SENATE SÉNAT

CANADA

DEBATES OF THE SENATE

1st SESSION • 44th PARLIAMENT • VOLUME 153 • NUMBER 196

OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Wednesday, May 1, 2024

The Honourable RAYMONDE GAGNÉ,
Speaker

This issue contains the latest listing of Senators, Officers of the Senate and the Ministry.

CONTENTS

(Daily index of proceedings appears at back of this issue).

Publications Centre: Publications@sen.parl.gc.ca

Published by the Senate
Available on the Internet: http://www.parl.gc.ca

THE SENATE

Wednesday, May 1, 2024

The Senate met at 2 p.m., the Speaker in the chair.

Prayers.

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

DAVID LEPAGE

CONGRATULATIONS ON RETIREMENT

Hon. Tony Dean: Honourable senators, we often talk in this place about social inequity and poverty in Canada. I rise today to mark the retirement of a Canadian leader internationally renowned for his efforts to address these issues through the social enterprise and social economy ecosystem: David LePage.

David's professional journey began in community economic development and community public radio in the United States, before he moved to Vancouver in 1999 to build a new life with his partner, Kim Boutilier, who grew up in Brantford, Ontario.

David was struck early on by the emerging role of community economic development and social enterprise in addressing the social and economic challenges in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

Colleagues, 24 years on, if you have a successful social enterprise-based catering service, cleaning company, bike repair shop or other social enterprise in your town, it is likely that these virtuous initiatives flourished with the support of David's advice and the broad community of practice he has helped to establish.

Ottawa alone has 120 social enterprises offering employment training, bookkeeping and food services, all supported by the Centre for Social Enterprise Development.

David's advocacy was crucial at the national level, spanning both the Harper and Trudeau governments and resulting in the introduction of social value requirements in large federal infrastructure project — for example, in creating training opportunities in the construction trades for youth, people with disabilities, Black Canadians, Indigenous peoples, newcomers and others in often marginalized populations. That, colleagues, is making a huge difference.

David LePage has been a visionary leader in building a strong and resilient social enterprise ecosystem in Canada, weaving social values and social goods into previously binary, buy-and-sell economic exchange relationships. His vision has had an impact on governments across Canada, Australia and Scotland and in numerous other countries around the world.

Alongside this, David was the founder and Chair of the Social Enterprise Council of Canada, and Program Manager for Enterprising Non-Profits, which published the first Canadian guide to social enterprise. His flagship organization, Buy Social Canada, now trains and certifies social enterprise managers and practitioners and provides support to private and public social procurement initiatives. And, yes, as you might expect, David has also been an influential board member of the Social Enterprise World Forum.

This is quite the legacy, Mr. LePage. On behalf of the Senate of Canada and Canadians across this country, thank you for your vision, unrelenting hard work and leadership. Your work will have a lasting impact in Canada and continue echoing around the world.

Colleagues, please join me in recognizing Mr. David LePage.

THE HONOURABLE WANDA THOMAS BERNARD, O.C., O.N.S.

CONGRATULATIONS ON LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Hon. Judy A. White: Honourable senators, it is my pleasure to rise today to highlight a recent achievement of one of our colleagues, the Honourable Wanda Thomas Bernard.

Senator Bernard was invited to an event at Carleton University, hosted by the School of Social Work in March, called Black History is every month: A love letter to the African, Caribbean and Black Community. She thought she was there to deliver welcoming remarks.

That evening, three awards were presented to recognize the outstanding contributions of individuals in the community. Senator Bernard applauded as the School of Social Work celebrated the recipients of a Rising Star Award and a Community Builder Award. She glanced around the room in curiosity as the winner of the final award, the Lifetime Achievement Award, was announced. The committee said it was the easiest award to determine the winner of. There was one person who came to mind when deciding who merited such a recognition.

To quote how the award was framed:

> This accolade is a testament to the outstanding contributions made by an individual over their entire career, recognizing a legacy of commitment to social justice, advocacy, and community impact.

Senator Bernard has been an impressive force for positive change over the course of her career to date, but particularly in the field of social work, where she has reached the status of living legend.

This was not the first time that Carleton University celebrated the achievements of Senator Bernard. In 2021, she was awarded the degree of Doctor of Laws. She has also received honorary degrees from Mount Saint Vincent University and McMaster University, in addition to being appointed to the Order of Canada

and the Order of Nova Scotia. Her dedication in addressing racism, justice and diversity is truly impressive — and I am certain she's not nearly done yet.

Colleagues, I invite you to join me in celebrating this wonderful achievement of Senator Bernard. It is a fitting honour for her ongoing work.

Wela'lin, thank you.

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of students from the University of Ottawa, the University of Haifa in Israel, and Bocconi University in Milan, along with their professor Michael Geist. They are the guests of the Honourable Senator Housakos.

On behalf of all honourable senators, I welcome you to the Senate of Canada.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

• (1410)

GLOBAL TECHNOLOGY LAW AND POLICY PROGRAM

Hon. Leo Housakos: Honourable senators, I'm pleased today to be hosting a group of university students from Canada, Israel and Italy, who are accompanied by their professor Mr. Michael Geist.

These students are part of the collaborative Global Technology Law and Policy program, which is celebrating a decade of cultural exchange between the University of Ottawa and the University of Haifa, and more recently also includes Bocconi University in Milan.

For the past 10 years, the University of Ottawa and the University of Haifa have partnered on a unique academic and cultural course that examines global technology law and policy issues. Over the years, it has brought together hundreds of students to experience new countries and develop new connections.

This year marks an exciting milestone in their joint efforts to examine the global development of technology law policy, including privacy, intellectual property and internet regulation.

Through this exchange program, participants have been fortunate to engage with scholars, students and experts from the other universities, exchanging invaluable insights and forging enduring connections.

Given everything that is going on in the world today, I think it is more important than ever to celebrate programs like this one — to celebrate collaboration.

It's beyond unfortunate that some of these students with us today would face backlash on university campuses, like my own alma mater, McGill University.

I don't want to put a damper on what should be a positive experience for these students. I certainly hope they enjoy their visit here today.

However, I would also be remiss if I didn't take this opportunity to absolutely and unequivocally condemn the anti-Semitism that Jewish students are facing on university campuses across Canada and the U.S. — across North America — and to call on those universities to do the right thing and deal with these encampments appropriately.

I know my colleagues will make those of you here with us today feel more welcome than many of you would feel on those campuses. Welcome to Ottawa. Thank you for being here.

[*Translation*]

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Nicolas Moyer, Chief Executive Officer of Cuso International. He is the guest of the Honourable Senator Gerba.

On behalf of all honourable senators, I welcome you to the Senate of Canada.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

[*English*]

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of representatives of the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada. They are the guests of the Honourable Senator Coyle.

On behalf of all honourable senators, I welcome you to the Senate of Canada.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS AWARENESS MONTH

Hon. Mary Coyle: Honourable senators, it is so lovely to look across the chamber at the sea of red carnations you are all sporting today. Thank you for that.

May is Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Month. Our guests from the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada, or MS Canada, brought us these red carnations to wear, to demonstrate our solidarity with and support for the 90,000 Canadians who live with multiple sclerosis, or MS. Canada has one of the highest rates of multiple sclerosis in the world, and 75% of people diagnosed in Canada are women. Most are diagnosed between the ages of 20 and 49.

MS is a neurological disease affecting the central nervous system, including the brain, spinal cord and optic nerves. Its symptoms can include vision problems, cognition and memory issues and impaired balance and mobility.

Most of us know someone — a friend, family member or colleague — who lives with MS: a favourite teacher who had to retire early due to motor function failure; a friend fighting poverty because she could no longer work full-time, and fell through those cracks between employment insurance and disability programs; a young professional worried she might lose her job because she had to miss work for unpredictable periods of time.

Colleagues, MS is an expensive disease. For the people living with it, annual costs are estimated to exceed $40,000 annually. For Canada, MS costs $3.4 billion annually.

With us today is MS Canada's Senior Vice-President, Community, Jennifer Arp, and the dedicated MS Canada team, including Sarah MacDonald from — you guessed it — Antigonish, Nova Scotia.

MS Canada is committed to achieving their bold vision, which is a world free of multiple sclerosis. In her May 2023 *The Hill Times* article entitled, "A cure for multiple sclerosis could be just around the corner," MS Canada CEO Dr. Pamela Valentine cited the breakthrough research identifying the Epstein-Barr virus as an early trigger for MS. She said: "We owe it to Canada to seize this moment and fund research on 'Canada's disease' . . . ."

Finding a cure for and preventing MS are now seen as possible, colleagues.

How can we support MS Canada in this life-giving work they do? We can support their urgent call for research funding. We can make sure that all Health Canada-approved MS treatments are covered under the new national pharmacare program. We can make sure the Canada disability benefit gets out in a timely manner, at an adequate level to all who need it.

Colleagues, let's support our fellow Canadians living with MS and let's support MS Canada in their vital and urgent work.

Wela'lioq, thank you.

VISITOR IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Dr. Paul Roumeliotis, Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer at the Eastern Ontario Health Unit (EOHU). He is the guest of the Honourable Senator Burey.

On behalf of all honourable senators, I welcome you to the Senate of Canada.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

[Senator Coyle]

[*Translation*]

WORLD BOOK AND COPYRIGHT DAY

Hon. Réjean Aucoin: Honourable senators, every year on April 23, the world is invited to celebrate World Book and Copyright Day. This date was chosen by the General Conference of UNESCO to celebrate reading, pay tribute to creators and raise awareness of the protection of intellectual property through copyright. This day serves as a reminder of the ongoing commitment to promote reading throughout the year. Every year, a major event is held at the UNESCO headquarters, where booksellers, publishers and artists are invited to share their passion for books and reading by running workshops for young people.

In a world where screens and texting seem to dominate our lives, we need to remember how important it is to read and to encourage children to discover the wonderful world of books.

In the digital age, where distractions are constant and conversation is often reduced to abbreviations, books invite us to slow down, to immerse ourselves in stories rich in detail and emotion and to use our imaginations in a way that screens can't match.

By encouraging children to love books, we give them a priceless treasure: The ability to travel through time and space without leaving the comfort of their own home. This gift, the love of reading, is one that will stay with them for the rest of their lives.

Behind every book is an author whose work is often overlooked. Authors are the architects of imaginary worlds, the tellers of stories that captivate and inspire. Protecting their rights is essential to ensure the diversity of literature.

On this World Book Day, as someone who has written children's books in my spare time, I would like to recognize and celebrate the contributions that authors make to our culture.

Copyright ensures that authors keep control over the use of their creations and enables them to benefit from their work. By protecting copyright, we're supporting authors who want to share their ideas and stories with the world, while preserving their creations.

On this World Book and Copyright Day, let's commit to rediscovering the magic of books, honouring the writers who create them and protecting the wealth and diversity of our world literary heritage.

Every book is a story, an adventure, a mirror we can use to see ourselves in and understand the world around us.

Thank you. *Wela'lioq*.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

[*English*]

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Rosabella Chiu, Senator Oh's spouse, and Harvey Hu, President of the Mississauga Chinese Business Association, who is accompanied by board members. They are the guests of the Honourable Senator Oh.

On behalf of all honourable senators, I welcome you to the Senate of Canada.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

• (1420)

ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH

Hon. Victor Oh: Honourable senators, I rise today to mark the first day of Asian Heritage Month. This is not just a celebration of our rich and diverse cultural tapestry but a testament to the contributions of Asian Canadians to the fabric of our nation.

As an Asian Canadian, I am deeply honoured to be part of a community that has played a vital role in shaping the Canada we know today.

From the early immigrants who laboured tirelessly to build our railways to the entrepreneurs, artists and innovators who continue to enrich our society, Asian Canadians have left an indelible mark on every aspect of Canadian life, but our journey has not been without its challenges. The Asian-Canadian community has faced discrimination and prejudice, yet through resilience and determination we have overcome these obstacles.

One such event that symbolized this strength was the 100-year anniversary of the Chinese Exclusion Act, which was held in this chamber last June. Not only did this monumental occasion mark 100 years since the enactment of the racist, anti-Chinese policy to stop Chinese immigration into Canada, it also represents how far we have come as a country in our commitment to diversity, equality and unity.

Our country's strength lies in our diversity. Strengthening our sense of multiculturalism is the multitude of Asian-Canadian community organizations that play a pivotal role in fostering solidarity, preserving cultural heritage and strengthening our cultural ties.

One such organization is the Mississauga Chinese Business Association. I would like to thank them for their tireless commitment to fostering our community's entrepreneurial and business sectors, and contributing to the prosperity of both Mississauga and Canada.

[*Editor's Note: Senator Oh spoke in Chinese*.]

Honourable colleagues, as you are all aware, this will be my last Asian Heritage Month statement in this chamber. It has been an honour to advocate for diversity and inclusion throughout my time as a senator, and I will retire this summer with a profound sense of pride in the progress we have made and continue to fight for.

Thank you. *Meegwetch*. *Xie xie*.

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Julie Macfarlane and Zelda Perkins, co-founders of Can't Buy My Silence. They are the guests of the Honourable Senator McPhedran.

On behalf of all honourable senators, I welcome you to the Senate of Canada.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Rob Whitley, Associate Professor of Psychiatry at McGill University. He is the guest of the Honourable Senator Brazeau.

On behalf of all honourable senators, I welcome you to the Senate of Canada.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

RULES, PROCEDURES AND THE RIGHTS OF PARLIAMENT

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO STUDY ROLE OF NON-AFFILIATED SENATORS

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move:

> That the Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures and the Rights of Parliament be authorized to examine and report on the role of non-affiliated senators, including mechanisms to facilitate their full contribution to and participation in a modernized Senate; and
>
> That the committee submit its final report no later than December 19, 2024.

ADJOURNMENT

NOTICE OF MOTION

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move:

> That, when the Senate next adjourns after the adoption of this motion, it do stand adjourned until Tuesday, May 7, 2024, at 2 p.m.

