melillo
Naqvi	Ng	Michaud	Moore
Noormohamed	O'Connell	Morantz	Morrice
Oliphant	O'Regan	Morrison	Motz
Petitpas Taylor	Powlowski	Muys	Nater
Qualtrough	Robillard	Patzner	Paul-Hus
Rodriguez	Rogers	Pauzé	Perkins
Romanado	Rota	Perron	Poilievre
Sahota	Sajjan	Rayes	Redekopp
Saks	Samson	Reid	Rempel Garner
Sarai	Scarpaleggia	Richards	Roberts
Schiefke	Serré	Rood	Ruff
Sgro	Shanahan	Savard-Tremblay	Scheer
Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)	Schmale	Seeback
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Singh	Shields	Shipley
Sorbara	Sousa	Simard	Sinclair-Desgagné
St-Onge	Sudds	Small	Soroka

**NAYS**

## Members



Steinley	Ste-Marie
Stewart	Strahl
Stubbs	Thériault
Therrien	Tochor
Tolmie	Trudel
Uppal	Van Popta
Vecchio	Vidal
Vien	Viersen
Villemure	Vis
Vuong	Wagantall
Warkentin	Waugh
Webber	Williams
Williamson	Zimmer— 146

### PAIRED

Members

Freeland Plamondon— 2

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

\* \* \*

[English]

### BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2024, NO. 1

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-69, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 16, 2024, as reported (with amendments) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

**Mr. Dan Muys (Flamborough—Glanbrook, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we are here this evening to debate Bill C-69, the budget implementation act.

We are again debating the out-of-control inflationary spending by the Liberals that is driving up the cost of literally everything for Canadians. In the budget for which this is the implementation act, we saw another \$61 billion in inflationary spending piled on the backs of Canadians, on top of the billions we have seen over the last nine years. It must be noted that, as a result of this, Canadian taxpayers are on the hook for \$58 billion in interest on that debt, which is more than the federal government sends to the provinces for health transfers. This point has been made, but it is worth restating because it is such an astronomical number.

All this debt and interest equals more taxes on the backs of Canadians, which is why, on April 1, we saw the Liberals increase the carbon tax by 23%, notwithstanding the outcry from premiers and Canadians. It is on the way to quadrupling, which we now know will be a \$30-billion-per-year hole in the economy. The report has now become public. Of course, there is the recent job-killing tax hike as well.

The problem with all the spending, taxes and red tape is that these things are killing our economy. Canada is now the worst-performing economy in the G7 and in the OECD. Since 2019, the last year before COVID, GDP per capita in Canada is down 2%; in the U.S., it has increased by 8%. Therefore, we really have a huge gap here between our two countries. We are at the very bottom and the U.S. is at the top of the G7, after nine years of the Prime Minister. The OECD calculated that Canada's economic growth will be the worst of the nearly 40 advanced economies in the OECD in this decade, again in the very basement. It will be below Greece and Italy, which are often the historical underperformers. If this trajec-

### Government Orders

tory continues and is not reversed, the OECD projects that Canada will have the worst economic growth for the next three decades.

Therefore, as we debate the budget, all of this means that we are on track for the worst decline in Canada's standard of living in 40 years, according to a Fraser Institute report from last month. In fact, we are seeing the widest gap in GDP per capita, which is a measure of the standard of living, between Canada and the U.S. since 1965. That is according to RBC.

This is alarming to me, and it should be alarming to all Canadians. It should be setting off alarm bells on the government benches as to how we got here. Clearly, all the inflationary spending, debt, taxes and red tape have compounded it. Really, it is what we have been calling economic vandalism.

Over the weekend, I was talking to a constituent who has a trucking firm. He told me that his orders are down and people are shipping less. This is in the midst of the greater Golden Horseshoe in southern Ontario. He is seeing that decline in business in the daily orders he is getting. He told me that, often, trucking is a harbinger of a decline in economic activity. We know this is true. Therefore, it confounds me that this is the case. How did we get this way in Canada? We have so many advantages that have been squandered by the Liberal-NDP government, with its fiscal and economic policies. The budget, with its taxes, exacerbates the issue even further.

In Canada, we have everything the world wants. We have 18 LNG projects awaiting approval; they are on the desk of the Prime Minister. The Germans, the Japanese, the Poles and the Greeks have all come to Canada looking for our LNG. We can help get the world off coal and replace Europe's dependence upon Russian natural gas. However, the Prime Minister told the German chancellor that there was no business case for LNG, so Germany went to Qatar, which helped it build the facility in seven months. This was a lost opportunity for Canada and Canadian jobs.

• (1820)

Canada has all the critical minerals, as well as many rare earth minerals. The world needs them, the world wants them, and we need them for our own economy. While we have 6% of the world's lithium, we do not extract it because of the government's bad policies and ideological aversion to natural resource extraction industries.

*Government Orders*

We also have nuclear expertise; not far from my home in southern Ontario, there is the second-largest nuclear plant in the world. There is a whole supply chain of companies that help feed that throughout southwestern Ontario, some of which are located in my constituency. That is another advantage that Canada has, yet our economy and standard of living are in decline, with the worst decline in 40 years. How can this be? Despite all these obvious advantages, along with smart people and good people, Canada is lacking in private sector investment in our economy. We saw that in the recent report about the lack of entrepreneurs that will take risks and seed innovation.

Therefore, it is not surprising that, after nine years of Liberal taxes and out-of-control spending, entrepreneurialism is being stifled. We saw that Canada lost 100,000 entrepreneurs. In the year 2000, Canada had three entrepreneurs for every 1,000 people. Today, that is down to 1.3, on average, per 1,000 people. The Prime Minister has bloated the size of the federal government at the expense of entrepreneurs and innovation. What is sad is that this is happening in Canada; we have every reason to succeed, but the government, these policies and the budget are dragging us down.

I contrast that to 2014, when there was a headline in The New York Times declaring that Canada had the strongest, most prosperous middle class in the world. In fact, The New York Times suggested that the Canadian dream had replaced the American dream in many respects in 2014. That is why my omas and opas came to Canada from the Netherlands following the Second World War. After the hunger winter, when the Dutch people were literally being starved to death by the Nazis, it was Canadian troops who liberated them. Many Dutch people came to Canada seeking hope, opportunity and freedom, and that is the story of many Canadians over the course of our history.

These people came with nothing in their pockets, as my grandparents did. They could work hard, save up, buy a home and start a family, but after nine years of the Prime Minister, that is no longer possible. It was possible in 2014, when The New York Times had that headline. Now, mortgages, down payments and rents have doubled, and taxes are up. That is why Canadians of all generations and backgrounds are upset. They are very upset. The most common thing I hear is people asking how it is that the Canadian dream has faded away. They ask how the freedom to work hard and succeed, to have that opportunity and hope, has drifted away after nine years of the Prime Minister.

It used to be that nine in 10 young people had given up on the dream of home ownership. It is now nine in 10 Canadians overall who see no future and no hope. That is an indicator of what the government farcically calls a budget that has fairness for every generation, when it is actually unfairness for every generation. They government has eroded that hope. I will be voting against Bill C-69, the budget implementation act, because it does not serve the interests of any generation of Canadians.

It is long past time that the Liberals get out of the way so that common-sense Conservatives can unleash Canada's potential and people can bring home powerful paycheques. Let us bring it home.

• (1825)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I hear my colleague saying that we could extract 6% more lithium, that we could explore nuclear energy, and so on.

Apart from suggesting that we deplete our soil and subsoil, in Quebec and Canada, does my colleague realize that the humidex in the region is 45 degrees today and that it will be 45 degrees again tomorrow, that 135 million people around the globe will suffer from the extreme heat, and that 19 pilgrims in Saudi Arabia died today, all because of the over-exploitation of minerals and oil?

How does my colleague see the future, he who was born in Canada, this wealthy country that opened doors for him? How does he respond to this? How does he respond to the fact that his fellow citizens in Canada and around the world are dying?

[*English*]

**Mr. Dan Muys:** Mr. Speaker, I would say a couple of things. First of all, the carbon tax is a tax plan and not an environmental plan. That is why we see that Canada is 62nd out of 67 countries in achieving our emissions targets. Therefore, I reject the member's analysis.

Second, we have an abundance of and an opportunity for liquefied natural gas in Canada, which is what I spoke about. We have seen the Japanese, the Germans, the Poles and the Greeks, who are hardly environmental Luddites, wanting our liquefied natural gas. This can help get the world off coal. China, which has one-third of the greenhouse gas emissions in the world, is using coal for its manufacturing economy. We have the ability to help China get off that. We should actually embrace that.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Mona Fortier (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to my colleague's speech. I found it somewhat interesting to hear him talk about the dream of home ownership, of owning a house. For several years, the government has had a plan to build more housing. In budget 2024 alone, we are increasing the number—

[*English*]

**The Deputy Speaker:** I have a point of order from the hon. member for North Okanagan—Shuswap.

**Mr. Mel Arnold:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask if there is a quorum in the House.

**The Deputy Speaker:** There is a quorum call. The bells shall not ring for more than 15 minutes.

*And the bells having rung:*

**The Deputy Speaker:** We now have quorum.

*Government Orders*

The hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Mona Fortier:** Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, my hon. colleague was talking in his speech about the dream of home ownership. For several years now, the government has been working to build new homes so that both younger and older people can have the opportunity to own a home. For example, the 2024 budget includes investments in the housing accelerator fund, which will help municipalities.

Can the member tell me whether the fact that he is voting against the budget means that he does not believe that we are helping municipalities to build more housing? If he thinks he wants more housing—

• (1830)

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot on a point of order.

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** Mr. Speaker, I really do not want to interrupt my colleague, who had to start her question again, but I am having trouble hearing her. I should be able to hear her. I think the quorum call interrupted things. Some people are talking about their travel plans and rum tasting.

Perhaps they should be asked to focus and promise not to break quorum, if it is going to prevent us from being able to hear the—

**The Deputy Speaker:** I thank the hon. member for his intervention.

[*English*]

Journals Branch is telling me that it is really nice outside, so members can take the conversations outside, if they need to.

The hon. member for Flamborough—Glanbrook.

**Mr. Dan Muys:** Mr. Speaker, I am all in favour of rum tasting.

In response to the question, there is a reason why nine in 10 young people have entirely given up on the dream of home ownership. We are building fewer homes today.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order. I am still hearing a lot of chatter, and the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot is really trying to listen. I see the pain on his face. I am just saying, for those who want to be outside, that it is beautiful outside, so take the conversations at least out into the lobbies where it is not quite as hot as it is outside.

The hon. member for Flamborough—Glanbrook.

**Mr. Dan Muys:** Mr. Speaker, in terms of home ownership, we see fewer homes being built today than we did in 1972. That is more than 50 years ago. In terms of the macroeconomic policy of the current government, fuelled by taxes and overspending, even Scotiabank has said that 2% of the rate hikes are attributable to government overspending by the Liberals. That is causing massive pain to those renewing their fixed and variable-rate mortgages. It is having a direct impact on the ability to access home ownership. It is also exacerbating the issue of people's ability to save for a down payment.

**Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, unfortunately, what we do not see in Bill C-69 is an investment in the Kivalliq hydro-fibre link project, which would help Nunavut communities not to rely on diesel. Does the member agree that there needs to be more taxation on oil and gas companies so that tax collected from them can help fund projects such as the Kivalliq hydro-fibre link project?

**Mr. Dan Muys:** Mr. Speaker, our energy sector in Canada is a large contributor of tax dollars to the federal government and to transfers to the respective provinces. In fact, the oil and gas industry in Canada is the most environmentally conscious and socially conscious, and it consults with indigenous communities more than any other energy sector in the world. I would reject the fact that we are importing oil from jurisdictions that have a horrible human rights record when we could be getting that right here from Canadian sources.

**Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is great to rise this evening and represent the most generous and entrepreneurial residents in the country, the residents of Vaughan—Woodbridge. It is a privilege to represent them. I understand there are other residents in the 338 ridings, but mine are the most special, in my humble view.

Bill C-69, the budget implementation act, is another major piece of legislation that would move Canada forward, move our economy forward, and provide foundational pillars for a strong economy and a strong future for my children and all the children who are blessed to call Canada home.

One thing I want to really be adamant about tonight is Canada's economic fundamentals. If we look at the foundation that we are building as a government, that we have built, one piece is the dental care plan. In my riding of Vaughan—Woodbridge, all over the riding, there are billboards up of dentists accepting patients under the Canadian dental care plan. We can think of the over two million seniors who have been approved by the plan. Over 200,000 seniors have seen oral health care providers from coast to coast to coast. Now, kids who are under 18 can also go.

This is transformational, and it is moving the country forward. This is helping Canadian families, not only for today, while we are elected to be in the House, but also for the future and for decades to come. It is part of our health care system. We did it, and we should be proud of that.

### *Government Orders*

On the early learning and national day care plan, I am blessed to have a two-and-a-half-year-old who is in day care. We know of the reductions that have taken place in Ontario. By September 2025, we will get day care down to an average of \$10-per-day, working with the province of Ontario. We need to expand the child care spaces to meet the demand, and that is happening. Yes, there are always kinks in the road. Life is not a straight line, and every representative knows this. However, it is about working hard and making sure that we are doing the right thing for our constituents, and the constituents in Vaughan—Woodbridge know that. We will continue to move forward.

On the housing accelerator fund, there has been a \$59-million investment into the city of Vaughan, and we are using those funds to incentivize home building.

The Canada child benefit is a transformational plan. When the Conservatives were in power, they were sending \$100 cheques to millionaires. We stopped that. We now have monthly, tax-free cheques going out to families across the country. It is nearly a \$30-billion program.

Now, we know that Conservatives equal austerity, and they are going to need to come clean on their plan to cut vital programs for Canadians and hard-working Canadian families, much like the ones in my riding of Vaughan—Woodbridge.

On the capital gains front, I have heard some chirping on the other side about the inclusion rate. Capital gains were taxed at 25% versus dividends in the mid-30% and versus interest. When we look at forms of capital income, it can lead to tax avoidance strategies put in place by accountants across this country, but I love accountants. I was halfway through doing my CPA. I have my CFA, and I have my master's degree in economics. I also worked on Wall Street and Bay Street, and I understand the tax system very well.

However, this is a fairness question that we need to fundamentally debate in the House. We move to integration, and the IMF said it in its review that this measure would make the tax system fairer. It makes it neutral, and we do not undertake strategies such as surplus stripping. I recommend members of the House to type in “surplus stripping”. They will see that it is a tax avoidance strategy.

We need to build a country that incentivizes entrepreneurs and incentivizes investment, such as in the auto sector, and we know that the opposition would have abandoned the auto sector. They would have abandoned St. Thomas, Windsor, Oakville, Brampton, Alliston and Oshawa. The investments in Quebec and British Columbia would not have happened. However, we stood up, and we collaborated with our provincial partners, the Ontario Progressive Conservative government, and that is what it is about. It is working with industry and labour, and getting those strategic investments.

• (1835)

I have heard much about energy and the forms of energy. We know that we will not, in the world, reach net zero by 2050 without nuclear energy, and Ontario is a leader. I am proud of our government, which believes in nuclear energy and is investing in nuclear energy. I have been up to Bruce Power in Kincardine, and I have been over to OPG on the east side of Toronto, near the area of my

colleague's riding, the hon. member for Whitby, who is seated close to me. We are investing in small modular reactors. We have put in an ITC to assist the nuclear sector. The Conservatives would cancel that.

The Conservatives do not believe in incentivizing investment. They believe in small government. They want to shrink the size of government. They would starve the government.

Some of my Conservative friends say that the FTE count has increased on the federal bureaucracy. Yes, it has, but do colleagues know why? It is because the Conservatives cut the living daylight out of the public service when they were in power. That is what they did. They made cuts. How do colleagues think Phoenix happened? The former Conservative government cut border services. It made cuts to the RCMP. It made cuts to everything to try to achieve a magic balanced budget, and used some accounting gimmicks from the sale of the shares of GM. Conservatives claim that was due to the small government. They should come clean and put out a plan.

It is 40°C outside. The world is experiencing climate change. It is real. They have no plan. We need an environmental plan. We need an economic plan. They have neither. They have slogans which mean absolutely nothing. It is unfortunate because I know that, on the other side, there are some hon. members with a lot of substance. It is unfortunate that they are not allowed to put forth ideas that have substance.

On Bill C-69, I look at our economic growth rate, which has forecasts for the IMF, built on the budget implementation act, built on the past. In 2025, Canada is forecasted to lead the G7 in growth. I think it is around 2.5%. Yes, we have had a population increase that has impacted our per capita rate. That will adjust itself in time. We know that. As an economist, I know that.

Let us be serious. We need to build a country where all Canadians are given the chance to succeed, not just the lucky few. I hear the chatter about capital gains. I hear the chatter against dental care. I hear the conversation against child care, which has increased labour participation rates, and I hear the chatter against nuclear energy and renewable energy, which half that caucus probably does not believe in. We know the cost curve has come down, that it is the cheapest form of energy there is and how many hundreds of billions of dollars is going into that. That is where the smart money is going. The member from Calgary on the opposite side knows that. We understand that.

*Government Orders*

Look at our AAA credit rating, which we have sustained since the former Liberal government, under Martin and Chrétien, fixed it. Look at our growth rate. Look at our net debt-to-GDP ratio and our deficit-to-GDP ratio, which is at 1%, versus the United States, which is between 5% and 7%, depending on how one measures it, and the European countries, which is three or four times that. Countries around the world look at us with envy and say, wow, look at their fiscal framework. Look at their banking system. Look at the FDI they are receiving for indirect investment. That is how to build a country. That is how to move forward.

On climate change, I am going to say that, again, we need to believe in climate change. The science is there. The next thing we will be having is a debate about vaccines again. Thinking about some of the commentary I have heard over the last couple of years, maybe members on the other side will say we should not vaccinate against measles, polio or something else.

When I look at my own riding, the EDA president was just shamed on Instagram for putting up fake news about our Minister of the Environment. That is what the Conservative Party of Canada is about. It is about fake news and misinformation, not real solutions for people at home and middle-class Canadians who work hard, get up and do the right thing every single day. That is unfortunate because Canadians deserve better. As an economist, as a father, as someone who worked for 25 years in the private sector before coming to this place, I will debate any one of those colleagues on economics, finance and business at any time. We are building a country where all Canadians get a fair shot of success, and that is what we need to continue to do.

I would be more than happy to have questions and comments. It is a beautiful day outside, but it is very hot. Climate change is real.

• (1840)

**Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I usually enjoy the speeches from the member on the other side of the House. I often refer to him in public as the “minister of finance” because I think he knows more about finance than anybody on that bench.

However, that speech was a ramble. I do not know if it is just because it is Monday and he had not prepared to be here, but he talked about a lot of things, including the capital gains rate, which, I will tell him, because he probably has not read it, is not part of the budget implementation act. He needs to go back and read that.

I will ask him some questions because he raised the budget implementation act. As far as capital gains go, capital gains are going back beyond the formula of his party's previous leaders, Chrétien and Martin, who reduced it to the 50% level because they got the budget back in balance. The budget is now not in balance, so of course, they are looking for ways to take more money from Canadians and are pretending it is only a certain sector of Canadians. It is all Canadians.

At that point in time, what exactly was the exemption rate that Canadians paid zero dollars on for their capital gains?

• (1845)

**Mr. Francesco Sorbara:** Mr. Speaker, there we have it. The Conservative Party of Canada is advocating for a 0% capital gains

inclusion rate, which would only benefit the wealthiest of the wealthiest in this country. That is exactly what the member just said.

I will say this: When given a choice between investing in dental care, seniors and child care or having a capital gains inclusion rate of two-thirds times the personal income tax rate, to get to a rate around 35%, so that somebody keeps about two-thirds of the dollars when they have a capital gains rate transaction, I will choose our plan over the 0% rate the member just talked about.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, this is the first time that I see my colleague, whom I very much like, get so heated. I am disappointed because I was on a mission with him and I tried to teach him a little more French. It did not work that evening, but he always has a French word to say.

He talks about building a country. It is clear that we do not feel included in that country, because Quebeckers and the Bloc Québécois's demands are ignored.

I will list a few of our demands: Quebec's right to opt out with full compensation; increased old age pensions for people aged 65 and over; an end to subsidies for all fossil fuels and support for a clean energy transition; and the transfer of housing money to Quebec.

How does he respond to this? We are not part of the story. We will never be part of the Liberals' federalist story. There is nothing there for us.

Does my colleague agree that the Bloc Québécois's demands remain unanswered?

**Mr. Francesco Sorbara:** Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to see my colleague. In response to his question, I would say that we are working together with all of the provinces and territories in our country. We are focusing on economic growth.

[*English*]

We are focused on creating a country that is more fair and where all Canadians succeed, all Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

[*Translation*]

I love Canada, and I love the beautiful province of Quebec. I am an anglophone from Ontario. I take French lessons all the time because I want to get better at it. My daughters are in French immersion in Ontario.

I always believe that Canada is the best country in the world, with all its provinces and territories.

*Government Orders**[English]*

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciated how much the hon. member talked about the seriousness of climate change. I do agree. I come from a riding that is in a rainforest. We are in droughts more often than we are not, which is very concerning for me because of the long-term impacts that it will have.

I am just wondering if the member could talk about why they keep giving so much money to oil and gas industries in subsidies instead of taking some of those resources and investing in a more green economy.

**Mr. Francesco Sorbara:** Mr. Speaker, we are investing the ITCs in climate, in renewable energy and renewable resources, literally billions of dollars in partnering with industry to do that. At the same time, we need to be realistic. With our climate goals, we will need energy sources, both renewable and non-renewable, for the years to come.

I just want to take my hat off to the over 800,000 Canadian workers who are employed in the oil and gas industry and related industries across Canada because they get up and they go work hard every day. They save the money. They want a bright future for their kids, and they deserve it. We will be there for them as the years go by. We will make sure we are the leader in renewable energy, just as much as we are in the auto sector—

*[Translation]*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Resuming debate.

The hon. member for Salaberry—Suroît.

**Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Salaberry—Suroît, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak about Bill C-69, which is a huge omnibus bill containing more than 650 pages. I would not be entirely honest if I said that I read them all. It contains 67 different measures, more specifically 23 tax measures and 44 non-tax measures. There are therefore a lot of elements in this huge bill.

Like any omnibus bill, Bill C-69 contains some commendable measures. However, it also contains measures that the Bloc Québécois and I consider unacceptable. I will give two examples.

First, the division regarding the banking system essentially removes Quebec and the provinces from the financial sector when a financial institution deals with its clients through a technological platform. The parties treacherously made no move to change this, as though nothing had happened, despite the explanation by the witness from Quebec. A representative from Mouvement Desjardins, the largest financial cooperative in Quebec, told the committee that the entire financial sector in Quebec and the provinces would be penalized if this power were taken away. My colleague from Joliette clearly explained how this does not make a lick of sense for the provinces and Quebec. Despite that, this division remains in Bill C-69, to our profound dismay. We do not understand why the members of the parliamentary committee did not listen to Mouvement Desjardins and the other witnesses who criticized this.

Bill C-69 also contains a new oil and gas subsidy. The government has added a so-called clean hydrogen tax credit. It is a 15% to 40% tax credit that will be calculated based on the carbon intensity

of the hydrogen produced. I think we can read between the lines. It is really a tax credit tailor-made for natural gas producers. We have talked ourselves hoarse saying that enough is enough with the support for all the companies and producers that has increased greenhouse gas rates in Quebec, in the provinces and across Canada.

I could list make a list of things that disappoint me, but what disappoints me the most is that there is nothing, no income support measure, for our farmers. When I say farmers, I am talking about small-, medium- and large-scale fruit and vegetable growers who are subject to the vagaries of climate and temperature.

If the members over there could stop talking loudly so I could finish my speech—

● (1850)

**The Deputy Speaker:** I did not mean to interrupt the hon. member. I was trying to give a little wink and a nod to the members.

*[English]*

To the hon. members for Abbotsford and Provencher, the hon. member for Salaberry—Suroît is not far away, and men's voices tend to carry in the chamber. I just want to make sure they know that when members are speaking in French, it is just as important as when members are speaking in English.

The hon. member for Salaberry—Suroît.

*[Translation]*

**Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille:** Mr. Speaker, it is time for the House to rise, because situations like this are unacceptable. I know my colleague is not wearing his earpiece, so he does not know how angry I am that he interrupted me during my speech.

I will go back to what I was saying. What outrages me is that there is no support for farmers, especially produce growers, those who grow our peppers, carrots and lettuce, those who work the land and really depend on the climate. There are all kinds of weather variations. Abitibi has had droughts. Elsewhere, we have seen floods. Farmers and produce growers had to deal with that last year. Their yields were a total disaster. I am thinking of strawberries and raspberries.

The fruits and vegetables we are buying right now in grocery stores in Quebec come from our produce growers. I am not just talking about small-scale produce growers who put together baskets of organic fruits and vegetables and sell them to people in their region or at farmers' markets in Montreal. All those produce growers have come to the same conclusion: The current programs are not designed for them and do not meet their needs.

More importantly, they have been asking the federal government for help for months now. One of the things they are calling for is for the AgriRecovery program to be activated, but the government refuses to listen. Quebec, meanwhile, understood the situation weeks ago, granting emergency assistance to support produce growers during the current season. They need to buy seeds and whatever else they need for the summer growing season. Everything we eat this fall and winter will come from investments made in fruit and vegetable growers. If the previous season was a disaster, that means they will not have enough cash. Produce growers cannot be compared to dairy farmers. They are two completely different sectors. I care deeply about this because there are a lot of produce growers in my riding. Many small-scale organic producers tell me that they feel completely ignored by the federal government. There is nothing in the budget for them, nothing to help them cope with the bad seasons that are, ultimately, the result of climate change.

I want to talk about something I have mentioned several times in the House. Two years ago, the government exempted apple ciders and meads from excise duty. It did so because the output of these small producers in Quebec is not intended for the international market. It is actually destined for the domestic, local and regional markets. There is not enough product to sell to a broader market. There are 118 cideries in Quebec. Those that produce apple cider or mead, a honey-based wine, have been exempted. We were very pleased because this is something the Bloc Québécois worked hard on, with help from the member for Joliette.

Has anyone ever tasted pear cider? It is heavenly. It is like regular cider, but made from pears. Has anyone tasted maple wine? It is an alcoholic wine made with maple syrup. Quebec has a lot of sugar bushes, and some have developed alcoholic products. There is one thing I do not understand. In my area, for example, we have the Black Creek cider house, which produces magnificent apple cider. It tastes heavenly too. This cider house also produces maple-based wine. Its bottles of apple cider are exempt from excise duty, but the small amount of maple wine it produces is not. It makes no sense. We do not understand why the Minister of Finance did not try to harmonize the exemption for all producers of berry wines.

• (1855)

As a last resort to convince the Minister of Finance, maybe I should offer her a bottle of currant wine, pear cider or ice pear cider. La Capsule Temporelle, a new cidery in my riding, makes a pear cider that tastes absolutely ambrosial.

However, the companies are struggling with the accounting. One of the companies is exempt from excise duty, while the other is not. Can we ask our Minister of Finance for some harmonization to allow our artisan producers to make a good living and sell a quality product in our regions, in all fairness and justice?

This is a heartfelt plea. I even wore a botanical print today in hopes of swaying the government. I hope my message has been heard by the government, specifically the Minister of Finance.

[*English*]

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I too have

### *Government Orders*

a passion and love for agri-food businesses, especially the ones in Quebec, like the microenterprises that produce high-quality products in Quebec that are to be savoured and enjoyed. When I travel through the region, I really appreciate that about Quebec.

In the federal budget this year, the BIA, we have the Canada carbon rebate for small businesses, which supports a rebate going back to small businesses. We have initiated an opportunity to work with Crown corporations, including BDC and EDC, so they can take more risks and lend more money to small and medium-sized enterprises, including agri-food businesses. We are also investing in Canadian start-ups through Futurpreneur, which has increased funding, and are working with Canada pension plans to see if they can invest more domestically. The list goes on. There is more money for regional economic growth as well.

There is quite a bit to be desired in this budget. Can the member opposite speak to the very large investments in it for small business?

• (1900)

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille:** Mr. Speaker, we noticed that the budget contains a helpful measure for microbreweries that make craft beer.

My question for the parliamentary secretary, who, if I remember correctly, serves on the Standing Committee on Finance, has to do with excise duty on small artisanal producers. It is a lot for them. It makes a big difference in the cost per bottle, whereas exempting them from excise duty will not have much impact on the government's coffers.

I would like to ask the parliamentary secretary to use his influence to convince the Minister of Finance to exempt berry wine producers from excise duty at the next opportunity. It is too late to do so in Bill C-69.

**Mr. Bernard Généreux (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I found my colleague's intervention very interesting, because a distillery in my riding that had been in business for five or six years was forced to shut down. It was producing some absolutely extraordinary products, mainly fantastic gins.

Unfortunately, it was forced to close down for obvious reasons. Small businesses like this one have to fill out literal mountains of paperwork on a daily and monthly basis to satisfy the government's ravenous appetite for red tape.

I will ask my colleague if she can confirm that her goal is truly to reduce the amount of paperwork that these small artisanal producers of wine, cider, honey and other fabulous made-in-Quebec products are required to fill out.

*Government Orders*

**Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille:** Mr. Speaker, my colleague is right.

In a region or a riding like mine, there are a lot of small artisanal producers of alcohol and other products. They all complain about the mountain of red tape they have to deal with, because it takes up a lot of their time. They do not have a lot of employees. Often, they are family businesses that do not have a lot of staff to meet these requirements.

The first thing my colleagues need to understand is that Quebec is proud to be home to many distilleries, microbreweries, cideries and wineries. Quebec produces many excellent artisanal products.

We cannot understand why these businesses are not getting better support. The first measure the government should take is to put apple cider and mead producers on an equal footing with berry wine-makers. The first step in doing this is to exempt these producers from excise duty. As I said, this will not make a huge hole in the government's budget, but it will make a huge difference for small-scale producers.

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what a pleasure it is to be able to speak to the budget implementation bill. Bill C-69 is a very important piece of legislation. Ultimately, it shows very clearly to Canadians in all regions of the country what they can expect from a Liberal government versus a Conservative opposition, or the Conservative-Reform party compared to the Liberal Party. Let us be very clear on that.

A few weeks back, I was at the party's annual general meeting, where some of the members were asking me a very simple question. They asked how I would best describe the difference between the Conservative Party today and the Liberal Party. The best thing I could come up with at the time was to say to think of it in the sense that the Liberal Party cares while the Conservative Party cuts. There is so much truth to that.

All one needs to do is take a look at what the Conservative-Reform party stands for today and listen to the many announcements being brought forward by the government to get a better appreciation of the contrast between the two parties. As a government and as a political party, we have advocated for very strong progressive policies. At the same time, we have taken budgetary and legislative action to support a strong, healthy economy. The big difference is that our plan is about building a Canada that ensures fairness for every generation. We do not see that coming from the Conservative Party.

I would suggest some members need to look at Hobbes and his theories on economic development and people to get a better sense of maybe where the Conservative-Reform party is. I would argue the Conservative Party today has really shifted far to the right. The more people understand the degree to which it has shifted, the more they are going to turn their backs on the Conservative Party.

Former prime minister Joe Clark is distancing himself by saying things like he never left the Progressive Conservative Party but that the party left him. Individuals like Kim Campbell are talking in a not a very positive way about the current leadership of the Conservative Party and the type of misinformation the party—

• (1905)

**The Deputy Speaker:** There is a point of order from the hon. member for Provencher.

**Mr. Ted Falk:** Mr. Speaker, I know there is very little good to talk about in this Bill C-69, this budget implementation act, but it would be nice if the member could use some of his time at least to talk about the actual issue we are debating.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I guess that is a call for relevance, so I will ask the hon. member to maybe stick to what we are prescribed today, which is Bill C-69.