QUESTION PERIOD

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

ACCESS TO INFORMATION REQUESTS

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): Government leader, I know you don't like my questions, and you may think they scrape the bottom of the barrel as you said yesterday, but it is my job to hold this incompetent and corrupt Trudeau government to account. I am only doing my job.

My office recently submitted an access-to-information request to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. It sought any documents that the department produced in relation to my Written Question No. 166 on the Order Paper about a so-called friendly soccer match between Canada and Iran. One of the documents provided to my office shows that my question was given a "risk level" of "high."

Leader, were you or your office aware that my question was assigned a risk level?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): No, senator. Thank you for your question. I was not aware. I will ask my office staff, but I was not advised, and I assume that I would have been.

Senator Plett: I find that strange. Leader, do you know if only the immigration department assigns a risk level to my questions, or do other departments have risk levels for them as well? If so, which departments? What does a risk level mean? If it's a high-risk question, does that mean I shouldn't hold my breath for an answer? I need to hold it pretty long for any answer anyway.

Also, is it only my questions that are assigned a risk level, or are questions from other senators also given risk levels?

Senator Gold: Thank you for the question. I really don't know the answer to your questions, and I don't want to speculate as to what the question of risk refers to, whether it refers to the risk of divulging certain information with regard to national security concerns or any other matter. I simply do not know the answer to your question.

HEALTH

DECRIMINALIZATION OF DRUGS

Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Senator Gold, five days later, it is frankly shocking that the Trudeau government still hasn't granted British Columbia's request to recriminalize the use of hard drugs, such as crack and heroin, in public spaces. It is the second time in recent months that B.C.'s NDP government has sought changes to this failed drug policy.

In September, the Trudeau government amended its program when B.C. asked for help to keep drugs away from places where young children play, including outdoor playgrounds, wading pools and skate parks.

Leader, why is your government doubling down on this policy now? Will you agree to B.C.'s request today?

• (1430)

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question.

As I said yesterday, my understanding of the request of the B.C. government with regard to this pilot program that they requested be put into place was not that they recriminalize the drugs but simply that they adjust the terms of the pilot project to limit — if not prohibit — the consumption of such drugs in certain public places.

As the minister announced, this is a matter she is considering seriously, and properly so. This is a three-year program that the provincial government requested along with the Government of Canada. It's only one year into the program, so I just cannot accept the premise, and I certainly cannot give a guarantee that any decision will be made today. However, it is being looked at seriously and properly, as the minister announced.

Senator Martin: Leader, I'm not sure how to qualify the actions of your government in this regard, but "urgent" is certainly not one of them. Last Friday, the B.C. government stated that it needed the Trudeau government to urgently change its decriminalization policy.

Leader, how much longer will this take? Where is the common sense needed to protect B.C. communities from the destruction and chaos caused by the public use of hard drugs?

Senator Gold: Thank you for your question.

The Government of Canada was responsive to the B.C. government's concerns about creating a safer environment for those who are, unfortunately, dependent upon these hard drugs.

That is the purpose of this pilot program, and it was the belief of both the British Columbia government and the Canadian government that it was an experiment worth doing in order to save lives. It will continue to be responsive to the requests of the Government of British Columbia and will work with them going forward.

CANADIAN HERITAGE

ATHLETE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Hon. Marty Deacon: My question is for the Government Representative in the Senate.

While we're very happy to see the increase of individual athlete allowances in the budget, it is a drop in the bucket in terms of what is needed to keep our sports system afloat in Canada. The Canadian Olympic Committee, Canadian Paralympic Committee and national sport organizations have been clear that the sport organizations are the ones charged with getting Canadians active that need the support. From our review, it looks like the support has actually been fiscally diminished.

These organizations are the backbone of our sports system in Canada where every athlete and every Canadian Olympian started at some time, along with coaches and technical leaders. They offer our young people great opportunities and are often inspired by such Olympians that we will soon see in Paris actively in programs they create. Sports are the foundation for an active and healthy community. They unite communities.

They have not seen an increase —

The Hon. the Speaker: Sorry, senator, your minute is over.

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Although you didn't get a chance to finish your question, I want to thank you for underlining the importance of funding our nation's athletes. They make us very proud.

I'll try to anticipate some aspects of your question and provide you with some information about what the government is doing.

Let's acknowledge that the funding for sports in Canada — as is the case so many areas — will fall short of the expectations and wishes of those who so appropriately champion those causes, but this government has to do the work of government and find a fiscally responsible way to accommodate all of the demands within a responsible framework.

To that end, my understanding is that Budget 2024 proposes a number of initiatives to support sports in Canada: $15 million over two years to the Department of Canadian Heritage to help support community sports programming and reduce barriers to sports programming. There is also a further $35 million over five years and $7 million ongoing —

Senator M. Deacon: Thank you.

Those are appreciated program-funded numbers that we're talking about with safety and inclusion in sports. We're looking for that continued and growing support for our national sport organizations to keep their lights on.

Senator Gold: As I was saying, there is not only certain programming over a five-year period but some ongoing funding beyond that for certain programs as well. The Government of Canada will continue to work diligently to support our athletes, young and veteran.

EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

CANADA DISABILITY BENEFIT

Hon. Pat Duncan: Senator Gold, Budget 2024 includes the launch of the Canada disability benefit. The benefit is based upon the recipient having a Disability Tax Credit certificate. As we heard moments ago, May is Multiple Sclerosis, or MS, Awareness Month. MS Canada has been calling for the benefit to include those with episodic disabilities as defined in the Accessible Canada Act.

Senator Gold, is there any policy move toward including eligibility criteria to accommodate persons with lifelong episodic disabilities like multiple sclerosis?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for raising the question and to our guests here for the work you do to support research, the communities and families who suffer from MS. It touches many of us in this chamber.

I will raise this question with the minister because I simply don't know at what stage those considerations are at. Thank you.

Senator Duncan: Thank you, Senator Gold. I appreciate that.

Access to health care has been much discussed recently, as has pharmacare. Access is a principle of the Canada Health Act, yet access to drug therapies to treat MS for the more than 90,000 Canadians who suffer varies between provinces and territories. Yes, health care is a provincial-territorial responsibility, and, yes, the government is working on federal pharmacare. It's also working on health care program funding, generally, seeking accountability on federal health care funding —

Senator Gold: I'll certainly add that to my questions.

[*Translation*]

HEALTH

CANADIAN DENTAL CARE PLAN

Hon. Jean-Guy Dagenais: My question is for the Leader of the Government. Today marks the beginning of the Liberal government's NDP-driven Canadian Dental Care Plan. No one knows how much it will cost, but we do know that the cost will be borne by all Canadians.

Your government is falsely promising a form of free dental care, although only 15% of dentists in Quebec have opted into the federal program, which is woefully inadequate to deliver the services promised.

Dentists clearly don't trust the remuneration and payment system put in place. I think Canadians are likely to be extremely frustrated.

My question is simple. How long is it going to take your government to respond and fix yet another service that will not work as promised?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question.

As you know, one third of Canadians do not have dental insurance through their employer. Also, one in four Canadians can't go to the dentist because it's too expensive.

As of today, May 1, 2024, one million Canadian seniors have already enrolled in the Canadian Dental Care Plan and will be eligible for treatment. To date, more than 6,050 dentists have agreed to provide the care.

Senator Dagenais: Your government is known to have zero skills when it comes to managing services to the public. CERB, ArriveCAN and immigration issues are proof of that.

Why did your government choose Sun Life Canada to manage reimbursements despite the fact that the majority of dentists in Quebec do not trust that this company will pay them promptly?

Senator Gold: The government has chosen a very reliable supplier. Keep in mind that the Canadian Dental Care Plan is a national program that will help Canadians across the country. If adjustments are needed to make this program work better, the government is committed to looking at all the options.

• (1440)

CROWN-INDIGENOUS RELATIONS

MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS

Hon. Pierre J. Dalphond: Colleagues, this coming May 5, we'll be commemorating Red Dress Day, an opportunity for all of us to pay tribute to missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and two-spirit persons.

According to Statistics Canada, between 2011 and 2021, 21% of all femicide victims were Indigenous, even though Indigenous women and girls made up just 5% of Canada's female population.

In its recent budget, the government announced $1.3 million to create a regional red dress alert system that would activate as soon as an Indigenous person was reported missing.

Senator Gold, when will this alert system be deployed and operational in Canada?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for that important question. I also want to thank you for advocating for this cause.

I do not have a precise schedule for the launch of the regional red dress alert system. The Government of Canada is listening to its Indigenous partners and collaborating with the provinces and territories to determine what a red dress alert would look like. To that end, the government established a standing federal-provincial-territorial-Indigenous table on missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people and prioritized discussions on how to launch a red dress alert. The government is making progress, but we still have a long way to go to ensure that every Indigenous person in Canada can live free from violence.

Senator Dalphond: The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls made numerous recommendations to the government that they referred to as "Calls for Justice". Can you tell us how many of these Calls for Justice the government has responded to so far, or is this still under review?

Senator Gold: Thank you for the question. Certainly the recommendations are being taken into consideration, but I do not have a specific answer to your question. I will discuss this matter with the minister.

[*English*]

HEALTH

DECRIMINALIZATION OF DRUGS

Hon. Leo Housakos: Senator Gold, like everything else he touches, Justin Trudeau's completely wacky policy of drug decriminalization has proven to be a failure. Even B.C. Premier David Eby acknowledges that it is ruining lives and causing death and chaos on Canadian streets. Yet, your government plans to push forward by decriminalizing in other cities.

This morning I met with Estelle Savoie-Dufresne, a young lawyer from Montreal and a mom to a beautiful 5-year-old daughter who lives in the Atwater area. Recently, her young daughter had a question for her. She looked at her mom and asked, "How should I pick up a syringe?" She was asking because she sees them in both her playground and her park.

Senator Gold, perhaps either you or Minister Miller, who represents that riding, can answer that question. Please demonstrate to us here in the chamber and to this five-year-old girl how she should pick up a syringe as she plays in her local park in our hometown.

An Hon. Senator: Hear, hear.

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question. That happens to be my neighbourhood. I'm very familiar with the circumstances that plague the people and the neighbourhood due to multiple causes such as drug use, homelessness, deinstitutionalization and all the ravages of colonization, as you would know, Senator Housakos, since you know Montreal so well. That is also an area where folks from the Far North find themselves torn from their roots. This has nothing to do with the question of decriminalization of drugs. This is a problem that is vast in Montreal.

Having said that, when jurisdictions approach the Canadian government and ask for their help to solve a health problem, the government will listen and work with them, as it did with B.C., and it will continue to do so while at the same time —

Senator Housakos: Decriminalizing hard drugs, Senator Gold, is completely —

Some Hon. Senators: Order.

The Hon. the Speaker: I'd like to remind senators to please wait until I call you before you ask your questions. Thank you.

Senator Housakos: Thank you, Your Honour.

As I said, Senator Gold, that response is completely wacko when we're talking about basically decriminalizing hard drugs. The good news for that mom and her daughter, Senator Gold, is that Pierre Poilievre will form a government, will ban hard drugs, will stop providing taxpayer-funded drugs and will instead put that money into detox and recovery.

In the meantime, could you look at this young mom from your hometown, and all others like her, and tell her that you will not further decriminalize hard drugs in Montreal or in any other —

Senator Gold: I feel for the mother and for anyone — children, families, parents — who feel insecure or unsafe on the streets of our cities and our towns. In that regard, there is no difference in our position, senator.

Where we do differ, quite frankly, is in the way in which you seem to try to disregard both the scientific and public policy issues surrounding drugs and retreat to a —

CANADIAN DENTAL CARE PLAN

Hon. Rose-May Poirier: My question is for Senator Gold. We're only a few months into the enrollment for the Canadian Dental Care Plan and it is already disappointing seniors across the country. According to the New Brunswick Dental Society, only five New Brunswick dentists have signed up for the program, but 45,000 seniors in New Brunswick have enrolled.

Government leader, what is your government's plans to ensure dentists have the capacity for all the enrolled seniors to have access to dental services in the communities?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you. As I mentioned in my response to an earlier question, this program is rolling out as it can given that it requires collaboration not only between the federal government, which is taking an enormous step forward — this is the largest benefit in our country's history; the government has to get it right — but also the provinces, who have responsibility for regulating their profession. They have the authority, which the federal government does not, in terms of how dentists are remunerated, organized and otherwise regulated. It will also rely upon the take-up of individual doctors, whether they are individual practitioners, in corporations or in the other forms that they have.

The government is serious about this program and is working hard at it. I hope that more take it up in New Brunswick as —

Senator Poirier: The dental care plan sounds like another broken program by this government. In my home reason of Kent County, seniors are going from dentist to dentist to dentist and are being turned away. Your government was warned of shortcomings about the program by the New Brunswick Dental Society seven months ago. Why has your government ignored the concerns raised by the dentists and rolled out the program too quickly?

Senator Gold: The government doesn't ignore the concerns, but it cannot also ignore the fact that one in four Canadians cannot go to a dentist because it's too expensive. As I have said, one in four does not have dental insurance which we are so privileged to have.

The Government of Canada is taking the needs of Canadians seriously. It takes the interests and concerns of dentists and provinces seriously. We will continue to work together to help Canadians.

AGING WITH DIGNITY AGREEMENTS

Hon. Iris G. Petten: My question is to the Government Representative in the Senate. Senator Gold, in Budget 2024, reference is made to aging with dignity agreements to improve access to home care, community care or care in a safe, long-term care facility for seniors.

Currently, nine provinces and territories have announced agreements with the federal government, but that does not include my own province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Can you provide an update on the process and any reasons why Newfoundland and Labrador might not have signed on to this agreement with the federal government as of yet?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question. I'm not in a position to discuss the negotiations for the Aging with Dignity bilateral agreements as you can well understand. However, I have every confidence that the Government of Canada and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador will be able to come to an agreement. As you know, this was done recently with the federal government providing almost $256 million to support Newfoundland and Labrador's three-year action plan to deliver needed improvements to its health care system.

• (1450)

Senator Petten: Senator Gold, since one of the goals of these federal-provincial agreements is to improve access to home care, does the government intend to financially support the continued development of technology as it pertains to helping our aging Canadians stay at home longer, should that be their preference?

Senator Gold: Thank you for your question. We know — and research shows — that it's far better for people to stay in their homes and obtain the care that they need there. The Aging with Dignity agreements focus on this important goal.

These agreements are underpinned by the same key principles and commitments as the Working Together bilateral agreements. This includes modernizing the health care systems so that health care providers and patients have access to electronic health information, which will undoubtedly help more Canadians stay in their homes longer and with dignity.

INDIGENOUS SERVICES

SUICIDE PREVENTION

Hon. Patrick Brazeau: My question is for the government leader in the Senate. Senator Gold, my question concerns the current suicide crisis experienced by Indigenous peoples in Canada as well as young boys and men. Between 75% and 80% of suicides in Canada are committed by men. Suicide and suicide attempts among some Indigenous groups are among the highest in the world. I read through Budget 2024, and found a few instances where mental health and suicide prevention are mentioned. Would you be so kind as to share with us what the Government of Canada's specific investments are relating to suicide prevention when it comes to Indigenous populations, young boys and men?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you very much for this important question, for your advocacy on this issue and for your courage in your advocacy.

Budget 2024 includes $630.2 million over two years, starting in 2024-25, to support Indigenous peoples' access to mental health services, including through distinctions-based mental wellness strategies. That is in addition to the $562.5 million in 2024-25 to support medically necessary services through the Non-Insured Health Benefits program, which is a program that supports a range of benefits for First Nations and Inuit people, including mental health services.

HEALTH

VACCINATION RATES

Hon. Sharon Burey: Honourable senators, my question is for the Government Representative in the Senate. I'm pleased to ask this question on May 1 — which is National Physicians' Day — and I'd like to thank Dr. Roumeliotis for pointing me to this question.

Canada grapples with a measles vaccine shortage amid a concerning surge of cases globally — including in Canada — and heightened demand. Across Canada, and in my province of Ontario, we're struggling to bridge the gap caused by missed routine vaccinations during the pandemic, with public health officials cautioning that resolving this issue could span several years. According to a recent report, only 60% of seven-year-olds are fully vaccinated against measles, mumps and varicella, marking a significant decline from the 82% to 86% coverage.

Senator Gold, what strategies and initiatives are being implemented by the government to address the decline in childhood vaccination rates and mitigate the long-term consequences?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question, senator. As we know, although the provinces and territories are, in fact, responsible for the distribution and delivery of vaccines, the federal government has launched the Immunization Partnership Fund. This fund helps support community-driven initiatives designed to close the gap amongst populations with lower vaccine uptake. Through this fund, programs such as the VIP Project receive funding to continue to improve and further develop the capacity of health care providers as vaccinators, vaccine promoters and evidence-informed vaccine communicators. This will help them continue to promote equitable respiratory and other childhood vaccine acceptance and uptake.

We know that vaccines save lives and should be distributed equitably and broadly in this country.

Senator Burey: According to the government's 2023 Adult National Immunization Coverage Survey, Canada is failing to meet its vaccination targets, leaving many vulnerable. A key issue hindering adult vaccination is widespread unawareness.

Senator Gold, what strategies is the government employing to disseminate vital information regarding the importance of vaccination to the public?

Senator Gold: Thank you. That's an important question. Through the fund to which I've referred, the government continues to invest in community initiatives to boost the uptake. Though I don't have time to list all of the projects, there are currently 53 ongoing projects across this country aimed at boosting vaccine acceptance. I should note, if I may, that the government has committed an additional $9.5 million to this fund for 2023 and 2024.

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): Leader, last October, the Supreme Court of Canada issued an opinion that said major elements of Bill C-69 — the job-killing "no more pipelines" act — were unconstitutional. At long last, in the recent budget, the Trudeau government broadly outlined their proposed changes in response to the opinion.

In the 2015 election, Justin Trudeau condemned the use of omnibus legislation and promised to end its practice. However, once in government, he quickly forgot about his promise. Leader, we learned on Monday that changes to the unconstitutional and anti-development Bill C-69 are being brought forward in another omnibus budget bill.

Why don't you want this studied as stand-alone legislation? Why are you cramming this into a budget bill?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question. The government took the Supreme Court decision very seriously, as it does with all Supreme Court decisions, because it respects the Constitution and will continue to do so. It brought forward the changes designed to ensure that a reoriented legislation satisfies the Constitution and follows the guidances provided by the Supreme Court.

As is our practice in this chamber, when we do receive the bill, it will be distributed to many committees who will have the opportunity to study it. I will invite all senators with a special interest in that subject to make sure that they are properly attuned to the committee work and can contribute properly to the study.

Senator Plett: In fact, the government does not take this very seriously. But I have good news, leader: There is already a bill before Parliament to fix this mess that this incompetent Trudeau government made with Bill C-69 — and that, senator, is Bill C-375 from Conservative MP Gérard Deltell. It recognizes provincial jurisdiction over natural resources, and removes duplication between federal and provincial environmental assets.

Will the Trudeau government support this bill?

Senator Gold: I'm not in a position to know whether the government has taken a definitive position on this bill, but, as is my practice, if and when the bill does come to this chamber and the government has a position on it, I will certainly be communicating that to you.

ANSWERS TO ORDER PAPER QUESTIONS TABLED

NATIONAL DEFENCE—ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY—PERSONNEL STATUS

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate) tabled the reply to Question No. 85, dated November 23, 2021, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding the Royal Canadian Navy.

NATIONAL DEFENCE—ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate) tabled the reply to Question No. 87, dated November 23, 2021, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding the Royal Military College of Canada.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS—RESIGNATION OF BORIS JOHNSON

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate) tabled the reply to Question No. 174, dated December 13, 2022, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding Global Affairs Canada and the resignation of Boris Johnson.

NATIONAL DEFENCE—CANADIAN ARMED FORCES—INITIATIVES

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate) tabled the reply to Question No. 175, dated December 13, 2022, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding the Department of National Defence.

HEALTH—FAMILY DOCTORS

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate) tabled the reply to Question No. 177, dated December 13, 2022, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding family doctors.

NATIONAL DEFENCE—KINGFISHER AIRCRAFT

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate) tabled the reply to Question No. 182, dated December 13, 2022, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding Kingfisher aircraft — National Defence.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT—KINGFISHER AIRCRAFT

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate) tabled the reply to Question No. 182, dated December 13, 2022, appearing on the

Order Paper and Notice Paper in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding Kingfisher aircraft — Public Services and Procurement Canada.

NATIONAL DEFENCE—ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY—
MEDICAL EMPLOYMENT LIMITATIONS

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate) tabled the reply to Question No. 212, dated February 16, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding the Royal Canadian Navy.

NATIONAL DEFENCE—CANADIAN ARMED FORCES—
PERSONNEL NUMBERS

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate) tabled the reply to Question No. 219, dated March 22, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding the Canadian Armed Forces.

EXPORT PROMOTION, INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT—
FORMER CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF INVEST IN CANADA

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate) tabled the reply to Question No. 231, dated May 30, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding the former CEO of Invest in Canada, Mr. Ian McKay — Global Affairs Canada.

PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE—FORMER CHIEF EXECUTIVE
OFFICER OF INVEST IN CANADA

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate) tabled the reply to Question No. 231, dated May 30, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding the former CEO of Invest in Canada, Mr. Ian McKay — Privy Council Office.

JUSTICE AND ATTORNEY GENERAL—2021 FEDERAL COURT CASE
FRASER V. CANADA

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate) tabled the reply to Question No. 239, dated September 19, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding the 2021 Federal Court of Canada case Fraser v. Canada (Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness).

PRIVY COUNCIL—DIPLOMATIC POSTS

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate) tabled the reply to Question No. 242, dated September 19, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding diplomatic posts.

NATIONAL DEFENCE—ANSWERS TO ORDER PAPER
QUESTION NO. 159

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate) tabled the reply to Question No. 243, dated September 19, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding the answers provided by the Department of National Defence to Senate *Order Paper* question No. 159 in the 1st Session of the 44th Parliament.

JUSTICE AND ATTORNEY GENERAL—
GENETIC NON-DISCRIMINATION ACT

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate) tabled the reply to Question No. 252, dated September 19, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding the *Genetic Non-Discrimination Act*.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT—
TRANSLATION BUREAU OPERATIONS

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate) tabled the reply to Question No. 314, dated February 29, 2024, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding Translation Bureau operations.

DELAYED ANSWERS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the answers to the following oral questions:

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on December 1, 2021, by the Honourable Senator Housakos, concerning the Independent Advisory Board for Senate Appointments.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on December 2, 2021, by the Honourable Senator Housakos, concerning the Independent Advisory Board for Senate Appointments.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on May 3, 2022, by the Honourable Senator Patterson (*Nunavut*), concerning the North Warning System.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on June 1, 2022, by the Honourable Senator Smith, concerning the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change — National Defence.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on June 1, 2022, by the Honourable Senator Smith, concerning the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change — Public Services and Procurement Canada.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on June 1, 2022, by the Honourable Senator Smith, concerning the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change — Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on June 8, 2022, by the Honourable Senator Petitclerc, concerning gender-based analysis.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on June 22, 2022, by the Honourable Senator Cordy, concerning the Independent External Comprehensive Review.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on December 6, 2022, by the Honourable Senator McPhedran, concerning the Independent External Comprehensive Review.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on December 13, 2022, by the Honourable Senator Carignan, P.C., concerning recommendations of the Commissioner of Official Languages.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on March 9, 2023, by the Honourable Senator Smith, concerning health transfers — Employment and Social Development Canada.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on March 9, 2023, by the Honourable Senator Smith, concerning health transfers — Health Canada.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on March 9, 2023, by the Honourable Senator Smith, concerning health transfers — Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.

PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE

INDEPENDENT ADVISORY BOARD FOR SENATE APPOINTMENTS

(*Response to question raised by the Honourable Leo Housakos on December 1, 2021*)

The Independent Advisory Board for Senate Appointments' report to the Prime Minister, covering the April 1, 2019 to August 1, 2021 period, was made public on the Board's website after it was submitted to the Prime Minister.

(*Response to question raised by the Honourable Leo Housakos on December 2, 2021*)

The Independent Advisory Board for Senate Appointments' report to the Prime Minister, covering the April 1, 2019 to August 1, 2021 period, was made public on the Board's website after it was submitted to the Prime Minister.

NATIONAL DEFENCE

NORTH WARNING SYSTEM

(*Response to question raised by the Honourable Dennis Glen Patterson on May 3, 2022*)

In June 2022, National Defence announced a plan to modernize Canada's North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) capabilities, supported by an investment of $38.6 billion over twenty years (accrual). This includes new investments for surveillance capabilities such as the Arctic and Polar Over-the-Horizon Radar, which will greatly enhance early warning and tracking of potential threats to North America. The plan also includes significant investment in upgrades to infrastructure needed to launch and sustain operations in Canada's North.

National Defence has engaged territorial, municipal, and Indigenous partners on initial infrastructure development plans and will continue consultations as projects mature to further build relations and enhance cooperation as we protect Canada's North. In April 2022, National Defence formally joined the Inuit Crown Partnership Committee to improve cooperation and collaboration with Inuit partners on sovereignty, defence, and security issues.

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

PAN-CANADIAN FRAMEWORK ON CLEAN GROWTH AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(*Response to question raised by the Honourable Larry W. Smith on June 1, 2022*)

National Defence is committed to reducing its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Since 2005, the Department has reduced its emissions by 36% (below 2005 levels) and is on track to reach 40% GHG reduction by 2025.

National Defence recognizes that purchasing green power is an important part of our plan to reach net zero. That is why, through Canada's Power Purchase Agreements, National Defence expects to be purchasing 100% green power by 2025. In fact, in the fiscal year 2022–2023, 72% of all electricity used at bases and wings in provinces with carbon-intensive electrical grids came from clean sources.

To achieve this objective by 2025, National Defence has established green power purchase agreements in Alberta and Saskatchewan and continues to pursue opportunities to secure clean electricity for our installations in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

The Defence Climate and Sustainability Strategy (DCSS), launched in November 2023, includes a commitment that 100% of National Defence's conventional light-duty vehicle fleet purchases will be zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs) or hybrid when available, with a ZEV procurement target of 50% by 2027.

As of 2022-2023, 86% of commercial light-duty vehicles purchased were ZEVs or hybrid (29% were ZEVs).

(*Response to question raised by the Honourable Larry W. Smith on June 1, 2022*)

Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC):

In her 2019 Ministerial Mandate Letter, the Minister of Public Services and Procurement was tasked with developing a strategy to power federal buildings with 100% clean electricity. PSPC is also tasked to be a first purchaser to help support the growth of new clean electricity/ renewable power sources as they become available while respecting the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change timeline.

Currently, more than 92.8% of electricity purchased by PSPC is clean electricity. To achieve the 100% commitment, PSPC's strategy, in partnership with the Treasury Board Secretariat, is to secure local clean electricity opportunities from new infrastructure. Through collaboration with provincial regulators and electricity utility companies, or through competitive tenders in jurisdictions where the electricity market is deregulated, local opportunities have materialized in Alberta and Saskatchewan with ongoing work occurring in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick An initiative is also ongoing to procure Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) at a national scale for jurisdictions where local opportunities are not available.

(*Response to question raised by the Honourable Larry W. Smith on June 1, 2022*)

Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS):

The following response applies as of the date of the question:

Through the Greening Government Strategy, the Government of Canada has committed to make its conventional light duty fleet greener, and transition to 100% zero emission vehicles (ZEVs) by 2030. On this pathway, the Government has committed that at least 75% of its new purchases will be hybrid electric vehicles (HEVs) or ZEVs where suitable options are available and considering operational feasibility.