The hon. parliamentary secretary has the floor.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, that is one weird call for relevance. I suspect the member is maybe reflecting on some of the words that I am using and trying to point out the contrast, how that contrast is amplified in this budget and how the Conservative Party continues to vote against and indicate very clearly that its members do not support the measures. The types of measures that we are talking about are very progressive in their nature.

That is why I think it is valid to repeat Joe Clark, the former Progressive Conservative prime minister, when he said that the party has left him. I hear Kim Campbell and the comments that she is making about this new Reform-Conservative party and how far to the right it has gone. We talk about the late Brian Mulroney, and he indicated that they have amputated the progressive nature of the Conservative Party.

In fact, if we take a look at some of the actions that they talk about, we will find that the current leadership has taken the party even more far right than Stephen Harper, and Stephen Harper was not that popular. What is going to happen? As we get closer to the election, more and more Canadians are going to look at what the Conservatives have to offer and contrast that with the types of things we have put in place over the last eight and a half, coming up to nine, years.

We could talk about the economy and the two million jobs, which is virtually double what the former government did in the same time span. We could talk about the pandemic around the world or interest rates around the world going through the roof. Inflation numbers were astronomical around the world, compared to Canada's numbers, yet we were able to keep control over them. We brought forward budgets and legislation to support Canadians while continuing to build a strong and healthy economy. That is one of the reasons Canada was in a great position out of the pandemic to be able to continue to grow the economy.

In fact, in the first three quarters of last year, Canada was number one in direct foreign investment out of the G7. If we contrast that with the world, we will see that we were number three. We have people and companies around the world looking at Canada as the place to invest. This did not happen by accident. This government has signed off on more trade agreements than any other government in Canada's history. This government has invested, in real dollars, in more capital infrastructure than any government in Canada's history.



*Government Orders*

In order to develop and encourage a healthy middle class, we need to have a healthy economy, and we have not lost sight of that. At the same time, we recognize the importance of fairness, and we have been consistent on that. Our very first budget, and one of the first pieces of legislation that we brought forward, was to put a special tax increase on Canada's 1% wealthiest. The Conservative Party actually voted against that. Is there any surprise that they now vote against the capital tax increase, which would affect 0.2%? It is less than half a per cent. We are talking about some of the wealthiest Canadians and asking them to pay a fairer share. The hypocrisy that flows from the Conservative Party and the misinformation that it spreads through social media are virtually endless.

• (1910)

As we get closer to the election, people will take a look at some of the things that we have been able to accomplish in this budget and others, such as investing in generational support for health care, almost \$200 billion over 10 years; the first-ever national child care program that is seeing people pay \$10 a day for child care; the first-ever pharmacare program that is at least going to be there for individuals with diabetes or women in need of contraceptives; the dental program to support our seniors and our children and others as we continue to expand upon it; a national school program to ensure that children are getting nutrition in the classroom, because we know that one cannot learn on an empty stomach; and the first-ever disability benefit. It would have been great to see a higher amount, but it is the first ever. It is the single greatest, I believe, expense in terms of new money on this budget line.

These are the types of things that we are bringing forward. What we are hearing from the Conservatives is that they are going to chop, chop, chop. There is the contrast: a caring, competent government and party versus a Conservative-Reform party that is more focused on the wealthiest Canadians and wanting to cut the programs that Canadians need and will support.

• (1915)

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have been very perplexed. I am hoping my colleague will be able to clear something up for me. We have in place a number of programs that actually help people, the Canadian dental program, thanks to the NDP, which has helped two million seniors who have signed up already, and we have millions of others expressing interest. We have pharmacare, which is going to help six million Canadians with diabetes and nine million Canadians who take contraception. Affordable housing and school lunches help hundreds of thousands of kids around the country and hundreds of thousands of families to recover from the national housing program that was gutted by the former Liberal government under Paul Martin.

All of these things benefit constituents of all of us. Perhaps the member could explain to me why the Conservatives have been fighting tooth and nail to block all of those programs, even though these programs are literally helping thousands of their constituents. I know seniors who live in Conservative-held ridings who say that their Conservative MP told them nothing about dental care but that, thanks to the NDP, they know it is there and they are actually getting these dental services.

Why are Conservatives, elected to represent their constituents, fighting their constituents' interests tooth and nail?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, when one takes a look at the types of programs in a minority situation, the government needs to find a party inside the House in order to pass things. There is no doubt that the New Democrats have played a very strong role in that. I value that support and I truly appreciate it.

What is confusing is that, quite often, we will see the Conservative Party talk in great opposition to many of these benefits, yet in each and every Conservative riding, one will find that there are literally thousands of their constituents who will benefit by them.

In the dental program in particular, they even have some Conservative spin discouraging the development of that program. I believe that the Conservative Party has moved so far to the right, and that is one of the reasons I suggest that it is not the traditional Conservative Party. It is more of a Reform-extreme party today.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, if Canada is in a sound financial position here and around the world, as our dear colleague from Winnipeg North, who I really like to listen to, says, why was the government unable to include a single one of the measures proposed by the Bloc Québécois? They included giving Quebec the right to opt out with full compensation, increasing old age security for those aged 65 and over, ending subsidies for fossil fuels, supporting a clean energy transition and transferring the amounts dedicated to housing to Quebec.

None of these are in the budget implementation bill. Why is that? For Canada, everything is going well financially. Is it different in Quebec? Are we not entitled to such measures?

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, the member raises a number of points, and I would love to be able to address them all. However, let me address one that the Bloc members constantly bring up, and that is in regard to seniors and the age 65 issue.

We, as a political party, made an election platform commitment to increase the OAS by 10% for seniors who were 75 and over. That was intentionally done because, as people get older, often, medical requirements increase. There are other issues, like the ability to get a part-time job if they need or desire one. By looking at a number of factors, it was determined that the best way we can assist seniors is to look at those who are 75 and up and to give them a healthy increase of 10%.

*Government Orders*

Through the years, we continue to see the COLA increases to OAS, and we have also seen substantial increases to the GIS, which date back to 2015-16. We dramatically increased it and took hundreds of seniors, in Winnipeg North alone, out of poverty.

● (1920)

**Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour once again to rise on behalf of the great people of southwestern Saskatchewan. There is no shortage of issues to talk about today, especially as we are debating the budget implementation act, yet again.

I first want to talk about the livestock tax deferral. This was in the budget. It was one of only two or three items that dealt with agriculture when the Liberals tabled the budget. Agriculture is obviously one of the largest economic drivers not just in southwestern Saskatchewan but also across the Prairies, and indeed, it contributes greatly to the national economy across the country.

I noticed today that there was an early designation of tax deferral zones under the livestock tax deferral program. I noticed that the majority of it, this go-round, was not so much in Saskatchewan, but in Alberta. Weather being weather, that is just the way it is, but what I want to talk about in particular are producers and producer groups who have been asking for a three-year window when it comes to the livestock tax deferral. When I spoke to the budget the first time, I brought this up, and I see no changes have been made when it comes to that window or time frame. I want to talk again about why that is important.

Over the last couple of months, I have been driving across my riding. I have been to Grasslands National Park in the south. I was at Leader on the weekend, with the Great Sand Hills near the Alberta border, and I was down Highway 1 in both directions. I am happy that there has been more rain than usual, definitely more than in the last five or 10 years. Right now, the pastures and the grass look really good, but the problem is that there has been probably five to seven years of persistent drought-like conditions in my neck of the woods. If we look at a map, my riding is right in the heart of the Palliser Triangle. When this country was being settled, people were told that it was not suitable for humans to live there, but we have been doing our best. We have done remarkably well in the time that we have lived in the prairie region.

Why is the three-year window important? Like I said, coming off about five years of persistent drought-like conditions, the native prairie grass and even the tame grass are under a lot of stress. With the current system the way it is, the livestock tax deferral lets farmers defer the taxes they would pay on any cattle that they sell this year until next year. They could defer that tax payment so that when they sell, they have a bit more money in their pockets. It is a good concept. The problem is that it incentivizes ranchers to buy back in when their pastures have not recovered and to do further damage if they do not have access to more grass.

Right now, the pastures have grown back quite well, but just because the grass is growing again this year does not necessarily mean this is the right time to graze it. It might be better and might be in the best interests of the land, the rancher and even the animal to leave a lot of this pasture alone, to let it rejuvenate for a whole season, and then, next year, go back to it. That would be a two-year

window, but to have a three-year window available to our producers would be of greater benefit. That needs to be considered going forward, particularly by a party that says it cares so much about the environment. If it cared about the environment, this is a common-sense policy that it would look to adopt, but it has not done it.

The next thing I want to talk about is the Impact Assessment Act. The budget had some minor tweaks, particularly in the budget implementation act. So far, the commentary on it is that this is most likely going to be unconstitutional. I noticed when I read over some of the wording, and I heard comments from others, that there are a couple of issues, one being to keep the ministerial designation framework in place. This is problematic for a couple of reasons.

One is that it could allow the Liberals to again wiggle their way into the province's jurisdiction, which was a problem with the original Impact Assessment Act, and it is currently an issue in other ways the Liberal government treats the provinces. It ventures into provincial jurisdiction on a regular basis, and the changes in the Impact Assessment Act would further enable it to do that. Keeping this ministerial designation framework is going to continue to lead to that infringement, but it also creates uncertainty for the investor, the proponent, looking for a quick, rapid timeline to get their projects built.

● (1925)

This matters because, even with the current government's approach, whereby it wants to stop pipelines and wants to stop oil and gas development, which I get, there is a lot of green energy that wants to be built and developed all the way across the country, and allowing uncertainty like this continues to be problematic. We heard about this issue in the natural resources committee, when we were talking about the Atlantic Accord bill that came through, and this was not addressed.

Trying to make sure that there is certainty for all the resource sector is of utmost importance because all across this country, Canada is blessed with all kinds of rare earth minerals. We are blessed with an abundance of oil and natural gas, and other things like helium and lithium. We have cobalt. We have all the things that are going to be needed to build, say, a battery supply chain, and traditional oil and gas obviously is a big part of that because the world needs Canadian gas. Officials came and asked, multiple times, and the Liberal government has turned them down numerous times, for Canadian LNG.

*Government Orders*

Another report I read today shows that last month, Russia passed the United States as the biggest supplier for natural gas to Europe. Knowing what is going on in Europe right now with the war in Ukraine and what is going on with Russia, the current government is further enabling the Putin war machine to continue to get the resources it needs because the Russians are still selling their gas into Europe. Canada has the resources to be able to be that provider, but because the government has killed off around 15 to 16 LNG projects, since the time the Liberals have been in power, to make sure they were not built, they have put us at a disadvantage and have put our allies in Europe at an extreme disadvantage because we do not have the ability to supply them with the product that they want and need. The government said that it would give them green hydrogen, but we are years away from that being a reality. We have a proven commodity that we could be using and could be exporting, and the Liberals have said no to that.

The other thing I want to touch on was in the budget, and the Liberals removed it from the budget. We can suspect and wonder why, but it is in regard to the capital gains increase. I was talking to a rancher this morning again. He looks at this as a tax on inflation. The reason I say he said that is that, sure, he bought the land maybe 25 years ago that he would be looking to sell, and the value of that land has increased. However, what else has increased is the cost for him to buy a tractor, to buy machinery, to buy product, to buy cattle and to buy feed. All the costs on his ranch have gone up as much, if not more, than the cost of the land that he might be looking to sell. Therefore, in all reality, there is not much of a gain that has been recognized there.

Because the value of one little thing that the government wants to focus on has gone up, the government does not take into consideration the value of everything else that has gone up over that same period of time. Let us imagine that over that 20-year span, the government's target with the Bank of Canada is a 2% inflation rate, if we multiply that, it is a substantive increase to all the products he has on his ranch. When the rancher sees this increase coming in, he says that all the government is doing is taxing inflation because his purchasing power has not gone up one bit.

Last, I just want to talk about the other piece of the government's supposed agriculture policy. The government only had really two or three things in there, as I mentioned at the start. Regarding the second one, the concept is a great idea, but it would be good for the Liberals if they would just get out of the way, and let it be done. With respect to my private member's bill, Bill C-294, for the second budget in a row, the Liberals said they are going to do consultations on interoperability. The government has three-quarters of a page in the budget and has done absolutely nothing with it. I already accepted a friendly government amendment to my bill at committee. It passed through the chamber, and we are still waiting for it to receive royal assent. It would be good if we could just get that bill passed. That is a good, Conservative common-sense bill that would do wonders not only for the manufacturing sector, but also for our farmers and our ranchers across the country. Let us just get that passed.

• (1930)

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and to the Minister of**

**Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it was great to hear the member recognize climate change. It is not often we hear Conservatives speak about stress on prairie grass or heat-waves, wildfires or droughts, which the member opposite mentioned, so he is recognizing the impacts on our climate and on the Prairies, which is great to hear. The member also mentioned numerous other things that our government is doing in the federal budget this year, including the investment tax credits and getting the impact assessment agreement up and running again to give that business certainty he was talking about and to give investors that certainty in the market. We have also added the indigenous loan guarantee and have extended the mineral exploration tax credit. I am sure that the member can agree that these are good things for industries within his riding.

**Mr. Jeremy Patzer:** Mr. Speaker, I just want to touch really briefly on one thing. One of the biggest threats to our native prairie grass is the government's management, through Parks Canada, of the Grasslands National Park especially. The way it is handling the species at risk there is they've been adding more species than were there before. It has been an adversary for the producers there who are actually doing a great job of maintaining the grasslands. It is trying to introduce a non-native species into that park, which is destroying the natural habitat for the one native species that is there, the sage grouse. It is making it impossible for the sage grouse to survive and thrive, because of its management of the park. It has been a failure.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, we know that the most recent budget is truly an attack on Quebec's and the provinces' jurisdictions. It is obvious that the Liberals were influenced by the New Democrats, who are so centralist that they would like to get rid of the provinces entirely.

We heard the Leader of the Opposition say many times that he would respect Quebec's and the provinces' areas of jurisdiction, and we know that Quebecers send \$80 billion in taxes to the federal government.

Last weekend, I heard the Leader of the Opposition speak during a debate in Quebec City on whether there should be a tramway, a third link or both. The leader of the official opposition said that Quebec should opt for a highway if it wanted money—our money, by the way. He said that if Quebec chose the tramway, it would not get a cent.

That means that he is blackmailing us with our own money. Is that not a form of interference in Quebec's areas of jurisdiction? It is up to Quebec to decide whether it wants a tramway or not. When he says that, he is interfering in Quebec's jurisdictions. Do you not agree?

[*English*]

**Mr. Jeremy Patzer:** Mr. Speaker, I find it fascinating that the member referenced how many tax dollars the Province of Quebec has paid into the federal coffers, but that his party turned around and voted for the government spending all of Quebecers' hard-earned money on other things.

*Government Orders*

We can agree on one thing, which is that the federal government needs to respect provincial jurisdiction. However, the member's party continues to prop up the government. The member and his party had a chance to send a statement and say that they do not agree with the way the government is spending their money, but they voted with the government instead of against it.

**Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, I do have a hard time trusting what Conservatives say, especially regarding indigenous peoples' issues. I was an adult when the Conservatives were in power, and although their prime minister made an apology to former residential school students, the very same government cut programs that would have ensured proper healing of intergenerational trauma from residential schools.

I wonder whether the member can explain what the Conservatives would do to make sure that indigenous peoples continue to get the supports they need and that their rights are upheld so we would see more indigenous peoples thriving in Canada.

• (1935)

**Mr. Jeremy Patzer:** Mr. Speaker, I was really happy to hear the leader of our party talk about his support for the optional first nations resource charge. This would allow first nations to decide whether they want to have a greater share and greater participation in resource development on their lands. I think it is a great opportunity to allow for economic reconciliation, to allow for self-determination and for them to be able to have jobs for their people to create that wealth that they need.

That way, they would not have to go to the federal government to ask for the money that they could be getting on their own if they were in charge of their own resource development. I think that the first nations resource charge is a great first step, and I look forward to being in government one day when we can implement it.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I ask for leave to present questions on the Order Paper.

[*Translation*]

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

**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. 2619, 2624, 2632, 2633, 2635, 2639, 2641, 2643, 2646 and 2647.

[*Text*]

Question No. 2619—**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice:**

With regard to audits conducted by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA), broken down by province or territory and fiscal year since 2015-16: (a) what is the total number of audits that determined a tax-payer had failed to withhold tax on rent paid to a non-resident landlord; (b) of the audits in (a), what is the total number of audits where (i) an adjustment resulting in more tax owing, (ii) an adjustment resulting in less tax owing, (iii) no adjustment, was made; (c) what is the total dollar value of payments received by the CRA as a result of the audits in (a); and (d) what were the total costs to the government related to 3792391 Canada Inc. v The King, 2023 TCC 37?

**Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with respect to the above-noted question, what follows is the response from the CRA for the time period of April 1, 2015 to April 30, 2024, that is, the date of the question.

In response to part (a), for this request, the CRA understands “taxpayer” to mean a Canadian resident tenant, either individual or corporation, or an agent acting on behalf of the non-resident, held liable, as a result of an audit, for failing to withhold from residential or commercial rent an amount required under part XIII of the Income Tax Act, i.e., when paid or credited to a non-resident.

The CRA conducted a search of completed audits and found that, during the period from fiscal year 2015-16 to fiscal year 2022-23, eight years, very few audits resulted in a Canadian resident payer being assessed under part XIII. The CRA is bound by section 241 of the Income Tax Act, provision of information, which mandates the confidentiality of taxpayer information. This provision restricts the CRA from disclosing specific details regarding individual audit cases when the dataset is limited in size. The search conducted did not include audits that resulted in the non-resident property owner being reassessed.

The CRA has long-standing and established common practice of raising assessments to the non-resident owners in lieu of the individual Canadian resident tenant.

In response to part (b), disclosing this information risks breaching the confidentiality provisions of the Income Tax Act. The protection of taxpayer information is of utmost importance to the CRA. To protect the integrity of the CRA's work and to respect the confidentiality of taxpayer information, the CRA cannot provide this information or comment on specific taxpayer files that it may or may not be reviewing.

In response to part (c), the CRA is bound by section 241 of the Income Tax Act, which mandates the confidentiality of taxpayer information. This provision restricts the CRA from disclosing specific details regarding individual audit cases when the dataset is limited in size. The CRA is therefore unable to provide the information requested.

Additionally, the CRA does not track payments against specific account adjustments like audits, as its systems apply payments to a taxpayer's cumulative outstanding balance by tax year, which can represent multiple assessments, reassessments such as audits of different types, and other adjustments.

In response to part (d), based on the judgment, this case was dismissed, without costs. Please see <https://decision.tcc-cci.gc.ca/tcc-cci/decisions/en/item/521069/index.do?q=3792391+Canada+Inc.+v+The+King%2C>.

There were no expert witness fees.

Salary costs for the CRA employee working this case were estimated at \$4,672. This was based on the court case complexity level, hours spent on the file and the officer's salary rate. It does not include salary costs for indirect activities or other standard corporate costs, such as the employee benefit plan.

In addition, the Department of Justice billed the CRA for the amount of \$48,714 for the support provided by the department in this court case.

Please note that these costs cannot be broken down by province or territory.

Question No. 2624—**Mr. Brad Vis:**

With regard to the government's decision to decrease the amount of the carbon pricing revenues rebated for small businesses from 7% to 5%: (a) why is the government decreasing the percentages; and (b) on what date will the decrease take effect?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, climate action is critical to Canada's long-term health and economic prosperity. Carbon pricing is widely recognized as the most efficient means of reducing our greenhouse gas emissions, which is why the Government of Canada continues to make sure that it is not free to pollute in Canada.

The federal price on pollution is revenue-neutral for the federal government; the direct proceeds from the federal carbon pricing system remain in the province or territory where they are collected. Put simply, every dollar collected from the carbon price is returned.

As of the 2024-25 fiscal year, i.e., starting on April 1, 2024, in provinces where the federal fuel charge applies, 93% of direct fuel charge proceeds are returned to residents of these provinces through the quarterly Canada carbon rebate. Eight in 10 households receive more in rebate payments than the costs they face from the federal pollution pricing system. Those living in a rural or small community are eligible for a supplement in addition to the base Canada carbon rebate amount, except in Prince Edward Island, where all residents receive the same amount since there is no census metropolitan area. In recognition of rural Canadians' higher energy needs and more limited access to cleaner transportation options, the government is proposing, through legislative amendments in Bill C 59, to double the rural supplement from 10% to 20% of the base rebate amount, starting in April 2024.

Also beginning in 2024-25, the proceeds allocated to indigenous governments will double from 1% to 2%, in recognition of the disproportionate impacts of climate change on indigenous communities.

As proposed in budget 2024, the share of proceeds allocated to small and medium sized businesses, SMEs, will be returned to them through the new Canada carbon rebate for small businesses. For 2019-20 to 2023-24, over \$2.5 billion in proceeds from the price on pollution will be urgently returned to an estimated 600,000 small and medium sized businesses via an accelerated and automated return process. For 2024-25, \$623 million in proceeds would be returned to eligible businesses. For this year and future years, the Canada carbon rebate will be assessed and delivered automatically when SMEs file their tax returns.

### *Government Orders*

Moreover, the government continues to support small and medium sized businesses with initiatives that help them transform their businesses, save energy, and continue to be competitive. The government has supported small businesses through several initiatives, including by decreasing the small business tax rate; lowering credit card transaction fees; enhancing the Canada small business financing program; and twice extending the partial loan forgiveness of the Canada emergency business account, CEBA, program. CEBA delivered over \$49 billion to help keep nearly 900,000 small businesses and non profits afloat during the pandemic.

Question No. 2632—**Mr. Tako Van Popta:**

With regard to any arrangements the Canada Infrastructure Bank (CIB) has with banks or other financial institutions to back up their financing in the event that the CIB is dissolved: what are the details of any such agreements, or similar type of agreements that the CIB has entered into, including who the agreement is with, when it was signed, whether there is a cost to taxpayers, what collateral or guarantees are involved, and how much is being paid to each of the financial institutions?

**Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to any arrangements the Canada Infrastructure Bank, CIB, has with banks or other financial institutions, CIB has nothing to report.

Question No. 2633—**Mr. Mario Beaulieu:**

With regard to the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada Client Support Centre, in its Montreal offices: what is the number of (i) unilingual anglophone, (ii) bilingual, (iii) unilingual francophone, agents?

**Mr. Paul Chiang (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, insofar as Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, IRCC, is concerned, the total number of agents working at the client support centre in the province of Quebec is 275.

This consists of i) 13 unilingual anglophone agents, ii) 262 bilingual agents, and iii) no unilingual francophone agents.

As such, the current workforce is 95% bilingual and 5% unilingual anglophone.

Question No. 2635—**Mrs. Laila Goodridge:**

With regard to the government's safe supply, safer supply and prescribed alternatives programs, broken down by year for the last two years: (a) which companies were allowed to import drugs into Canada that were to be used under the programs, broken down by drug that they were allowed to import; (b) how much of each drug was each company (i) allowed to import, (ii) importing, into Canada; and (c) what are the details of all contracts the government has had, or currently has, with companies related to providing drugs for the programs, including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) vendor, (iii) value of the contract, (iv) amount of drugs provided as part of the contract, in total and broken down by substance?

**Mrs. Élisabeth Brière (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development and to the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Health Canada does not operate prescribed alternatives programs or make decisions about what prescription drugs are prescribed to clients by these programs. The choice of medication is a decision between the practitioner and their patient, and licensed companies do not play a role in this decision.

*Government Orders*

With regard to questions (a) and (b), all prescription drugs containing controlled substances sold in Canada are supplied by pharmaceutical companies that hold licences issued by Health Canada. Health Canada cannot share the names of the companies that imported substances, for security and confidential business reasons. It is also not possible to determine the quantity of substances imported for the purposes of prescribed alternatives as this is not indicated on the permit application. When applying for a permit, licensed companies must indicate the purpose of the import. Examples of purpose of importation are medical use, research purposes, commercial sale in Canada, drug development purposes, repackaging for export, etc.

As of June 7, 2024, there are 131 companies that hold a controlled substance licence in Canada for controlled substances that are for medications reported to be used in federally funded substance use and addictions program, SUAP, prescribed alternatives projects. The above information does not mean 131 companies have imported or supplied medications containing controlled substances that are being used in a project providing prescribed alternatives. Rather, it is the total number of companies that hold a controlled substance licence in Canada for controlled substances that are for medications reported to be used in federally funded SUAP prescribed alternatives projects.

With regard to question (c), Health Canada does not have contracts with individual pharmaceutical companies for the medications used in prescribed alternatives programs.

**Question No. 2639—Mrs. Kelly Block:**

With regard to Public Services and Procurement Canada and the “mPersona” application: (a) what was the total amount paid to the 34 employees tasked to use the “mPersona” application created by Symaiotics; (b) what was the total amount paid to Symaiotics and any other company during the application’s trials, and, if there were other companies, how much was each company paid, broken down by company; and (c) how many hours did the 34 employees work on the application?

**Mr. Charles Sousa (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to (a), Public Services and Procurement Canada, or PSPC, compensation officers tested the mPersona tool as part of their assigned duties to determine whether it could speed up payroll processing. PSPC employees received their regular salaries during the testing, and did not receive additional payments.

With regard to (b), the source code for the mPersona application is open, available and free to anyone wishing to use, modify or distribute it. PSPC paid no money to Symaiotics or any other company for its use, and no contract was awarded in relation to mPersona. The use of mPersona had no financial implications for PSPC.

With regard to (c), PSPC employees spent approximately 1,600 hours testing mPersona. After this point, PSPC determined it had gathered enough information to discontinue its use.

**Question No. 2641—Mr. Marty Morantz:**

With regard to the claim on page 29 of the 2024 budget document entitled “Tax Measures: Supplementary Information,” that the federal government returns more than 90% of direct proceeds from the fuel charge to individuals through the Canada Carbon Rebate: (a) what indirect or other proceeds from the carbon tax does the government receive; (b) how much money was received by the government in the last fiscal year from each of the indirect or other proceeds listed in (a); and (c) if the government does not track how much revenue it receives in indirect or other proceeds from the carbon tax, (i) why not, (ii) why does it make claims about people benefitting from the carbon tax knowing that it does not track this data?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, climate change is an existential challenge, and climate action is critical to Canada’s long-term health and economic prosperity. Carbon pricing is widely recognized as the most efficient means of reducing our greenhouse gas, or GHG, emissions, which is why the Government of Canada continues to make sure that it is not free to pollute in Canada.

The federal price on pollution is revenue neutral for the federal government; all of the direct proceeds from the federal carbon pricing system remain in the province or territory where they are collected. Put simply, every dollar collected from the carbon price is returned.

The Goods and Services Tax/Harmonized Sales Tax, or GST/HST, is calculated on the final amount charged for a good or service. The general rule that was adopted at the inception of the GST, in 1991 under prime minister Brian Mulroney, and carried over for the HST, is that this final amount includes other taxes, levies and charges that apply to the good or service and are generally embedded in the final price. As such, the final amount charged could include an amount attributable to the federal fuel charge. This long-standing approach to calculating the GST/HST ensures that tax is applied evenly across goods and services consumed in Canada. It also makes it easier for vendors to calculate the amount of tax payable, for consumers to understand, and for the Canada Revenue Agency to administer.

The incremental GST/HST revenues from the embedded federal fuel charge in the final price of goods and services are not available. The extent that the fuel charge is passed onto consumers will vary by type of goods and services, and the GST/HST is not applicable on some types of supplies, like basic groceries. This makes it difficult to precisely determine the additional GST/HST revenues from the federal fuel charge. Moreover, the government does not track the amount of GST/HST that is collected for each type of good or service that a vendor may sell. When firms remit the GST/HST that they have collected on their taxable sales, they report and remit to the Canada Revenue Agency only one single amount for all jurisdictions. Requiring vendors, like small businesses, to track GST/HST collected on the individual types of goods or services they sell by jurisdiction would impose a significant reporting burden on them.

The government reports the direct fuel charge proceeds collected and returned annually through the Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act Annual Report. For more information on the proceeds collected and returned, please see the Annual Report for 2022 at the following website: <https://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/9.893583/publication.html>.

*Government Orders***Question No. 2643—Mr. Ted Falk:**

With regard to those fatalities and serious adverse events (SAEs) associated with Pfizer's and Moderna's COVID-19 mRNA-based vaccines and tracked by Health Canada (HC) and the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC): (a) did HC or the PHAC or any other federal agency or entity or agency contracted by the federal government detect a safety signal when examining, (i) the VAERS data from the USA, (ii) the EudraVigilance data from Europe, (iii) the Yellow Card data from England; (b) if the answer to (a) is affirmative for either (i), (ii) or (iii), what are the safety issues and how is the federal government addressing them; (c) what are the respective provincial numbers of vaccine-associated fatal and nonfatal heart attacks, strokes and other cardiovascular events recorded in Canada's vaccine surveillance program(s), between December 31, 2020 and December 31, 2023; (d) given the data from (c), has HC, the PHAC, or another federal government body such as the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) undertaken the research to determine if there has been an increase in the events described in (c) compared with their baseline values prior to the COVID-19 vaccine roll-outs; (e) what does the temporal association between the fatal or non-fatal serious adverse events in (c) and the timing of the mRNA-based vaccine roll-outs (primary series and boosters) show, per age group; (f) has the submission of any provincial health agencies' reports of vaccine-associated fatalities been denied by Canada's vaccine surveillance program(s); (g) if the answer to (f) is affirmative, how many reports of fatalities were denied by Canada's vaccine surveillance program(s) and for what reasons; (h) how many fatalities and SAEs associated with any drug or medical devices removes that item from the market; (i) how many fatalities and SAEs associated the mRNA-based vaccines will be deemed sufficient, as a threshold safety signal, to shut down the distribution of the mRNA products and what agency has established this benchmark; and (j) in consideration of cumulative reports of fatalities and SAEs during Pfizer's 3-month post-marketing phase, and in Canada and other jurisdictions around the world associated with the mRNA products, why was this vaccination program permitted to continue and who made that decision?

**Mr. Yasir Naqvi (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the health and safety of Canadians is Health Canada's top priority, and the Department of Health exercises stringent regulatory oversight over vaccines. Before a vaccine is approved in Canada, the department conducts a rigorous scientific review of its safety, efficacy and quality. Submissions typically contain extensive data regarding the vaccine's safety, efficacy and quality, including results of pre-clinical and clinical studies, details on manufacturing processes, and information on adverse events following immunization. An authorization is only issued when benefits of the vaccine outweigh the risks of its use.

In response to (a) and (b), following authorization, Canada has a robust and well-established vaccine safety surveillance system involving Health Canada, Public Health Agency of Canada, or PHAC, provinces and territories, and vaccine manufacturers. Health Canada continues to monitor the safety profile of health products once they are on the Canadian market, to help ensure that the benefits of the product continue to outweigh the risks. The safety profile of these products is monitored by reviewing safety information submitted by manufacturers as well as considering safety information from international regulators that may come from their spontaneous reporting databases, such as Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System, or VAERS, data from the USA, EudraVigilance data from Europe or the Yellow Card data from England. When new safety issues are identified, Health Canada takes action, which may include communicating new risks to Canadians and healthcare professionals or changing the recommended use of the product. Detailed information about known and potential risks associated with the use of COVID-19 vaccines is included in their Canadian Product Monographs, or CPM. Further information on CPMs of COVID-19 vaccines can be found on the Health Canada website COVID-19 vaccines and treatments portal at [canada.ca](https://canada.ca).

In response to (c) to (g), Health Canada and the PHAC have been actively monitoring and reviewing reports of adverse events following immunization, or AEFI, for COVID vaccines. There are two databases which capture Canadian AEFI reports. AEFI reports submitted by provincial and territorial public health authorities and federal departments are captured in the Canadian Adverse Events Following Immunization Surveillance System, or CAEFISS, which is managed by PHAC. In addition, the Canada Vigilance Program, or CVP, managed by Health Canada, receives AEFI reports from manufacturers, Canadian hospitals, healthcare professionals and consumers. In general, AEFI reports received by Health Canada are included in the CVP database unless it is missing any of the 4 minimum criteria, such as identifiable patient, identifiable reporter, product suspected of being responsible for the reaction, and adverse reactions. Information about COVID-19 vaccine AEFIs reported in Canada, including the number of reports of vaccine-associated fatal and non-fatal heart attacks, strokes and other cardiovascular events, is published on the Government of Canada's website. AEFI reports by age and sex are also included on the website. It is important to note that these reports do not necessarily imply that a relationship between the adverse event and the vaccine has been established. However, they are an important information source supporting ongoing safety monitoring.