While the rate of ZEV adoption has been constrained by the market availability and supply of suitable vehicles that meet operational requirements, ZEV purchases will increase rapidly as more suitable options become available in the market over the next one to three years, making the 2030 target achievable. Departments have work underway in several areas (such as charging infrastructure, life-cycle costing) to chart the path to an electrified fleet by 2030. In addition, the Greening Government Strategy indicates that where necessary, TBS may exempt particular vehicle groups or locations where there are no suitable ZEV options available that meet operational requirements.

JUSTICE

GENDER-BASED ANALYSIS

(*Response to question raised by the Honourable Chantal Petitclerc on June 8, 2022*)

Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+) is mandatory in all federal budget proposals, Treasury Board Submissions as well as Memoranda to Cabinet. Lead ministers are required to present a Memorandum to Cabinet, informed by GBA+, before introducing government legislation. The analysis included in Memoranda to Cabinet is subject to Cabinet confidence.

The *Canadian Gender Budgeting Act* states the government policy to make information available to the public on the impacts of Government decisions in terms of gender and diversity to enhance transparency and accountability. Since 2019, all federal budgets have included impact reports on gender and diversity.

To further advance this goal, Budget 2021 provided $172 million over five years, with $36.3 million ongoing, to Statistics Canada to implement a Disaggregated Data Action Plan to fill data and knowledge gaps. This funding will support more representative data collection, enhance statistics on diverse populations, which will help inform parliamentarians' review of legislation.

In response to the recent Office of the Auditor General audit on GBA+, Women and Gender Equality Canada, with the support of the Treasury Board Secretariat and the Privy Council Office, committed to improve monitoring and public reporting on the status of GBA+ implementation across government.

NATIONAL DEFENCE

INDEPENDENT EXTERNAL COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW

(*Response to question raised by the Honourable Jane Cordy on June 22, 2022*)

100 percent of *Criminal Code* sexual offence charges are now being laid in the civilian justice system. No new *Criminal Code* sexual offence charges are being adjudicated in the military justice system. Military Police (MP), under the direction of the Canadian Forces Provost Marshal, continue to work to refer applicable cases to civilian policing partners for investigation.

A file may not be referred in some cases. For instance, some victims request a military police investigation. Should the MP investigation result in the laying of charges of sexual

assault or other criminal offences of a sexual nature, these charges will be laid within the civilian justice system and not the military justice system.

On March 21, 2024, the Minister of National Defence introduced Bill C-66 to amend the *National Defence Act* that would modernize the military justice system and advance culture change within the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). The proposed legislation includes removing the CAF's investigative and prosecutorial jurisdiction over *Criminal Code* sexual offences committed in Canada, thereby addressing Recommendation 5 of the *Independent External Comprehensive Review.* Recommendation 5 is the only recommendation that can exclusively be implemented through legislation.

(*Response to question raised by the Honourable Marilou McPhedran on December 6, 2022*)

On December 13, 2022, the Minister of National Defence tabled a report in Parliament in response to former Supreme Court Justice Arbour's recommendations in the Independent External Comprehensive Review (IECR). The Minister accepted all 48 recommendations and directed National Defence to move forward on all of them.

Additionally, on November 20, 2023, the Minister of National Defence released the second biannual status report authored by External Monitor, Jocelyne Therrien. The Report provides an external overview of the work underway by the Department of National Defence (DND) and the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) to implement the IECR recommendations.

Both reports are available online.

On March 21, 2024, the Minister of National Defence introduced Bill C-66 to amend the *National Defence Act* that would modernize the military justice system and advance culture change within DND and CAF by addressing key recommendations made by former Supreme Court Justices Arbour and Fish.

The proposed legislation includes:

Removing the CAF's investigative and prosecutorial jurisdiction over *Criminal Code* sexual offences committed in Canada, thereby addressing Recommendation 5 of the IECR.

Addressing eight recommendations (2, 7, 8, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16) from the report by former Supreme Court Justice Fish.

CANADIAN HERITAGE

RECOMMENDATIONS OF COMMISSIONER OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

(*Response to question raised by the Honourable Claude Carignan on December 13, 2022*)

The federal government is committed to honoring the Official Languages Act and the associated regulations.

Our two official languages are an asset for all Canadians. We are the first federal government to recognize that French is faces challenges across Canada, including in Quebec. The federal government must play a key role in protecting and promoting French. This is why the federal Government modernized the Official Languages Act.

The federal government understands that we need a strong Official Languages Act to protect the Official Language rights of all Canadians. That's why our modernization of the Official Languages Act expanded the powers of the Official Languages Commissioner, including giving them the ability to impose administrative monetary penalties on companies that work with the traveling public and given them order-making powers. By giving the Official Languages Commissioner more tools, we're ensuring they can continue to play a vital role in protecting and promoting both our Official Languages.

HEALTH

HEALTH TRANSFERS

(*Response to question raised by the Honourable Larry W. Smith on March 9, 2023*)

Foreign credential recognition (FCR) and licensing for regulated occupations (e.g., nurses, physicians and dentists) is a provincial and territorial responsibility. Across Canada, it is estimated that there are more than 600 regulators overseeing more than 275 regulated occupations.

The Foreign Credential Recognition Program (FCRP) supports the labour market integration of skilled newcomers by funding provinces and territories, regulatory authorities, and other organizations to improve and ensure the efficiency of FCR processes; provide loans and support services to help skilled newcomers navigate the FCR process; and provide employment supports such as training, work placements, wage subsidies, and mentoring to help skilled newcomers gain Canadian work experience.

Since 2015, the FCRP has invested nearly $270 million in 115 projects to support skilled newcomers. Budget 2022 provided the FCRP an additional $115 million over five years, with $30 million ongoing, to support up to 11,000 internationally trained professionals annually. The Program has invested nearly $114 million in 36 projects focusing on the labour market integration of internationally educated health professionals. Additionally, as of January 2024, over $20 million in FCR loans have been issued—two thirds of the borrowers were in the health sector.

(*Response to question raised by the Honourable Larry W. Smith on March 9, 2023*)

Health Canada

At their October 2023 meeting, federal, provincial, and territorial (FPT) Health Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to supporting Canada's health workforce, with a focus on retention, domestic education supply and demand, foreign credential recognition for internationally educated health professionals (IEHPs), labour mobility, and health workforce and data planning. This included a commitment to work with PT medical regulatory authorities to strive to provide licensure to qualified physicians and nurses within 90 days once source verification of credentials is confirmed and immigration approvals are in place, and a commitment to expedite pathways to licensure for physicians and nurses, as well as create and leverage alternate pathways to get IEHPs in the health workforce faster.

Health Canada conducted a scan of five PT medical regulatory authorities to understand licensure processes for international medical graduates, and found that these jurisdictions are meeting the 90-day service standard for a licencing decision for qualified physicians. However additional factors can delay an IEHP's ability to begin working in the health sector, including obtaining required documentation, or immigration decisions. Discussions are underway with all PTs and other stakeholders to confirm the 90-day service standard for licencing decisions for physicians and for nurses.

(*Response to question raised by the Honourable Larry W. Smith on March 9, 2023*)

Insofar as Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) is concerned:

IRCC is taking action to support Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC), and working with provinces and territories (PTs), in fulfilling the Minister's commitment to "continue to work with provinces, territories and regulatory bodies to improve foreign credential recognition (FCR)." The Department's work focuses on improving newcomers' awareness of FCR processes and supports in accessing regulated professions in the labour market. Specifically, IRCC updated the information provided to Express Entry clients on what to expect if they want to work in a regulated profession and where to seek support. In spring 2023, IRCC published a factsheet to help newcomers learn how to start FCR processes before arrival in Canada. Collaboration with partners is ongoing to examine ways to support newcomers in navigating FCR processes.

These actions complement existing Settlement Programming, which supports the economic integration of newcomers, and includes sector-specific employment-related services, including for internationally educated nurses and early childhood educators.

IRCC also supports efforts by PTs to coordinate FCR and selection processes for newcomers through their Provincial Nominee Programs. For example, IRCC worked with Saskatchewan and Manitoba recently to address duplication in language testing for nurses to streamline the immigration process, allowing these candidates to begin working sooner.

• (1500)

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 4-13(3), I would like to inform the Senate that as we proceed with Government Business, the Senate will address the items in the following order: Motion No. 165, followed by all remaining items in the order that they appear on the Order Paper.

RULES, PROCEDURES AND THE RIGHTS OF PARLIAMENT

MOTION TO AMEND THE *RULES OF THE SENATE*—DEBATE

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Gold, P.C., seconded by the Honourable Senator LaBoucane-Benson:

That the *Rules of the Senate* be amended:

1. by replacing the words "Leader of the Government" by the words "Leader or Representative of the Government" in rules 2-4(2), 3-6(2), 4-3(1), 4-8(1)(a), 5-7(m), 6-5(1)(b), 12-5(a), 12-23(2) and (3), and 14-1(2);

2. in rules 3-3(1) and (2), 4-2(8)(b), and 7-4(2), by replacing the words “6 p.m.” by the words “7 p.m.” in the marginal notes, as appropriate, and the text of the rules;

3. in rule 4-2(2), by replacing the number 15 by the number 18 in the marginal note and the text of the rule;

4. in rule 4-2(8)(a), by replacing the words “At the request of a whip or the designated representative of a recognized parliamentary group” by the words “At the request of a whip, liaison, or the designated representative of a recognized party or recognized parliamentary group”;

5. by:

(a) replacing rules 4-9 and 4-10 by the following:

“***Delayed Answers and Written Questions***

Delayed answers to oral questions
4-9. (1) When responding to an oral question during Question Period, a Senator may indicate that a delayed answer will be provided in writing pursuant to the terms of this rule.

Written questions
4-9. (2) Subject to subsection (5), a Senator may submit a written question to the Government relating to public affairs by sending it in writing to the Clerk if either:

(a) a written answer is requested; or

(b) the question seeks statistical information or other information not readily available.

Publication of written questions
4-9. (3) Upon receipt of a written question, the Clerk shall have it published in the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* on the day following receipt and subsequently on the first sitting day of each week until the earlier of the following:

(a) an answer is tabled;

(b) a written explanation why an answer has not been provided is tabled;

(c) the question is withdrawn; or

(d) the expiration of the 60-day period provided for in this rule for an answer or explanation.

Withdrawal of a written question
4-9. (4) The Senator who submitted a written question may subsequently withdraw it by writing to the Clerk, who shall have a note to that effect included in the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* the next time the question would have been published there.

Limit on number of written questions
4-9. (5) A Senator shall not submit a written question if they already have four such questions that are to be published in the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* under the provisions of subsection (3).

Answer within 60 days
4-9. (6) Within 60 calendar days of the Leader or Representative of the Government, or a Senator who is a minister, indicating that a delayed answer will be provided to an oral question pursuant to the terms of this rule, or of a written question first appearing in the *Order Paper and Notice Paper*, the Leader or Representative of the Government, or the Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy of the Government, shall table either the Government’s answer to the question or a written explanation why an answer has not been provided.

Tabling
4-9. (7) An answer or explanation to be provided under this rule may be tabled either during Delayed Answers, which shall be called at the end of Question Period, or by being deposited with the Clerk. A copy of any such tabled document shall be provided to the Senator who asked the question, and the delayed answer to an oral question shall be printed in the *Debates of the Senate* of the date the tabling is recorded in the *Journals of the Senate*.

Failure to respond or provide explanation
4-9. (8) If the Government has tabled neither an answer nor an explanation of why an answer has not been provided within the 60-day period provided for under this rule, the absence of an answer shall be deemed referred to the Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures and the Rights of Parliament for consideration and report, with this referral being recorded in the *Journals of the Senate* as soon as possible thereafter.”; and

(b) renumbering current rules 4-11 to 4-16 as rules 4-10 to 4-15;

6. in current rule 4-13(3), by replacing the words “such sequence as the Leader or the Deputy Leader of the Government shall determine” by the words “such sequence as the Leader or Representative of the Government, or the Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy of the Government shall determine”;

7. by replacing rule 6-3(1) by the following:

“Time limits for speakers
6-3. (1) Except as otherwise provided:

Certain Leaders and Facilitators
(a) the Leader or Representative of the Government, the Leader of the Opposition, and the leader or facilitator of the recognized party or recognized parliamentary group with the most members, other than, if applicable, the recognized parties or recognized parliamentary groups to which either the

Leader or Representative of the Government, or the Leader of the Opposition belongs, shall be allowed unlimited time for debate;

Other Leaders and Facilitators
(b) leaders and facilitators, other than those provided for in paragraph (a), shall be allowed up to 45 minutes for debate;

Sponsor of bill
(c) the sponsor of a bill, if not one of the Senators provided for in paragraph (a), shall be allowed up to 45 minutes for debate at second and third reading;

Critic of bill
(d) the critic of a bill, if not one of the Senators provided for in paragraph (a), shall be allowed up to 45 minutes for debate at second and third reading;

Designated Senators
(e) one other Senator designated separately by the leader or facilitator of each recognized party or recognized parliamentary group, except for the recognized party or recognized parliamentary group of the sponsor and critic, shall be allowed up to 45 minutes for debate at second and third reading; and

Others
(f) other Senators shall speak for no more than 15 minutes in debate.";

8. by replacing rules 7-1(1) and (2) by the following:

"Agreement to allocate time
7-1. (1) At any time during a sitting, the Leader or Representative of the Government, or the Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy of the Government may state that they have reached an agreement with the representatives of the recognized parties and the recognized parliamentary groups to allocate a specified number of days or hours either:

(a) for one or more stages of consideration of a government bill, including the committee stage; or

(b) for consideration of another item of Government Business by the Senate or a committee.

Motion on agreement to allocate time
7-1. (2) The Leader or Representative of the Government, or the Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy of the Government may then, without notice, propose a motion based on the agreement.";

9. by replacing rules 7-2(1) and (2) by the following:

"No agreement to allocate time
7-2. (1) At any time during a sitting, the Leader or Representative of the Government, or the Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy of the Government may state that they have failed to reach an agreement with the representatives of the recognized parties and the recognized parliamentary groups to allocate time to conclude an adjourned debate on either:

(a) any stage of consideration of a government bill, including the committee stage; or

(b) another item of Government Business.