The PHAC has published results of the following event-specific analyses investigating the potential increase in events described in (c) compared with their baseline values prior to COVID-19 vaccine rollouts.

It is also important to consider that the risk of cardiac complications has consistently been shown to be increased following COVID-19 illness. It is important to keep in mind that there is temporal overlap between the emergence of the SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes COVID-19 and the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccines, and scientific care must be taken to separate the contribution of viral illness versus rare incidences of certain AEFIs following vaccination to the total number of these events observed in the Canadian population.

In response to (h) and (i), in regard to a product withdrawal from the Canadian market, there is no specific threshold nor an established benchmark regarding the number of fatalities or number of serious adverse events, or SAEs, by which drugs or medical devices, including mRNA-based vaccines, would no longer be available on the Canadian market. This determination would be based on a scientific review of the balance of risks and benefits. As noted above, if the available evidence, including data obtained through surveillance, indicates that the risks outweigh the benefits, Health Canada will take appropriate action.

*Government Orders*

In response to (j), Health Canada reviewed safety reports including data from Pfizer's three-month post-marketing phase submitted by the manufacturer. The information reviewed did not identify new safety concerns and was consistent with the known safety profile of COMIRNATY. Outcomes of Health Canada's safety reviews for COMIRNATY are available online at the Post Authorization Activity Table for COMIRNATY. To date, the benefits of these vaccines continue to outweigh their known risks.

The National Advisory Committee on Immunization, or NACI, is an external advisory body that provides independent, expert advice on the optimal use of vaccines approved for use in humans in Canada. NACI guidance is based on a rigorous review and assessment of the quality of the available evidence. Decision-making relies on the consideration of multiple factors including burden of disease, vaccine safety, vaccine efficacy/effectiveness and programmatic factors. NACI's guidance is advisory in nature as provinces and territories are responsible for designing and delivering their immunization programs.

NACI continued to recommend the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine as a review of the available evidence showed that the benefits of the immunization program outweighed the risks.

**Question No. 2646—Mr. Dan Muys:**

With regard to bonuses paid out at VIA HFR – Dedicated Project Office in the 2023-24 fiscal year: (a) what was the amount paid out in bonuses (i) in total, (ii) to executives; (b) how many individuals received payments; (c) what percentage of officials that received bonuses were (i) at or above executive level or equivalent, (ii) below the executive level or equivalent; (d) what is the average amount of payments (i) at or above executive level or equivalent, (ii) below the executive level or equivalent; and (e) what is the highest amount of payment?

**Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the response to (a)(i) is \$94,520.55 gross; the response to (a)(ii) is \$94,520.55 gross. The response to (b) is 1. The response to (c)(i) is 100%; the response to (c)(ii) is 0%. The response to (d)(i) is \$94,520.55 gross; the response to (d)(ii) is N/A. The response to (e) is \$94,520.55 gross).

**Question No. 2647—Mr. Dan Muys:**

With regard to end-of-life marine vessel decommissioning and recycling, colloquially known as Shipbreaking, since January 1, 2016, broken down by year: (a) how many oversea tows of retired laker or coastal ships did Transport Canada approve; (b) how many of the oversea tows of retired lakers or coastal ships that Transport Canada approved changed their final destination once in international waters; and (c) how many retired laker or coastal ships were recycled in Canada?

**Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in response to (a), Transport Canada does not approve oversea tows of retired lakers or coastal ships. However, Transport Canada conducted a total of 12 safety assessments of international towing operations of dead ships departing Canada since January 1, 2016: one in 2022; two in 2021; one in 2020; six in 2019; and two in 2018.

In response to (b), his information is unknown. Transport Canada does not keep track of changes to destination as these ships are not required to be reported after leaving Canadian waters.

In response to (c), Transport Canada does not collect this information as Canadians are not required to report vessel recycling. However, the department has been made aware of two vessels that were recycled in Canada in 2022.

[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 response to Questions Nos. 2620 to 2623, 2625 to 2631, 2634, 2636 to 2638, 2640, 2642, 2644, 2645, and 2648 to 2650 could be made orders for return, these returns would be tabled in electronic format immediately.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

[Text]

**Question No. 2620—Mr. Alistair MacGregor:**

With regard to federal housing investments for Vancouver Island, since February 1, 2006, broken down by year: (a) how much federal funding was provided to support the construction of non-profit or community housing and how many units were developed; (b) how much federal funding was provided to support the construction of cooperative housing and how many units were developed; and (c) how much federal funding was provided to support the construction of purpose-built rental housing and how many units were developed?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 2621—Ms. Raquel Dancho:**

With regard to the statement by the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada in the House of Commons chamber on April 18, 2024 that, "In the budget, we have already announced that we are going to increase the maximum sentences for auto theft", for each auto theft offence: (a) how many people have been convicted of each of the related offences since January 1, 2016, broken down by year and offence; (b) of those convicted in (a), how many offenders received the maximum sentence, broken down by year and offence; and (c) how many offenders have received the mandatory six months imprisonment for a third offence?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 2622—Mr. Brad Vis:**

With regard to government patronage, contracts and funding provided to the individuals who signed the document entitled "An Open Letter from Economists on Canadian Carbon Pricing": (a) which of the individuals who signed the document have received government contracts since November 4, 2015; (b) what are the details of all contracts in (a), including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) vendor, (iii) amount, (iv) description of the goods or services provided, (v) manner in which it was awarded (sole-sourced versus competitive bid); (c) what are the details of all grants or contributions issued to the signatories or the institutions they represent since November 4, 2015, including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) recipient, (iii) amount, (iv) purpose of the grant or contribution; and (d) which of the signatories has received an Order in Council appointment from the government or have served on any type of government advisory body since November 4, 2015, including, for each, the (i) name of the individual, (ii) body or organization for which they were appointed or served, (iii) position?

(Return tabled)



*Government Orders***Question No. 2623—Mr. Brad Vis:**

With regard to the trip to Washington, D.C. by the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry on April 27 and 28, 2024: (a) what was the minister's detailed itinerary on the trip; and (b) what are the details of each meeting attended by the minister on the trip, including the (i) date, (ii) time, (iii) purpose, (iv) list of attendees?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 2625—Ms. Michelle Ferreri:**

With regard to Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreements, broken down by province or territory and by year, since October 1, 2019: what was the (i) total number of early learning and child care spaces available during the fiscal year, broken down by age group of child and type of setting, (ii) number of net new spaces created during the fiscal year, broken down by age group of child and type of setting, (iii) total number of inclusive spaces created or converted, broken down by age group of child and type of setting, (iv) average daily parental out-of-pocket fee for regulated child care spaces at the end of each fiscal year, (v) number of children 0 to K receiving fee subsidies, broken down by families receiving partial and full subsidies, (vi) number or proportion of child care service providers who provide services that are adapted to the needs of children with disabilities and children needing enhanced or individual supports, (vii) number and percentage of staff working in regulated child care programs who fully met the province's certification and educational requirements, (viii) annual public expenditure on training and professional development of the early childhood workforce, (ix) indicator data related to the wages of the early childhood workforce according to the categories of certification, including any wage enhancements, top-ups or supplements?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 2626—Mrs. Kelly Block:**

With regard to the 2023 Canadian federal worker strike: (a) what was the total amount mistakenly paid out to striking employees; and (b) what is the amount that has not been collected back by the government?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 2627—Mr. Corey Tochor:**

With regard to sole-sourced contracts entered into by the government related to products or services for ministers or their offices, including the Office of the Prime Minister, since January 1, 2019, broken down by each minister: what are the details of each such contract, including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) vendor, (iii) amount, (iv) description of goods or services?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 2628—Mr. Corey Tochor:**

With regard to expenditures related to the Cabinet retreat which took place in Montréal, from January 21 to 23, 2024, including expenses incurred by the Privy Council Office as well as by other departments or agencies, and including travel expenses incurred by ministers, ministerial staff, and others: (a) what are the total expenditures related to the retreat incurred to date; (b) what is the breakdown of the expenditures by type of expense (accommodation, hospitality, audio-visual, etc.); (c) what are the details of all expenditures in excess of \$1,000, including, for each, the (i) amount, (ii) vendor, (iii) description of the goods or services provided; and (d) what are the details of all travel expenses incurred by ministers and their staff, broken down by individual, including, for each, (i) the title, (ii) the amount spent on airfare, (iii) the amount spent on other transportation, (iv) the amount spent on accommodation, (v) the hotel or venue name, (vi) the amount spent on meals or per diems, (vii) other expenses, broken down by type?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 2629—Mrs. Rachael Thomas:**

With regard to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC): how much advertising revenue did the CBC receive from government departments, agencies, and other Crown corporations during the 2023-24 fiscal year?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 2630—Mrs. Rachael Thomas:**

With regard to expenditures on public relations or media training, or similar type of services for ministers or their offices, including the Office of the Prime Minister, since March 1, 2022, and broken down by minister: what are the details of each such expenditure, including the (i) date of the contract, (ii) amount, (iii) vendor, (iv)

individual providing the training, (v) summary of the services provided, including the type of training, (vi) person who received the training, (vii) date of the training?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 2631—Mr. Tako Van Popta:**

With regard to planned funding by the government related to "safe" or "safer" supply programs: how much does the government plan on spending on such programs, broken down by department, agency, and initiative in the current fiscal year and in each of the next five fiscal years?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 2634—Mr. James Bezan:**

With regard to the Royal Canadian Navy's Halifax-class frigates: (a) what is the number of (i) sea days, (ii) non-sea days, that each frigate has had for each of the last 48 months, broken down by month and by frigate; (b) what is the breakdown of the reasons for non-sea days, including the number of days each month that each frigate was not at sea for each of the reasons; and (c) what is the percentage of frigate fleet readiness each month for the last 48 months, broken down by month for the (i) total fleet, (ii) Pacific fleet, (iii) Atlantic fleet?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 2636—Mr. Chris Warkentin:**

With regard to government expenditures related to preparations for committee appearances by ministers, government officials, or representatives of any government department, agency, Crown corporation or other government entity, or for appearances by any former official, since January 1, 2019: what are the details of each expenditure, including the (i) date of the contract, (ii) vendor, (iii) description of goods or services, (iv) date of the committee appearance, (v) name and title of the individual or individuals appearing at committee, (vi) name of the committee, (vii) manner in which the contract was awarded (sole-sourced or competitive bid)?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 2637—Mr. Chris Warkentin:**

With regard to government dealings with Pollara Strategic Insights (PSI) since January 1, 2020: (a) what are the details of all contracts signed between government departments and agencies and PSI, including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) amount, (iii) description of goods or services, (iv) manner in which the contract was awarded (sole-sourced or competitive bid), (v) topics of research or polling covered by the contract, if applicable; (b) what are the details of each poll conducted by PSI for the government, including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) questions asked, (iii) results; and (c) what are the details of all meetings held between government officials, ministers or ministerial staff and PSI owner Don Guy, including, for each, the (i) list of attendees, (ii) date, (iii) location, (iv) purpose of the meeting?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 2638—Mr. Chris Warkentin:**

With regard to government dealings with economists Jim Stanford, Andrew Sharpe, Mostafa Askari, Mel Cappe, Marc Lévesque formerly of the Public Sector Pension Investment Board, Don Drummond, Kevin Milligan, Stephen Gordon, Andrew Leach, Paul Beaudry, Pierre Fortin, and Mike Moffat, since November 4, 2015: (a) which of the economists above have received government contracts; (b) what are the details of all contracts with these economists, including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) vendor, (iii) amount, (iv) description of the goods or services provided, (v) manner in which it was awarded (sole-sourced versus or competitive bid); (c) what are the details of all grants or contributions issued to these economists, including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) recipient, (iii) amount, (iv) purpose of the grant or contribution; and (d) which of these economists have received an Order in Council appointment from the government or have served on any type of government advisory body since November 4, 2015, including, for each, the (i) name of the individual, (ii) body or organization for which they were appointed or served, (iii) position, (iv) start and end dates?

(Return tabled)

*Government Orders***Question No. 2640—Mrs. Shannon Stubbs:**

With regard to firearms which were prohibited as a result of the May 1, 2020, Order in Council SOR/2020-96: (a) how many have been (i) turned in, (ii) seized, (iii) confiscated, (iv) otherwise obtained by the government broken down by how it was obtained; (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by those firearms which were previously in the possession of individuals versus businesses; and (c) what is the breakdown of (a) and (b) by make and model?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 2642—Mr. Bob Zimmer:**

With regard to Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada's Northern Abandoned Mine Reclamation Program: (a) how much has been spent to date on the Giant Mine, in total and broken down by the (i) purpose, (ii) recipient, of the funding; (b) how much is allotted to each purpose and recipient in (a), in total and broken down by (i) purpose, (ii) recipient; and (c) what are the details of all consultant contracts for the Giant Mine and the Giant Mine Oversight Board, including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) vendor, (iii) amount, (iv) description of the goods and services, (v) manner in which the contract was awarded (sole-sourced or competitive bid), (vi) start and end dates, if applicable?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 2644—Mr. Ted Falk:**

With regard to the review by Health Canada (HC), the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), or the National Advisory Committee on Immunization, of a pre-print study posted on October 15, 2023 of which six authors are associated with the US Food and Drug Administration that found "a new signal was detected for seizures-convulsions after BNT162b2 (2-4 years) and mRNA1273 COVID-19 vaccinations (2-5 years)": (a) which federal health agency, organization, committee or department(s) or outsourced contracted firm is responsible for reviewing or identifying studies such as the pre-print titled "Safety of Monovalent BNT162b2 (Pfizer-BioNTech), mRNA-1273 (Moderna), and NVX-CoV2373 (Novavax) COVID-19 Vaccines in US Children Aged six months to 17 years"; (b) has any federal health agency, organization, committee, department(s) or outsourced contracted firm reviewed or been made aware of the forementioned study or learned about the new safety signal of seizures/convulsions among children following monovalent COVID-19 vaccine; (c) if the answer to (b) is affirmative, has HC or any federal health agency, organization or committee issued any statement to the Canadian public or any communication to the provinces or the medical community to create awareness of this new safety signal; (d) if the answer to (c) is affirmative, what was the statement or communication provided; (e) if the answer to (c) is negative, why not; (f) how many episodes of seizures-convulsions have been reported in children under 17 years in Canadian Adverse Events following Immunization Surveillance System records, from (i) May 1, 2021 to April 30, 2023, (ii) May 1, 2018 to April 30, 2020; (g) what provincial and territory data is the federal government relying upon to monitor risk of seizures and convulsions in this cohort in real time; (h) how far out is the government monitoring this data (e.g. 28 days post-vaccine, up to 3 months, 6 months, 12 months, beyond 12 months post-COVID-19 immunization); (i) what are the Canadian government's threshold values for marking the likelihood of a vaccine serious adverse event as transitioning from an extremely rare, to a rare occurrence, and from a rare to a common occurrence; (j) what is the threshold whereby a safety signal of seizures or convulsions would shut down the mRNA vaccine program in children under the age of 17 years; (k) why are children's seizures-convulsions not listed on HC's webpage denoted to children's side-effects which was last updated on October 27, 2023; (l) with real-time monitoring, what other safety signals has HC, the PHAC or any other federal agency or department discovered post-mRNA vaccine injection for (i) children under age 5 years, (ii) children 6-17 years, (iii) persons 18-25 years, (iv) persons 26-35 years; (m) is HC receiving any data directly from provincial datasets to monitor increased usage of provincial health systems by Canadian children post-vaccination; (n) has any federal health agency or entity such as the Canadian Institute for Health Information or outsourced contractor tracked the number of episodes of myocarditis and pericarditis in young persons under the age of 35, post-vaccination, using billing or ICD-10 data from physicians and hospitals across Canada both before and after the COVID-19 injections had commenced; (o) if the answer to (n) is affirmative, (i) for what period of time post-immunization are they tracked, (ii) is the rate of myocarditis and pericarditis in persons under 35 years following the roll-out of the COVID-19 mRNA vaccines greater or less than the baseline rates of myocarditis and pericarditis from 2016-2019; (p) if there were deviations from the baseline found in (o)(ii), by how much did this occur and by which method has the determination of any difference, or lack thereof, been made; (q) if the answer to (n) is negative, why is this data not being tracked; and (r) when examining the risk-of-harm to

benefit ratio of the COVID-19 mRNA products and when considering the combination of serious adverse events such as seizures-convulsions, myocarditis and pericarditis in young persons, what is the combined threshold of serious adverse events by which mRNA products would no longer be available to (i) children under the age of 5 years, (ii) children 6-17 years old, (iii) persons 18-25 years old, (iv) persons 26-35 years old, and who determines these thresholds, when, and based on what data?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 2645—Mr. Frank Caputo:**

With regard to Correctional Service Canada, broken down by year since 2008: what is the capacity of federal institutions and the number of those incarcerated (i) in total, (ii) by region, (iii) by correctional institution?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 2648—Mr. Dan Muys:**

With regard to Health Canada (HC), the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) and the reporting processes of adverse events following immunization (AEFI) and the implementation of the Brighton Collaboration Case Definitions of AEFIs: (a) in what ways does HC's Canada Vigilance Program (CVP) differ from the PHAC's Canadian Adverse Events Following Immunization Surveillance System (CAEFISS) reporting system; (b) what purpose does it serve for Canada to have two reporting systems; (c) how, if at all, is the CVP and CAEFISS data amalgamated; (d) regarding HC's relationship to the Brighton Collaboration (BC), (i) does one exist, and, if so, when did HC or the PHAC start using the BC criteria as a requirement for AEFI recognition, (ii) what is the BC's purpose in the vaccine space in Canada; (e) regarding the implementation of the BC criteria, (i) when was it communicated to health care practitioners, (ii) how was it communicated; (f) were there any definitions of AEFIs that were changed after January 1, 2019 by (i) the BC, (ii) HC, (iii) the PHAC, (iv) the National Advisory Committee on Immunization; (g) if the answer to (f) is affirmative, (i) which ones were changed and by which agency, (ii) how were they changed, (iii) why were they changed; (h) is HC aware of the entities, such as the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations, which partner with the BC; (i) if the answer to (h) is affirmative, what are those entities and corporations along with their inherent conflicts of interest (COI) in the vaccine space; (j) what or who are the other funding and non-funding entities who partner with the BC; (k) is HC aware of those individuals who constitute the BC's Board of Directors and those who have been trained at the BC, including the members of the Advisory Committee on Causality Assessment; (l) if the answer to (k) is affirmative, (i) what percentage of those individuals are working, have worked, or have consulted for a pharmaceutical company, (ii) how many work in Canada; (m) of the individuals identified in (l) as Canadians, (i) what are their names, (ii) what are their conflicts of interest, (iii) what positions do they hold in other entities; (n) how much does the Government of Canada, and any entity related to the Government of Canada, provide monetarily to the BC; and (o) is the BC associated, either directly or indirectly, with any vaccine manufacturers or related organizations?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 2649—Mr. Frank Caputo:**

With regard to the Canada Border Service Agency's (CBSA) releasing detainees, who would otherwise be held in custody pending deportation, due to a lack of detention capacity: (a) how long has the government known about the problem; (b) how many meetings has the government had on this issue; (c) what steps has the government taken to address this issue; and (d) how many detainees does CBSA project will have to be released due to lack of capacity?

(Return tabled)

*Government Orders***Question No. 2650—Mr. Dan Muys:**

With regard to the government's approach to the Chinese state owned CRRC Corporation Limited: (a) has the government identified any threats to national security from CRRC, and, if so, what are the details of each; (b) has the government identified any safety or performance issues with the operation of CRRC rolling stock in Canada, and, if so, what are the details of each; (c) since January 1, 2016, and broken down by year, how many projects involving CRRC have been approved by Transport Canada; and (d) since Canada joined the Asian Infrastructure Bank on March 19, 2018, is the government aware of (i) any CRRC projects that received funding from the Asian Infrastructure Bank, (ii) any other funds received by CRRC from the Asian Infrastructure Bank, and, if so, what are the details of each?

(Return tabled)

[*English*]

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

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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**BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2024, NO. 1**

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-69, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 16, 2024, as reported (with amendments) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

**Mr. Parm Bains (Steveston—Richmond East, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is always an honour to stand in the House to debate on matters on behalf of the great people of Steveston—Richmond East. Today, it is to continue on the debate on Bill C-69, the budget Implementation act for budget 2024, which is about reinforcing the promise that all Canadians should have a fair chance to build a good life, and about continuing to build a country that works for everyone. We are going to do that by building more affordable homes, by making life cost less and by growing the economy in a way that is shared by all.

Today I would like to talk about one element of Bill C-69 that could improve financial outcomes for Canadians: consumer-driven banking. Every Canadian deserves access to affordable, modern banking services to help them pay their bills, save money, receive their government benefits and build their credit. Budget 2024 includes measures to lower banking fees by capping non-sufficient fund fees, modernizing free and affordable bank account options, expanding financial help services, doing more to crack down on predatory lending and launching new consumer-driven banking tools.

Consumer-driven banking, also known as open banking or consumer-driven finance, provides a way for people and small businesses to securely transfer their financial data to different service providers, including banks, credit unions and accredited financial technology companies, fintechs. This could include apps that use data to provide automated budgeting and savings advice, help keep track of bills, secure a loan, find a better deal on insurance or on a currency exchange rate and track monthly rent payments to build up credit.

Consumer-driven banking provides real-time access to all financial accounts, products and services in one place and access to personalized tools and products to help improve financial health. It can

play an important role in the future of the Canadian economy and increase consumers' choice and control over their financial data. It can help make life more affordable and even help young Canadians when it is time to buy a first home.

However, so far, in the absence of a framework, fintechs have been limited in their ability to develop new financial tools, largely due to a reliance on an unsecured process called screen scraping, which pulls data from a bank account by reading the account information. This requires consumers to share their banking credentials with fintech companies. An estimated nine million Canadians currently share their financial data this way, which raises security, liability and privacy risks to consumers and the financial system. I presume there may be hon. members present who have gone through this process and felt uneasy about it, as I have.

As first announced in the 2023 fall economic statement, the government published Canada's consumer-driven banking framework along with budget 2024, in order to drive an innovative consumer-driven banking system in Canada. As announced in budget 2024, the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada, FCAC, is mandated to oversee, administer and enforce Canada's consumer-driven banking framework.

FCAC's existing financial literacy and consumer education mandate make it well placed to help guide consumers who engage in consumer-driven banking. The mandate was informed by an extensive review of international jurisdictions and is in line with international best practices, offers administrative efficiency and allows for the timely delivery of consumer-driven banking in Canada.

At this point, I should also stress that the government would not be privy to any personal information or data.

I will move now to the bill before us. Bill C-69 introduces legislation to implement key components of the framework, including a new act, the consumer-driven banking act, and amendments to the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada Act. These legislative updates would establish the foundational elements of the framework, including governance and scope, as well as criteria and the process for the technical standard.

### *Government Orders*

The amendments to the FCAC Act would create a senior deputy commissioner for consumer-driven banking, who would be responsible for the supervision of the framework. The commissioner of FCAC would retain full administrative control of FCAC and would continue to report to the Minister of Finance and Parliament. As well, the consumer-driven banking act would require FCAC to maintain a public registry of participating entities in the framework.

Once implemented, the framework would regulate access to financial data, providing Canadians and small businesses with safe and secure access to financial services and products that would help them manage and improve their finances.

• (1940)

The framework would also align with those of our largest trading partners, including the United States. In order to facilitate oversight of provincial entities while respecting their jurisdiction, provincial entities would be able to opt in to governance, supervision and participation. In the case of provincial credit unions, provinces would retain the authority to impose their own requirements.

Importantly, the functional scope for participating entities would be limited to “read access”. This means that participating entities would only be able to see, not change, the data held by another participating entity should a consumer request it. The scope would not include payment initiation, or “write access” as it sometimes is called. Furthermore, data could be obtained only if a consumer provides consent to the participating entity.

Access to data would be limited to what is specified in the legislation, which includes chequing accounts and savings accounts, investment products and lending products such as credit cards, lines of credit and mortgages. Regardless of an entity's size or business model, due diligence of its security controls would be conducted before allowing it to participate in the framework. This would help set an equal and high bar for security measures and give confidence to consumers that their data is safe.

Participating entities would be required to comply with existing privacy legislation as well. The framework would also include additional privacy rules that are unique to financial data sharing to address the provision of express consent to access data, consent management, and revoking access to data shared by a consumer. Participants would be required to have a standardized process for consent and revocation that would be done in a clear, simple and not misleading manner.

The proposed legislation represents a culmination of long-term engagement with industry, consumer groups and experts, and would deliver a made-in-Canada solution to the issue of screen scraping. There is alignment among stakeholders for the government's proposed approach, including fintech and the Canadian Bankers Association.

The government would continue to engage with industry, which would lead on the implementation of the framework in key areas, including technical standards, with oversight from the FCAC. This collaborative work would refine more complex elements, such as the accreditation framework and common rules for privacy, security and liability, to be introduced in additional legislation later this year.

Canada's consumer-driven banking framework, with government-led oversight of security requirements, technical standards and consumer protections, would enable consumers to securely and confidently exercise their right to use and move their data. Once the framework is operational, the government would consult with stakeholders to determine how and when to phase out screen scraping. This would include review of other jurisdictions' approaches to screen scraping.

Canada has a strong, well-regulated financial sector that has proven to be stable, resilient and trusted by Canadians. Consumer-driven banking would contribute to the strength of the sector and protect financial consumers, part of the government's plan to grow Canada's economy in a way that works for everyone. I encourage all hon. members to support the bill.

• (1945)

**Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague did not really reference much in his speech in regard to where the government is at with its spending habits. There is the \$61 billion more in spending that virtually every sector, the banking industry and even the government people themselves are saying is leading to continuing inflation.

Can the member tell us what he thinks is wrong with the idea that, as Canadians are telling me, the government raised \$54 billion on the GST and it is all going to the interest on the debt this year?

**Mr. Parm Bains:** Mr. Speaker, I encourage the member opposite to look at the responsible measures taken in the spending review right now. If we look at all of the measures in the budget, we see that they are all about productivity. Whether we are talking about \$5 billion in loan guarantee programs or whether we are delivering major economic investment tax credits, it is all to increase productivity.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to hear my colleague talk about banking services. That is something that Bill C-69 does not talk much about.

I have two short questions to ask him about banking services.

First, does he recognize the authority of Quebec and the provinces in this sector?

Second, does he realize that Bill C-69 will give all of Canada's big banks a huge advantage over the smaller ones like Caisses Desjardins in Quebec?

[*English*]

**Mr. Parm Bains:** Mr. Speaker, a tremendous number of initiatives respect what Quebec has to offer. If we look at the budget, there is \$3.4 billion to support young researchers in Canada and Quebec, billions to fight homelessness, \$780 million in support for creative industries and \$1.5 billion to protect and expand affordable housing. There is a lot in this budget that respects how we are working with Quebec.

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I always appreciate my hon. colleague's remarks.

Every day we hear in the House the Conservatives talk about the cost of living pressures that Canadians are under. Obviously, they continually make it sound like global inflation has been caused by our government. We know that is not true, and it is misleading to imply that.

We see in this budget numerous measures that would help Canadian families save money on their bills: more child care spaces, the national school food program, dental care, pharmacare and others. Could my hon. colleague speak to how our government is there for Canadians in helping them out with the cost of living pressures they are under?

**Mr. Parm Bains:** Mr. Speaker, I have listed a few things in some of the other answers. For example, the member mentioned the dental program. We have over 500 dentists now signed up in my city of Richmond, British Columbia, who are ready to help those who need help the most. I speak to all of these measures as being a way toward productivity. If people can get help and get a leg-up, they can contribute in a better way.

• (1950)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague talked about homelessness. The Auditor General of Canada has said that for the government to meet its target of reducing chronic homelessness by 50% by 2030, it would have to invest seven times more money than it is currently investing.

What does my colleague have to say to address the homelessness crisis?

[*English*]

**Mr. Parm Bains:** Mr. Speaker, I encourage the member to look at all the measures that were put into this budget. They amount to billions to help with homelessness and to give people another chance.

### *Speaker's Ruling*

#### PRIVILEGE

##### ALLEGED PREMATURE RELEASE OF SPEAKER'S RULING ON SOCIAL MEDIA—SPEAKER'S RULING

**The Speaker:** Before we move on with debate, the Chair wishes to make a statement in regard to the concerns raised earlier today by the member for Edmonton Strathcona about the premature publishing of a tweet on the @HoCChamber X account.

In her intervention, the member pointed out that the account had prematurely disclosed the conclusions of the Speaker's ruling on the question of privilege raised by the member for Winnipeg Centre. The member stated that it was inappropriate that the conclusions of the ruling would be shared publicly before members of the House were apprised of them.

[*Translation*]

The Speaker wishes to note that the tweet in question was published in error. According to the process in place, a courtesy advance notice of tweets about rulings is shared with a very small team in the House administration to expedite publication on social media. The instructions are clear: Tweets must never be posted before a ruling is delivered. In this case, the text of the tweet was unfortunately posted as the ruling was being read and not afterwards. To our knowledge, this is the first time this has happened. I should note that at no point is anyone in my office involved in publishing these tweets.

On behalf of the House administration, the Speaker would like to sincerely apologize for this error. It is very important to the Speaker that members have the first opportunity to hear the conclusions of a ruling. To ensure that such a thing does not happen again, I immediately requested changes to our internal processes on your behalf.

[*English*]

While I am on my feet, I want to address the strong language that was used after the point of order was raised. The member for Winnipeg Centre made a significant point for all members to consider, yet used words that were not acceptable on the floor of the House. There are ways to make one's point without resorting to profanity, and I trust that this will not happen again.

I thank all members for their attention.

The hon. member for Winnipeg Centre has a point of order.

**Ms. Leah Gazan:** Mr. Speaker, you pointing out my language in the House speaks exactly to my point. You commented just now, with all due respect, that my language was unparliamentary, but saying in this House that “he was more likely to reoffend because of his racial background”, which is highly racist, was totally disregarded. In fact, it was not just totally disregarded. The total meaning of that sentence was allowed to be changed.

I will not watch unparliamentary language in this House, with all due respect, if racism, bigotry, anti-LGBT bigotry and sexism are tolerated, behaviour that I find highly unparliamentary.

*Government Orders*

● (1955)

**BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2024, NO. 1**

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-69, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 16, 2024, as reported (with amendments) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

**Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise here this evening to speak to Bill C-69, a bill that enacts certain provisions of the budget tabled back in April. I spoke to the budget at that time, back in the spring, but I would like to add a few comments now that it is before us as an implementation act because it is an important budget. All budgets are important, but this one in particular is important.

As we all know and hear every day, Canadians are struggling, especially to find housing, to pay the rent, to dream of paying a mortgage or even to find a roof to put over their heads. They struggle with the cost of groceries and the price of gas at the pumps.

Also, we are facing a climate crisis that is bringing us fires, floods and other extreme weather events that cause widespread stress to Canadians, their health, their homes and their livelihoods. Last year's fires in my riding and surrounding areas not only destroyed houses, but put tens of thousands of people on evacuation. They ended the tourist season abruptly in early August, just when all my local businesses are poised to make an income after months of losses. Then a mid-winter freeze caused serious damage to grapevines and peach, apricot and cherry orchards, which are part of the agriculture sector, a real backbone of the economy in my riding. Any budget has to recognize and face the climate crisis head-on.

While Canadians are struggling, big corporations and wealthy Canadians are doing better than ever. Big oil companies are making a killing. Big grocery companies are making record profits. Budgets are documents that make choices that will help Canadians. That is what we hope. It is clear that it is ordinary Canadians who need that help, not big corporations and wealthy individuals.

The NDP has used its leverage in this minority Parliament to deliver results for people. In this budget alone, we have compelled the Liberal government to build more homes, preserve existing affordable housing, protect renters and bring in universal single-payer pharmacare, starting with contraception and diabetes medications and devices. I want to pause there because, while they are all critical, people may not realize how critical diabetes medications are. A friend of mine, who was 27 years old, died because he could not afford the full cost of his insulin medication to monitor and help his diabetes. That will not happen again.

This budget would establish a national food program. Canada is the only G7 nation without a national school food program. A quarter of Canadian kids live in homes that are food insecure. This is another NDP initiative put in this budget. We are very proud of it. The Conservatives voted against it.

This budget would reverse damaging cuts to indigenous services. It would invest in accessible, high-quality, non-profit child care, another NDP initiative. It would establish a dedicated youth mental

health fund. It would double the volunteer firefighters tax credit. I will talk more about that later.

As I said, several elements in this budget are key NDP initiatives. They are the pillar of this budget, I would say. However, they would not be there without the NDP's pressure. This is not an NDP budget. It would be different if it was an NDP government. We would go much further in some areas to help Canadians who need it the most.

I will talk about some of the victories, the things that will change the lives of Canadians for the better, and some things that are conspicuously missing.

We have the homebuyers' plan, which has been enhanced by increasing the withdrawal limit from \$35,000 to \$60,000. The government is also cracking down on short-term rentals by denying income tax deductions on income earned.

● (2000)

Short-term rentals are one of the big issues in my riding. My riding is a very popular area for people to come visit and spend their vacations at all times of the year. Increasingly, it is becoming more and more difficult to find housing, simply because it is very profitable for people to buy houses simply for investment and to put up as short-term rentals. This will help curb that, along with some important provincial legislation that has just been introduced. That is very welcome news.

This budget implements the Canada health transfer 5% growth guarantee. Canadians expect the federal government to support provinces in delivering the health care that we need. We all know that our health care system is struggling as well. This will help keep it going and give us the health care that we need, which we are so proud of, health care that was brought to us, again, by the NDP back in the 1960s.

I mentioned the volunteer firefighters tax credit. It used to be \$3,000. There are almost 100,000 volunteer firefighters across Canada. They are the people who keep us safe in small communities from one end of the country to the other, and yet they receive so little in return for that brave and hard work.

They used to get a \$3,000 tax credit. That was raised to \$6,000 in this budget, again, based on an NDP initiative by my colleague from Courtenay—Alberni, who put forward a private member's bill to increase that to \$10,000. We will take \$6,000 as an improvement, but let us keep supporting our firefighters.

*Government Orders*

There is one thing that is not in this budget. With regard to wild-fire firefighters who are not part of local firefighting corps but who fight wildfires in the summer, one would be surprised to find that they are not defined as firefighters under the CRA regulations. Firefighters, policemen and other people, such as ambulance drivers, get special dispensation under the Income Tax Act to put more money aside for their retirement. Wildfire firefighters do not. They are specifically excluded, and we need to change that, to call wild-fire firefighters “firefighters”. It was not in this budget, but I hope it will be soon.

While I am talking about firefighters, another thing that is not in this budget is a national wildfire-fighting force. We need this, and 75% of Canadians have come out in support of such a force, which would be there to support local and provincial firefighting services. We need this help. It is clear that things are getting worse year by year. We cannot go on as we have been. We have been depending on the armed forces to help us. This year, the armed forces have said they are not going to be there this summer. We need to do something different, and I think a national wildfire-fighting force is the way to go.

I will also mention the good news about support for research. Finally, the government is putting funding into the scholarship and fellowship funding for young researchers in Canada. That funding had remained stagnant for 20 years. Students were living in poverty, and that has finally been fixed. That is very good news.

I will just finish by mentioning the Canada disability benefit, something the NDP has been fighting for, and yet we are very disappointed that this was brought in as a \$200-a-month benefit, something that will not get people with disabilities out of poverty. People with disabilities live in poverty all across the country. No province gives them enough money to live above the poverty line. We had a chance to finish that, make it right, and we will continue fighting for people with disabilities, to make sure that they will not live in poverty.

● (2005)

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I really appreciate the member’s role in our caucus, as well as in this House, with his many years of expertise.

One of the parts he mentioned in his speech that really resonated with me was the realities of climate change and the impacts it has on smaller communities and their economies. I am just wondering if he could talk about some solutions that we could be looking at, instead of giving so many dollars to the oil and gas industry.

**Mr. Richard Cannings:** Mr. Speaker, small communities are really at the pointy end of the stick when it comes to climate change and its effects, whether it is through floods or wildfires. We have to mitigate the effects of climate change, that is, get serious about the emissions we put out by bringing them down through every means possible, but we also have to help these small communities adapt to climate change.

Just outside my riding, there are small communities in my area, Princeton, Merritt and Abbotsford, that were devastated by floods, for instance, in 2021. They are still waiting for adequate federal help to pay for the rebuilding of their communities in a way that

they will be resilient in the face of future floods or fires. I could go on.

We have to support small communities. They do not have the resources, and we should and could help them.

**Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, maybe we could talk a bit about what was not in the budget: eliminating the price on pollution, as an example, or cutting programs for people who are struggling. We are continuing to invest in Canadians and at the same time fight climate change.

The hon. member had started talking about science. If he could work science and climate change, and our need to invest in that, as well, into his answer, that would be great.

**Mr. Richard Cannings:** Mr. Speaker, that sounded a bit like an improv act where one has to talk about a couple of things to bring it in, but I am happy to do that. I sit with the member for Guelph on the science and research committee. Right now, we are studying the effect of climate change in the Arctic and the research that we need to support in the Arctic about that: about how it is affecting people, what we can do about it, and how we can mitigate it. There is so much that needs to be done.

We have all heard about how Canada has to maintain and strengthen its support for Arctic communities, about how we have to work with indigenous groups there, the Inuit, the first nations of the north. We need to invest in infrastructure across the Arctic for that research. We have to invest in logistics support.

There is the polar continental shelf project, which, like the fellowships I mentioned, has been stagnant in funding for many, many years. It is the backbone of Arctic research. We have to maintain and strengthen that.

**Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the member comes from a beautiful part of the province, but not as beautiful as North Okanagan—Shuswap.

I would like to ask the member what his thoughts are about the \$60 billion in additional debt that this budget is going to be passing on to future Canadians. Members in his riding, just the same as in mine and in every riding across the country, are going to be forced to pay the debt and the interest payments, which will now overcome what we actually do in health care transfers to the province. How does he justify passing that debt on to future generations?

*Government Orders*

● (2010)

**Mr. Richard Cannings:** Mr. Speaker, we could talk all night about this. I would simply say that budgets are about choices. There is some increased funding here in this budget. It would go to a dental care plan that would bring dental care to nine million Canadians. For the first time, they would have access to a dentist. All of us here get free dental care, but the Conservatives want to keep that from the rest of Canadians. That is an investment in our health care system that would save us money in the long term. There are many other examples like that.

**Mr. Patrick Weiler (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise in the House this evening to join the debate on the budget implementation act.

As this may be the last time I have the opportunity to rise in this House before the session ends for the summer, I do want to take some time to acknowledge my staff members, who helped me tremendously, allowing me to do the work that I do: Natasha, Norman, Kevin, Donna and Kiran on my constituency side, and Sophie, Edith, Ahdi and Danica helping me on the legislative side. I thank them so much for the incredible work that they do.

I do want to spend a few minutes talking about budget 2024. Particularly, this budget takes some significant steps forward in ensuring that we can get more housing built faster. In my mind, there is perhaps no bigger challenge that we have in the country right now than tackling the housing crisis. This year's budget lays out an ambitious plan that shows how we would build 3.87 million new homes by 2031, which is what we need to do to close the housing gap. This is about building more homes by bringing down the cost of home building, helping cities make it easier to build homes at a faster pace, changing the way Canadian home builders manufacture homes and growing the workforce to ensure that we get the job done. The budget also includes funding for below-market housing.

I have very much seen the impact of these programs already through many of the municipalities, through the housing accelerator fund, speeding up the permitting process for new housing, as well as the federal government supporting the construction of over 1,000 new below-market homes since I was elected in 2019.

The budget also takes some significant steps forward in helping with the high cost of living. There would be \$1 billion in additional funding to build new child care spaces. Already, through the federal government's programming, families are saving, on average, \$6,600 per child on child care each year in B.C. The budget would also provide additional funding for training of more ECE workers. We are also moving ahead on the first two parts of our pharmacare program, providing free access to contraceptives and diabetes medication, which would make a tremendous difference in the lives of so many Canadians.

This budget also moves ahead with the national school food program, as well as launching the Canada disability benefit, and I will get to those a bit more in a few minutes.

This budget also takes some steps forward in growing the economy in a way that is shared by all. There would be a generational investment in artificial intelligence, which is going to be a huge part of improving productivity in Canada going forward, as well as

major investments in research and development, which was just mentioned in the previous intervention. We are also moving forward on a number of investment tax credits that would continue to grow the green economy in Canada, which has already led to Canada's being the largest per capita recipient of foreign direct investment last year.

I do want to highlight a few measures in the budget implementation act, knowing that I will not have time to cover all of them, as this is a 660-page piece of legislation.

With respect to the housing file, there are changes to the Income Tax Act that would now prevent folks from deducting income for short-term rentals in areas where municipalities do not allow them. This would be really important to ensure that those homes go back into the long-term rental pool. The homebuyers' plan withdrawal limit would also be increased from \$35,000 to \$60,000 to allow people to save for a down payment for their first home, which would be in addition to the first home savings account that we created, which is already allowing Canadians to save \$40,000 tax-free in and tax-free out.

There are a number of measures that would make life cost less for Canadians. One that would make a tremendous difference in my riding is doubling the volunteer firefighter tax credit and the search and rescue tax credit for volunteers. As someone who has both Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue and normal search and rescue, as well as a number of volunteer firefighter stations in my riding, I know this would make a tremendous difference for folks who put themselves at risk to help us in our most vulnerable times. Therefore, this is a small token of our appreciation for the incredible work that they do.

As I mentioned before, we are moving ahead with a national school food program. We are currently the only G7 country that does not have a national school food program. Through an investment of \$1 billion over five years, we would be providing meals for 400,000 children across Canada.

● (2015)

Through measures in this budget, we would be able to start negotiations with provinces, like my own, British Columbia, which has already started on the work to ensure we can pass along these benefits, which are not only going to ensure that children get fed but also save families an estimated \$800 per child per year.

This budget also moves ahead with the Canada disability benefit. This is the largest single-line budget item in this budget, which would provide \$2,400 tax-free to Canadians living with disabilities. We know these are some of the most vulnerable Canadians who face high costs because of living with a disability, so measures in the budget implementation act would give effect to this benefit.



*Government Orders*

The budget implementation act would also expand the Canada student loan forgiveness program, which provides student loan forgiveness for professionals to tackle labour shortages in remote and rural areas. As a proud representative of a semi-rural riding, I am pleased that the budget implementation act would offer loan forgiveness to ECE workers, dentists, dental hygienists, pharmacists, midwives, teachers, social workers, personal support workers, physiotherapists and psychologists, in addition to doctors and nurses in all communities in my riding outside metro Vancouver. Up to \$60,000 over five years in loan forgiveness is available in some cases. For those in one of these professions, it is yet another reason to consider coming to my riding.

This budget would also cut the excise duty rate on craft brewing, which is 90% of brewers in Canada. It would make a big difference for those businesses and their customers as well.

This budget would also drive inclusive growth. We are moving ahead with a number of investment tax credits, including for green hydrogen and clean manufacturing, as well as the extension of the mineral exploration tax credit, which would ensure that we can find the critical minerals that we need and use those critical minerals in the value chain to build the technologies we are going to need to decarbonize, as well as to produce the green hydrogen that we are going to need in a number of sectors, like heavy transportation, where electrification will not work.

I also want to mention that this budget would make a number of legislative changes to improve Canada's anti-money laundering and anti-terrorist financing regime. In fact, in every budgetary bill, both the budget and the fall economic statement, since I was elected in 2019, we have made legislative amendments to improve this regime, in addition to investing close to \$375 million to ensure we can better combat financial crimes. The budget implementation act would expand coverage under this regime to tackle more high-risk areas, like cheque-cashing businesses, leasing and financing companies and others. It would also allow businesses that report under this regime, like banks, to communicate with each other while maintaining privacy regulations. This is very important as we know we are dealing with very complex matters that would require that sharing of information, provided that we do it in a safe way. Lastly, we would allow FINTRAC to communicate directly with civil forfeiture offices. This is very important because it would make it much easier to seize assets, ill-gotten gains, where it is very difficult at times to prove at a criminal level.

I want to mention a couple of things that I would like to have seen in the BIA that were not included. Number one, while we do make some important changes to the underused housing tax, there are more areas that we need to address. As an example, in my riding, there are areas that municipalities zone to prevent people from being long-term renters. The areas are zoned to be short-term rentals, where foreign direct investment was sought after to build up the bed capacity. We need to take into account examples like this to create exemptions.

Lastly, we made a number of changes to the Impact Assessment Act in this budget implementation act to respond to the Supreme Court of Canada case. I believe we may have gone a little too far and were too cautious in those changes, such that we have created gaps in our environmental assessment regime. My suggestion is

that in the fall economic statement, these are two areas we should look at to make sure we improve them going forward.

• (2020)

**Mr. Dean Allison (Niagara West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I know my colleague's intentions are sincere.

The challenge with the government is that it has no problem making promises it has no intention of ever delivering on. What does 3.9 million homes over the next seven years amount to? It is about half a million homes a year. We built 240,000 homes last year.

Could the hon. member tell us how on earth he expects us to get to 3.9 million homes?

**Mr. Patrick Weiler:** Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned in my speech, this is perhaps one of the largest challenges that we have in the country.

We cannot keep building houses the way that we are building them right now. I can give an example from my riding. A company called Nexii is building homes in a factory sense. If we can prefabricate homes and then assemble them on site, that is one way of increasing the productivity in that space. It is something that we need to do. We need to get more people to work in trades to build more homes. That is part of the challenge.

Through the budget, we are now expanding funding through the housing accelerator fund to speed up the permitting at the local level. We need to work very closely with municipalities and provinces. I am very fortunate with my province of British Columbia. We have a great working relationship.

We need to make sure that we have the density as-of-right, and that we are working together, rowing in the same direction, because it is a tremendous challenge that we need to be able to solve as a country.

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is my neighbour, and it is always good to see him here in the House.

My question is around the disability supports. We know that the NDP has been fighting desperately for a long time, along with a lot of advocates for the disability community, talking about the high level of poverty and the reality that so many are slipping through cracks that we should be filling.

*Government Orders*

It was very disappointing to see the Liberal government not put forward something more substantive, but instead, something that will keep people in poverty rather than lifting them from it.

I am just wondering if he has heard the same thing, like I have from my constituents, that this is a significant concern, and they expect to see more.

**Mr. Patrick Weiler:** Mr. Speaker, this is a tremendous step forward in this budget, creating the Canada disability benefit. To have \$2,400 each year, tax-free, going to individuals living with a disability makes a huge difference in people's lives. Again, we are talking about some of the most vulnerable Canadians. This is moving ahead with something that was committed to in the 2021 platform for my party.

Can we do more? Absolutely. There is more we can do to make life more affordable for all Canadians, but particularly some of the most vulnerable. This is just one such measure in this budget.

We are also moving ahead with providing a dental care plan for low-income Canadians, as well as a lot of the investments in housing and pharmacare. Collectively, these are a lot of the measures that we are taking to make life more affordable, in addition to the Canada disability benefit, which I think is already going to make a tremendous difference in people's lives.

• (2025)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am going to continue in the spirit of my colleague's question on the Canada disability benefit. The Bloc Québécois criticized one thing in this bill, and that is the fact that the rules, the eligibility requirements and the benefit level were all to be determined by regulation.

The government used the budget to announce a benefit amount that we feel is insufficient, and it did this without having tabled the regulations as planned. What can my colleague tell us about that?

**Mr. Patrick Weiler:** Mr. Speaker, as I said to my other colleague, this is a very important program to support Canadians who are in very challenging situations.

We also need to work with the provinces to implement this program. We need to make sure that this program will take effect and that the provinces will not use the money that is to be used for this program for other purposes. There are a number of things we need to do to ensure this program works well.

[*English*]

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to stand today and talk on Bill C-69, the budget implementation act, or as I prefer to call it, “the economic vandalism act”.

This is a budget that continues to build upon the inflationary deficits that Canadians are struggling to deal with. The government's spending continues to be out of control. First it was borrowing money, then it was printing money, and now it is going to continue to dip into the pockets of Canadians and raise taxes so it has money to spend on all its crazy ideas and programs.

We know the Liberals have gotten no results the entire time they have been in government. For the past nine years, we have witnessed rent double. We have witnessed the cost of a mortgage double and the cost of a down payment double. Our children and grandchildren will not have the opportunity that we did to own a home and to move ahead in life because of the out-of-control spending of the Liberal-NDP government.

We have a deficit this year that is going to be over \$40 billion. It has been described as the worst budget since 1982. Who said that? The former, Liberal-appointed Bank of Canada Governor, David Dodge.

We have witnessed that Canada has the worst living standards in 40 years according to the Fraser Institute. We have also seen, under the Liberal-NDP government, that we have had the worst growth in GDP, or income per person, since the 1930s. Nine in 10 middle-class families are paying more in income tax today than they were nine years ago.

We have a situation that is increasing and is hurting everyone. In my riding of Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, it is hitting everybody. Our farmers are struggling with increased carbon taxes that have gone up 23% and they now have to deal with the capital gains tax, and that is really starting to take a bite.

We can look at how farms have been structured, family farms, over the last number of years. I come from a farm family. My daughter and son-in-law are grain farmers. I have two brothers who are farmers. They put hard work and effort into growing their properties. They want to make sure that there is something to pass on to the next generation, which is the same thing that my father did for his children, and that is at risk.

To make things more manageable, people have formed their family farms into limited corporations. Our doctors, our dentists and our chiropractors, especially in rural areas, have set themselves up into limited liability partnerships and corporations. Those limited corporations pay out capital gains. Of course, now these capital gains are all going to get taxed by the Liberal-NDP coalition by up to 67%.

This is not a tax on the wealthy. This is a tax on the hard-working people who feed us, take care of us and take care of our health. All of them are going to be attacked and become either less profitable or be forced to relocate to jurisdictions like the United States where it is easier to make a living without having to work as hard. I have had doctors and dentists tell me that they are going to work fewer hours because of the income tax implications with the capital gains tax grab by the Liberals and the Minister of Finance.

*Government Orders*

This is also hitting cottage owners and those who have secondary residences, whether they bought a property for rental income or they bought a home that they hope to pass on to their children. Now, when they go to sell those properties, they are going to get nailed with this capital gains tax that they did not expect. There is a word for this. When somebody takes something away from another that they never deserved, it is called highway robbery. That is the economic vandalism that we are talking about here by the Liberal-NDP coalition.

As the shadow minister for national defence, I do want to switch gears and talk about how this budget does not support, in any way, shape or form, the even less ambitious defence policy update. The defence policy update had some ideas, but all the spending, especially in this budget, has been kicked down the road until after the next federal election. We are talking three, four or five years down the road before we see any increase in spending for national defence to support our troops.

● (2030)

At the national defence committee today, we actually had one of our witnesses say that the defence policy update is a national “embarrassment” that fails to recognize the threat environment we are in and that, technically, Canada is already “at war”.

We are witnessing what is happening in Ukraine. We have had increased escalation in the conflict in the South China Sea between the PRC and the Philippines, plus what we are seeing in Taiwan. This defence policy update fails to recognize those threats. All the money that has supposedly been promised is kicked down the road.

As a case in point, we have a retention and recruitment crisis happening in the Canadian Armed Forces. One thing that we identified is the lack of housing. The Minister of National Defence even said that we are short 6,700 residential housing units for our troops. We have troops who are living homeless and actually couch surfing. They are living in campers or in their cars. Worse yet, they are stuck in these tent cities that have sprung up across the country over the last nine years under the Liberal government.

Even though the government recognizes that we need more homes for our current serving members of the Canadian Armed Forces, the budget has zero dollars for new housing for our troops. It has zero dollars next year. There is only \$8 million in the budget in three years' time, which does not build 6,700 housing units. Eight million dollars will not build, in today's dollars, 24 homes. Again, that is a national embarrassment. We have people who are serving this country but cannot house themselves properly, and the government and the defence minister fail to recognize that we have to support our troops. Therefore, we have a retention and recruitment crisis, and the defence policy update gives no idea of how we are going to increase our troop strength. We are 17,000 troops short today, and it could get worse if this is not rectified soon.

We have a housing shortage and, of course, we have no money to put into new houses. As we heard today again at committee, we have an army that the government has no plan to get new kit for so that it can become the expeditionary force we have come to rely on as Canadians.

A case in point on how the government does not take our forces seriously and puts them in awkward positions is the news we heard just this weekend that the Canadian Armed Forces, through the Royal Canadian Navy, positioned one of our Arctic offshore patrol vessels in Havana, Cuba, for a celebration of the Communist dictatorship there. It is docked alongside Russian navy destroyers. Why would we want to use the Royal Canadian Navy to liaise with a hostile dictatorship in Cuba and an aggressive country that is invading Ukraine today?

We know that Cubans are serving in the Russian armed forces today and fighting in Ukraine. Cuba has actually sent troops to Belarus to train alongside Russian and Belarusian soldiers so that they can invade Ukraine again from the north. This is a national embarrassment and, again, speaks to the fact that the government does not have a plan when it comes to supporting our troops. Instead, it uses them for photo ops with Communist dictatorships rather than supporting our allies in fighting back against the evil that is occurring around the world.

We have frigates that cannot be deployed on as frequent a basis. We no longer have destroyers. We no longer have any of our own supply ships. They are slowly coming, and we have the *Asterix* out there, of course, which we ordered when we were in government. However, we do not have the same reach in the navy that we used to.

When we look at Ukraine, our government, again, continues to dither and delay in delivering. It announced 18 months ago that NASAMS was going to be sent to Ukraine, and it is still not there. The Liberals finally announced that we were sending 2,000 CRV7 rockets, but guess what, Mr. Speaker? We asked back in February to send the 83,000 we had, not 2,000.

We will continue to put pressure on the government to do the right thing for Ukraine, for the Canadian Armed Forces and for rural Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

● (2035)

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I had a very hard time listening to the member referencing support for Ukraine in his speech. He stood up multiple times in the House and voted against more support for Operation Unifier, support for Ukrainian refugees coming to Canada and an updated free trade agreement between Canada and Ukraine, which President Zelenskyy himself asked us to pass. I cannot understand.

The BIA has additional support for Ukraine, in terms of using seized Russian assets. We just heard an announcement that the Prime Minister made at the G7 to support Ukraine with additional funds.

How can the member honestly criticize our government when he cannot stand up for Ukraine?

*Government Orders*

**Mr. James Bezan:** Mr. Speaker, the member over there knows well that no one has fought more and harder for Ukraine than I have. I was one of the first of 13 to be banned from Russia because I have taken a strong stand in support of Ukraine for a long time. I will take no lessons from the member.

When we did not support the free trade agreement, it was because we already had a free trade agreement in place. It was better than the current free trade agreement, in which the Liberals actually stuck a carbon tax. We know that the Liberals also supported sending over turbines to pump Russian gas into Europe to help fund Putin's war machine. We will never take lessons from the Liberals on how to not stand up for Ukraine.

**An hon. member:** Oh, oh!

**The Speaker:** I think there could be a lot more decorum, and people should not be taking the floor unless they are recognized by the Speaker. The hon. member had asked a question. The other hon. member was responding.

The hon. member for Nunavut has the floor.

**Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, I know the member talked about the importance of the military in other places, and I appreciate that. He might appreciate my question about how much more investment needs to be made for Canadians so that they can participate in Arctic sovereignty and Arctic security. Does the member agree that, for example, investing in Canadian Rangers would be much better for keeping Canada secure?

**Mr. James Bezan:** Mr. Speaker, the member knows my mother was born in Chesterfield Inlet and raised in Pangnirtung, so I have a lot of connections to the Arctic. I really do firmly believe that the Canadian Armed Forces have a major role to play in expansion of the Canadian Rangers to make sure that they are better financed, as well as able to do a greater job in carrying out exercises to establish our control and sovereignty over the entire Arctic.

We also know that we could be making more investments in dual-purpose infrastructure for both the Canadian Armed Forces and local populations. That is everything from runways to ports and from telecommunications to broadband. We need to do more of that to make sure that those collaborations will work for all Canadians, especially those in the high Arctic.

● (2040)

**Mr. Marc Dalton (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for his work on the defence file. On defence, could he comment on the fact that the Liberals are saying they are going to increase the amount of expenditure over the next five years, but they are actually cutting back this year? It is as though they are putting everything down the road and saying they are really increasing, but they are actually decreasing. I know the forces are suffering because of this.

**Mr. James Bezan:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question. The Liberals are cutting \$2.7 billion from the budget over the next three years. That is having an impact, and we are starting to see it in the issues around readiness and training. We are now deploying our troops to the NATO enhanced forward position in Latvia that we are running, and they are not taking their pretraining before they go and deploy. That predeployment training is critical to being able to

make sure that we are the leaders in the theatre of NATO allies that are also stationed at the same base in Latvia. When we go over there and have them play catch-up, again, it is a national embarrassment. Therefore, we need to make sure that we are making the investments that are required. A case in point is that one of the first things the Liberals cut was uniforms for women in the Canadian Armed Forces; they did not think these uniforms were necessary. It is a shame.

**Mr. Earl Dreeshen (Red Deer—Mountain View, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to speak on behalf of the great people of Red Deer—Mountain View. I plan on speaking to some of the issues that are important to the families and the businesses in my riding, particularly housing; agriculture; food supply; global issues, such as energy and food security; and, of course, debt financing.

Food and shelter have long been considered some of the bare necessities for human beings to survive, yet these two critical needs to sustain the health and well-being of Canadians have been and continue to be put at risk by the NDP-Liberal government's reckless handling of governmental affairs. While it upsets me greatly that we are unable to have amicable, maybe even friendly discussions about these issues and how the government fails to address them in the budget implementation act, we just do not have this luxury. It is necessary to be blunt.

We, as parliamentarians, ought not to have that luxury when this past spring saw the percentage of first-time users of food banks rise sharply to 61%, compared with 43% last fall, according to the Salvation Army's Canadian poverty and socio-economic analysis. We should not have the luxury to sit around and act as if the current government's handling of these challenges has been sufficient when, according to the Grain Growers of Canada, Canada's national voice for grain farmers, the average grain farm will pay 30% more after the capital gains tax changes. As well, we should not have any luxury to tolerate the continued endangerment and mortgaging of Canadian lives as our nation continues to face a drought of family doctors and our government continues to erect barriers for health care providers.

The budget implementation act fails to address these three concerns and, frankly, many more. It is bizarre that we as a government can, on the one hand, muse about the struggles everyday Canadians face in being able to afford to eat and, on the other, pass legislation that would effectively make it harder for Canadian farmers to grow food for us domestically.

Here is a scenario that might resonate with a typical grocery shopper. We all know how the price of fruit works. As fruit goes out of season, the price increases because of how difficult it is to source supply. It is a question of supply, not necessarily a question of demand, as I am sure cherries and peaches are popular fruits for most.

*Government Orders*

Other foods that are also universally popular and never a question of demand are meats and grains, which are essential to a healthy diet for people around the world. While inflation has, without a doubt, played a significant role in the cost of food and groceries, we must look to pull on the lever of domestic supply in our fight against this cost of living crisis. However, this lever has continued to be neglected and ignored by our current government.

We have a carbon tax that, without a doubt, penalizes our farmers for working hard to feed Canadians. According to the Grain Farmers of Ontario, it is estimated that up to \$2.7 billion of carbon tax will be paid by Ontario grains and oilseeds farmers by 2030. Most grain farms are family owned. I have already mentioned how the average grain farm will be forced to pay nearly 30% more in taxes as a result of the proposed capital gains tax changes. These, of course, were removed from the current budget implementation act for what could only be described as political purposes.

I myself am a fourth-generation farmer, and I can wholeheartedly say that this proposed change would target the retirement plans of farmers, make it more difficult for farms to change hands between generations and threaten the security and long-term viability of family farms across this country. We will need more farmers here in Canada if we are to have any hope of combatting the cost of food for everyday Canadians.

RBC found that, by 2033, 40% of Canadian farm operators will retire; however, 66% of producers do not have a succession plan in place. Certainly, what is happening now is not making it any easier. Our farmers, and those who grow our food, are in need of certainty about their futures, not more penalties on their hard work or more uncertainty about their retirement.

• (2045)

When we challenge our farmers, who are an essential component of what makes up the backbone of this country, with more taxes and uncertainty, it does not bode well for the future of domestic food production and agriculture in this country. Once again, this budget fails to respond to these growing challenges and leaves much to be desired.

This budget fails Canadians by missing the mark entirely in addressing food security here in Canada. I say this because I know that many will cite worldwide disruptions of supply chains and global trade. They will point to the invasion of Ukraine and the conflicts of the Middle East, but for years I have been involved as part of Canada's delegation to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the OSCE, and I am very aware of the current situation there, along with the consequences on global food supply.

The OSCE deals not only with food security, but also energy security and, of course, the discussion about security within the continent of Europe. Even after saying these things and affirming statements of how food insecurity is a global issue, I want to remind us all here today that to act as if things in Canada are all right and that agriculture in Canada is not impacted by global affairs is reckless and short-sighted behaviour. In fact, it is unfortunate that I have to point this out, but this behaviour has become par for the course after nine years of the NDP-Liberal government.

When our allies face an energy crisis and are in need of alternate sources of oil and natural gas, they can count on us for words of affirmation and emotional appeals of support, but when they come to ask for our own oil and natural gas, both of which we have an abundance of, the answer has been that there is "no business case". When farmers and food growers here in Canada are allowed to do more of what they do best, which is to provide us with the means to feed both ourselves and the world, we not only help ourselves, but also help our allies in need. We cannot responsibly prioritize helping others when we cannot help ourselves.

Canadians want to help their neighbours. Canadians want to be known as the breadbasket for our allies, but only if they are in a position where they must not choose between that and feeding their families or keeping a roof over their heads. Canada stands ready to work hard and to be rewarded. Canadians do not need more government tools. They need fewer government barriers. A food production renaissance in this country would fundamentally shift our approach to tackling the cost of living crisis we face after 12 years of reckless, unabated government spending.

Whether one is a banker on Bay Street, a construction worker maintaining critical infrastructure, a police officer protecting our streets or a nurse coming off a 12-hour night shift, we are all Canadians, and we all need to eat. Empowering our farmers by removing unfair and unjust penalties and continuing to support community initiatives, such as 4-H Canada, would nurture our next generation of food growers and prioritize common sense over ideology. That is what we need to get this country back on track so that young students are able to focus on studying for their next quiz instead of having to worry about what to eat.

I cannot in good conscience support this budget implementation act knowing that there is so much this budget fails to address. The \$61 billion in new spending is not the answer we need to bring down inflation and lower interest rates. Canada will have to spend \$54.1 billion to service our national debt, which is more than we are currently sending to provinces for health care. Instead of printing more money to help Canadians scrape by, we need to start producing more of what that money buys.

Under a future Conservative government, we would axe the tax on farmers, build more homes for families to eat their suppers in, fix the budget to allocate modern supports for those who grow our food and stop the crime against hard-working Canadians, who want nothing more than to raise responsible citizens and make Canada the greatest place to live on earth.

*Government Orders*

● (2050)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have a great respect for the fine work that our farmers do day in and day out, 365 days a year. Let there be no doubt about that, whether they are addressing the needs created in drought situations or promoting trade.