Notice of motion to allocate time
7-2. (2) After stating that there is no agreement on time allocation, the Leader or Representative of the Government, or the Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy of the Government may give notice of a motion to allocate time for the adjourned debate, including the committee stage of a bill. The motion shall specify the number of days or hours to be allocated.";

10. by replacing rule 7-3(1)(f) by the following:

"(f) Senators may speak for a maximum of 10 minutes each, provided that the Leader or Representative of the Government, the Leader of the Opposition, and the leader or facilitator of any other recognized party or recognized parliamentary group may each speak for up to 20 minutes;";

11. in rule 7-3(2), by deleting the words "at 6 p.m." and the words "at 8 p.m.";

12. in rule 7-4(5)(d), by replacing the words "the Government Whip" by the words "the Government Whip or Liaison";

13. by replacing rules 9-5(1) to (3) by the following:

"(1) The Speaker shall ask the Government Whip or Liaison, the Opposition Whip, and the whips or liaisons of the three recognized parties or recognized parliamentary groups with the most members, other than, if applicable, the recognized parties or recognized parliamentary groups to which either the Government Whip or Liaison, or the Opposition Whip belongs, if there is an agreement on the length of time the bells shall ring. If a whip or liaison is absent, that whip or liaison's leader or facilitator may designate a Senator to act for this purpose.

(2) The time agreed to shall not be more than 60 minutes.

(3) With leave of the Senate, this agreement on the length of the bells shall constitute an order to sound the bells for that length of time.";

14. by replacing rule 9-10(1) by the following:

"Deferral of standing vote
9-10. (1) Except as provided in subsection (5) and elsewhere in these Rules, when a standing vote has been requested on a question that is debatable, the Government Whip or Liaison, the Opposition Whip, or the whip or liaison of any of the three recognized parties or recognized parliamentary groups with the

most members, other than, if applicable, the recognized parties or recognized parliamentary groups to which either the Government Whip or Liaison, or the Opposition Whip belongs, may defer the vote.";

15. by replacing rule 9-10(4) by the following:

"Vote deferred to Friday
9-10. (4) Except as otherwise provided, if a vote has been deferred to a Friday:

(a) the Government Whip or Liaison may, at any time during a sitting, further defer the vote to 5:30 p.m. on the next sitting day if it is on an item of Government Business; and

(b) the Government Whip or Liaison, the Opposition Whip, or the whip or liaison of any of the three recognized parties or recognized parliamentary groups with the most members, other than, if applicable, the recognized parties or recognized parliamentary groups to which either the Government Whip or Liaison, or the Opposition Whip belongs, may, at any time during a sitting, further defer the vote to 5:30 p.m. on the next sitting day if it is on an item of Other Business.";

16. by replacing rule 10-11(2)(a) by the following:

"(a) by the Leader or Representative of the Government, or the Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy of the Government, at any time during a sitting; or";

17. by:

(a) replacing rule 12-3(3) by the following:

"Ex officio members
12-3. (3) In addition to the membership provided for in subsections (1) and (2), and subject to the provisions of subsection (4), the Leader or Representative of the Government, the Leader of the Opposition, and the leaders or facilitators of the three recognized parties or recognized parliamentary groups with the most members, other than, if applicable, the recognized parties or recognized parliamentary groups to which either the Leader or Representative of the Government, or the Leader of the Opposition belongs, are ex officio members of all committees except the Standing Committee on Ethics and Conflict of Interest for Senators, the Standing Committee on Audit and Oversight, and the joint committees. For the purposes of this provision, in case of absence, the Leader or Representative of the Government is replaced by the Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy of the Government, the Leader of the Opposition is replaced by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, and the leader or facilitator of any other recognized party or recognized parliamentary group is replaced by that Senator's deputy leader or deputy facilitator.

Ex officio members voting
12-3. (4) Of the ex officio members of committees provided for in subsection (3), only the Leader or Representative of the Government, and the Leader of the Opposition, or, in their absence, their respective deputies, shall have the right to vote."; and

(b) renumbering current rule 12-3(4) as rule 12-3(5);

18. by replacing rule 12-8(2) by the following:

"Service fee proposal
12-8. (2) When the Leader or Representative of the Government, or the Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy of the Government tables a service fee proposal, it is deemed referred to the standing or special committee designated by them following consultations with the Leader or Deputy Leader of the Opposition, and the leader or facilitator of any other recognized party or recognized parliamentary group, or the designate of such a leader or facilitator.";

19. by replacing rule 12-18(2) by the following:

"Meetings on days the Senate is adjourned
12-18. (2) Except as provided in subsection (3) and elsewhere in these Rules, a Senate committee may meet:

(a) when the Senate is adjourned for more than a day but less than a week, provided that notice was given to the members of the committee one day before the Senate adjourned;

(b) on a Monday the Senate does not sit that precedes a Tuesday on which the Senate is scheduled to sit; or

(c) during other periods the Senate is adjourned and that are not covered by the above provisions, provided that the meeting was either:

(i) by order of the Senate, or

(ii) with the agreement, in response to a request from the chair and deputy chair, of a majority of the following Senators, or their designates: the Leader or Representative of the Government, the Leader of the Opposition, and the leaders or facilitators of the three recognized parties or recognized parliamentary groups with the most members, other than, if applicable, the recognized parties or recognized parliamentary groups to which either the Leader or Representative of the Government, or the Leader of the Opposition belongs.";

20. by replacing rule 12-26(1) by the following:

"Appointment of committee
12-26. (1) As soon as practicable at the beginning of each session, the Leader or Representative of the Government shall move a motion, seconded by the Leader of the Opposition, and the leader or facilitator of

the recognized party or recognized parliamentary group with the most members, other than, if applicable, the recognized parties or recognized parliamentary groups to which either the Leader or Representative of the Government, or the Leader of the Opposition belongs, on the membership of the Standing Committee on Ethics and Conflict of Interest for Senators. This motion shall be deemed adopted without debate or vote, and a similar motion shall be moved for any substitutions in the membership of the committee.";

21. in rule 14-1(1), by replacing the words "Leader or Deputy Leader of the Government" by the words "Leader or Representative of the Government, or Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy of the Government";

22. in rule 16-1(8), by replacing the words "Leader or Deputy Leader of the Government" by the words "Leader or Representative of the Government, or Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy of the Government", both times they appear; and

23. in Appendix I:

(a) in the definition of "Critic of a bill", by replacing the words "Leader or Deputy Leader of the Government" by the words "Leader or Representative of the Government, or Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy of the Government";

(b) by replacing the definition of "Deputy Leader of the Government" by the following:

"**Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy of the Government**
The Senator who acts as the second to the Leader or Representative of the Government and who is normally responsible for the management of Government business on the floor of the Senate. The Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy is also generally responsible for negotiating the daily agenda of business with the Opposition and other recognized parties and recognized parliamentary groups. In the absence of the Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy, the Government Leader or Government Representative may designate another Senator to perform the role. The full title is "Deputy Leader of the Government in the Senate" or "Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate". (*Leader adjoint ou coordonnateur législatif du gouvernement*)";

(c) in the definition of "Evening suspension", by replacing the words "between 6 and 8 p.m." by the words "between 7 and 8 p.m.";

(d) in the definition of "Government Business", by replacing the words "Leader of the Government or the Deputy Leader" by the words "Leader or Representative of the Government, or the Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy of the Government";

(e) by replacing the definition of "Government Leader" by the following:

"**Government Leader**
See "Leader or Representative of the Government". (*Leader du gouvernement*)";

(f) by replacing the definition of "Government Whip" by the following:

"**Government Whip or Liaison**
The Senator responsible for ensuring the presence of an adequate number of Senators of the Government party in the Senate for purposes such as quorum and the taking of votes, and to whom the Leader or Representative of the Government normally delegates responsibility for managing the substitution of Government members on committees as appropriate. The Government Whip or Liaison may be responsible for outreach on Government Business in the Senate. (*Whip ou agent de liaison du gouvernement*)";

(g) by replacing the definition of "Leader of the Government, or Government Leader" by the following:

"**Leader or Representative of the Government**
The Senator who acts as the head of the Senators belonging to the Government party, or who is appointed by the Government to represent the Government in the Senate without affiliation to a Government party. In modern practice, the Leader or Representative of the Government is normally sworn in as a member of the King's Privy Council for Canada and can be a member of Cabinet. The full title is "Leader of the Government in the Senate" or "Government Representative in the Senate". (*Leader ou représentant du gouvernement*)";

(h) by replacing the definition of "Ordinary procedure for determining the duration of bells" by the following:

"**Ordinary procedure for determining duration of bells**
The Speaker asks the Government Whip or Liaison, the Opposition Whip, and the whips or liaisons of the three largest recognized parties or recognized parliamentary groups, other than, if applicable, the recognized parties or recognized parliamentary groups to which either the Government Whip or Liaison, or the Opposition Whip belongs, if there is an agreement on the length of time, not to exceed 60 minutes, the bells shall ring. With leave of the Senate, this agreement constitutes an order to sound the bells for the agreed length of time, but in the absence of either agreement or leave, the bells ring

for 60 minutes. In some cases provided for in the Rules, this procedure is not followed, with the bells ringing for shorter periods of time. (*Procédure ordinaire pour déterminer la durée de la sonnerie*)";

(i) in the definition of "Public bill", under "Bill", by replacing the words "(introduced by a Cabinet Minister or in a Minister's name) or a non-Government bill (one introduced by a Senator who is not a Cabinet Minister)" by the words "(introduced by a Cabinet Minister, in a Minister's name, or by or on behalf of the Leader or Representative of the Government if that Senator is not a minister) or a non-Government bill (one that is not a Government bill)";

(j) by replacing the definition of "Senator who is a minister" by the following:

"**Senator who is a minister**
A Senator who is a member of the Cabinet. The Leader or Representative of the Government is generally sworn in as a member of the King's Privy Council for Canada and may be a member of Cabinet. (*Sénateur-ministre*)";

(k) in the definition of "Sponsor of a bill", by replacing the words "the sponsor will typically be a government member" by the words "the sponsor is designated by the Leader or Representative of the Government"; and

(l) by adding the following new definitions in alphabetical order:

(i) "**Deputy Leader or Deputy Facilitator**
The Senator who acts as the second to the leader or facilitator of a recognized party or recognized parliamentary group, other than, if applicable, the recognized parties or recognized parliamentary groups to which either the Leader or Representative of the Government, or the Leader of the Opposition belongs. (*Leader adjoint ou facilitateur adjoint*)";

(ii) "**Government Liaison**
See "Government Whip or Liaison". (*Agent de liaison du gouvernement*)";

(iii) "**Government Representative**
See "Leader or Representative of the Government". (*Représentant du gouvernement*)"**;**

(iv) "**Leader of the Government**
See "Leader or Representative of the Government". (*Leader du gouvernement*)"**;**

(v) "**Legislative Deputy of the Government**
See "Deputy Leader or Legislative Deputy of the Government". (*Coordonateur législatif du gouvernement*)"; and

(vi) "**Representative of the Government**
See "Leader or Representative of the Government". (*Représentant du gouvernement*)";

That all cross references and lists of exceptions in the Rules be updated as required by these changes, but otherwise remain unchanged;

That, in relation to the amendments to current rules 4-9 and 4-10, provided for in point 5 above:

1. new rule 4-9(5) not apply to any written question submitted before the adoption of this motion, so that only written questions submitted after the adoption of this motion are counted as if subject to that provision;

2. the provisions of the new rules have effect from the time of the adoption of this motion in relation to questions arising from that time forward, subject to point 3 below; and

3. the provisions of the new rules relating to the 60-day period for answering written questions, tabling, and a failure to respond or provide an explanation take effect, in relation to written questions submitted before the adoption of this motion, on the date that is six months after the adoption of this motion as if that were the date on which these questions were submitted, provided that if the current session ends before the expiration of this six month period, these elements of the new rules take effect on the last day of the current session; and

That, within 30 days that the Senate sits after the adoption of this motion, the Standing Committee on Ethics and Conflict of Interest for Senators present a report to the Senate proposing changes to the *Ethics and Conflict of Interest Code for Senators* to take account of the amendments to rule 12-26(1) provided for in point 20 above.

Hon. Yuen Pau Woo: Honourable senators, this motion does not go far enough in advancing the goal of a less partisan, more independent Senate, so there is more work to be done following its passage. After all, the point of a more independent, less partisan Senate is not just about how we do our work and what makes us feel good. It is much more about the credibility and legitimacy of our institution for generations to come.

I'm not so naive as to think that a Senate made up entirely of independent members will, in and of itself, make Canadians love the Upper House, but I am sure that a return to partisan duopoly will do the opposite. Let's pass this motion quickly and use it as the basis to further modernize and improve the Senate of Canada.

Thank you.

Hon. Denise Batters: Honourable senators, I rise today to speak to Government Motion No. 165. This motion outlines significant changes to the Senate Rules.

Make no mistake, the purpose of this motion is to try to destroy the Conservative opposition in the Senate. That has been this government's aim in this place for the past eight and a half years. Senator Gold suggests that Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his office had nothing to do with this motion. He wants us to believe it came out of his own "non-affiliated" head. But why, then, was this proposal introduced as a government motion by the Leader of the Government in the Senate? There is serious weight behind this initiative.

And why now? The Trudeau government is introducing these wide-ranging changes to the Senate Rules in its scandal-plagued dying days. The Liberals are flailing in the polls, and this is their last-ditch attempt to cement their power before the government changes. It is not a coincidence that the government is ramming through this proposal before the Senate now, when Prime Minister Trudeau has appointed more than 80 senators and our opposition Conservative caucus is down to 13 — and soon to be 12 — members.

The changes to the Rules in this motion are not generally new proposals. They have been suggested and studied by the Senate many times before, in Senator Harder's "discussion" papers, through the Senate Modernization Committee and through motions introduced by Senators Woo and Tannas. The government has tried and failed to push these changes through the Senate Rules Committee. That didn't work, so now the government is trying to force them through the Senate Chamber, where a vast majority of senators have been appointed by Prime Minister Trudeau.