Earlier this year, I was with the Minister of Agriculture when we opened up one of the greatest economic opportunities for the future of agri-foods by opening up an office in Manila, a trade office for 40 Asian countries. I wonder if the member would recognize that we not only have budget measures to support farmers but also other initiatives. Does the member support the Indo-Pacific Agriculture and Agri-Food Office opening in Manila?

**Mr. Earl Dreeshen:** Mr. Speaker, I have been on the international trade committee for a number of years, and I have had opportunities to go around the world to see just how well thought of Canada is in the trading world. The fact that the government continues to deal with some of those things and keep that going can be appreciated because it is important that we continue to do the great work that was done by the Conservatives when we were last in power. It is so critical. In agriculture, it really becomes one of the most important parts because, yes, we grow a lot of grain, but if we are going to be successful, we have to make sure that it gets to world markets.

[Translation]

**Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I had the pleasure of visiting Red Deer once because my son was working there.

My colleague mentioned that grain and wheat crops are important in his region, but the same can be said of the oil industry too.

I imagine that my colleague agrees that we need to stand up and fight climate change. With that in mind, what measures does he think should be included in a budget to ensure a just transition?

[English]

**Mr. Earl Dreeshen:** Mr. Speaker, I do agree with the member that oil is important, but it is not just important in my province. It is important for Canada and for the world since we are able to produce this oil and gas most efficiently and with the least emissions around the world. The drops of oil and molecules of natural gas should be moved, and we should be finding markets for them because we will continue to need them. It does not matter if we are going to be putting in windmills, solar panels or geothermal. All of those types of operations for renewables require a massive amount of hydrocarbons to build them. We need the rare earth minerals to put them together.

We have this concept that says we will ignore how all of these other sources of energy come to be, and we will just talk about the fact that there seems to be a pretty good whipping boy in Canada to go after oil and gas. The last drop of oil and gas in this earth should come out of Canada.

● (2055)

**Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, I know the member thinks there are not enough investments for farmers. Whatever

he thinks there is for farmers, there is far less for hunters in the north. We know that the rates of poverty are much higher in the Arctic.

I wonder if the member agrees that, whatever investments are made for farmers, there must be comparable investments for hunters so they can provide for their families, communities and Canadians as well.

**Mr. Earl Dreeshen:** Mr. Speaker, it is critical because harvesting, whether it comes off of land where we grow or the animals on the earth as part of tradition or just that we need to eat, is important. When the government talks about agriculture, it should deal with that part as well. I know that people compartmentalize and say that hunting is different than the other part, but to me, it is critical, especially for the north.

**Mr. Scott Aitchison (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is always a treat to rise in the House. I will just share a few thoughts about this budget, particularly as it relates to the housing portfolio. I would note that the housing section of the budget this year was significant. Unlike other years, housing was at the very beginning of the budget. I find it interesting because the government has talked a lot about housing for some time.

We certainly all recall the 2017 launch of the Liberals' national housing strategy. We saw lots of pictures and videos of the Prime Minister with some of his MP colleagues and workers in front of a big housing project. At the time, the Prime Minister announced \$40 billion, and gradually the Liberals came up with new numbers that brought it up to \$70 billion, not all of which was really new money. However, it was lots of fanfare and lots of talk.

In fact, the Prime Minister, at the time, described the national housing strategy as being a life-changing, "transformational" national housing strategy. That was announced with lots of fanfare, and then the Liberals slowly rolled it out. We found out a few years later, from a report from the Auditor General on the specific piece of it that was about homelessness, that the department was not even tracking the spending. The government did not really know whether it was having any impact. As the Auditor General and maybe anybody else with any sense would know, if one is not tracking what they are doing, then they do not know if the money they are spending is actually having any impact or they are just throwing money out the window. The department was not really tracking it, which I guess probably does not come as a huge surprise with the government. The Liberals really are a lot better at the photo ops than they are at the follow-through, so they did not really know if that was working or not.

*Government Orders*

However, Canadians know the truth of all that because, despite the fanfare and the announcements made in 2017, tent cities are not just in the large cities in this country. They are everywhere. They are in smaller towns all across the country. Homelessness is worse now than it has been since we started tracking homelessness. Then, as well, we also know the results of the national housing strategy and the transformational program. Since the government took office nine years ago, house prices and rents have doubled in this country. Thanks to the excessive borrowing, there were going to be little, wee deficits. We remember that it was a \$10-billion deficit. Deficits were going to be very, very small. Former prime minister Harper warned us that maybe that that was not true and, sure enough, he was correct. The deficits have been massive. Of course, out-of-control spending and out-of-control borrowing lead to higher interest rates and higher inflation, and that is what we have seen with the government.

We fast forward it to today, when we have the borrowing and the excessive spending and, on top of that, the extra taxes. We have talked a lot about the various different tax schemes these guys have come up with to fund their spending. Ottawa does not have a revenue problem; it has a spending problem.

Therefore, they came up with the carbon tax, which the Liberals have been insisting all this time is really good, that it is going to reduce carbon emissions and that it is good for people. The Liberals keep saying that eight out of 10 people get more more money back. Do they know what? The lid is finally off. We have finally seen the hidden reports of the Minister of Environment that, in fact, the carbon tax is going to cost the economy \$25 billion to \$30 billion. We know that it is a tax on a tax on a tax on a tax.

I bring it back to housing. Carbon tax applies to every stage of building a home. Whether it is the materials that are produced to build the home or the truck that is used to deliver the materials to the site, the carbon tax adds on to that and, of course, there is tax on top of the carbon tax. Governments make more money on housing than anybody else does. In this country, the average cost of government on every single home is about 33%. That is more than the builders make on houses. However, it is not just the federal level or the provincial level. It is the local level. Of course, the Liberals finally caught on to the fact that housing was actually in a crisis.

● (2100)

I asked the previous minister if he would call this situation a “crisis.” He was afraid to use that word and would not use that word. In the summer of 2023, he was booted out, and a new minister was put in who is very good at using the word “crisis”, who is quick on his feet, who is a great debater, who is really good with the YIMBY language and who is generally a nice guy, too. I really like him.

However, at the same time, he has come up with even more programs. The one I find particularly bizarre is the housing accelerator fund. All the Liberals like to talk about it. They are really proud of the housing accelerator fund because it is designed to speed up the building permit process in cities. The idea is that they would go around, city to city, and they would have these agreements with the cities to speed up their processes to make it easier to build.

I have asked to see those agreements. There are about 100 or so cities, and I cannot see them. For whatever reason, they are a secret.

However, I have been able to dig into some of the municipal planning reports that have gone to their councils. I will use Toronto as an example, just because Toronto is where the crisis is almost as acute as anywhere in the country. Vancouver is the worst, and I would say Toronto is next.

The City of Toronto, in its housing accelerator application, agreed to a couple of different things to try to speed up the process. It was all in the reports. We do not know, of course, if any of these things have actually been done, except for one. We know that one thing that the minister really pushed was the concept of permitting fourplexes, four units, without having to get any special permission on any residential zone. Whatever kind of homes people live in, in the city of Toronto, they could turn it into four units, without going for a special permit, a rezoning or any kind of public hearing. People could do that.

The minister pushed that in almost all of these agreements. It is almost as though he thought it was some kind of a silver bullet to solve the problem. As it turns out, the City of Toronto has already permitted this for about a year. In that time, there have been 74 applications to transform buildings into fourplexes. We know it is really not a silver bullet, but it was one of the big pushes.

At the same time as we have a housing supply crisis, we also have a housing affordability crisis. Again, it is because of not only the cost of materials but also the cost of local governments. Local governments charge so many fees. There are building permit fees, connection fees, permit fees and development charges. A lot of people do not understand these development charges. A cheque has to be cut just for the privilege of having that piece of property that someone might be able to one day build a house on.

That is not to mention the long, painful delays to get approvals. It takes, on average, in Canada, 249 days to get a building permit. In the United States, it takes, on average, 80 days. It is insane. Time is money. We could ask any builder, and they would tell us that time is money. That makes it more expensive.

We have this situation where the City of Toronto, one of the most expensive cities in the country to build in, got \$471 million from the Liberal government. It is so proud of this money, yet in the same time it got that money, it increased its development charges by 20%. It is not \$97,000 for the privilege of building on a new lot, it is \$117,000 now. I just do not understand, in a housing affordability crisis, why the government is borrowing money. Keep in mind that this is \$4 billion of borrowed money, when the deficit is \$40 billion, that it is going to give to cities that then turn around and make it more expensive to build.

*Government Orders*

I am sure the Speaker cannot believe it. The Speaker is smiling because he cannot believe it. It is insane. This is what former Liberal finance minister John Manley referred to as driving with one's foot on the gas and the brake at the same time. The Liberal government is giving money to cities, which makes it more expensive. The Liberals are proud of this and think it is going to be some kind of a magical solution to what is literally a crisis in this country.

It is a shame. There are too many Canadians suffering with a photo-op government that does not deliver the results, and Canadians are paying the price.

• (2105)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, and then there was reality. The reality is that we have a government that is actually building literally thousands of homes in co-operation with other levels of government.

Contrast that to the leader of the Conservative Party, who, when he was the minister of housing, in one year, built, and I need two hands for this, six houses. I can suggest to you that the programs being put in place would have a positive, profound impact by working with other levels of government, contrary to the position that the Conservatives have, which is to cut the funding and beat the municipalities over the head to try to get them to build more homes. That is the Conservative approach.

Why does the member believe the Conservative approach is going to build any houses?

**Mr. Scott Aitchison:** Mr. Speaker, would anybody accept the premise of that ridiculous question? That is not the Conservative approach. The Conservative approach is to reward results, not to pay for promises, which is the Liberal approach. They keep spending money, borrowing money and pushing the cost of paying off that debt onto the next generation, which is already thinking they will never be able to own a home of their own. The fact of the matter is that cities are a big part of the problem. They are on the front lines of the crisis, but they are also part of the problem. Just rewarding them with millions and millions of dollars, while they make it more expensive, is idiotic.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague. I have the pleasure of working with him on the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities, where we have conducted many studies on the housing issue.

It is all well and good to talk about housing and affordable housing, but many witnesses have said that the issue cannot be reduced to supply and demand alone. We should not just focus on supporting private sector construction; we also need to invest in social housing. We need to invest in non-market funding to support non-profit organizations and co-operative housing. That is where the needs are pressing.

Does my colleague agree with such a measure?

• (2110)

[*English*]

**Mr. Scott Aitchison:** Mr. Speaker, the simple answer is this:

[*Translation*]

Yes, I agree.

[*English*]

There are lots of examples where governments can work together in partnership with community organizations. When I was the mayor of Huntsville, we gave land to different community organizations to build affordable and deeply affordable units. The federal government owns all kinds of buildings, thousands and thousands of buildings that are underutilized, and all kinds of land. We could make that land available in partnership with organizations and could reduce the cost of getting these units built, and we could get a lot more done.

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I certainly agree with the comments about the Liberal government; what we have seen is a doubling of housing prices under the Liberal government. There is no doubt. Up until now, until the NDP forced the Liberals to actually make investments in affordable housing, we saw very little action for affordable housing. The problem is, of course, that the Harper government did the same thing. It doubled housing prices and did not construct affordable housing. In fact, it was a disastrous decade for social housing, co-operative housing, and it was probably the worst period in our history.

I wanted to ask my colleague why he thinks the Harper government failed, and why have Conservatives not apologized for their part in the housing affordability crisis?

**Mr. Scott Aitchison:** Mr. Speaker, I have a very quick answer for that member. The Harper government did not fail. In fact, houses cost half the price back then. Rent was half the price back then. In fact, with the crisis we have today, the genesis of it was with the Pierre Elliott Trudeau government, in fact. It was actually the Stephen Harper government that recognized we had a problem with homelessness in this country and that came up with the housing first program. It doubled the amount of money that the previous Liberal government was putting into homeless programs. It was the one that caught on, that recognized we had a problem and that started to do something about it. It was not a failure. The Liberals love to talk about how little investment there was in the Harper era. There was investment, and it was not in a crisis.

**Mr. Marc Dalton (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this is a headline. It says, “‘Impossibly unaffordable’: Vancouver 3rd-worst city for housing”.

**Mr. Scott Aitchison:** Mr. Speaker, that is true.



*Government Orders*

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to acknowledge the passing of a former parliamentarian just a few days ago. Gilles Perron, who was the member for Rivière-des-Mille-Îles for 11 years, passed away after a brief battle with cancer. He will be remembered as a fighter, someone who was close to his constituents and dedicated to his community. He will also be remembered for his extraordinary commitment to veterans. Any progress made on post-traumatic stress disorder is thanks to him. Dearest Gilles, thank you and rest in peace.

Despite this sad news, I am pleased to rise today to speak to the bill to implement certain provisions of budget 2024, Bill C-69. I would like to begin by saying that the Bloc Québécois has decided to vote against this bill. Why? It is because too many aspects of the bill go against our values, the needs of Quebec society and what we have been protecting from the very beginning, that is, Quebec's areas of jurisdiction. They are also other provinces' areas of jurisdiction, provinces that might be less combative than Quebec, but, basically, these are our jurisdictions. As I see it, all of this is having a negative impact on the environmental balance of Quebec and Canada.

We have before us a mammoth omnibus bill. We are talking about 650 pages. It contains 67 different measures, 23 tax measures and 44 non-tax measures. Objectively speaking, this bill has some positive aspects, but clearly it has too many irritants for the Bloc Québécois to agree to support it. I will focus my speech on just two points. Given that we are talking about a 650-page bill, we obviously have to limit ourselves. Two things in this bill are very important to me, and Quebecers are concerned about them too. I am talking about oil and the environment. Oil gets a lot of ink. Far be it from me to make extremist or—how shall I put this—demagogic comments, because people still need oil.

We still need oil, unfortunately, but if we were able to advocate for a well-thought-out, calculated phase-out of oil and gas extraction, that would help us move on to something else and look to the future in a better light. However, our government and the Conservatives are obviously not taking that direction. The implementation of budget 2024 is clear proof of that.

Who here believes that there is a single oil company in Canada that needs subsidies to operate? No one, obviously. I think that even the Conservatives would agree with me. Ottawa is subsidizing oil companies to the tune of a whopping \$30.3 billion in tax credits. Subsidizing companies that have record revenues year after year does not add up and is even rather obscene.

The massive subsidies the federal government is giving oil companies in the form of tax credits will total \$83 billion by 2035. Six tax credits were introduced by the Liberals in the last two budgets. What is more, this \$83 billion is being given to companies whose shareholders are 70% foreigners, people from outside Canada. This creates a significant flight of capital out of Quebec and Canada. It is important to mention it.

● (2115)

As for the profits generated by these same oil companies, we are talking about \$38 billion from 2020 to 2022. Yes, we, the taxpayers, are paying oil companies to continue polluting when they are making record profits. That is an insult to our intelligence and, of course, to our environment.

Similarly, the government has implemented a clean technology investment tax credit of \$17.8 billion. That is also a rather striking and appalling example. Under the guise of promoting clean energy, this tax credit actually seeks to encourage oil companies to use nuclear reactors, which would, of course, enable them to extract more bitumen and make more gas available for export at taxpayers' expense.

This bill contains another tax credit, the \$12.5-billion carbon capture, utilization and storage investment tax credit. The problem is that this money once again enables oil companies to extract more oil. What is more, let us not forget that carbon capture is still in its infancy, in a completely experimental phase. The goal is to recover some of the carbon dioxide emitted and then store it underground, usually in old, empty oil wells.

Interestingly, former Liberal environment minister, Catherine McKenna, did an interview with a news site called 24 heures on December 5, 2023. She had this to say about the investment tax credit for carbon capture, utilization and storage:

It should never have happened, but clearly the oil and gas lobbyists pushed for that...We are giving special access to companies that are making historic profits, that are not investing those profits into the transition and clean solutions. They are returning those profits to their shareholders, who for the most part are not Canadian, and then they ask to be subsidized for the pollution they cause, while Canadians have to pay more for oil and gas for heating.

I guess the Liberals need to leave their party in order to speak freely and intelligently.

I will now move on to my second point. People have probably been outside today and are likely aware of the massive temperature increase forecast for this week. We are in for a second heat wave, and it is not even officially summer yet. The temperature with humidex will be 45°C. Some 135 million people will be affected by this extreme temperature. There are also the 19 pilgrims who died today in Saudi Arabia. Let us also think of the teachers and students who are finishing their year and their exams in extreme heat. Above all, I am thinking of seniors whose health is fragile and who will be affected by these extreme temperatures. There are also the farmers who are struggling to make sure they can harvest their crops, which provide us with healthy food.

*Government Orders*

There is absolutely nothing in this budget to mitigate the impacts of climate change. Do we still need to convince the Liberals that it is nearly too late to take action? It is unacceptable to ignore this issue and not prioritize measures to ensure the quality of life for future generations. The Bloc Québécois cannot just sit back and wait for a plan that will not be presented until next fall.

In closing, I would add that the government did not pick up on any of the priorities put forward by the Bloc Québécois before the economic statement. These are priorities that would respond to the real and urgent needs of Quebec and would serve Canadians as well. I will simply conclude by saying that the Bloc Québécois will continue to stand up for the interests of Quebec and its citizens against unfair and harmful measures like the ones in Bill C-69.

• (2120)

**Mr. Marc Dalton (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to extend my condolences to the family of Gilles Perron.

Our country relies on exports. Energy, especially oil, represents 10% of our exports.

I know that Germany, Japan and Greece told the Prime Minister that they would like to have access to these products. The Prime Minister responded by saying that he would think about it, that he did not know whether there was a framework or if this would work.

My question is this. Why would the Bloc Québécois rather that the money go to Saudi Arabia and Venezuela instead of Canada?

**The Speaker:** Before giving the floor to the member for Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, I would like to commend my colleague from Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge on his French.

The hon. member for Rivière-des-Mille-Îles.

**Mr. Luc Desilets:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his condolences to Mr. Perron's family.

This is not about the money going to Canada, Saudi Arabia, Brazil or wherever. It is about creating a plan to get off fossil fuels. The Liberals are not really offering us that plan, and neither are the Conservatives, that is for sure.

We still need oil. Unfortunately, I still have a car that runs on oil, for a short time at least. We need to create a plan to move away from fossil fuels, plain and simple.

• (2125)

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with its targets, the government is well on its way to ending fossil fuel subsidies. There are a couple of exceptions that I am aware of. For example, thinking of the environment, something needs to be done with orphan wells. There is government support to deal with them. Also, in certain situations in the north, we will see some subsidies.

Can the member give an indication as to what other specific subsidies he is talking about? I ask because I am not necessarily aware of them.

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Desilets:** Mr. Speaker, I was only talking about subsidies to oil companies, which are often indirect.

My colleague mentioned wells, which are reused for carbon capture. That is where the captured carbon is buried. That is the current plan.

I am not saying it is 100% negative. At least they are being used for that rather than being rehabilitated, as they were supposed to be a few years ago, if memory serves. A lot of money was injected into rehabilitating these wells, which, incidentally, were created by oil companies that have not had to foot any of the bill for the damage they have caused to the environment.

[English]

**Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, I am glad the member talked about oil and gas companies. I want to ask him a question similar to one that I have asked in the House before regarding how investments could be made, especially during this time of climate change.

The Liberals have been offered a solution: Nunavut communities could help combat climate change by transitioning to not relying on diesel anymore. However, the Liberals are refusing to fund that project. Nunavummiut could contribute to combatting it.

I wonder if the member can explain to us why investing in Nunavut through the Kivalliq hydro-fibre link project could help Nunavummiut and Canada reach their targets, which, in my view, they are far from reaching.

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Desilets:** Mr. Speaker, this is 2024 and it is time to put the brakes on oil. Fortunately, there are alternatives. We are talking about wind turbines and solar energy harvesters that can support entire villages. At my cottage in the Laurentians, I even installed a system that is not fully operational yet but will enable me to take 1,500 square meters completely off-grid in a few years.

This is affordable for everyone. Let us not forget that solar panels cost half as much as they did 10 years ago. They can be installed anywhere on the planet, in Nunavut in fact.

[English]

**Mr. Jamie Schmale (Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to stand today to speak to Bill C-69, the budget implementation act. As we have heard in the debate going on tonight regarding the bill, there are a number of concerns on this side of the House, specifically the government's new spending ideas: \$61 billion in new spending. We do this when we are having and dealing with a very real inflation crisis that is causing real hardship throughout the country.

*Government Orders*

The number of people who are raising their voices to that fact is something we have never seen before. Food bank usage across the country is up to record levels. There are homeless encampments now in pretty much all of our major cities, not to mention the smaller rural communities as well, where this was never seen or heard about.

To make matters worse, this year we will be spending \$54.1 billion to service the national debt. It is unfortunate, because we are paying more money for interest than the federal government is sending to the provinces for health care. That is absolutely significant. I do not think I have ever heard a single person articulate the benefit of paying more in interest payments on the national debt, how that actually makes sense. It is wasted money.

Not only that, but because we are paying only the interest, we are not actually paying down the debt. That means the payments will continue. That could fluctuate based on the interest rate at the time, depending on how that certain part of the debt is structured.

Future generations and the last generation we are looking at right now, the youth graduating high school who are going to college or university, are recognizing they might not ever be able to buy a house. They might not ever be able to have the dream many generations here in Canada had before them. Yes, there is a group of people, the very wealthy, who are not being hurt by this and are not affected by it. It is those everyday, normal, working-class people who are being punished with higher prices for food, rent, fuel and heat, all of the things making life more difficult for working Canadians.

When people have less money in their pockets, less money to spend on their priorities, cutbacks in family budgets occur. We have seen and heard the stories that grace the newspaper articles and the headlines about people skipping meals and watering down milk for their kids trying to stretch dollars and stretch the supply in the refrigerator a little longer just to get through the next day or so. It is absolutely crushing to hear and read these stories in a country like Canada, where the dream has always been absolutely real. It is absolutely crushing to see these young people.

The other side will always ask for patience, more time and more resources. There will always be the promise that utopia is just around the corner and that it will be worth it if we just keep spending. The other side will say that, but will it actually be what the Prime Minister is promising? I would argue no.

The Prime Minister and the Liberal Party inherited a balanced budget. The economy was on fire. Life was affordable and life was enjoyable. Now look at where we are. Was it worth it? The average Canadian's net worth, their nest egg, their savings account and their retirement package have suffered. The buying power of their dollars has suffered. The path the government is on is not worth it for the everyday person.

• (2130)

The policies need to change. We have to start focusing on what used to make us extraordinary. Ontario, especially, used to be the manufacturing wheel of this country. We used to build a lot more things in this country. It is unfortunate that in Ontario, when Kathleen Wynne and Dalton McGuinty were in the premier's office, ob-

viously separately, one after the other, they started to mess around in the energy market.

That is when hundreds of thousands of manufacturing jobs left Ontario. We are watching the numbers continue under the Liberal government, because when the Liberal Party of Ontario lost the election, a lot of staffers made the trip up the 401 or Highway 7 to Ottawa and started working for the current government. We can see it is a continuation of the mentality that if we just keep spending, just keep borrowing and just keep taxing, we will eventually get there, but life has only gotten worse for the majority of Canadians.

The reality is that the Liberal Party has gone too far. Its members do not know how to fix it, and their solution at this point is yet another government program. They will start the tape; they will look at the problem they created, and the solution will be a new program. The government can get money only by borrowing, taxing, printing or a combination thereof, and if it does too much in excess, it can debase the economy or the currency. We have seen a bit of both here.

Conservatives want to look to where the problem started and address it from its root, and that is where a lot of our common-sense plans come from. We are addressing the fact that we need to build and make things again in Canada. How do we do that? We need a regulatory environment that allows private enterprise to start up and flourish.

The bureaucracy has gotten bigger under the current government. That, unfortunately, has been slowing a lot of the progress from the private sector, and we have seen money in the billions of dollars flee this country looking for other jurisdictions, because capital is like water; it takes the path of least resistance. When we allow the private sector to do what it does best, to innovate and to create opportunities and wealth in our communities, the economy grows. When the economy grows, jobs are created, spending happens, more jobs are created and overall happiness rises, because when people have options, when they have choice, they are happier.

When they do not have choice, people are more miserable, and in Canada there is very little competition in pretty much every single sector, such as airlines, groceries or telecommunications. The list goes on, and it is getting worse. We need some common-sense solutions here in this party. The Conservative Party is ready to take on that challenge.

• (2135)

**Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, did we just hear a speech from the hon. member on the opposite side, whom I have a lot of respect for? The Province of Ontario has created hundreds of thousands of new manufacturing jobs since we came into power. The Province of Ontario lost the jobs that the hon. member was referring to during the Harper administration.

*Government Orders*

I want to know who is correct. Are Doug Ford and the Progressive Conservatives correct in saying they and we have created, collaboratively, hundreds of thousands of jobs in Ontario, or is Doug Ford wrong? I have one final question: What programs is the hon. member mentioning that the Conservatives will cut? Is it dental care, seniors' payments or child education? What is it? I want to know.

**Mr. Jamie Schmale:** Madam Speaker, we do not need to go far to find the wasteful spending in the current government. The list goes on. It will not take much to figure it out.

I have a lot of respect for my friend as well. Yes, those jobs did leave in the 2000s. Guess who was in charge in the province of Ontario. It was the Liberal Party of Ontario. The Liberals cannot say the jobs left under Harper but forget who was in charge of the energy policy in the province of Ontario that drove up electricity rates to the highest among most jurisdictions in North America and then wonder why manufacturing left the province. If they are driving up the cost of energy, which manufacturing needs in order to produce, and then are just shocked when the manufacturers leave, there is their answer. When we talk about Conservatives getting to the root, that is the root.

• (2140)

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I like the member, but, gosh, talk about inventing alternative facts. I lived through the Harper regime. We lived through the terrible financial mismanagement of the Harper regime. We saw \$116 billion given to Canada's big banks in liquidity supports because the Harper government just wanted to splurge on the banking sector. That resulted in dividend payments and corporate bonuses.

However, the worst part of the Harper financial mismanagement was the infamous Harper tax haven treaties, which the PBO tells us cost us over \$30 billion each and every year. That is why the Harper government was always in deficit. It was massive financial mismanagement. In fact, Conservative financial management is an oxymoron. When the Conservatives have such a lamentable financial management record, how could they possibly give lessons to anybody else?

**Mr. Jamie Schmale:** Madam Speaker, likewise, I do respect the member, but he also forgets we were in a global economic crisis, and countries all around the world agreed that they would deficit spend on infrastructure. It was agreed that the taps would open but eventually would close, and that is where the Liberals forget that the story continues. One has to turn off the taps in order to maintain financial strength.

The NDP was the party asking for more spending. By the time 2015 came along, the budget was balanced, the economy was back on track and we were growing as a country economically and politically across the world.

**Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, yes, there is alternate news here all right. Inflation in 2011 was 2.91%. It is now 2.7%. I wanted to also mention that in the summer of 2015, Canada was still technically in recession from the downturn in 2009, and it is simply because the Harper government turned off the taps way too soon. It took until we came along, re-

covering from the pandemic, when we added over a million jobs and cut the poverty rate and the unemployment rate significantly. Therefore I wonder whether the hon. member could go back and kind of revise his perspective on things.

**Mr. Jamie Schmale:** Madam Speaker, the Harper government started the mechanism that allowed the jobs to be created. The government of the day, when it came in, just benefited from them. What did the government do at the time? It raised taxes. It slowed down the economy. Now what do we have? We have misery. We have tent cities. We have food bank usage that is the highest it has ever been. How can that be a mark for success—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** We have to resume debate.

The hon. member for Kitchener South—Hespeler.

**Ms. Valerie Bradford (Kitchener South—Hespeler, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to stand before this House in support of the budget implementation act, 2024, no. 1, which will implement many of our government's key priorities in budget 2024 and fairness for every generation.

All children deserve a fair start in life, yet nearly one in four kids in Canada live in a household with too little income to buy enough to eat, which is impacting their health and their opportunities to learn and grow. That is just not right, so in budget 2024, we proposed a new national school food program that will help ensure children across Canada get the food they need to thrive, regardless of their family circumstances. The children of today are tomorrow's doctors, nurses, electricians, teachers, scientists and small business owners. By supporting them, we lay the groundwork for a brighter tomorrow. Therefore, I urge my hon. colleagues to pass Bill C-69 swiftly, so we can get this program up and running and do right by Canada's kids.

We are proposing to invest \$1 billion over five years into the national school food program, which will provide 400,000 more kids across the country every year with food in school. That is 400,000 more kids beyond those currently served by the patchwork of provincial, local and charitable programs that currently exist and which are often under strain due to low resources and high food prices. By working together with provincial, territorial and indigenous partners, we will expand access to school food programs across the country as early as the 2024-25 school year, which is just incredible. For kids, this investment will mean not being hungry at school or missing crucial nutrients from their diet. That is important because studies show that students who consistently consumed a nutritious breakfast and lunch achieved higher grades in reading, math and science compared to their peers.

*Government Orders*

Meanwhile, for moms, dads, and caregivers across Canada, this investment will mean peace of mind, knowing that their kids are eating healthy meals and are well looked after in school, but also that they do not have to buy healthier foods in order to pay rent and other bills on time. Even with inflation easing significantly over the last year, affordability pressures are still causing more Canadian families to face food insecurity, which, frankly, should worry us all. After all, food insecurity is strongly linked to poorer health outcomes, including higher rates of type 2 diabetes, heart disease and high blood pressure, but also higher rates of mental health issues like depression and anxiety. All of this puts a large burden on our already stressed health care system. The national school food program will be a safety net for the parents who need this support the most, including first nations, Inuit and Métis families, many of whom have some of the highest historic rates of food insecurity in Canada. Once up and running, it will save an average participating family with two children as much as \$800 per year in grocery costs. That is extra money families can direct toward clothing, toys and books for their kids, as well as groceries and other essential goods.

Further to that point, evidence shows us that school meal programs do not just reduce health inequities for kids, but they also promote sustainable food systems and practices, and create more jobs in both the food service and agriculture sectors, especially for women. This is feminist social policy in action. It is smart economic policy too.

When it comes to helping kids and youth, especially vulnerable kids and youth, we are going to keep going. That is why we have made generational investments like the Canada child benefit, which has helped lift hundreds of thousands of children out of poverty since its launch in 2016, and provides families with up to nearly \$8,000 per child per year to provide the essentials their kids need. It is why we are continuing to deliver an early learning and child care system across all provinces and territories, which has already cut fees for regulated child care to an average of \$10 a day or less in eight provinces and territories and by 50% or more in all others.

We are also improving access to dental health care for children under the age of 12 through the Canada dental benefit, and soon for children under 18 with the Canada dental care plan, so that parents do not have to choose between taking care of their kids' teeth and putting food on the table.

● (2145)

To help younger Canadians get the mental health and addiction supports when and where they need it most, we are also launching a new \$500-million youth mental health fund. This new fund would help community mental health organizations across the country provide more access to mental health care for younger Canadians in their communities. This is so we can help more kids and youth live happy, healthy, supported and fulfilled lives. Canada's success depends on the success of its youngest generations.

The national school food program is on top of our generational investments to help families make life more affordable across the country. Thanks to this crucial investment, we will be helping families by making sure that kids do not spend the school day hungry

and, at the same time, bring peace of mind and relief to parents and caregivers, but we cannot do it alone.

I hope my hon. colleagues will support Bill C-69 and join us in our vision of a Canada where every child and youth has enough food to eat, so they can focus in school and reach their full potential.

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the member's support for the school food program. It is something the NDP has been fighting for and I am really happy to see that, with our pressure, we were able to finally see it in the budget.

Returning to this issue of people living with disabilities and the reality of the deep level of poverty that community is in, the benefit that the Liberals are putting forward is only \$200 a month, which absolutely will not bring people out of poverty.

Is the member willing to advocate for persons living with disabilities and push the government to do better?

● (2150)

**Ms. Valerie Bradford:** Madam Speaker, we know that people living with disabilities are facing financial challenges. However, the \$200 a month is a start. It is a place maker. Liberals wanted to get money committed to this in the budget, so that we can build on it going forward.

Right now, we have so many pressing issues to deal with, like housing and food insecurity. It is impossible to help everyone to the extent we would like to all at once. We are focusing on housing and the food program, but we are also focusing on disabilities for now. I know that the \$200 is inadequate, but it is a start and we will build on it going forward.

**Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the government likes to say a lot of pretty words about housing and how housing is so important.

I am curious if the member can let the House know whose idea it was to come up with the catalogue for housing. They put millions of dollars into a catalogue and thought somehow it was going to be a solution to the housing crisis.

**Ms. Valerie Bradford:** Madam Speaker, it is interesting that the member brings up the topic of a catalogue, because I remember a certain Conservative leader who, at one point, thought a catalogue would be an interesting environmental solution.

I have often thought back to the time of World War II housing when we had all the veterans coming back home. They needed to start new families and needed quick, affordable housing. There were ready-made plans.

*Government Orders*

We still see them in St. Marys in my area. There is a heritage site that has wartime houses. They were very cost effective. They were modest, reasonable starter homes, which is what we need. We do not need big, palatial houses that nobody can afford. We need quick, affordable starter homes and that is what the catalogue, or suggested plans, would accomplish.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the member's comments. In fact, when I left the forces myself, I lived in one of those wartime houses on Logan Avenue in the north end of Winnipeg.

What we have before us today is a government that is genuinely committed to working with other levels of government to address the housing issue that we face today. The federal government needs to play a leading role, which it is doing.

Would the member agree that co-operating with the different levels of government is far more effective in terms of dealing with the issue of housing than when today's leader of the Conservative Party was the minister responsible for housing? He, in one year, completed six houses.

**Ms. Valerie Bradford:** Madam Speaker, I certainly do agree. Obviously, a problem of this magnitude requires all levels of government working co-operatively, all hands on deck, on creative solutions. There is excellent potential with modular housing. It can be built off-site year round and be moved into place very quickly. We have many examples of that in my area and it is phenomenal to see how quickly they are built. Even big, amazing hotels can be built in a modular fashion.

We have to think outside the box, get creative and come up with a number of different solutions. We cannot continue to do things with the same methods and processes that have failed us over the last few decades. We have to pick up the pace, and it is going to require all three levels of government working together: municipalities, provinces and the federal government.

**Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am going to talk about the budget, but specifically firearms. Some might wonder why. There are really some simple points. The NDP-Liberals are spending billions of dollars that will not fix the problem, the NDP-Liberals are making us more unsafe by spending that money and, lastly, something we have all heard before, the NDP-Liberals simply are not worth the cost. Let us get into it.

How are the NDP-Liberals wasting billions of taxpayer dollars? We have what has been spent recently, which I will take right from the estimates. In the supplementary estimates 2024-25, funding for the firearms compensation program to advance a collection of banned firearms is \$18,591,385. That is a lot of money. Funding for the collection, validation and destruction of firearms from businesses is another \$15,270,047. I was just up in Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk. People are living in squalor there. Their houses are mouldy. They cannot afford to buy things like milk, sugar or coffee. Meanwhile, the government throws millions around like it was chump change. That is what Liberals are spending now.

What are they going to be spending in the near future? Budget 2024 proposes to spend \$30.4 million over two years, starting in

2024-25, to Public Safety Canada for the buyback of firearms sourced from existing departmental sources, another \$7.4 million over five years starting in 2024-25, with \$1.7 million in remaining amortization to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to modernize the Canadian firearms program telephone and case management systems. Recent estimates have been close to \$42 million that have been spent or budgeted. Can anyone guess how many firearms have been collected so far? It is zero. Even if some had been collected, buying firearms from law-abiding firearms owners, who are not the problem in the first place, is not going to make the country more safe.

That \$42 million is going to pale in comparison to the number that I am going to speak about next. This is what Gary Mauser proposes the Trudeau government's buyback firearms program plan may cost. This is where it gets into the billions—

• (2155)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader is rising on a point of order.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, the member knows that he should not be using members' names, but their riding or title.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** I am sorry, I missed that.

The hon. member does know that, so I would ask him to refrain from doing so.

**Mr. Bob Zimmer:** Madam Speaker, I will rephrase that. The current government buyback firearms program plan may cost up to \$6.7 billion. This is what it is estimated to be. We all know that the long gun registry was supposed to cost \$2 million, but it ended up costing \$2 billion. That \$6.7 million, I am sure, will easily double, triple or quadruple by the time the government is all said and done with it.

All the while, the government is spending toward a \$40-billion deficit this current fiscal year, not to accomplish one thing, and is going after the wrong people. It is going after Grandpa Joe and his hunting rifle and sport shooting shotgun instead of going after criminals and tackling real crime on city streets in our urban centres. I will also add, which I have said before, that what the government is doing by buying back firearms from law-abiding firearms owners is not making us any safer.

*Government Orders*

The OIC that was recently announced by the government, dated May 9, 2024, is called “Order Amending the Order Declaring an Amnesty Period”. This is how the government recently enabled Canada Post to be a place that would receive firearms as part of the gun confiscation regime. I will read out what it does specifically. It allows for a person to “deliver the specified firearm or specified device”, it allows an entity to “transport the specified firearm or specified device” and it allows an entity to “possess the specified firearm or specified device”. It is referring to Canada Post, but it is also referring to other carrier companies that can receive firearms and transport them.

One group that is very concerned about what the government is doing with this process is Canada Post. One of our colleagues, the member for Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, recently asked the president and CEO of Canada Post if he was comfortable with the new OIC, just a month ago. In an article that I wrote recently for a firearms magazine, I noted:

Despite Canada Post's objections to serving as a collection point for the NDP/Liberal gun confiscation program and their risk assessment highlighting substantial safety concerns, the Minister of Public Safety recently proposed an amendment...to formalize the process.

Despite the concerns of Canada Post, Canada Post workers and the security of the building, the government is proceeding unsafely forward anyway.

Doug Ettinger, president and chief executive officer of the Canada Post Corporation, was recently asked at committee about potential safety concerns. My colleague from Saskatchewan asked:

Mr. Ettinger, we have seen recent reports in the media that Canada Post is going to have a role in the gun buyback program through the shipping of guns. It's my understanding that Canada Post had previously done a risk assessment of being involved in [the gun buyback] program and found that there were too many risks for Canada Post to be involved in it.

Is Canada Post being pressured to participate in this program, or was there another risk assessment conducted that found there were not as many risks as previously thought?

This was from Mr. Ettinger:

We did an internal safety assessment. We were not comfortable with the process that was being proposed in ongoing discussions over the last few months. Our position is that we're just not comfortable with elevated risk.

We're not set up for it. Our buildings are not set up with security or proper storage. The buildings aren't that secure overall in the way I'd like them to be. This is not in our expertise. This should be best left to those who know how to handle guns, how to dismantle them and how to manage them so that no one gets hurt. It is not something that we're comfortable with at all.

Mr. Ettinger finishes with this:

...our position is clear, based on the approach that was being considered. We're just not comfortable from the elevated risk assessment of that. I would not live with myself if somebody got hurt—it's almost that simple.

● (2200)

We see a government spending Canadians out of house and home, with a \$40-billion deficit, while people are struggling to afford their mortgages. I have been through the northern territories many times. People there are struggling to afford heat, to afford food and to put fuel in their vehicles. I was just up in Inuvik. It is \$2.73 per litre for diesel up there currently. They bring groceries up to Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk in a big truck that uses diesel. That is

not covered and does not get any rebate from the government through the carbon tax.

The whole point of what I am trying to say tonight is that we have a government wasting billions on a program that is not going to make Canadians any safer and actually makes them less safe. All the while, it will be overspending by \$40 billion, which we do not have, just this year alone. I did a video once, in 2016, highlighting our level of debt. Overall, in Canada, it was \$600 billion. Since that time, the debt has doubled to over \$1.2 trillion. In the short amount of time the government has been in power, it has doubled the national debt, and it is because of doing things like this while not solving problems in the first place.

I started off by saying some simple things, and I will finish with this. The NDP-Liberals are spending billions that will not fix the problem. The NDP-Liberals are making us more unsafe while Canadians are going without food, heat or houses. I have said it before and members have heard me say it a lot: The NDP-Liberals are not worth the cost.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, as I have indicated before, when I listen to Conservative speakers, the first thing that comes to my mind is the contrast between the Liberals and the Conservatives. The Liberals, on the one hand, truly care. The Conservatives cut. The Liberals care; the Conservatives do not care.

At the end of the day, why does the Conservative Party, or the Conservative-Reform party, across the way continue to not support our programs, whether it is pharmacare, dental care, the disability program or the child care program; the investments in generational health care supports, with \$200 billion over 10 years; and so much more? The Conservatives are preoccupied with cuts. The question is, why?

● (2205)

**Mr. Bob Zimmer:** Madam Speaker, I do not think the member asked one question related to my speech. I was talking about firearms and how the government is wasting billions of dollars to take firearms away from law-abiding Canadians while spending money on things that are not fixing problems.

I met a Kevin up in Iqaluit. He is living in absolute squalor in a house there. He has three grandsons he is taking care of. Every window in the house does not work. If the window by the kitchen gets opened, where a lot of kids would, they could fall 15 feet and get badly hurt.

This is after nine years of the NDP-Liberal government. Outcomes are not getting measured. Therefore, houses are not getting built. A lot of money seems to be getting spent, but we are not sure where it is all going. The fact of the matter, to the member across the way, is the government is not getting it done.

*Government Orders*

**Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, I have the same concern as the Liberal MP when it comes to the Conservatives caring for people. When Nunavut had a Conservative MP, that MP was part of the party that made cuts to the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, which was leading the way to ensure that indigenous people could get the healing they deserve.

How can anyone trust the Conservatives that they will lead in such a way that helps indigenous peoples?

**Mr. Bob Zimmer:** Madam Speaker, interestingly, this is from the member who said to me with her own mouth that if she could, she would shut down every natural resource job in the territory, every single one. She would not develop any natural resources in Nunavut.

Where are the jobs going to come from with this particular member in Nunavut? I am not sure. If the member wants to talk about what is cruel to local folks, it is not providing jobs and opportunities to prosper in that territory.

We saw projects done by the previous Conservative government with the previous member of Parliament. We just saw the Iqaluit port finished.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Please allow the hon. member to answer the question.

The hon. member for Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies.

**Mr. Bob Zimmer:** Madam Speaker, I was there. We got to see the brand new port of Iqaluit open up, which provides great opportunities for the people of Iqaluit and Nunavut. That is from a previous Conservative government, and it has finally been realized. I hope the member supports jobs in her community, and I hope she changes her current position.

**Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I really appreciated my colleague's speech because he really broke down to nuts and bolts what the government is trying to do to hunters and sport shooters.

One thing the Liberals quite often say is that they are going to buy back firearms, but the government never owned the firearms in the first place. I wonder if my friend could just explain to the Liberals that when they do not own firearms in the first place, they cannot buy them back.

**Mr. Bob Zimmer:** Madam Speaker, that is the best question I have had all night. That is why when I speak about this particular gun buyback program, which is the Liberal terminology for it, I call it the gun confiscation program. That is what it is. It is about the confiscation of law-abiding firearms owners' firearms. Ironically, guess who does not turn in their firearms. It is criminals and gang members. We have all the law-abiding folks turning in their legally obtained firearms, and all the illegal firearms, which are causing all the problems in the first place in our inner cities, are still out there. It is wrong-headed.

We have the right plan on this side to get things done and to spend the money where it is going to make a difference. We are going to bring it home.

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I want to speak this evening about the concept of the government's assertion about tax fairness in this budget. I would like to read into the record some facts that push back on the government's assertion that a fairly significant tax increase it has included in this budget is only going to affect a very small number of Canadians.

I am reading from an article in the National Post. When I was putting my notes together for this speech, I thought that it actually summarized it very well, so why reinvent the wheel? This is an article written by Matthew Lau last week, which reads:

In its latest announcement on the capital gains tax increase, the Liberal government presents as a "quick fact" that it's "increasing capital gains taxes on 0.13 per cent of Canadians, in any given year." There are three problems with the 0.13 per cent figure. First, it is misleading; second, it is incomplete; and third, it ignores tax incidence, which is the concept that the economic burden of a tax falls on different people—in fact, on very many more people—than simply those who face a higher tax bill.

That concept of tax incidence is something that I encourage colleagues to understand, prior to continuing to vote in favour of this budget, because it will detrimentally impact the Canadian economy. The article goes on:

Let's take the three problems in order. First, the 0.13 per cent figure is misleading because of the phrase that follows: "in any given year." The taxpayers who are part of this 0.13 per cent in one year are different than the taxpayers captured in this group in another year. For many Canadians, reporting an annual capital gain in excess of \$250,000 is a once-in-a-lifetime event—or an immediately-after-lifetime event if the capital gain threshold is triggered when a deceased person's assets are liquidated.

What this is saying is that this affects families. It continues:

This means that even if only 0.13 per cent of Canadians pay this higher tax rate every year, a much greater percentage of Canadians will be hit with this tax hike over the course of their lives. [An] Economist...concluded that, "As a share of Canada's tax filer population, those impacted by the new capital gains proposal on a lifetime basis is 1.26 million or 4.3 per cent of tax filers compared to the budget estimate of 0.13 per cent."

Second, the 0.13 per cent figure is incomplete because it excludes corporations. As the Liberals estimated in budget 2024, approximately 307,000 corporations (again, in a given year) will be subject to the tax. About 6,000 of these are likely to be publicly traded...so many Canadians will effectively be subject to the higher capital gains tax through their investments, [and through their] pension...assets.

The government does not talk about how this tax increase is going to affect people's investments and particularly their pensions. The government has not adequately costed that or talked about it in its presentation of this tax to Parliament and to the general public.

Then there's the approximately 301,000 private corporations, many of which have multiple owners, such as partners or family members, so even excluding exposure to publicly traded corporations, many Canadians will be hit by the capital gains tax...through their investments. "Overall," [an economist] estimates, "4.74 million...investors in Canadian companies will be affected, representing 15.8 per cent of all filers." Or more than 100 times the Liberals' stated figure of 0.13 per cent.

Again, I want to emphasize what I said in the earlier part of that statement, which is that a lot of these are family members. These are family-owned corporations of tradespeople. That is why the Leader of the Opposition asked the Liberals to provide an amendment saying that if it is only going to affect 0.13%, then accept an amendment to keep it to that, but we know that they cannot. That is why they will not accept this amendment, because they know these facts, and they are just not telling the Canadian public. They are not being honest. That is not fair.



*Government Orders*

## The article states:

This brings us, thirdly, to the concept of tax incidence, of which students will learn in a good economics class but which the Liberal government would like us all to ignore. A well-known example: on paper, corporate income taxes are paid by shareholders, but in reality the economic burden of the tax falls largely on workers in the form of lower wages. Corporate income taxes discourage investment, thus reducing labour productivity and the number of businesses bidding for labour.

● (2210)

## The article continues:

No differently, the Liberal government's capital gains tax discourages business investment and will have negative effects on workers...beyond those who earn high amounts of capital gains in [any] given year. Business investment has already fallen in alarming fashion since the Liberals took office: from 2015-Q3 to 2024-Q1, real per capita investment is down 13.9 per cent. A capital gains tax hike that distorts investors' decisions to favour present-day consumption over long-term investment will make this trend even worse.

The incidence of the Liberals' capital gains tax hike will fall on all of us, not just the 15.8 per cent...who are directly affected, or the "0.13 per cent of Canadians, in any given year" that the Liberals claim. For ordinary Canadians, learning about tax incidence for two hours could be a profitable and amusing activity; being whacked by a capital gains tax that the Liberals say will only affect the super-rich [but affects all of us], not so much.

The other point that has been made by economists and by any business person is that the brisk implementation of the hike guarantees that it will enforce Canadian investors to shed assets in a hurry to take advantage of the existing lower rate, but revenue will decline over time. While we know the Liberals are facing potential credit downgrades because of the incredible amount of debt they have incurred on the Canadian people and because of the incredible deficit they once again racked up this year, they are looking for a way to prevent that credit downgrade. They are looking for an easy cash grab.

One never wants to be in a position as a person where one is looking for a quick way to make money. That is where poor decisions are made. There are all sorts of crass examples I could give of that. Why would I not do that? This is like the equivalent of selling feet pictures for the Liberals. That is what the capital gains tax is. It is a quick cash grab to try to prevent Canada from having its credit downgraded.

This would all be bad enough if it was not for the finance minister, who I honestly do not know how she has her job. I am sure she is liked in the caucus. I do not have anything personally against her, but she is clearly incompetent. How the Liberal backbench allowed her to present a budget that was this unbalanced, with this in it, and to keep her job is beyond me. This is so irresponsible. What the finance minister said in announcing this should give all colleagues in this place pause for thought. Her comments were described in a major Canadian newspaper as, "[the finance minister's] remarks seem like naked class warfare in a miserably thin guise of technical fairness."

The government has spent billions and billions of dollars. Are we in trillions now? It has spent so much money, and I do not think there is a single Canadian who can look at their life in terms of being able to buy groceries, to afford rent, to look at buying a house, to take a vacation or to look that long-term prosperity, and certainly not young Canadians, and who can say that they are better off now than they were nine years ago.

We have spent all of this money, essentially in peacetime, and the last few years are not pandemic time. There is no reason for this deficit this year. If the government has spent all this money in this short period of time and Canadians have nothing to show for it, then why are we still allowing the government to use spending as a metric?

Government members say that they are creating tax fairness, but they are just increasing taxes to make life more unaffordable and to create less investment for our country. As parliamentarians, we cannot allow them to do this. We have to hold them to account on this. I understand that there are different schools of political thought in this place about what the government should spend on and what it should not, but none of us, regardless of political stripe, should allow a government to spend without outcome, which is exactly what the government has done.

When we think about all of the waste, we have only scratched the tip of the iceberg on the scandal of the government's waste. We should never be listening to the government about trying to take more of Canadians' hard-earned money to let it go into the abyss. We have to stop it. I implore colleagues of all political stripes to vote against this budget. It is bad. The government needs to go back to the drawing board. Certainly, this measure it has put in there is not tax fairness; it is decimation for the Canadian people.

● (2215)

**Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I think the hon. member's comments give rise to that old saying that we can put all the accountants end to end, and they will never reach a conclusion. I wanted to quote a few things from the International Monetary Fund and get the hon member's reaction to that. It says, "Canada's fiscal track record continues to compare favourably to many other advanced economies.... Debt remains low in international comparison". It also says, "The increase in the capital gains inclusion rate improves the tax system's neutrality with respect to different forms of capital income and is likely to have no significant impact on investment or productivity growth."

That does not suggest that things are going to go to hell in a handbasket. I am just wondering, with what the hon. member has read and with what I have just mentioned, if there is some kind of disconnect that she could explain.

● (2220)

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner:** Madam Speaker, I would argue humbly that the member is disconnected. If he goes and knocks on the doors in his riding, there is nobody who is going to accept what he just said because the lived reality of Canadians is not one of prosperity; it is one of hardship right now, and it is one of lack of hope for the future. That is what disconnect looks like.

*Government Orders*

Also, there are so many other metrics where the member is just flat out wrong. Canada is on a track for its worst decline in living standards in 40 years. Before the current Prime Minister, Canada's GDP grew at a rate similar to that of the United States, but since 2015, the economy has weakened significantly. Canada's GDP per capita is down 2%, while the United States' has increased by 8%.

I could go on and on, but I do not need to quote this plethora of economic statistics that validate my point. I just have to go door knock in my riding. That is all I have to do, and I encourage the member to do the same because I think he is going to find that he is in for a reckoning come the next election.

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Madam Speaker, since I was elected, I have noticed the Conservatives punching down, on seniors for example. They are talking about cutting CPP. In fact, I was a long-time schoolteacher, and one issue under the Harper government was that kids were going to school hungry, so I, as a teacher, paid out of my own pocket for food. What do the Conservatives do? They vote against the school food meal program and then make a whole bunch of excuses about why they do not support it, even though it is supported by advocates across the country. The Conservatives built no affordable housing during the time they were in. They come up with these slogans that totally axe the facts on a constant basis, which are certainly not based on the facts. They put down academic institutions. They have something against research. I am wondering what the member thinks about her party's record of axing the facts.

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner:** Madam Speaker, the fact on food bank usage and people not being able to eat is that under the current government, food bank usage has skyrocketed. Not as many children needed to use food banks in 2015 as they do today. In fact, that number is astronomically higher. With regard to homes and affordable housing, everybody's rent has doubled. Nobody can afford a home anymore, and that has happened under the current government. With regard to seniors, the opposition leader cited an example of a low-income senior who wanted to hive off a part of her property for her children. She now has to pay this tax that she cannot afford. I do not understand why the New Democrats, if they are proponents of helping people who are disadvantaged, would continue to support a government that is corrupt and that has never delivered on anything. I think voters will remember that in the next election.

**Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I would like to say to my hon. colleague that another example might be that we have seen young professionals, as I have read in news stories, are leaving the country in significant numbers because they cannot deal with this taxing regime any longer. Would the member like to comment on another example of the outcome of the government's policy?

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner:** Madam Speaker, I want a country where people do not feel like they have to leave it to get ahead, yet that is exactly what the government has done. Regarding this tax, primary care doctors, when we are in a primary care doctor shortage, are saying that they cannot stay in this country because of it. This has to end, and I implore my NDP colleagues to stop proping the government up.

**Mr. Dean Allison (Niagara West, CPC):** Madam Speaker, to my colleague from Calgary Nose Hill, those were great remarks that really reflect what, if people are at the doors talking to individuals, they will recognize as being an issue. It boils down to the fact that Canadians have lost hope and they feel like they are drowning, and there are a number of factors that contribute to that.

One of the things I have noticed about the government over the last number of years since the Liberals have been in power is that it loves to talk a great game. It is amazing the number of promises the Liberals continue to promise to deliver on that they do not actually deliver on. It is all summed up in an article that was in the paper in April 2016. It was titled "‘Deliverology’ guru schools Trudeau government for 2nd time at cabinet retreat". I am guessing that he or she was there for a second time because they were having a hard time delivering the results, although it is pretty easy to make promises.

One of the things that concerns me about the government is not just the spending. The member for Calgary Nose Hill laid that out very well in terms of the constant spending, and there have been other members in the House who have talked about the spending. However, one of the challenges is that the government continues to make promises that it has no intention of keeping, no intention of delivering or no idea how they are going to begin. I can give hundreds of examples, and I am going to give a couple of examples tonight during my speech.

One of the members of the Liberal Party spoke earlier. We are in a housing crisis, so the Liberals talk quite a bit about their commitment to build 3.9 million homes over the next seven years. We can hear this number, and they talk about it all the time. They talk about all this money that they are contributing to the cause, yet we are not seeing any results. I know that we have had colleagues ask the question, and I want to break down the numbers for people at home, just to realize how absurd this number is.

On building 3.9 million homes by 2031, that is seven years away. That is almost 560,000 homes a year, which works out to over 46,000 homes a month, over 10,000 homes a week, over 1,500 homes per day and over 63 homes per hour. Therefore, we are looking at pretty much a home needing to be built every minute in this country.

When we look at what the current building situation is in this country, we see that this past year, we only built 240,000 homes, and part of the reason for that is the whole issue of red tape and regulations, and the fact remains that there is really no plan. Once again, there is a promise for what we would like to see happen. That is what the Liberal government does often times. The Liberals talk about what they promise or what they would like to do or what they would love to see happen. I am going to make my point tonight that the government is completely incompetent and does not have any idea how it is going to deliver any of the things that it actually promises individuals.

*Government Orders*

To help them try to deliver this stuff, the Liberals do spend a lot of money on consultants. That has been a theme here in the House over the last little while. We see that there was over \$15 billion spent in 2021-2022. We see the McKinsey situation. Originally, we thought that the company had been given \$100 million in contracts. It turns out that number is actually \$200 million in contracts. We have seen the size of the bureaucracy increase by almost 40% since the time we were in government.

It was interesting that, right after COVID, people were going to get their passports renewed, and we remember the challenges they were having. They were waiting for hours and hours. We thought, okay, the government is hiring more people to help make this happen. In talking to my constituents, I have to say that the service is actually as bad as it was back then. I talked to someone the other day who went in for a passport and they waited for over three hours. Let us think about that. We are not in post-COVID times. We have a bureaucracy that is 40% larger than when we were in government, yet the government has no ability or competence whatsoever to deliver those things. We have not seen services improve at all.

As a matter of fact, government regulations is the other side of that coin. The reason we cannot build homes is that government regulations are pretty tough at all levels. I am not going to say that is just at the federal level, as they are certainly tough provincially and municipally as well. Some people are not so lucky as I am. I come from an area in Niagara where we actually have four levels of government. We have a regional level of government that adds a layer of complexity to that. CFIB said that it costs small business owners nearly \$40 billion a year for them to deal with regulations. CFIB representatives also said that probably 30% of that \$40 billion a year is unnecessary, redundant and overly burdensome regulation.

• (2225)

That leads me into talking about small business. I think that the government's record has been horrendous on small businesses. As a matter of fact, I think small businesses are being crushed under the government. I think that if we go back to COVID and see some of the unfair restrictions that happened with restaurants and the hospitality industry, those hangovers remain. We look at it right now in terms of large multinationals, global consulting firms and billion-dollar companies, which have never had it so good under the government. I mean, they are laughing. Their pockets are stuffed with cash, but small businesses continue to get crushed.

I had a chance to talk to an individual restaurateur in my riding. I was at an event in Grimsby, Ontario, on Friday, and I had a chance to talk to Mark. Mark owns a couple of restaurants. I asked him how he has been doing since COVID. I asked him if he has been able to rebound since COVID. He said, "As a matter of fact, I am still killed. I am still crushed. I am struggling to make the bills. I am struggling to be able to maintain what is happening. I had to try to sell one of my other restaurants because of the issues there."

He is not unique. If one goes to Restaurants Canada, it will tell members that almost 42% of businesses went insolvent. The number is around 41% for businesses in general. When one adds in restaurants, that number goes up to literally 44%. The year before,

coming out of COVID last year, we saw that only half of restaurants were losing money. That number, currently, this year, is probably up to 62%. When the government says to us that we have never had it so good, I would challenge that, and I would ask members to go to talk to a small business person to see if they actually feel the same way.

One of the challenges is that people are losing hope. They are losing faith. Once again, the member for Calgary Nose Hill did mention the fact, and one of the questions mentioned this, that people are leaving this country in record numbers. We are seeing that all the time because people are trying to go to places where maybe they would have some hope. I think that is the sad part. We have a great country. I just think it is tremendously mismanaged.

When I think about what is going on right now, I could stand here all night and just talk about the mismanagement. I just want to give members a couple highlights. I look at the most recent Auditor General report. It said that there were over 180 conflicts when looking at contracts, 186 times there were conflicts of interest. The Treasury Board said that there were over 160 conflicts when it came to dealing with consultants and contractors. That is for the people that self-disclosed. Imagine the people who did not mention it. It was 163 times.

Blacklock's Reporter does a great job. I encourage people to have a look at its news organization. It is a subscription, but it has great information. It came up with a story. This was done with some OPQs. We were able to figure this out. There were a couple of sole source contracts during COVID. We do not have to go back too far. We see a sole source contract for StarFish, which had new ventilators and was given \$170 million. Some of them were scrapped even while the pandemic was going on. Others were sold for as little as \$6. We certainly will never forget the juicy contract that Frank Baylis, a one-term MP here, got for ventilators for \$237 million.

These are the things that I think really frustrate people. This is what we are talking about. We are talking about a government that has a spending problem, and I think we have a government that is absolutely incompetent when it comes to being able to deliver the things it talks about.

I would love to talk a bit about the Winnipeg lab story. It is kind of ironic. It is sad that we had a couple of scientists that were actually getting packages from Amazon. They were getting stuff from China, and they were sending stuff back. That is unbelievable. The government then covered it up. That is absolutely insane. It did not want to realize how incompetent it was. We also found out they were working for the Chinese military.

*Government Orders*

Once again, there are many things I could go on about. One thing I will tell members is that the government is just not worth the cost. When we get a chance, we are going to give people hope, give people faith and give people a chance to have a better life once again.

● (2230)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the member said that he is going to give people a chance to have hope, yet he is going to cut back on issues that people genuinely care about, such as seniors receiving dental care services and the pharmacare program being rolled out. Imagine the individuals with diabetes. Think of the school food program. The Conservatives are going to cut that away. There are so many things they are going to cut.

My question for the member is this: Why do the Conservatives not recognize the need to be fair? Why are they opposing the capital gains tax? They voted against the 1% tax hike for—

● (2235)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** I have to give the hon. member a few seconds to answer.

**Mr. Dean Allison:** Madam Speaker, do members know who is going to be upset when we form government? It will be Liberal insiders. They are going to be so disappointed because they will not be getting those fat, juicy contracts where there is no value for service and where things do not get delivered. The government had a sole-source contract for a quarter billion dollars, and then it scrapped the machines and did not even use them. What a joke.

[*Translation*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** It being 10:36 p.m., pursuant to order made earlier today, it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the report stage of the bill now before the House.

[*English*]

The question is on Motion No. 1. A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 2 to 31.

[*Translation*]

If a member participating in person wishes that the motion be carried or carried on division, or if a member of a recognized party participating in person wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

[*English*]

**Mr. Adam Chambers:** Madam Speaker, we would like a recorded division.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The recorded division on Motion No. 1 stands deferred.

The next question is on Motion No. 32. A vote on this motion also applies to Motion No. 33.

If a member participating in person wishes that the motion be carried or carried on division, or if a member of a recognized party participating in person wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

**Mr. Adam Chambers:** Madam Speaker, we need another recorded vote.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The recorded division on Motion No. 32 stands deferred.

[*Translation*]

The next question is on Motion No. 34.

A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 35 to 37.

[*English*]

If a member participating in person wishes that the motion be carried or carried on division, or if a member of a recognized party participating in person wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, I know the member opposite was about to ask for a recorded vote. If not, I will.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The recorded division on Motion No. 34 stands deferred.

[*Translation*]

The next question is on Motion No. 38.

If a member participating in person wishes that the motion be carried or carried on division, or if a member of a recognized party participating in person wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

[*English*]

**Mr. Adam Chambers:** Madam Speaker, we request a recorded vote, but you can apply this result to the next 14 that you are about to read.

● (2240)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The recorded division on Motion No. 38 stands deferred.

Following the hon. member for Simcoe North's request, the votes on Motion Nos. 42 to 154 will be deferred until tomorrow.

Pursuant to Standing Order 45, the recorded division stands deferred until Tuesday, June 18, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

\* \* \*

#### ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION ACT

The House resumed from May 31 consideration of the motion that Bill C-65, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee, and of the amendment.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am being encouraged to see the clock. If we could pass this bill, I would be happy to do so.

*Government Orders*

At the end of the day, we have before us an important piece of legislation, and the first chance I had to debate the issue inside the chamber, I thought I was rather generous to the Conservative Party in my comments. However, the Conservatives moved an amendment indicating that they would be filibustering the legislation, and because of that, we are now in a position where the bill is limited in the amount of time for debate in an attempt to try to get the legislation to at least the committee stage.

The minister, earlier today, answered a series of questions and talked, in essence, about how the minister is open to improvements to the legislation if, in fact, there is something that members opposite would like to see. I would encourage those members to bring forward their ideas and make those suggestions to the minister, possibly even directly. They do not have to even wait until we are at committee, but could maybe send an email or approach the minister.

I talked about many things when I previously addressed the bill. However, in going through the legislation, a couple of things came across my mind about what the legislation would do and why it is that the Conservatives have indicated that they are going to be voting against the bill.

It is a fairly well-known fact that the crypto king, the member for Carleton, is a big cryptocurrency fan. However, the problem is that it is a way to hide donating to potential candidates or to a political party, which is something that is incorporated in the legislation. It would ensure that there would be a higher sense of transparency and accountability with donations to candidates and political parties. I can appreciate that the crypto king, the member for Carleton, has some concerns regarding that, but I would hope that some of the Reform- Conservatives would see the merit of transparency and a higher sense of accountability in who is donating to political parties and candidates. The bill before us deals with things of that nature.