The fallacy on which the Trudeau government has based its entire dismantling of the Senate structure is that Trudeau-appointed senators are independent and non-partisan. In fact, within the ranks of these Senate appointees are maximum donors to the Liberal Party, a former 20-year Liberal MP, a former Liberal premier, Liberal Party executive members, Trudeau Foundation alumni and even the former transition head of the Trudeau Government.

The so-called independent Senate appointment panels aren't independent either. These panels are also filled with more people named to the position by the Trudeau PMO, or Prime Minister's Office: more Liberal donors, Trudeau Foundation alumni, et cetera. At this point, the sometimes empty panels don't even bother to tell Canadians who's recommending their suggested appointments. The PMO picks the Senate appointment panels and the PMO picks the senators. The PMO has even admitted they use the Liberal Party database, Liberalist, for their Senate appointment short lists.

It is on this backdrop of smoke and mirrors that the Trudeau government has proposed this motion, which would create an entrenched Trudeau government-appointed senator majority and trample the rights of the opposition, whose stated duty is to challenge the government.

This government motion, Motion No. 165, will dilute the power of the opposition by giving all other Senate groups the same powers — for example, equal speaking time limits for leaders, time allocation, agreement on bells for votes, et cetera.

In the Westminster system, the government's role is to propose and try to pass their policy agenda. The opposition's role is to oppose it, so that all aspects of every piece of legislation are carefully considered from all viewpoints. This is especially important in the Senate, where our role is to provide sober second thought before legislation is passed into law.

The other groups in the Senate don't really have a parliamentary role. In fact, the Senate is now made up of a huge majority of senators who were appointed by Justin Trudeau. These groups claim they are also opposition, although 95% of the time they vote with the Trudeau government. Let's remember — fundamentally, "opposition" means "to oppose."

Senators appointed by a previous prime minister obviously don't have a similar allegiance to the sitting Prime Minister, and we form the opposition as the Conservative caucus. But most of the senators in the other groups — the Independent Senators Group, the Canadian Senators Group and the Progressive Senate Group — were appointed by Justin Trudeau, meaning he is essentially appointing his own opposition. Honourable senators, this is a perversion of democracy and upends more than 150 years of Canadian parliamentary tradition.

According to the current Rules, for most speeches in the Senate, the Leader of the Government and the Leader of the Opposition have unlimited time to speak and take questions. This is because the government leader explains the reasons why a piece of legislation is important to the government's agenda, and the government is held accountable by answering questions about it. The Senate Leader of the Opposition gets unlimited speaking time to challenge the government, critique the legislation and ensure the legislation is the best that it can be. Under the rule changes proposed by the government in this motion, the leader of the Independent Senators Group — currently the largest Senate group — would also receive unlimited time to speak and take questions, while other group leaders would each get 45 minutes. For what purpose? What are those senators' parliamentary roles?

• (1510)

Traditionally, senators appointed by a prime minister serve in his or her government caucus. However, even if they don't, it is reasonable to expect that senators appointed by a prime minister would be ideologically aligned with that prime minister's political viewpoint. The Senate is, after all, a political institution.

Under the current system, senators appointed by Prime Minister Trudeau are ideologically aligned but don't sit in the government national caucus and therefore don't know the intricacies of how or why that legislative policy developed. What are the leaders of these groups going to talk about for 45 minutes or for an unlimited time? They can't inform on behalf of the government; they can't answer questions on behalf of the government. What is the purpose? If the Independent Senators Group leader is actually acting as the government leader, then just give her the job. It hearkens back to the time when it was unclear who was the real Senate government leader, Senator Harder or Senator Woo.

Similarly, Senator Gold's motion would give senators from the non-government and non-opposition benches the label of "designated senators" on bills to mimic the role of critics on legislation. Under this change, a designated senator from every group — not limited to five — would get the opportunity to deliver a 45-minute speech at second and third reading of every bill. Of course, as Senator Quinn noted previously, the government won't give a briefing to the designated senators as they would for the critic of the bill, so what exactly would they have to talk about for 45 minutes?

Senate rule changes have never been made unilaterally in more than 150 years. This has always — rightfully — been done by consensus. It is appalling that the Senate's government leader is now trying to dance around the definition of "consensus" to essentially destroy the opposition. The Rules Committee, where I'm the Deputy Chair, recently studied the issue of equity of groups. The Trudeau-appointed senators failed to achieve consensus on several issues, so the government is now circumventing the Rules Committee and bringing these contentious issues to the Senate through this motion instead.

Our Conservative opposition members of the Rules Committee did, in fact, agree to many minor rule changes. We tried to separate out these agreed-upon changes from the larger controversial issues which did not have consensus. We offered to move ahead with the implementation of these smaller changes. I actually tried two or three times at Rules Committee. But Trudeau-appointed senators refused to agree. They insisted on all or nothing. That was 18 months ago. Now Senator Gold is trying to find wiggle room around the term "consensus," claiming it does not require unanimity. The Trudeau government is attempting a last-ditch effort to change the Rules during their final days in power. This is their attempt to destroy the opposition, which is a key part of our democracy that has existed for 156 years in Canada and is a group that plays a critical, historical role to challenge the government.

This government motion would also change the Senate Rules regarding written questions submitted to the government. Senator Gold wants us to believe that this is the government delivering accountability. However, as with most Trudeau government manœuvres in Parliament, this motion will deliver no such thing. The government will limit written questions to only four per senator. They say this is similar to the House of Commons Standing Orders. The thing is, the opposition in the Senate only has 13 senators; the opposition in the House of Commons has about 120 MPs. Furthermore, in the House of Commons the government has 45 days to answer, but in the Senate they would have 60 days — with no explanation given as to why senators are treated like second-class citizens. The House of Commons and the Senate are supposed to be equal and complementary chambers.

This motion gives the government the option of not even giving an answer to a written question so long as they provide an explanation for the lack of an answer. Lord knows the government can be creative with that. This is just one other way for them to dodge accountability. In fact, the process the government is proposing for written questions provides an incentive for them to delay providing a response for as long as possible. When a senator receives a reply, they can submit another question — to a maximum of four. Therefore, the longer it takes the government to reply, the fewer questions they will have to answer. It defeats the purpose of imposing a time limit for the government response in the first place.

This motion proposes that if an answer is not tabled within the time limit, the matter would be passed to the Senate Rules Committee. Once again, I ask, "Why?" The Rules Committee certainly wouldn't be able to provide a meaningful answer to a question on content. In the House of Commons, these issues are passed on to the relevant standing committee, where committee members would at least have a fighting chance of seeking or receiving a response. In both the Senate and the House of Commons, there is no real recourse if the answer is meaningless or wrong, as with the answer I recently received and raised in Senate Question Period.

This Trudeau government motion will also have serious consequences on the process for invoking time allocation, already a drastic government tool for truncating debate. According to Motion No. 165, during a government motion on invoking time allocation, each of the group leaders will get 20 minutes to speak and take questions. The entire debate is capped at two-and-a-half hours. That means that the other 100 senators not in leadership positions will barely have time to speak at all. This runs counter to the fundamental principle of the Senate that all senators are equal. Further, this will reduce the time for the government leader, who is proposing time allocation, to answer questions from other senators. This allows the government to dodge accountability for limiting debate.

There are many problems with the definitions in this motion. First, section 23(g) of the motion states that the Leader of the Government in the Senate is to be ". . . appointed by the Government." However, this is not an order-in-council appointment; the Senate government leader is appointed by the Prime Minister, not by the government. If they can't even get that right in this motion, why should we trust them to change the *Rules of the Senate*?

The proposed definition of the Government Whip or liaison is also confusing. Under existing *Rules of the Senate*, the "Government Whip" is currently described as responsible for maintaining quorum of "government party senators" in the chamber and at votes, and is generally responsible for ". . . managing the substitution of government members on committees." Given that there are only three members of the Government Representative Office and they don't sit on any committees, I expect those duties are next to non-existent. Under Senator Gold's motion, the only change is to add the word "outreach." What exactly does that mean? Even the former deputy government leader admitted in Rules Committee that she could not define the Government Whip's or liaison's role of outreach. It means they "liaise with other senators," she said — as do we all, honourable senators. What's the difference? We don't know, and neither does the Trudeau government. Why are we enshrining this redefinition in legislation? What does this newly styled government liaison actually do in this role aside from walking down the aisle before a vote?

It will be interesting to see if the Trudeau-appointed senators are as committed to supporting the government and these measures to destroy the opposition when it is their turn to serve on the opposition benches. They may just find it gives them a completely different perspective.

Our parliamentary traditions have evolved based on the very important role the opposition and government play in our Westminster system. Our system was established that way because it works. It allows democratic input and creates the best legislation possible as it moves through the Senate. We should not overturn our fundamental structures simply to placate one prime minister, particularly in his final days of clinging to power. Therefore, I hope you will join me in voting against this draconian omnibus motion.

Thank you.

Hon. Diane Bellemare: Honourable senators, I rise in support of this motion introduced by Senator Gold. I will speak on three issues: first, the importance of Motion No. 165; second, the principle of equality between senators and the issue of non-affiliated senators; and finally, the role of the Rules Committee in the process of modernizing our rules and procedure.

• (1520)

[*Translation*]

I won't repeat what has already been said about the content of Motion No. 165, since I only have 15 minutes to speak. However, I would like to make it clear that this motion is very important to ensure greater sustainability for the changes that have been made over the past 10 years regarding the necessary existence of a number of groups and caucuses in the Senate.

[*English*]

In this motion, most of these proposed changes to the Rules are a complement to the amendments to the Parliament of Canada Act made in 2022 to recognize additional Senate groups and federal statutory law. They also relate to earlier reforms toward a more independent Senate, including the recognition in the Rules in 2017 of groups not affiliated with a political party. This was a crucial step toward the Senate becoming more independent and less partisan. This change put an end to the duopoly Senate which existed since 1867, composed of a Liberal and a Conservative caucus.

Notably, the Liberal and the Conservative parties served in the Senate as the opposition when the Bloc and the NDP served as the opposition in the other place. This shows that a duopoly in the Senate does not reflect the diverse views of Canadian society.

The 2017 rule change, together with a more transparent appointment process, spoke to Canadians who don't identify as partisans, enhancing independent voices in the Senate of Canada. Also, it helped the Senate to have more groups, countering the risk of majoritarianism.

Honourable senators, let me remind you that the Fathers of Confederation, when they adopted a bicameral Parliament, took inspiration from the British philosopher, economist and political scientist John Stuart Mill, who wrote *Considerations on Representative Government* in 1861. I can assure you that this book is worth reading, even while on vacation.

He wrote:

> The consideration which tells most, in my judgment, in favour of two Chambers . . . is the evil effect produced upon the mind of any holder of power, whether an individual or an assembly, by the consciousness of having only themselves to consult.

Such a situation can be exacerbated in a unicameral Parliament. So, this is one reason why the Senate exists. It gives some assurance to minority populations and regions that they can be heard through the Senate. But the tyranny of the majority, as John Stuart Mill put it, can also exist in bicameral Parliament.

Motion No. 165, along with the previous changes and the amendments to the Parliament of Canada Act, makes it possible to prevent it.

[*Translation*]

Although the purpose of bicameralism is to prevent the tyranny of the majority, the mere existence of a Senate is not enough. The Senate must also be independent.

[*English*]

But what does an independent Senate really mean? In a few words, it means it is not controlled by the party in power, and particularly by the Prime Minister's Office. It does not mean that the Senate or senators can do whatever they want. An independent Senate must show restraint and respect the democratic preferences of Canadians and the elected chamber while protecting the interests of minorities and regions at the same time. This has been well explained by the Supreme Court in 2014, as well as by senator Ian Shugart, who left us too soon, but with this vital message.

Unfortunately, in Canada, as documented by political scientists, it has been tempting for the party in power to control the Senate caucus affiliated with it and impose its party line. This was done through the appointment process and through a system of fear and favour and, ultimately, through majority votes under party discipline. Thus, the checks and balances of John Stuart Mill could be negated. When the Senate has at least three groups, it becomes more difficult for the party in power to exercise control. This is one landmark innovation of the Senate reform of the Forty-second Parliament.

[*Translation*]

Honourable senators, especially those of you who have been sworn in since 2016, I urge you not to forget that majoritarianism has been a real practice in the federal Parliament since the early days of Confederation. Successive governing parties have always sought to secure the majority of votes in the Senate and, above all, to impose a party line. It's not surprising that the Senate was seen as the institution that rubber-stamped the decisions of the other place. The Senate must not go back to its old ways.

The Senate's most recent existential crisis, which began in 2013 and which I watched with astonishment, was the culmination of the ruling party's strategy to control the Senate. You have to have lived it to believe it. This control strategy was documented by Justice Vaillancourt in his ruling in the Duffy case.

[*English*]

Therefore, Motion No. 165 is very important in the process of modernizing the Senate, but it is not the end of the process. Other rules need to be changed to help all senators to perform their constitutional duties.

The Senate needs to address the issue of equality among senators, including non-affiliated senators. On this point, let me remind you of this chamber's debates in 2015 and 2016 when senator John Wallace, appointed by Prime Minister Harper, introduced a motion to mandate the Rules Committee to study this specific issue.

[*Translation*]

In summary, Senator Wallace proposed that the Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures and the Rights of Parliament be authorized to examine and report on the practices of the Senate and the rules relating to committees, in order to assess whether all senators are, in fact, treated equally, fairly and equitably, no matter if they are sitting as members of the government, as members of the opposition, as members of recognized parties, or as independent or non-affiliated senators. They all should have the same reasonable opportunity to contribute fully to the Senate through their committee work.

[*English*]

His motion also highlighted the importance of our committee seat selection process in this context. At the time, I believed that we, the Senate, should first focus on amending the Rules so that independent groups would be recognized. That was done in 2017 and will be reinforced by this motion.