Interestingly, if we go into some of the details of the legislation, members will see that there is a stronger stand on disinformation that is intended to disrupt the conduct of an election. We know for a fact that that actually takes place. It was not that long ago when we had a good example of it, which was when we had robocalls being made that were trying to suppress individuals' opportunities to go out and vote. Members might remember that there was even a high-profile Conservative member who ultimately went to jail as a result of it. This is the type of thing in which information is so vitally important, and we have the Conservative Party not even recognizing the need to fix the issue.

I do not quite understand why it is that the Conservative Party is in opposition to the legislation. I look at it as modernizing, to a certain extent, certain aspects and encouraging more people to get engaged in the democratic process. The minister himself, in answers, provided some excellent examples of how it encourages people to get more involved. There are certain things that we learned from the pandemic, such as ensuring that those in long-term care facilities have the opportunity to have more involvement—

**An hon. member:** Foreign interference.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, the member is right. This government has dealt more with foreign interference in elections than the Stephen Harper administration did. It is a very good point.

• (2245)

We will continue to look at ways to enhance the strength of our election laws, and part of that goes to what I just used as an example: long-term care facilities and making it easier for residents to be engaged and vote. That is a positive thing. At the end of the day, it also allows, for example, for youth to be more engaged, with voting at campuses. Why would the Conservatives oppose this stuff? The bill even talks about going into the 2029 election and how we can make it easier, with the hope that Elections Canada will put into place such things as being able to vote at any polling station within a riding.

I use the comparison of a provincial election, where people can vote for their candidate in a local constituency anywhere in the province. It is a step forward. The legislation would, I hope, move us in that direction. These are the types of initiatives that really make a difference.

We could talk about expanding the number of voting days. We might not be able to implement it for the next election, but in 2029, we may have three days on which people can mark their ballots, with “election day” becoming “election days”.

The legislation would do many things. The only thing Conservatives want to talk about is how we supported 32 Conservatives with regard to changing the election date. It is not about helping those 32 Conservatives. It is about making sure the committee understands and appreciates that there are things happening. Edmonton and Calgary were having elections on that day. The entire province of Alberta listened to what the Bloc had to say when it came to the date being too close to Quebec's municipal elections. Where are those Alberta MP advocates?

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**BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2024, NO. 1**

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-69, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 16, 2024, as reported (with amendments) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

**Mr. Eric Duncan:** Madam Speaker, I do not believe there was unanimous consent to lump all the votes together and defer them. We will need to take them one at a time and confirm whether any members in the House wish to have a recorded division. We need to complete that process.

• (2250)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The hon. member is correct. We did not receive the email confirming unanimous consent prior to 6.30 p.m., so we have to go back to moving the motions.

The next question is on Motion No. 39. A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 40 and 41.

*Government Orders*

If a member participating in person wishes that the motion be carried or carried on division, or if a member of a recognized party participating in person wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

**An hon. member:** Madam Speaker, we would ask for a recorded division.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The recorded division stands deferred.

[*Translation*]

The question is on Motion No. 42. A vote on this motion also applies to Motion No. 43.

[*English*]

If a member participating in person wishes that the motion be carried or carried on division, or if a member of a recognized party participating in person wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

**Mr. Eric Duncan:** Madam Speaker, I would ask for a recorded vote.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The recorded division stands deferred.

[*Translation*]

The question is on Motion No. 44. A vote on this motion also applies to Motion No. 45.

If a member participating in person wishes that the motion be carried or carried on division, or if a member of a recognized party participating in person wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

[*English*]

**Mr. Eric Duncan:** Madam Speaker, it would be in the best interests of all members of the House if we had a recorded vote.

[*Translation*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The recorded division on the motion stands deferred.

[*English*]

The next question is on Motion No. 46. A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 47 and 48.

If a member participating in person wishes that the motion be carried or carried on division, or if a member of a recognized party participating in person wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

**Mr. Eric Duncan:** Madam Speaker, I would like to add my voice again to request a recorded vote on that important amendment.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The recorded division on Motion No. 46 stands deferred.

[*Translation*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The question is on Motion No. 49. A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 50 to 78.

If a member participating in person wishes that the motion be carried or carried on division, or if a member of a recognized party participating in person wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

[*English*]

**Mr. Eric Duncan:** Madam Speaker, it would be best if we had a recorded vote on that.

[*Translation*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The recorded division on the motion stands deferred.

The question is on Motion No. 79.

[*English*]

A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 80 to 129.

If a member participating in person wishes that the motion be carried or carried on division, or if a member of a recognized party participating in person wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

**Mr. Eric Duncan:** Madam Speaker, I apologize for my passion on this tonight, but I would request a recorded vote on that item as well.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The recorded division on the motion stands deferred.

[*Translation*]

The question is on Motion No. 130. A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 131 to 141.

If a member participating in person wishes that the motion be carried or carried on division, or if a member of a recognized party participating in person wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

[*English*]

**Mr. Eric Duncan:** Madam Speaker, I would like to request a recorded vote on that one as well.

[*Translation*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The recorded division on the motion stands deferred.

[*English*]

The next question is on Motion No. 142. A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 143 to 145.

If a member participating in person wishes that the motion be carried or carried on division, or if a member of a recognized party participating in person wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

**Mr. Eric Duncan:** Madam Speaker, I know both the mover and the seconder would want a recorded vote on their amendment.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The recorded division on the motion stands deferred.

*Government Orders***ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION ACT***[Translation]*

The question is on Motion No. 146. A vote on this motion also applies to Motion No. 147.

If a member participating in person wishes that the motion be carried or carried on division, or if a member of a recognized party participating in person wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

• (2255)

*[English]*

**Mr. Eric Duncan:** Madam Speaker, since so many Canadians are engaged in following the budget and the upcoming vote, I would ask for a recorded vote on that amendment, please.

*[Translation]*

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The recorded division on the motion stands deferred.

*[English]*

The next question is on Motion No. 148. A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 149 to 153.

If a member participating in person wishes that the motion be carried or carried on division, or if a member of a recognized party participating in person wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

**Mr. Eric Duncan:** Madam Speaker, after nine years, we believe we need some more common sense, and common sense would say that we need a recorded vote on that amendment.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The recorded division on the motion stands deferred.

*[Translation]*

The question is on Motion No. 154. A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 155 to 161.

If a member participating in person wishes that the motion be carried or carried on division, or if a member of a recognized party participating in person wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

*[English]*

**Mr. Eric Duncan:** Madam Speaker, I want to assure you I am not doing this to try to beat the word count in the House of Commons of the member for Winnipeg North today, but I will request a recorded vote on that amendment as well.

*[Translation]*

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The recorded division on the motion stands deferred.

*[English]*

Pursuant to Standing Order 45, the recorded divisions stand further deferred until Tuesday, June 18, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-65, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee, and of the amendment.

**Mr. Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the member for Winnipeg North gave his speech and his comments on the government's proposed legislation, Bill C-65. One thing he forgot to mention was probably the most well-known part of the bill he has just spoken about for several minutes, which is the Liberals' attempt to change the election date; we have affectionately called this the NDP-Liberal pension protection act.

It was the Liberal-NDP agreement to change the election by a week for some reason that just happened to give class of 2019 members of Parliament their pensions if they were defeated in the next election. Thankfully, after relentless pressure from Conservatives, the NDP heard from many Canadians who thought that was an absolutely dreadful and shameful approach.

I want to get the member on the record. Does he now agree that this was nothing but partisan politics in an attempt to try to save some of their pensions for their own gain? Will he now agree that it was a terrible idea and nothing but a fake premise to try to change the date of the election to benefit their pensions?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I understand the Conservative-Reform party members are a little weak in math. There are actually more than double the number of opposition members who would benefit from this than Liberal members. I can assure the member across the way that it had absolutely nothing to do with the legislation.

It is unfortunate that he did not hear the comments from the minister directly. I would ask the member to reflect on the fact that it is a minority government, which means the will of the committee will ultimately prevail. As the minister himself indicated, we will support the committee.

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Madam Speaker, one of the things I am really concerned about is foreign interference. We heard about it in the news. The leader of the Conservative Party refuses to get the security clearance he needs to participate. I think this is happening at a time when there are many things people are questioning around the safety of our elections.

How does the member across the way feel about the Conservative leader's fear, as it seems to be fear, to get security clearance?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, I think that is a fair question. Why does the leader of the Conservative Party not want to get the security clearance to have the full, unredacted briefing? It is a legitimate question. I suspect that the leader of the Conservative Party would rather play political games than do justice to the issue at hand.

*Government Orders*

I find that unfortunate. As one of my colleagues asked, what is the leader hiding? We know there are references, for example, to the Conservative leadership. I suspect that might be the leadership he ran in. Is there something that he is scared of? What is the reason? The leader has not provided any explanation other than he does not want to know.

• (2300)

**Ms. Lena Metlege Diab (Halifax West, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the legislation amending the Canada Elections Act is an important piece of legislation. In fact, it is critical because it seeks to improve access to electoral participation, while also ensuring the continued integrity of our system. It has to go to committee to be studied further because it is essential to our democratic process.

Can the member elaborate on that? Can he give us his reasoning and his opinion on that?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, there are many aspects of the legislation that would ultimately be modernized. It deals, for example, with issues like cryptocurrency. Across the way, we have the king of cryptocurrency, the member for Carleton, who apparently knows the benefits of cryptocurrency. However, we need to ensure that we do not have foreign actors investing in cryptocurrency and donating to candidates or political entities during or outside of elections. I think that is a positive aspect of the legislation. It deals with misinformation and it enhances the opportunity for people to vote. It makes a whole lot of sense to get behind this legislation.

**Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I think a lot of Canadians watching out are not sure what this bill actually refers to. I will quote an article quickly. It states, “Canada soon to be governed by the pension coalition in Ottawa.” It says this new law, Bill C-65, proposes to move the election date, meaning 80 MPs would get vested in their pension. Let us just call the government we have in Ottawa what it would be after this new law, Bill C-65, passes: the pension coalition.

My question is to the NDP and Liberal members. Are they still the pension coalition; yes or no?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, that is a little weird. There is no NDP-Liberal pension coalition. There is an NDP-Liberal understanding that this is important legislation. Even though the Conservative Party opposes the legislation, there is a great deal of value in strengthening our election laws by seeing the legislation go to committee. If there is a coalition, I would even suggest that the Bloc also recognizes the value of the legislation.

I would remind my friend opposite we are in a minority government. When dealing with this issue, the minister has indicated he will abide by what the committee proposes with respect to that, or listen to any other ideas that would give strength to the legislation. It is beyond me as to why the Conservative-Reform party is not supporting this legislation going to committee.

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Madam Speaker, we lived under the Harper regime and, of course, the Conservative attempts to ensure that people could not vote, using all kinds of subterfuge and disinformation, trying to attack indigenous peoples, youth and poor people in our communities across

the country. The Harper regime was absolutely terrible in trying to reduce the number of Canadians voting. We saw all of the techniques that they used to try to do that. Now, the Republicans in the United States are doing the same thing. They are disenfranchising racialized people. The attempt by the Conservatives and by the Republicans is to have fewer people voting, so they can better control the rest of the population.

I want to ask my colleague, is that why the Conservatives are opposing this legislation, which broadens the vote and makes it easier for Canadians to exercise the fundamental democratic freedom of voting for the government that they choose? Is that why Conservatives are so incredibly opposed to broadening the franchise and letting every Canadian vote?

• (2305)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, there is a great deal of merit to the argument that the member has just put forward.

I would add to it by reflecting on the voter identification card, which members would remember. The Conservative Harper government, when the current Conservative leader was a part of that government, advocated that that particular voting card should not be used as proof of identification that would enable a person to vote. We even had one Conservative who grossly exaggerated abuse of the card and literally made up a story about how cards were being thrown to the side and then gathered and how people were going to vote, or something of that nature. That member had to formally apologize for being intentionally misleading.

There is a valid argument that the Conservative-Reform party today does not want to see an enhanced electoral system that sees more people vote. That could be a major aspect of the problem.

**Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the Conservative leader refuses to get security clearance, so the Conservative leader will not know who in his caucus either deserves not to be in the caucus, or deserves not to be given the leader's signature to run in the next election.

Would my hon. colleague suggest that the Conservative caucus is a safe place for MPs who might be working against Canada?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, it is important to recognize that leaders of political parties play an important role in terms of signing off on want-to-be candidates, and that is something that has not necessarily been on the table. It is part of the reason why it is so highly irresponsible of the leader of the Conservative-Reform party, today, not to get that security clearance.

**Mr. Len Webber (Calgary Confederation, CPC):** Madam Speaker, today I rise to speak to this bill, Bill C-65, the electoral participation act. However, I like to refer to it as the electoral ousted Liberal pension act. Some of my colleagues refer to it as the NDP-Liberal election pension protection act.



*Government Orders*

As a member of Parliament, though, Madam Speaker, I am deeply committed to upholding the principles of democracy and fairness, and I must voice my strong opposition to this legislation and to its detrimental implications for our political system. At the heart of my opposition is the proposal, or the provision, in this bill to move the election day to a later date, to solely benefit certain members of Parliament in qualifying for their pensions. Literally, this bill is a cynical attempt by the Liberal government to move the election day from October 20 to October 27 next year. This would then result in 80 MPs getting a pension or qualifying for a pension because they will have reached the required six years of service. Long story short, this is a bill aimed at giving pensions to losing Liberals at the next election. In fact, of the 80 MPs, there are 32 Conservatives, 23 Liberals, 19 Bloc Québécois and 6 NDP MPs who would benefit from this proposed election day change.

However, my colleagues, Canada's Conservatives, are very much opposed to this change, even if we are the party that stands to benefit the most. It is not only the Conservatives here who are opposed, but also many others who have not voted Conservative in the past and who are opposed to this bill. It is specifically because of the change in the date of the proposed election. This proposal is not just a procedural tweak. It strikes at the core of what it means to serve in public office with integrity and accountability. Elections should never be scheduled to line the pockets of losing MPs. We all knew the rules when we came here, and we ought to abide by them. One cannot change the rules just because one is losing the game. This is what I certainly see occurring here. It is rather disgusting, in my eyes.

Let me be clear about this proposal in this bill. By shifting the election date, the Liberal government is manipulating the electoral process to serve the interests of a select few MPs who are nearing their forced retirement. This undermines the democratic foundation upon which our country stands, and it reflects poorly on the House as a whole. It has never been okay to change the rules for personal benefit. I even question if those 80 MPs who stand to benefit would be in a conflict of interest when the time comes to vote on this bill. Perhaps they should not be voting on this bill. Perhaps they should not even be speaking to this bill. That is food for thought for colleagues and food for thought for perhaps the Ethics Commissioner.

If the motivation to move to the final election day is actually motivated by an intent to avoid provincial elections or cultural holidays, then the Liberal government should look at moving it up instead, and make it happen sooner so that it does not look so cynical in the eyes of the taxpayer. In fact, we here on the Conservative side of the House, would be happy to move it up maybe a year or even this summer. Let us have it during the stampede. Would that not be a celebration of the stampede, to win the election? Most Canadians are ready to cast their ballots now and not to drag it on for another year and a half.

With respect to existing legislation and to the other additional measures proposed in this bill, Canadians are offered significant alternative ways and days to vote in general elections. I am talking about advanced polls, perhaps.

• (2310)

That is an alternative, absolutely. Advance polls exist; they are held on the tenth, ninth, eighth and seventh days before an election day. In fact I have rarely voted on election day, and I have found that advance polls are a very effective way of guaranteeing making one's vote count. Leaving one's vote to the last days could have some risk, of course. A person can find themselves sick or otherwise unable to attend a polling station, due to weather reasons, a vehicle breakdown or whatever. Advance polls tended to be less crowded also, compared to on election day, which is certainly appealing to me. I hate crowds, so get me in on an advance poll any day for an election for sure.

There are other methods of voting also. People can vote by mail. They must complete an application for the registration and special ballot by mail. They have to do it after the election is called, however. Canadians living abroad can apply any time. They can apply now to vote by mail in a future election, whenever that may be. People can also vote in person at any Elections Canada office across the country when an election is called; they can do that until the sixth day before election day.

If someone is on holiday in Charlottetown and they live in Calgary, for example, they can vote in Charlottetown. They just have to go to an office there and must also, again, complete an application for registration and a special ballot. They have to show their identity and where they live, and they can get a ballot. There are many options, many opportunities and many ways to vote during an election.

I want to talk a bit now about voter participation. Voter participation in Canada, as most of us know, has fluctuated greatly over the time we have been a country. In 1896, for example, only 62.9% of Canadians voted, but the following election, on November 7, 1900, saw the rate rise to a near record of 77.4%. That was when Mr. Wilfrid Laurier was re-elected. He was re-elected to a second majority government then. That was the ninth Parliament of Canada. There were 128 seats. He won over a Conservative, Charles Tupper.

Back then, 77.4% of Canadians participated. The rate of voter participation did not drop below 62% for the next 100 years, so it was fairly high. Since then, there has been a persistent drop in voter participation. In 1988, voter participation started its decline from 75.3% to a rate that now, in the last few elections, has hovered in the low to mid-60s. There is no question that in recent years, voter turnout has been a pressing concern in Canadian elections.

*Government Orders*

The fact remains, though, that if someone does not cast their vote, the person who does is the one who speaks for them. As the saying goes, those who do not participate in the democratic process are destined to be ruled by those who do. We also have heard it expressed that if someone did not vote, they do not have the right to complain. I certainly have said that to many people whom I have talked to who come to me to complain about the current Liberal government or to complain perhaps about some of the work I do in my constituency. I ask them, “Well, did you vote?” If they say no, I say, “Well, you do not have the right to complain to me.”

● (2315)

However, we can take some satisfaction in knowing that Canadians are traditionally better at turning out for elections than our neighbours to the south. The 2020 election in the U.S. had a record turnout; it brought 66% of the voting population out to vote. Historically, though, American elections are often decided with less than 50% of the population.

For many years, the focus on increasing voter participation has focused on additional voting opportunities and alternative voting methods but it has not worked out as hoped. One must honestly ask why voter turnout continues to go down as the number of opportunities to vote has only increased. The downward trend in voter participation indicates a troubling disengagement among Canadians, and youth in particular, from their democratic process.

Youth voter turnout in Canadian federal elections remains lower than the turnout of all other age groups. The most common reason for not casting a ballot is that many youth are just not interested in politics. They are disengaged. There is no hope for young voters with the current economy the way it is, the way the Liberal government has decimated our economy.

I am pretty confident, though, that voter turnout at all ages and in all age groups will dramatically increase in the next election as people look to make sure change happens in Ottawa. There will be a desire to get rid of a government that has a new scandal by the day and a phony NDP opposition party that sold its soul to keep the Liberals in power this long.

I also think we need to focus on instilling the importance of voting as a civic duty. Let me share part of a speech that I gave a couple of years ago to new citizens. It was at a citizenship swearing-in ceremony in Calgary at the Telus Spark Science Centre, close to the zoo, for those people who want to know where it is.

I said, at the swearing-in ceremony, “Today, you raised your hand and took the oath of Canadian citizenship. Today you become part of the Canadian story—a land of many people from many lands with one shared goal—a better Canada.

“Now, you will be able to participate in our great democracy. No matter your political stripe, you all now have a treasured duty to participate and make Canada even greater.

“Embrace your new citizenship, cherish what it means and enjoy what it provides.

“Your new citizenship carries with it many responsibilities—to better your community, to help your fellow Canadian and to proudly represent our nation around the world.”

We need to instill in Canadians new and old that one has a duty to participate in our democratic process. We need to show people that elections do matter, that their voice is heard and that they have the power to determine who leads their country. We owe it to those who fought for us in past wars and those who died on distant battlefields to ensure that we have that freedom today, the freedom to vote.

Finally, in conclusion, as parliamentarians, we have a duty to uphold the highest standards of transparency and accountability. We are entrusted by the people of Canada to represent their interests and safeguard the democratic values upon which our country was founded.

Bill C-65, the bill we are debating here tonight, in its current form would fail to meet those standards. Let us be honest with Canadians. This is not a bill about increasing voter participation; it is a bill that is aimed at giving pensions to losing Liberals at the next election. It is disgusting. It is self-serving behaviour that is likely the cause of voter apathy in this country more than anything else.

● (2320)

The bill prioritises short-term gains for a handful of MPs over the long-term health of our democracy and the trust of our citizens, so I call upon my fellow colleagues across party lines to join me in opposing the bill, Bill C-65. We need to stand together in defence of democratic principles and the rights of all Canadians, so let us send a message, a resounding message, that we are committed to a political system that values integrity, fairness and above all else, the public trust.

**Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the passion in my colleague's speech, but are we at risk of throwing the baby out with the bathwater? The one issue, the pensions, I understand. I have had my own correspondence on that, but we are talking about sending something to committee where the committee would have the opportunity to take out the things that the majority in the committee disagrees with. Does the member have faith in the committee system that the committee would actually return a bill to Parliament in a form that Canadians would accept?

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Len Webber:** Madam Speaker, I would absolutely hope that if the bill goes to committee, which I expect it to do because of the support of both the Liberal and the NDP caucuses, it has to be amended. It has to eliminate that opportunity for these losing Liberals and losing NDP members to get that pension because of the date changes. That has to change. If it does not change, they are going to hear about it. They are going to hear from their constituents. They are going to hear about it come election day, whenever that date will be. They are hearing about it now. I cannot imagine that the hon. member does not hear it right now from his constituents. I hear it all the time, not only from my Conservative supporters, but also from the people who support the NDP and the people who support the Liberals. They say that, if this passes, they will vote for me for the first time.

● (2325)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech. It was very thoughtful and wise. I really liked the fact that he said perhaps members should not be allowed to vote to postpone the election because they could be in a conflict of interest. I really liked that.

To me, that is a critical aspect of this legislation. The government is postponing the election for a ridiculous reason. It could have suggested holding it sooner instead. The legislation offers enough opportunities for people to vote early, for example.

The most troubling part is what this does to perceptions of parliamentarians. The public is once again going to take refuge behind arguments like the fact that these MPs will qualify for pensions a little earlier. I myself am one of them. I was elected in 2019, and I absolutely do not support this utterly ridiculous date change.

I would like to hear my colleague talk about how the public would perceive this bill if it were passed.

[*English*]

**Mr. Len Webber:** Madam Speaker, the hon. member brought up the point of conflict of interest, which I brought up in my speech, and I absolutely believe that these individuals who were elected in 2019, who are the ones who would benefit from this change of date with the pensions they would be provided, should not be able to vote in the House on the bill, not be able to speak in the House on the bill and not be able to even ask questions about the bill if there is any conflict of interest, and I see it with these members. I think they have a right to say that they will not speak to the bill and they will not vote on the bill because there is a definite conflict of interest. If they do not, then shame on them.

**Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I have a lot of respect for the member, and I know he did not really mean it when he said that I had sold my soul.

He also went on, passing misinformation that the NDP is somehow in favour of moving the election date to favour pensions. We have been very vocal about opposing that. The member can be confident that, within committee, this would be eliminated.

The member mentioned young voters, and I just wanted to ask him what he thought of the growing feeling in various countries in

the world about allowing the voting age to go down to 16 so that young people would really have a reason to vote and engaging those students while they are in school. When I go to schools and talk to young people, they are engaged. They are intelligent and are very much concerned about their future.

We are voting on matters that will affect these people. They are not going to affect most of us. I am just wondering if the member would support the policy of lowering the voting age to 16 so we can get those young people voting.

**Mr. Len Webber:** Madam Speaker, the hon. member is a good man who I highly respect, and even more so for opposing this in committee, where it will go. On that note, I feel that perhaps the pension date may not change as long as the Liberals do not support that portion of the bill.

With respect to youth, they are becoming more vocal and more engaged, which is what I have seen in the schools that I have attended. The youth have become more engaged, because they do not have hope. They do not have hope in the future. They do not have hope in being able to buy a home. They do not have hope in being able to have the standard of living that their parents once had.

This hope is what we need to be able to instill in them to get them out to vote for a better government that would change this society and this country in order for this country to be the future of hope. That new government would have to be the Conservative Party of Canada.

● (2330)

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I just wanted to ask the Conservative member who raised this a question.

As the member knows, the NDP are the worker bees in this Parliament. We get things done, including dental care, pharmacare, affordable housing, anti-scab legislation and “by indigenous, for indigenous” housing.

In terms of the amendment that the member is opposed to, the Conservatives did not offer any solutions. The NDP, as we always do, provided the amendment that it appears the Conservatives are going to support. Why did the Conservatives not do any work at all on this? Why do they just talk and not actually present the amendment that the NDP has presented?

**Mr. Len Webber:** Madam Speaker, I think about the NDP going into this committee and opposing the date change. That is very important and I applaud them for that.

Now when it comes to the member's question on what ideas are out there, and what the Conservatives are bringing forward, perhaps I can bring an idea forward to get Canadians more engaged. Maybe we should throw a referendum question on the ballot, some type of a question in order to engage Canadians even more in the voting process.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I listened very closely to what the member was saying.

*Government Orders*

It seems to me that virtually all the other aspects of the legislation, which enhance or give strength to the elections laws, would have more people participate. It seems to me that that is what the member was asking for, but he does not like the date that is being suggested.

Based on what the member is hearing, if the date were changed, would he support the legislation?

**Mr. Len Webber:** Madam Speaker, I am all about engaging Canadians and getting them out to vote. Whatever it takes to get them out to vote, let us get them out to vote. The issue that my Conservative colleagues and I have is, again, I repeat, the date change that would create pensions for losing Liberal and NDP members. If that date changed, I would be in full support of this bill.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I want to note that I will be sharing my time with the member for Vaughan—Woodbridge.

Bill C-65 amends the Canada Elections Act. It seems the road to hell is always paved with good intentions. First, to be honest, it is a bill with many very interesting elements. We know that voter turnout has trended downward. When we look at long-term trends in voter turnout, we see a slight but permanent decline.

We definitely have some questions to ask ourselves. We are the representatives of a people within a democracy. We are better off when people participate in this democratic exercise. We will quite simply be stronger here if we are more represented by the public.

However, there is a catch. I would like to say that there is an elephant in the room, but it is more like a brontosaurus. It is a big deal, a huge deal. It is funny because people in my riding are not usually up in arms about a bill to amend the Canada Elections Act. I would normally never hear a peep about it something like that. No one would be coming to see me. However, this time, people are going full throttle. People are coming to see me at my office. When I am out and about, people come up to me to talk about this bill. It does not happen all the time, but it does happen often. People think that this bill is shameful.

The bill says that an election can be held on another day if the original election day is “in conflict with a day of cultural or religious significance or a provincial or municipal election”. I think that everyone agrees that the date should be changed in the case of a provincial or municipal election. It is already hard enough for people to follow one election. Following two at the same time would not be easy, especially if people also have to vote. At some point, they will lose track of everything that is going on. Let us just say that this all seems strange.

It made me think of something that sticks in my mind. At the time, I was not in politics in this Parliament; I was in Quebec City. The Prime Minister said that Canada would be the first postnational state. I do not know if anyone remembers that. I thought that was pretty rich. In order to have a postnational state, people have to forget their nation and its culture. They have to open up to other cultures and respect them. People are supposed to open up to the world

while smothering their own culture and who they really are. I find that rather odd. It is called multiculturalism.

Multiculturalism means saying that we must respect cultures from other places. I have no problem with that, but things have reached the point where the cultures and religions we respect come from other places. There are many different cultures on this planet. People who travel a lot know this. There are plenty of cultures, and I hope they survive. Every time a culture disappears somewhere, history and customs disappear. That is always sad. That is why we are fighting very hard to ensure that Quebec's culture lives and survives permanently, insofar as possible.

We can all agree that there are quite a few cultures and religions in the world. There are more religions around the world than hairs on my head. Of course, I used to have more hair than I do now, but in any case, let us just say that there are a lot of them. There is even a spaghetti king or spaghetti deity. Followers of this religion spend their days eating spaghetti and meatballs. In any case, it does not matter. The spaghetti king does exist. Some people believe in it. There are all kinds of religions.

A year has just 365 days. I am convinced that if we looked hard enough, we would never be able to hold an election, because every day of the year would be a cultural or religious holiday somewhere. I do not think that is a good idea.

October 20 happens to be Diwali. I did not know that, but it sounds really fun. It is the festival of lights. Maybe the Liberals could use a little light these days. If we put up some lights, it might illuminate them a little. The last time they saw the light, I think it was a train, and it shows. Anyway, Diwali is the festival of lights for Hindus and Sikhs. I salute them. I am very fond of them.

● (2335)

We wondered where this was coming from, and then the truth came out. I was elected on October 21, 2019. If we do the math, we realize that October 20, 2025, is four hours short to qualify for a pension. Imagine, only four hours. Since those are the rules, we have to accept them. I accept them. There are 22 Liberals who are in the same situation as me who realize that, for the sake of four hours, they are going to lose money. It is odd that the Liberals are the ones talking about this, because the Minister of Transport keeps saying that it is the Bloc MPs who are thinking about their pensions. He is wrong. We are saying that we will play the game, even if we are just four hours short. That is the game of democracy. Win some, lose some. The Liberals need to look at the polls upside down to improve their mood. Things are not going well for them. I would say to them that they have a year to pull up their socks if they want to keep their pensions, if they do not want to be defeated. If not, at least 100 of them stand to be defeated.

*Government Orders*

Madam Speaker, I am not talking about you, my constituency neighbour. I sometimes go to restaurants in your riding, and your voters clearly adore you. You have no reason to worry. I do not go to your riding to steal votes or talk politics; I just think you have good restaurants. However, some Liberals are scared. They think they are going to lose their pensions. They can see that they are not making any headway. I have watched them over the last few months. There are people I like on the other side. I like them, but it seems as though they are deliberately trying not to win. They need to wake up. The problem is simple: They are struggling to manage and do their job. Instead of coming up with things that makes no sense, like this bill, they need to smarten up and do a good job, and perhaps they will get to keep their pensions as a reward.

I do not wish misfortune on anyone, but there are probably about 22 members who are going to lose their seat in the next election. However, using something like this to make sure that some MPs get to keep their retirement pension is dishonest, and people do not like that. People are saying that some politicians are only here to get a pension. It fuels cynicism. I think that is unfortunate, because it affects everyone here. No one is spared. Honestly, I think that the Liberals should reconsider and remove that from the bill. What is more, the change in date will mean that the federal election is closer to the municipal election in Quebec. People already do not go out of their way to vote in municipal elections. It is difficult. We need to encourage people. We need to do our part. Now, the government is saying that it is going to hold a federal election six days before a municipal election. That does not make any sense. I am seriously speaking from the heart here.

Unfortunately, this is tarnishing the reputations of the Bloc Québécois members. The Liberals could tell people who are celebrating Diwali that they think that is important and that they have a great deal of respect for them. It is true that people have the right to celebrate that holiday. However, they can vote in the advance polls and still celebrate on October 20. As things now stand, the advance polls open four days before an election, and this bill will add two extra advance polling days. That brings us to six days. The number six makes me think of something. Do you know what the number six makes me think of, Madam Speaker?

There are six days of advance polling for people who want to celebrate Diwali. Moreover, people can vote directly at the returning office at any time. They will be able to take part in the democratic activity and cannot say that they were prevented from celebrating. They will be able to celebrate. I have not done much research, but it seems to me that there was once a Jewish holiday on election day, and people in that community were encouraged to go vote in advance. I think that went quite well. Still, there are a lot of things in this bill that look very good. Advance polling will be extended from four days to six. There are also plans to make voting easier, clearer and faster by allowing people to vote at any table in four years' time. There are some interesting bits. We should not throw the baby out with the bathwater.

• (2340)

We have to keep this bill. We are with the Liberals, but they have to try to be better. They may yet manage to salvage their pension. That is what I wish for them, because if they are better off, Quebecers and Canadians will be better served. We are there to help

them. We have a lot of good ideas. If only they would listen to the Bloc Québécois, everything would be all right.

[*English*]

**Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, we are getting high-centred on the one thing that it seems a lot of people would not like to see in the bill, so let us turn this inside out. I would like the hon. member to maybe talk about things that are not in the bill that he would like to see. For instance, there has been mention of voting at 16. How close are we to voting on-line?

Are these the sorts of things that perhaps the hon. member would like to see, or are there other things?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Alain Therrien:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his interesting question.

The Bloc Québécois has already said that we are in favour of allowing the vote starting at age 16. Have all the parties reached that point? That is up for discussion.

In terms of online voting, I do not know. There are some advances in the bill. Mail-in voting is an improvement. Other improvements relate to foreign interference and the possibility of voting in long-term care facilities, CEGEPs and universities. There are some good measures in this bill. Can more be added?

Before we talk about what more we can do, let us vote for that. Let us remove the stumbling block that everyone sees and then, at that point, we can do it. Then, we can discuss voting at age 16 and other things that we could introduce later. What a great job.

• (2345)

**Mr. Bernard Généreux (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for so clearly explaining the absolutely unacceptable aspect of this bill, namely the change in the election date, which, as he said, will be very close to the date of municipal elections in Quebec. As my colleague said, there is no rush to vote at the municipal level in Quebec. I quite agree with him on that.

There is, however, one thing that has been bothering me since the beginning of his speech. The Bloc Québécois is here in Ottawa. It sees Canada as another country. However, most Bloc members are going to receive a pension from that other country.

I would like him to tell me if he thinks it is okay for him to receive a pension from another country, only to one day go back to his own country and collect a pension there, too.

**Mr. Alain Therrien:** Madam Speaker, there are people who go to work in the United States, who drive trucks to the United States and who are paid by the Americans. What is the problem?

We are the Bloc Québécois. We represent Quebecers, who contribute \$80 billion in taxes. I work for them. I work to ensure that this money is spent wisely and that the will of Quebecers is respected when it comes to where the money goes. That is why we are here.

*Government Orders*

We work on bills that govern Quebecers' lives. That is why we are here. In our minds we are in foreign country, but, unfortunately, that foreign country is going to take money out of our pockets. We are here to stand up for our people and ensure that their money is spent wisely.

I do not think that I am as adored in my riding as you are in yours, Madam Speaker, but I am sure that the people in my riding are happy with the work I am doing.

During the next election, my colleagues are welcome to come to my riding to see how proud people are of the work the Bloc Québécois is doing. They say that, yes—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Madam Speaker, this is a foreign country, according to my colleague from La Prairie. I love listening to him, but there are 700,000 Quebecers who have benefited from dental care in this foreign country. This dental care was put in place thanks to the NDP. In the first five weeks alone, 700,000 Quebecers have already taken advantage of this new program, which will really improve their health.

It is obvious that Quebecers disagree with my colleague, but does he agree with the NDP amendment, which will completely fix this bill?

The Conservatives and the Bloc did not introduce any amendments. The NDP did. Does the member support the NDP amendment?

**Mr. Alain Therrien:** Madam Speaker, what has the NDP done when it comes to dental coverage? We already have dental coverage in Quebec. What is going to happen is that they are going to add another structure on top of that insurance. People are going to pay—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Resuming debate. The poor interpreters have had enough.

The hon. member for Vaughan—Woodbridge.

[*English*]

**Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is quite humorous what is happening on the other side in the corner there, but I will let the two MPs continue the conversation outside the House.

On a much more serious note, and on a note of gratitude, this is the second time I have spoken today and, in case I do not have an opportunity to speak before the House rises for the summer, I wish to thank my team here in Ottawa, Sashalie and Dima, for all their hard work. I would also like to thank the team back in the city of Vaughan, in my riding of Vaughan—Woodbridge, at the constituency office, Pina, Anthony and Francesco, for all their hard work. As we all know, our staff are the ones who do a lot of the heavy lifting for us and keep us going strong to the extent needed. To the family back home, my kids, wife and all the folks who believe in me and

encourage me to do better and be better, I wish to send my thanks as well.

● (2350)

[*Translation*]

I am proud to rise this evening to speak to Bill C-65, the electoral participation act.

The government introduced Bill C-65 to increase participation and confidence in Canada's electoral process. This bill implements lessons learned from recent elections. It takes into account the recommendations of the Chief Electoral Officer, as well as the concerns and changing views of voters. It responds to the evolving threats to our democracy.

Although Bill C-65 contains many important proposals, I would like to take this opportunity to talk about the provisions in this bill to strengthen the protection of Canadians' personal information by federal political parties.

I am sure my colleagues will agree that communication between parties and voters is essential to a healthy, modern democracy. Personal information contributes to this ongoing dialogue. It enables parties to communicate with Canadians and understand their views and priorities. In turn, these connections can help voters make informed choices about who they want to represent them in Parliament.

Unfortunately, we know that malicious actors can try to access or disclose personal information held by the parties. In fact, the Communications Security Establishment Canada has established that the theft and manipulation of databases containing personal information are a major threat to political parties. That is unacceptable, and we recognize that we need to do more so that Canadians know that their information is protected.

That is why, in 2018, Parliament took an important first step by passing the Elections Modernization Act, which imposed the very first privacy requirements on federal political parties by creating a condition of registration under the Canada Elections Act.

Finally, each party has been required since 2019 to provide Elections Canada with a policy for the protection of personal information that meets the requirements set out in the act. Parties that do not comply with this requirement can be deregistered or denied the right to register. Currently, under the Elections Modernization Act, all federal political parties have a publicly available policy for the protection of personal information that addresses a range of privacy issues, such as how a party collects, uses and shares data.

It was a first step in the right direction. Bill C-65 proposes to enhance these requirements. With interactions between the political parties and the voters being increasingly focused on data, more robust, national measures for the protection of personal information are needed.

In budget 2023, Parliament took another step forward by establishing that the Canada Elections Act is a national regime that governs the collection, use, disclosure, retention, and disposal of Canadians' personal information by federal political parties and any person acting on their behalf. It was established that the same rules apply to the federal political parties and the persons acting on their behalf, regardless of the voters' place of residence or the territory where the party operates.

This also crystalized the fundamental objective of the federal political parties that collect, use, disclose, retain and dispose of personal information, which is to participate in Canadian democracy by supporting the activities of candidates who share the same values as the party.

However, we know that it is always possible to do more. That is why the government is now proposing to enhance the requirements that need to be included in each federal party's policy for the protection of personal information, so as to promote the principle of transparency, protection, accountability and compliance.

I will address each of these principles separately. Many requirements will promote greater transparency. Every party must make its policy for the protection of personal information publicly available in both French and English, and the policy must be written in plain language. In order for Canadians to better understand the elements of this policy, every party must give examples illustrating how it collects, uses, discloses and disposes of personal information.

Every policy must indicate not only the types of personal information that the party collects, as is currently the case, but also the types of personal information that it retains, uses, discloses and disposes of. However, even though transparency is important, it is not enough. Additional safeguards are needed.

First, the policy for the protection of personal information must require that personal information be protected through physical, organizational and technological security safeguards.

These safeguards can include locked filing cabinets or secure areas, document encryption, password protection and the sharing of personal information on a need-to-know basis. The level of protection must be proportionate to the sensitivity of the information.

Second, the policy for the protection of personal information will require the party to ensure that any individual or external organization that receives personal information from a federal political party, such as a supplier or contractor, has equivalent safeguards.

Third, every political party must prohibit the sale of personal information. That is an important change because, right now, the act only requires the policy to include a statement indicating the circumstances under which personal information can be sold.

Fourth, the updated privacy policies would also prohibit parties from providing false or misleading information to Canadians about why they are collecting personal information.

Finally, Bill C-65 would prohibit the disclosure of personal information with malicious intent.

### *Adjournment Proceedings*

• (2355)

All these requirements that would apply to the parties are reasonable and sensible. Requiring greater accountability also helps meet that objective. Each party should have a designated privacy officer who would be responsible for—

• (2400)

[*English*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):**

That is all the time. The hon. member will have five minutes of questions and comments the next time the bill comes before the House.

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## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

[*English*]

### PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, \$2,600 was, according to his testimony, the hourly rate earned by one Kristian Firth on the ArriveCAN app or what many people are calling the arrive scam scandal. There was a simple question that I asked the minister, and I did not get a response. Does he think that \$2,600 an hour was a reasonable rate?

As such, I am back in the House at midnight to ask the same question again.

Kristian Firth, with his partner, at a two-person company, worked out of their basement. They got this massive contract to build the ArriveCAN app, and they did not do any work on the app; they simply received the contract and subcontracted it. For their pains of getting the contract and going on LinkedIn to find people who actually did IT work and who could actually build an app, the company, GC Strategies, Kristian Firth, got \$2,600 an hour.

This is at a time when many Canadians are struggling, and Canadians are paying higher taxes than ever before. The government is showing such disdain for their money that it is giving money to these well-connected insider friends of the government to simply receive contracts and to subcontract at a rate of \$2,600 an hour, according to Kristian Firth's testimony. Based on some of the surrounding numbers, I would say that it is actually a fairly conservative estimate, "conservative" not in the good sense but a conservative estimate of \$2,600 per hour.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

I am repeating the question several times because I want to make sure that the parliamentary secretary is without excuse and that he will stand up and answer the question that has been asked, which is the question the minister declined to answer. This is the question: \$2,600 per hour was the rate, according to his own testimony, that Kristian Firth earned on the ArriveCAN app. It was not for building the app and not for designing the app, but it was simply for going on LinkedIn and for finding other people to build the app, something that the public service could have likely done itself.

Does the parliamentary secretary believe that \$2,600 per hour was a reasonable rate for Kristian Firth to be earning? The parliamentary secretary is without excuse. I have asked the question several times. Does the parliamentary secretary believe that \$2,600 per hour was a reasonable rate for Kristian Firth to earn on the arrive scam app? Does he believe \$2,600 was a reasonable rate?

I await the parliamentary secretary's response to my question.

**Mr. Randeep Sarai (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I want to stress that this is an issue we are not taking lightly. Let me first say that I am very proud of the public servants who worked so diligently to ensure that the government could deliver services and programs to Canadians during the pandemic.

At the same time, it is clear that something went wrong with the procurement of professional services related to ArriveCAN. Our government is extremely concerned about the issues that have come to light. I want the member to know that we have taken and are taking action to improve our procurement processes, and we are holding companies accountable for their misconduct, while protecting federal expenditures. With regard to reports by the Auditor General and the procurement ombudsman, Public Services and Procurement Canada, PSPC, as the central purchaser for the government, has already taken several steps to implement the recommendations and improve the processes.

For several years now, the department has been making progress in its plan to modernize procurement, which has long been a priority. Right now the government is firmly focused on improving and further strengthening processes, especially when it comes to IT procurement. We have been working for months to do just that. This includes strengthening guidance and training for those involved in the procurement process. PSPC is also improving evaluation requirements to ensure that resources are properly qualified, and is requiring increased transparency for suppliers around their price and their use of subcontractors.

It is also improving documentation when awarding contracts and issuing task authorizations, and it is clarifying work requirements and activities, specifically which activities and which projects are worked on by contractors. In addition, PSPC is updating its guidance to help other departments and agencies in procuring responsibly when using procurement instruments under their own authorities. We know that fundamentally improving IT procurement requires us to ensure that those processes are clear and transparent and that the roles, responsibilities and rules are understood, respected and adhered to.

To that end, the department is going even further in strengthening the integrity in procurement by creating a new office of supplier integrity and compliance, which we know will help the government better respond to misconduct. We owe it to Canadians to preserve the integrity of federal government procurement. That is why we are taking action now to strengthen and improve procurement so that what happened in the case of ArriveCAN never happens again.

● (2405)

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Madam Speaker, maybe the Liberals should open a new office for answering the question that was asked, because I asked it three times at least, and the member opposite chose not to answer. It is a very simple question. Canadians are struggling. They are seeing the incredible waste and corruption within the NDP-Liberal government. In particular, they are shocked that, as part of the arrive scam scandal, over \$2,500 per hour was paid out to well-connected insider consultants.

If one cannot answer the basic question about whether they think a \$2,600-an-hour fee is reasonable, how can we ever see meaningful improvement under the government? I do not think we will, but I will try one last time: Does the parliamentary secretary for Veterans Affairs, who is the one here answering the questions, think that \$2,600 per hour was a reasonable rate, yes or no?

**Mr. Randeep Sarai:** Madam Speaker, we are committed to preserving the integrity of federal government procurement, and that is precisely what our government is doing. Public Services and Procurement has already taken several steps to implement the recommendations of both the Auditor General and the procurement ombudsman. It is strengthening guidance and training in federal procurement and making great progress in our plan to modernize processes.

We will continue to explore ways to improve our procurement processes, specifically when it comes to IT procurement. We know that the newly established office of supplier integrity and compliance will help the government better respond to misconduct and further safeguard the integrity of federal procurement.

DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

**Mr. Kevin Vuong (Spadina—Fort York, Ind.):** Madam Speaker, on June 7, I informed an oblivious government that Canadians will never get over nor accept a betrayal of their country's democracy by traitors who willingly sell themselves out for political and financial gain. Instead of continuing a policy of denial, the Liberal government should cease resorting to any measure that could shield party colleagues who are on the payroll of foreign operators and who have willingly accepted various offers of foreign support to win party nominations and obtain electoral victory.



*Adjournment Proceedings*

Canadians are wondering why the government continues to refuse to release cabinet documents to both the Hogue inquiry and the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians, NSICOP, so that any individual believed to have been a willing participant to treasonous activities can be investigated. What are the Liberals hiding? Is it the case that the Liberal Party does not want to incriminate its own members?

The Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs answered my question and had the audacity to claim that I had made something up, and said that the government has “worked collaboratively” with the Hogue commission. What a joke. The minister went on to indicate that, “officials from the Privy Council Office are in regular and ongoing contact with the lawyers from the Hogue commission to ensure that they have all of the appropriate and relevant documents to do the important work that all recognized parties in the House supported.” Someone is clearly making things up, but it is not me, and it is my hon. colleague who should be careful before making things up in the House of Commons.

Most Canadians do not believe that the government has come clean when it comes to what it knows about foreign interference in our country. Indeed, we currently have the Hogue commission looking into foreign interference. We also have NSICOP. We also had a special rapporteur take a shot at it. We even had a few people in our national security agencies put their careers on the line to try to inform the public of what is known and what is being intentionally withheld by the government. There must be some fire with all this smoke.

I do not think those entities feel they are making things up, and it seems like it is only the government that wants everything to go away and for people to just get over it. Why is that the case? Why is the Liberal government withholding over 1,000 documents from the Hogue commission and the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians?

It is past midnight. I am here to fight for transparency for Canadians. What does the government have to hide?

• (2410)

**Mr. Randeep Sarai (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise today to speak to the vital, ongoing work that the Government of Canada is doing to protect Canada's democratic institutions.

As all members of this House are aware, threats to Canada's democracy do not affect only some Canada; they affect all Canadians. That is why the enhancements to safeguard Canada's democratic systems and processes against foreign interference that are set out in Bill C-70 are supported across party lines.

Indeed, the Government of Canada's ongoing work to protect Canada's electoral systems and democratic institutions includes efforts to maximize public transparency while protecting what and how government documents are shared. This is because the nature of some records and how they are intended to be used is fundamental to the functioning of our democratic system of government.

I would like to take this opportunity to make clear what cabinet confidences are and why they are treated so carefully by the government so that any misunderstanding along these lines can be put to an end.

Cabinet confidences are documents that are prepared for members of cabinet. They include memoranda to cabinet, discussion papers, records of cabinet deliberations, records of communications between ministers, records to brief ministers and draft legislation.

The Canadian government is, and has been since Confederation, a Westminster system of government. This means that the principle of keeping cabinet confidences secret is older than Canada itself. It originates from the United Kingdom's Westminster Parliament, which dates back many centuries.

Cabinet confidences are central to how the Westminster system functions because of another foundational principle called cabinet collective responsibility. These principles complement each other, as members of cabinet consider all material at their disposal, deliberate, and even disagree freely around the cabinet table. Once the deliberations are finished, cabinet makes a collective decision, and all members are responsible for it.

The secrecy of these deliberations and of the materials that are used to make cabinet decisions is therefore paramount to the system functioning as designed. This has been long understood by successive Canadian governments, which have upheld the principle of cabinet confidences. In addition to the government, the Supreme Court of Canada has recognized, “Cabinet confidentiality is essential to good government.”

Protecting Canada's democracy also means protecting our democratic institutions and ensuring that they can function as intended. Protecting cabinet confidences is not a nefarious act, but rather a fulfillment of the government's duty to uphold the long-established principles of Canada's system of government.

While fulfilling this duty, the Government of Canada continues to support the ongoing work of the public inquiry into foreign interference. Since the inquiry was established last year, the set of cabinet confidences specified in the terms of reference for the commission have already been provided during the commission's first phase of work. Those terms of reference were developed and agreed to by all recognized parties in the House. As it has done all along, the government will continue to provide thousands of classified documents to the commission and will continue to make government witnesses available to answer the commission's questions.

The Government of Canada looks forward to the commission's final report in December and will consider how its recommendations can further help to enhance Canada's measures against foreign interference in its electoral systems and democratic institutions.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

• (2415)

**Mr. Kevin Vuong:** Madam Speaker, Canadians deserve to know the truth. Canadians deserve to know who was involved, who profited politically and/or financially and how they will be brought to justice for their actions, just as much as those who have conducted foreign interference operations in our country.

Why is there such a reluctance by the government to provide Canadians with evidence of foreign interference? Why is it that when the Prime Minister went on CBC earlier today and was asked if there were any Liberal MPs on the NSICOP list who had betrayed Canada, he stammered and could not answer for over 10 seconds? What is the basis for that? Is the Liberal Party afraid of where this will end if they release the names?

**Mr. Randeep Sarai:** Madam Speaker, the Government of Canada continues to support the important work of the public inquiry into foreign interference, as it has done since the inquiry was established last year. The government continues to provide thou-

sands of classified documents and to make government witnesses available to meet with the commission to answer its questions. While supporting the commission's work, the government will continue its ongoing work to protect Canada's democratic institutions.

Protecting Canada's democracy is not a partisan activity. It requires constant vigilance and ongoing effort to meet the ever-changing threats to our democratic systems and processes. The Government of Canada takes this duty seriously and welcomes the efforts of all parliamentarians who are committed to this important work.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The motion that the House do now adjourn is deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until later this day at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 12:17 a.m.)





# CONTENTS

Monday, June 17, 2024

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

### Excise Tax Act

Bill C-323. Third reading .....	25013
Ms. Sgro .....	25013
Ms. Chabot .....	25014
Mr. Johns .....	25015
Ms. Ferreri .....	25017
Mr. Ellis .....	25018
Division on motion deferred .....	25019

### Sitting Suspended

(The sitting of the House was suspended at 11:49 a.m.) ..	25019
---	-------

### Sitting Resumed

(The House resumed at 12:01 p.m.) .....	25019
---	-------

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

### Budget Implementation Act, 2024, No. 1

#### Bill C-69—Time Allocation Motion

Mr. Rodriguez .....	25019
Motion .....	25019
Mr. Kurek .....	25019
Ms. Tassi .....	25020
Mr. Julian .....	25020
Mr. Calkins .....	25020
Ms. Chagger .....	25021
Mr. Johns .....	25021
Mrs. Roberts .....	25022
Ms. Chabot .....	25022
Mr. Julian .....	25022
Mr. Gerretsen .....	25023
Mrs. Roberts .....	25023
Mr. Johns .....	25024
Motion agreed to .....	25025

#### Report Stage

Bill C-69. Report stage .....	25025
Mr. Fillmore .....	25025
Mr. d'Entremont .....	25027
Mr. Lemire .....	25027
Mr. Johns .....	25027
Mr. Calkins .....	25028
Mr. Lamoureux .....	25029
Mr. Lemire .....	25030
Mr. Bachrach .....	25030
Ms. Dzerowicz .....	25030
Mr. Lemire .....	25032

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

### Brazilian Canadians

Ms. Dzerowicz .....	25032
---------------------	-------

### Summer Events in Cariboo—Prince George

Mr. Doherty .....	25032
-------------------	-------

### David Chiapin Tang

Mr. Miao .....	25032
----------------	-------

### Louise Bourgeois

Ms. Chabot .....	25033
------------------	-------

### Conversion Therapy

Mr. Gerretsen .....	25033
---------------------	-------

### Calgary Stampede

Mrs. Kusie .....	25033
------------------	-------

### Graduation Congratulations

Ms. Yip .....	25033
---------------	-------

### London Journalists

Mr. Fragiskatos .....	25034
-----------------------	-------

### Housing

Mr. Génèreux .....	25034
--------------------	-------

### Inter-Parliamentary Union

Mr. McGuinty .....	25034
--------------------	-------

### Ethics

Mrs. Thomas .....	25034
-------------------	-------

### Taxation

Mr. Williamson .....	25034
----------------------	-------

### Lorraine Henderson

Mr. Drouin .....	25035
------------------	-------

### Truth and Reconciliation

Mr. Desjarlais .....	25035
----------------------	-------

### National Indigenous Peoples Day

Mr. Lemire .....	25035
------------------	-------

### Carbon Tax

Mr. Zimmer .....	25035
------------------	-------

### Cutest Pets on Parliament Hill

Mr. Maloney .....	25036
-------------------	-------

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### Taxation

Mr. Poilievre .....	25036
Ms. Anand .....	25036
Mr. Poilievre .....	25036
Mr. Duclos .....	25036

### Carbon Pricing

Mr. Poilievre .....	25036
Mr. Guilbeault .....	25036
Mr. Poilievre .....	25036
Mr. Wilkinson .....	25036

<b>Taxation</b>	
Mr. Poilievre .....	25037
Ms. Anand .....	25037
<b>Democratic Institutions</b>	
Mr. Therrien .....	25037
Mr. LeBlanc .....	25037
Mr. Therrien .....	25037
Mr. LeBlanc .....	25037
<b>Indigenous Affairs</b>	
Mr. Singh .....	25037
Ms. Hajdu .....	25037
Mr. Singh .....	25038
Ms. Hajdu .....	25038
<b>Carbon Pricing</b>	
Mr. Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry) .....	25038
Mr. Guilbeault .....	25038
Mr. Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry) .....	25038
Mr. Wilkinson .....	25038
Mr. Seeback .....	25038
Mr. Guilbeault .....	25038
Mr. Seeback .....	25039
Mr. Guilbeault .....	25039
Mr. Berthold .....	25039
Mr. Guilbeault .....	25039
Mr. Berthold .....	25039
Mr. Guilbeault .....	25039
<b>Climate Change</b>	
Ms. Michaud .....	25039
Mr. Guilbeault .....	25039
Ms. Michaud .....	25039
Mr. Guilbeault .....	25040
Ms. Michaud .....	25040
Mr. Guilbeault .....	25040
<b>Carbon Pricing</b>	
Mrs. Stubbs .....	25040
Mr. Wilkinson .....	25040
Mrs. Stubbs .....	25040
Mr. Wilkinson .....	25040
Mr. Shields .....	25041
Ms. Bendayan .....	25041
<b>Indigenous Affairs</b>	
Ms. Idlout .....	25041
Mr. Vandal .....	25041
<b>The Environment</b>	
Mr. Johns .....	25041
Mrs. LeBouthillier .....	25041
<b>Public Safety</b>	
Ms. Sgro .....	25041
Mr. LeBlanc .....	25041
<b>Housing</b>	
Mr. Paul-Hus .....	25042
Mr. Duclos .....	25042
Mr. Paul-Hus .....	25042

Mr. Duclos .....	25042
Mrs. Vien .....	25042
Mr. Duclos .....	25042
Mr. Martel .....	25042
Mr. Duclos .....	25042
<b>Employment</b>	
Ms. Chabot .....	25042
Ms. Martinez Ferrada .....	25043
Ms. Chabot .....	25043
Mr. Kusmierczyk .....	25043
<b>Taxation</b>	
Mr. Baldinelli .....	25043
Ms. Bendayan .....	25043
Mr. Baldinelli .....	25043
Mrs. Valdez .....	25043
<b>Health</b>	
Mrs. Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster) .....	25043
Mr. Holland .....	25044
<b>Women and Gender Equality</b>	
Ms. Lambropoulos .....	25044
Ms. Ien .....	25044
<b>Taxation</b>	
Mr. Brock .....	25044
Ms. Bendayan .....	25044
<b>Diversity and Inclusion</b>	
Mr. Morantz .....	25044
Ms. Khera .....	25044
<b>Foreign Affairs</b>	
Mr. Bezan .....	25044
Mr. Blair .....	25045
<b>Public Safety</b>	
Mr. Sorbara .....	25045
Mr. LeBlanc .....	25045
<b>Foreign Affairs</b>	
Ms. McPherson .....	25045
Mr. Hussen .....	25045
<b>Democratic Institutions</b>	
Mr. Vuong .....	25045
Mr. LeBlanc .....	25045
<b>Presence in Gallery</b>	
The Speaker .....	25045

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

<b>Miscarriage of Justice Review Commission Act (David and Joyce Milgaard's Law)</b>	
Bill C-40. Report stage .....	25046
Motion No. 1 negatived .....	25047
<b>Iran</b>	
Ms. McPherson .....	25047
Motion .....	25047

(Motion agreed to).....	25047
<b>Miscarriage of Justice Review Commission Act (David and Joyce Milgaard's Law)</b>	
Bill C-40. Report stage.....	25047
Ms. Martinez Ferrada (for the Minister of Justice).....	25047
Motion for concurrence.....	25047
Motion agreed to.....	25049

**Privilege**

**Record of the Proceedings of the House—Speaker's Ruling**

The Speaker.....	25049
------------------	-------

**Privilege**

**Alleged Premature Release of Speaker's Ruling on Social Media**

Ms. McPherson.....	25050
Mrs. DeBellefeuille.....	25050

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

**Government Response to Petitions**

Mr. Lamoureux.....	25051
Motion.....	25051
Motion agreed to.....	25052

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

**Electoral Participation Act**

**Bill C-65—Time Allocation Motion**

Mr. MacKinnon.....	25052
Motion.....	25052
Mr. Perkins.....	25052
Mr. LeBlanc.....	25052
Ms. Barron.....	25053
Ms. Michaud.....	25053
Ms. Chagger.....	25053
Mr. Morrice.....	25054
Mr. Cooper.....	25054
Mr. Savard-Tremblay.....	25054
Ms. Idlout.....	25055
Mr. Arnold.....	25055
Mr. Lemire.....	25055
Ms. Mathysen.....	25055

**Business of the House**

Ms. Petitpas Taylor.....	25055
--------------------------	-------

**Electoral Participation Act**

**Bill C-65—Time Allocation Motion**

Motion.....	25056
Mr. LeBlanc.....	25056
Mr. Kmiec.....	25056
Mr. Lamoureux.....	25056
Mr. Kurek.....	25056
Mr. Davidson.....	25057
Ms. Blaney.....	25057

Motion agreed to.....	25059
-----------------------	-------

**Budget Implementation Act, 2024, No. 1**

Bill C-69. Report stage.....	25059
Mr. Muys.....	25059
Mr. Desilets.....	25060
Mrs. Fortier.....	25060
Ms. Idlout.....	25061
Mr. Sorbara.....	25061
Mr. McLean.....	25063
Mr. Desilets.....	25063
Ms. Blaney.....	25064
Mrs. DeBellefeuille.....	25064
Mr. Turnbull.....	25065
Mr. Génèreux.....	25065
Mr. Lamoureux.....	25066
Mr. Julian.....	25067
Mr. Desilets.....	25067
Mr. Patzer.....	25068
Mr. Turnbull.....	25069
Mr. Therrien.....	25069
Ms. Idlout.....	25070

**Questions on the Order Paper**

Mr. Lamoureux.....	25070
--------------------	-------

**Questions Passed as Orders for Returns**

Mr. Lamoureux.....	25074
--------------------	-------

**Budget Implementation Act, 2024, No. 1**

Bill C-69. Report stage.....	25077
Mr. Bains.....	25077
Mr. Maguire.....	25078
Mr. Desilets.....	25078
Mr. Turnbull.....	25079
Ms. Chabot.....	25079

**Privilege**

**Alleged Premature Release of Speaker's Ruling on Social Media—Speaker's Ruling**

The Speaker.....	25079
------------------	-------

**Budget Implementation Act, 2024, No. 1**

Bill C-69. Report stage.....	25080
Mr. Cannings.....	25080
Ms. Blaney.....	25081
Mr. Longfield.....	25081
Mr. Arnold.....	25081
Mr. Weiler.....	25082
Mr. Allison.....	25083
Ms. Blaney.....	25083
Ms. Chabot.....	25084
Mr. Bezan.....	25084
Mr. Turnbull.....	25085
Ms. Idlout.....	25086
Mr. Dalton.....	25086
Mr. Dreeshen.....	25086
Mr. Lamoureux.....	25088
Ms. Chabot.....	25088
Ms. Idlout.....	25088

Mr. Aitchison .....	25088	Division on Motion No. 46 deferred .....	25104
Mr. Lamoureux .....	25090	Division on Motion No. 49 deferred .....	25104
Ms. Chabot .....	25090	Division on Motion No. 79 deferred .....	25104
Mr. Julian .....	25090	Division on Motion No. 130 deferred .....	25104
Mr. Dalton .....	25090	Division on Motion No. 142 deferred .....	25104
Mr. Desilets .....	25091	Division on Motion No. 146 deferred .....	25105
Mr. Dalton .....	25092	Division on Motion No. 148 deferred .....	25105
Mr. Lamoureux .....	25092	Division on Motion No. 154 deferred .....	25105
Ms. Idlout .....	25092		
Mr. Schmale .....	25092	<b>Electoral Participation Act</b>	
Mr. Sorbara .....	25093	Bill C-65. Second reading .....	25105
Mr. Julian .....	25094	Mr. Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry) .....	25105
Mr. Hardie .....	25094	Mr. Lamoureux .....	25105
Ms. Bradford .....	25094	Ms. Gazan .....	25105
Ms. Blaney .....	25095	Ms. Diab .....	25106
Mr. Patzer .....	25095	Mr. Zimmer .....	25106
Mr. Lamoureux .....	25096	Mr. Julian .....	25106
Mr. Zimmer .....	25096	Mr. Hardie .....	25106
Mr. Lamoureux .....	25097	Mr. Webber .....	25106
Ms. Idlout .....	25098	Mr. Hardie .....	25108
Mr. Patzer .....	25098	Mr. Desilets .....	25109
Ms. Rempel Garner .....	25098	Mr. Cannings .....	25109
Mr. Hardie .....	25099	Mr. Julian .....	25109
Ms. Gazan .....	25100	Mr. Lamoureux .....	25109
Mr. Shields .....	25100	Mr. Therrien .....	25110
Mr. Allison .....	25100	Mr. Hardie .....	25111
Mr. Lamoureux .....	25102	Mr. Généreux .....	25111
Division on Motion No. 1 deferred .....	25102	Mr. Julian .....	25112
Division on Motion No. 32 deferred .....	25102	Mr. Sorbara .....	25112
Division on Motion No. 34 deferred .....	25102		
Division on Motion No. 38 deferred .....	25102		
<b>Electoral Participation Act</b>		<b>ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS</b>	
Bill C-65. Second reading .....	25102	<b>Public Services and Procurement</b>	
Mr. Lamoureux .....	25102	Mr. Genuis .....	25113
<b>Budget Implementation Act, 2024, No. 1</b>		Mr. Sarai .....	25114
Bill C-69. Report stage .....	25103	<b>Democratic Institutions</b>	
Division on Motion No. 39 deferred .....	25104	Mr. Vuong .....	25114
Division on Motion No. 42 deferred .....	25104	Mr. Sarai .....	25115
Division on Motion No. 44 deferred .....	25104		





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