But I think that now the time has come to reintroduce Senator Wallace's motion.

Finally, let me speak briefly on the role of the Rules Committee. But before I do, let me tell you this anecdote. In March 2015, I had the privilege to accompany Speaker Nolin in London with a few other senators to visit the Lords Chamber. Charles Robert, the Clerk of the Senate and the Clerk of the Rules Committee, accompanied us. I asked him why it takes so long for the Rules Committee to propose any changes on our rules and procedures. He said, "Because the Rules Committee tries to reach consensus." It makes sense to me. It has always made sense to me.

Indeed, I repeat, I believe that the Rules Committee needs to try honestly to reach consensus. But what if it cannot? It could happen that the committee is not able to reach a consensus involving all groups. When that happens and when leaders clearly cannot agree either, then the Senate as a whole has to decide for the good of the country.

As I said earlier, the content of Motion No. 165 was studied in the Rules Committee, which reported to the Senate in March 2023. The fifth report did not include any recommendations because the committee failed to reach consensus. Some items were strongly opposed by the Conservative members of the committee.

Also, I need to say that when all groups and caucuses in the committee agreed to study the motion concerning the equality of groups, it was not with the intent to vote on the issue.

• (1530)

From the start of this study, many suspected that it would be impossible to reach consensus on all items. The objective of our study was to clarify the items on which the Senate could find consensus. One could say that the Rules Committee did a kind of pre-study of Motion No. 165. In other words, the committee decided to get a clear picture of the issue and present it to the Senate.

I decided not to call votes on different items because I respected the committee's original will. A battle on the matter would have compromised the future work of the committee in order to produce a report of the committee tabled under Other Business that would remain vulnerable to a filibuster in the chamber.

In my view, in exploring our procedures, the Rules Committee should try to reach a reasonable consensus. That means the members should try to work toward common ground in good faith. When consensus is not possible, its role is to enlighten the chamber on the different possibilities. This is what has been done in the fifth report. Then, it is for the Senate as a whole to decide.

I believe Canadians expect more of us and aren't looking for a "game of thrones" in the Senate. That is why I am happy that Senator Gold has commenced this transparent debate after years of frustrated efforts to have our Rules match the ideals of our constitutional role. The debate over power and equity is not a zero-sum game. Indeed, what is at stake is the independence of the Senate from the control by the party in power over our decisions, for the good of all Canadians. The public will be the true winner in achieving a better Senate.

I am happy that this motion was introduced by the government because at the end of the day, in an appointed Senate such as ours, Canadians cannot vote us out, as is the case in most senates around the world. If the Senate cannot be made accountable to the voters, who is to assure them that this institution can accomplish its role of sober second thought for all Canadians? To ask this question is, maybe, to answer it.

In closing, let me remind you that the development of Motion No. 165 took many years of hard work, dialogue and committee study. This includes the work of the Special Senate Committee on Modernization and the Rules Committee, as well as discussions in working groups and debates in this chamber. I want to give special thanks to Senator Gold and Senator Lankin for their hard work on this.

In my view, the time has now finally come to do the right thing and vote.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Julie Miville-Dechêne: I rise to speak briefly in support of the changes to the *Rules of the Senate* proposed by the Government Representative, Senator Gold. I will be brief, because I want to acknowledge Senator Bellemare's efforts and to thank her for explaining what happened at the Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures and the Rights of Parliament, since I wasn't there. You reminded us that there was a real process and genuine attempts at consensus, although it wasn't achieved, and that the substance of the matter was examined carefully. This clearly shows that this proposal didn't come out of nowhere. It has the merit of having been studied in one way or another and examined by many. Thank you, Senator Bellemare, for your expertise and for providing us with these clarifications.

The Independent Senators Group has been involved and was consulted on these reforms, and we support these changes. There is a strong consensus, although some people, including myself, would have liked to go further to make our institution more functional.

For example, I would like the Senate to organize the debates on certain bills to take place on a continuous basis, over a day or two, so that we can truly assess the pros and cons and hear several perspectives at the same time. Basically, I want us to have a real debate, rather than speeches here and there over a period of several weeks or months, since I think that greatly detracts from the quality of our meetings.

When deadlines are tight or when the groups and parties are equally committed, we sometimes manage to dedicate a continuous block of time to a single debate, like we did with the bill on medical assistance in dying, for example, or with Bill C-234 on grain farmers and the carbon tax.

Such opportunities are all too rare, in my opinion, even though I think that they would benefit everyone.

The other rule that I personally do not like concerns the automatic granting of voting rights to the Government Representative and the Leader of the Opposition when bills are voted in committee. I think that rule effectively discredits the work of senators, most of whom are independent, who have spent weeks or months studying the spirit and the letter of a piece of legislation.

Let's come back to the motion before us.

In my mind, there is absolutely nothing in this package of limited, sensible reforms that threatens the role of the opposition. Moreover, I note that the definition of opposition leader remains untouched, meaning that that individual will continue to have to come from a party, and not from an independent group. Partisan politics — so dear to some — will continue.

I am not a fan of partisanship, as you know, but I am one of those who believe in the need for a vigorous opposition in the Senate. Of course, to play that role, the opposition needs rules and procedures that counterbalance the power of the majority party and the executive. In the British House of Lords, about one quarter of which is non-partisan crossbenchers, the role of the opposition is reserved for the party that is not in power and has the most MPs in the House of Commons.

We shall see how things develop here. There are many unknowns in our Senate reform, but the essential role of an opposition cannot be denied, in my opinion. This role became particularly clear to me — and Senator Dalphond referred to it yesterday — in the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic, when there was a very small group of us present in the Senate. The sense of urgency did absolutely nothing to encourage debate, which was nevertheless necessary.

I would like to move on and make a few more specific points about the proposed rule changes.

First, let's address reducing the supper break from two hours to one hour. That is a simple change that takes nothing away from the opposition's power, unless they are really attached to the idea of unnecessarily extending our sittings. Former senator Solange Chaput-Rolland, who was known for being blunt, used to say, "We're not spring chickens anymore." For younger folks who may be unfamiliar with this expression, it means that we need a bit of sleep.

This rule seems excessively rigid in 2024. I understand that on occasion there may be important events taking place on the sidelines in the evening around the time the Senate sits. In that case, a longer break can always be negotiated between the facilitators and leaders. However, it seems completely unnecessary to have a two-hour break as the standard. What is more, this two-hour break rule does not exist at the other place, unless there is unanimous consent. However, our MP colleagues still attend receptions organized by stakeholders and lobby groups.

The House of Lords, which is often our inspiration in the Westminster system, does not take two-hour evening breaks either. What they do there is rather interesting. They have what they call the dinner break at 7:30 p.m., during which they organize a short debate for those who were not very involved in the debate during the rest of the day, while those who are hungry go and get themselves a sandwich if they want. The models vary from parliament to parliament.

I would also like to say a few words about the proposed changes to speaking time.

Under the current rules, only the Government Representative and the Leader of the Opposition have unlimited speaking time. We saw that in practice yesterday. This is similar to the rules in the House of Commons. Senator Gold is proposing to extend that privilege to the facilitator of the largest group. Does that really dilute the opposition's power, as our Conservative colleagues are suggesting? I don't think so.

• (1540)

In my opinion, if the goal is to persuade — and that's what our goal should be — it's far from obvious that speaking longer necessarily makes an argument more persuasive. Last night was a perfect example. Personally, I would say that the best speeches I've heard in this chamber weren't the longest ones. Though

unlimited speaking time can delay a vote, the opposition already has the ability to defer a vote, and the proposed change doesn't affect that. So I'm not sure that unlimited speaking time offers the ISG, of which I'm a member, any significant strategic advantage, considering our group's general aversion to blocking or unduly delaying the smooth conduct of business. I understand the discomfort mentioned yesterday in this chamber, but I agree with Senator Dalphond that these proposals are a necessary step forward, even if they're not perfect.

It seems to me that several of the other rule changes simply reflect the fact that the Senate is no longer a government-and-opposition duopoly. As things stand today, 79 of the Senate's 96 senators are independent. Under the old Rules, however, we have no say on strategic matters, such as deferring votes or various other items related to the operation of the Senate. The time has come to align our Rules with this new reality.

Making it possible for the independent senators groups to defer a vote is not insignificant. In such cases, since we do not have party lines, it is not a decision aimed at achieving a specific result. It can, however, be a decision aimed at allowing the maximum number of senators and points of view to be heard. The vote on Bill C-234 on the carbon tax and grain farmers is a good example.

Unfortunately, our opposition colleagues' main argument against these changes to the Rules is to insinuate — as they have been doing for the past eight years — that we have no legitimate authority to reform the Senate since we are beholden to the Trudeau government and are therefore anything but independent. According to them, these changes are just another way to support the current government.

These partisan criticisms are of little value to me, and the repeated gratuitous insults irritate me. Personally, I'm quite confident in my ability to remain independent. What's more, the changes we are proposing are intended to be sustainable and long-term. However, as my colleagues in the opposition know and like to point out, governments change. I, too, would have preferred to see the four groups reach a consensus on these changes to the Senate Rules. I understand that it is not for lack of trying, and that has been the case for years now. I think the independent senators have been very patient during the process. It is time for the Senate Rules to take into account the new reality of the upper chamber, and that is why I will fully support Senator Gold's motion.

Thank you.

Hon. Claude Carignan: Would you take a question, senator?

Senator Miville-Dechêne: Of course.

Senator Carignan: With regard to time limits or unlimited speaking time, you know that some people exercise their rights wisely, while others abuse them. Sometimes you may think the rights are being used wisely, and other times you may think they're being abused. Does that justify changing the rule? Let me give you an example. We often see omnibus bills. We have seen 1,000-page bills amending 30 or 40 laws at once.

Do you really think that 10 minutes on a very specific point is enough time for a senator to argue their position on an omnibus bill? That's why we need certain individuals — in this case, the party or group leaders who have unlimited speaking time — to highlight certain important elements, which another senator can't do in 10 minutes.

Don't you think that if a future government, perhaps one led by Mr. Poilievre — I know you're not keen on that scenario, but it may happen — chooses to introduce an omnibus bill . . . You won't have time to cover everything, and then you'll say it's appalling to not have enough time to critique the bill properly. There might be 200 amendments that make no sense, but you'll only have time to discuss four of them.

Don't you think that getting rid of unlimited speaking time makes the opposition less effective as a critic on legislation?

Senator Miville-Dechêne: As you know, senator, the changes that Senator Gold is proposing don't take away the opposition leader's right to unlimited speaking time. That is not being touched. The changes would not touch the unlimited speaking time on this side of the House, nor for Senator Gold. They would add unlimited speaking time for the majority group. Personally, I'm not sure that this is a major strategic advantage, because I think it's different from a senator using unlimited speaking time for partisan reasons because they dislike a bill. Unlimited speaking time is used not only for omnibus bills, but on all sorts of occasions.

So, yes, it's a weapon. I understand and I get it. I have some reservations about that weapon. I'm a relatively young senator and so far, the marathon speeches have been a turnoff for me. I know that it's not me you're trying to persuade, but lots of other people. But I'm aware that it's a tool, and all I'm saying is that it's not being taken away from you, and that extending it to the ISG isn't costing you anything. You can say that you no longer have —

The opposition still has significant powers and will keep playing its role. In fact, I've said this before in this chamber. We hear you. You are being heard, whether on omnibus bills or whatever else. You're heard much more than 12 people could be heard anywhere else. You have a strong voice that is being heard and, quite honestly, your entitlements are fairly safe.

Senator Carignan: With your indulgence, Senator Miville-Dechêne, that wasn't really the question. It's what you're saying, and because of how you described unlimited speaking time for the Leader of the Opposition. You called it a weapon. It is not a weapon. It is a right to express a point of view. It is not a weapon. It is the democratic exercise of a right to ensure that all aspects are discussed. For example, some positive changes have been made to the Rules in relation to a number of provisions and implications. Sometimes, these things take time. It is not a weapon. It is a democratic right, and it must remain unchanged. It troubles me to hear you denigrating this right.

The Hon. the Speaker: I'm sorry, Senator Miville-Dechêne, but your time has expired.

[*English*]

Hon. Jim Quinn: Honourable senators, I'm going to share remarks and build on some of the other questions and commentary that I've made on this subject.

I want to start by saying that members of the House of Commons and senators are, in fact, members of Parliament. We should be treated equally when it comes to receiving a response to written questions and delayed answers. When a valid question isn't responded to in a satisfactory manner, there is a mechanism on the other side known as the Adjournment Proceedings, or perhaps better known as the "late show" — and, no, it doesn't involve Conan O'Brien — which is available at 6 p.m. every day except on Fridays. This provides a member of the House of Commons with the opportunity to give notice of their intention to seek a more wholesome answer. Being aware of this is important for us, because in response to my question concerning a 45-day response time, Senator Gold noted that there was no other mechanism available to members of the House of Commons for delayed answers to questions posed during a Question Period. In fact, the above-noted mechanism provides them with that avenue in a very timely fashion compared to what I'm proposing in my amendment.

• (1550)

Speaking from experience, having been involved with the late show as a bureaucrat, those turnaround times could be in a matter of hours — not days, weeks, months or years.

The Privy Council Office, or PCO, currently has an internal 45-day deadline for responding to questions from either house. However, the lack of a consequence in the Senate means that the internal 45-day timeline is often missed, where some questions have taken over three years to receive an answer. This is a matter of basic respect. Not answering questions in a reasonable time frame impacts us as parliamentarians, making our job that much more difficult.

Now, I support many elements of the government's proposal, but the 60-day time frame is inconsistent with existing policy and is somewhat arbitrary. Voting yes on this amendment does not result in the motion failing. If time allocation is moved while this item is up for debate, it simply means that there will be a vote on the amendment followed by a vote on the main motion. I repeat, this amendment will not cause the modernization package to fail.

I fear that some honourable colleagues may feel that should this amendment be adopted, the rule change package will fail. Others may feel that allowing for one amendment may result in many other amendments being proposed, including some that may be considered dilatory. I believe if other amendments are proposed — and if some amendments are, in fact, dilatory — not only will senators have the power through votes to accept or reject them, but Senator Gold has, indeed, the option to use time allocation, which then prevents other amendments from being tabled. I think it's fair and reasonable for some flexibility in this to be entertained as proposed amendments may, in fact, strengthen government Motion No. 165. After all, these are our Rules.

I share those thoughts because I've had a number of colleagues in this chamber come to me and say, "I support what you're trying to achieve, but I fear in doing the change, the whole package will fail or we may get frivolous amendments put forward." I wanted to share this with you because I don't believe that it should prevent our ability to bring forward changes that may, in fact, strengthen it and be more respectful of us as parliamentarians because that's what we are.

MOTION IN AMENDMENT—DEBATE

Hon. Jim Quinn: Therefore, honourable senators, in amendment, I move:

That the motion be not now adopted, but that it be amended:

1. by replacing proposed new rules 4-9(3)(b) to (d) by the following:

"(b) the question is withdrawn; or

(c) the expiration of the 45-day period provided for in this rule for an answer.";

2. in proposed new rule 4-9(6), by:

(a) changing the number 60 to 45 everywhere it appears, including in the marginal note; and

(b) replacing the words "either the Government's answer to the question or a written explanation why an answer has not been provided" by the words "the Government's answer to the question";

3. in proposed new rule 4-9(8), by replacing the words "tabled neither an answer nor an explanation of why an answer has not been provided within the 60-day period" by the words "not tabled an answer within the 45-day period"; and

4. in point 3 of the paragraph beginning with the words "That, in relation to the amendments to current rules 4-9 and 4-10", by replacing the words "the provisions of the new rules relating to the 60-day period for answering written questions, tabling, and a failure to respond or provide an explanation take effect" by the words "the provisions of the new rules relating to the 45-day period for answering written questions, tabling, and a failure to respond take effect".

Thank you.

Hon. Denise Batters: Would Senator Quinn take a question?

Senator Quinn: Yes.

Senator Batters: Thank you for bringing this amendment. I wanted to clarify that in clause 2 of your amendment, does part (b) mean that that is removing the government's ability to simply say that they are explaining why they are not providing a written answer? I want to make sure I understand that correctly.

As I raised in my speech earlier, I said that that doesn't seem to be a very fair way for the government to go about something by simply saying, "Oh, we can't provide that answer because of this reason or that reason." That does not exist in either the House of Commons or in the Access to Information Act. I wonder if that's what that part of your amendment meant.

Senator Quinn: Thank you for that. I gave my copy to the clerk.

No, the intention is to ensure that we have the opportunity to get a wholesome answer.

Our Leader of the Government in the Senate often has to go and make inquiries to questions that are asked, and he's in the unfair position, I think, of depending on people outside of this chamber to provide the information to him. Because it's not dealt with as a priority, those answers sometimes take weeks, months and years, as I said.

The intention of this amendment is to cause the answers to be dealt with in a timely manner, within the period I indicated.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Raymonde Saint-Germain: Senator Quinn, colleagues, I agree that the government's response time to written questions, and to questions in general, is far too long.

At this very moment, we have 97 written questions on the Order Paper that remain unanswered, some of which have been pending for several months, in some cases for over a year.

Today's Order Paper, for example, contains 57 pages of unanswered questions. That's more than 60% of the content of our Order Paper.

That being said, we have a new reality that could be surprising. Artificial intelligence can produce questions in just a few minutes, at a dizzying pace. However, the same can't be said for the time it takes to prepare solid, well-researched answers.

That being said, when it comes to written questions, Government Motion No. 165, which is before us, represents a major step forward compared to what we have in our existing Rules. Under this motion, the government must answer our questions within 60 days, whereas there is no time limit for a response in our current Rules. The motion not only proposes this time limit, which is tight — and I will come back to that later — but it also states that the government must provide an explanation and be subject to a sanction, yes, a sanction, if it does not meet that deadline. The sanction in question is serious and involves the absence of answer being referred to our Standing Committee on Rules for an investigation on a possible breach of privilege, which comes with very serious sanctions.

With all due respect, senator, your comparison with the House of Commons is rather flawed.

[*English*]

I concur fully with Senator Batters' point. You have a situation in which the comparison you made would withdraw the obligation for the government to explain the reasons for failure to comply with the 60-day or — in the case of the amendment — 45-day time limit. This would make the proposition, in my opinion, far less efficient and the government far less accountable.

For this reason only, we should not support your amendment, but I have additional ones. Allow me, colleagues, to speak a few minutes more to this motion.

As to your comparison with the other place, there are many differences in the context, and I will explain these differences now.

[*Translation*]

First, in the Senate, only one representative of the government or, in his or her absence, the Deputy Government Representative, can answer questions, including written questions, and handle follow-up — only one person. By contrast, in the House of Commons, 40 members of cabinet can field questions. Furthermore, the Prime Minister is usually present in the House of Commons one day a week for this question period.

In the House of Commons, there is no such sanction and . . .

The Hon. the Speaker: I'm sorry for interrupting, senator, but it is now 4 p.m.

(*At 4 p.m., pursuant to the order adopted by the Senate on September 21, 2022, the Senate adjourned until 2 p.m., tomorrow*.)

THE SPEAKER

The Honourable Raymonde Gagné

THE GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE IN THE SENATE

The Honourable Marc Gold

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

The Honourable Donald Neil Plett

FACILITATOR OF THE INDEPENDENT SENATORS GROUP

The Honourable Raymonde Saint-Germain

THE LEADER OF THE CANADIAN SENATORS GROUP

The Honourable Scott Tannas

THE LEADER OF THE PROGRESSIVE SENATE GROUP

The Honourable Pierre J. Dalphond

OFFICERS OF THE SENATE

INTERIM CLERK OF THE SENATE AND CLERK OF THE PARLIAMENTS

Gérald Lafrenière

LAW CLERK AND PARLIAMENTARY COUNSEL

Philippe Hallée

USHER OF THE BLACK ROD

J. Greg Peters

THE MINISTRY

(In order of precedence)

_____

(May 1, 2024)

_____

The Right Hon. Justin Trudeau	Prime Minister
The Hon. Chrystia Freeland	Minister of Finance Deputy Prime Minister
The Hon. Lawrence MacAulay	Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food
The Hon. Dominic LeBlanc	Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs
The Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos	Minister of Public Services and Procurement
The Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau	Minister of National Revenue
The Hon. Mélanie Joly	Minister of Foreign Affairs
The Hon. Diane Lebouthillier	Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard
The Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan	President of the King's Privy Council for Canada Minister of Emergency Preparedness Minister responsible for the Pacific Economic Development Agency of Canada
The Hon. Carla Qualtrough	Minister of Sport and Physical Activity
The Hon. Patty Hajdu	Minister of Indigenous Services Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario
The Hon. François-Philippe Champagne	Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry
The Hon. Karina Gould	Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (on parental leave)
The Hon. Ahmed Hussen	Minister of International Development
The Hon. Seamus O'Regan	Minister of Labour and Seniors
The Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor	Minister of Veterans Affairs Associate Minister of National Defence
The Hon. Pablo Rodriguez	Minister of Transport
The Hon. Bill Blair	Minister of National Defence
The Hon. Mary Ng	Minister of Export Promotion, International Trade and Economic Development
The Hon. Filomena Tassi	Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario
The Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson	Minister of Energy and National Resources
The Hon. Anita Anand	President of the Treasury Board
The Hon. Steven Guilbeault	Minister of Environment and Climate Change
The Hon. Marc Miller	Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship
The Hon. Dan Vandal	Minister responsible for Prairies Economic Development Canada Minister responsible for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency Minister of Northern Affairs
The Hon. Randy Boissonnault	Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages
The Hon. Sean Fraser	Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities
The Hon. Mark Holland	Minister of Health
The Hon. Gudie Hutchings	Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency Minister of Rural Economic Development
The Hon. Marci Ien	Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth
The Hon. Kamal Khera	Minister of Diversity, Inclusion and Persons with Disabilities
The Hon. Pascale St-Onge	Minister of Canadian Heritage
The Hon. Steven MacKinnon	Leader of the Government in the House of Commons
The Hon. Gary Anandasangaree	Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations
The Hon. Terry Beech	Minister of Citizens' Services
The Hon. Soraya Martinez Ferrada	Minister of Tourism Minister responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Region of Quebec
The Hon. Ya'ara Saks	Minister of Mental Health and Addictions Associate Minister of Health
The Hon. Jenna Sudds	Minister of Families, Children and Social Development
The Hon. Rechie Valdez	Minister of Small Business
The Hon. Arif Virani	Minister of Justice Attorney General of Canada

SENATORS OF CANADA

ACCORDING TO SENIORITY

(May 1, 2024)

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
Jane Cordy	Nova Scotia	Dartmouth, N.S.
Mobina S. B. Jaffer	British Columbia	North Vancouver, B.C.
Pierrette Ringuette	New Brunswick	Edmundston, N.B.
Percy E. Downe	Charlottetown	Charlottetown, P.E.I.
Paul J. Massicotte	De Lanaudière	Mont-Saint-Hilaire, Que.
Stephen Greene	Halifax - The Citadel	Halifax, N.S.
Michael L. MacDonald	Cape Breton	Dartmouth, N.S.
Pamela Wallin	Saskatchewan	Wadena, Sask.
Yonah Martin	British Columbia	Vancouver, B.C.
Patrick Brazeau	Repentigny	Maniwaki, Que.
Leo Housakos	Wellington	Laval, Que.
Donald Neil Plett	Landmark	Landmark, Man.
Claude Carignan, P.C.	Mille Isles	Saint-Eustache, Que.
Elizabeth Marshall	Newfoundland and Labrador	Paradise, Nfld. & Lab.
Judith G. Seidman	De la Durantaye	Saint-Raphaël, Que.
Rose-May Poirier	New Brunswick—Saint-Louis-de-Kent	Saint-Louis-de-Kent, N.B.
Salma Ataullahjan	Ontario (Toronto)	Toronto, Ont.
Fabian Manning	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. Bride's, Nfld. & Lab.
Larry W. Smith	Saurel	Hudson, Que.
Josée Verner, P.C.	Montarville	Saint-Augustin-de-Desmaures, Que.
Jean-Guy Dagenais	Victoria	Blainville, Que.
Diane Bellemare	Alma	Outremont, Que.
David M. Wells	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. John's, Nfld. & Lab.
Victor Oh	Mississauga	Mississauga, Ont.
Denise Batters	Saskatchewan	Regina, Sask.
Scott Tannas	Alberta	High River, Alta.
Peter Harder, P.C.	Ottawa	Manotick, Ont.
Raymonde Gagné, *Speaker*	Manitoba	Winnipeg, Man.
Frances Lankin, P.C.	Ontario	Restoule, Ont.
Ratna Omidvar	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.
Chantal Petitclerc	Grandville	Montreal, Que.
Yuen Pau Woo	British Columbia	North Vancouver, B.C.
René Cormier	New Brunswick	Caraquet, N.B.
Nancy J. Hartling	New Brunswick	Riverview, N.B.
Kim Pate	Ontario	Ottawa, Ont.
Tony Dean	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.
Wanda Thomas Bernard	Nova Scotia (East Preston)	East Preston, N.S.
Lucie Moncion	Ontario	North Bay, Ont.
Marilou McPhedran	Manitoba	Winnipeg, Man.
Gwen Boniface	Ontario	Orillia, Ont.
Éric Forest	Gulf	Rimouski, Que.
Marc Gold	Stadacona	Westmount, Que.
Marie-Françoise Mégie	Rougemont	Montreal, Que.
Raymonde Saint-Germain	De la Vallière	Quebec City, Que
Rosa Galvez	Bedford	Lévis, Que.
David Richards	New Brunswick	Fredericton, N.B.
Mary Coyle	Nova Scotia	Antigonish, N.S.

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
Mary Jane McCallum	Manitoba	Winnipeg, Man.
Robert Black	Ontario	Centre Wellington, Ont.
Marty Deacon	Waterloo Region	Waterloo, Ont.
Yvonne Boyer	Ontario	Merrickville-Wolford, Ont.
Mohamed-Iqbal Ravalia	Newfoundland and Labrador	Twillingate, Nfld. & Lab.
Pierre J. Dalphond	De Lorimier	Montreal, Que.
Donna Dasko	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.
Colin Deacon	Nova Scotia	Halifax, N.S.
Julie Miville-Dechêne	Inkerman	Mont-Royal, Que.
Bev Busson	British Columbia	North Okanagan Region, B.C.
Marty Klyne	Saskatchewan	White City, Sask.
Patti LaBoucane-Benson	Alberta	Spruce Grove, Alta.
Paula Simons	Alberta	Edmonton, Alta.
Peter M. Boehm	Ontario	Ottawa, Ont.
Brian Francis	Prince Edward Island	Rocky Point, P.E.I.
Dawn Anderson	Northwest Territories	Yellowknife, N.W.T.
Pat Duncan	Yukon	Whitehorse, Yukon
Rosemary Moodie	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.
Stan Kutcher	Nova Scotia	Halifax, N.S.
Tony Loffreda	Shawinegan	Montreal, Que.
Brent Cotter	Saskatchewan	Saskatoon, Sask.
Hassan Yussuff	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.
Bernadette Clement	Ontario	Cornwall, Ont.
Jim Quinn	New Brunswick	Saint John, N.B.
Karen Sorensen	Alberta	Banff, Alta.
Amina Gerba	Rigaud	Blainville, Que.
Clément Gignac	Kennebec	Lac Saint-Joseph, Que.
Michèle Audette	De Salaberry	Quebec City, Que.
David M. Arnot	Saskatchewan	Saskatoon, Sask.
Flordeliz (Gigi) Osler	Manitoba	Winnipeg, Man.
Margo Greenwood	British Columbia	Vernon, B.C.
Sharon Burey	Ontario	Windsor, Ont.
Andrew Cardozo	Ontario	Ottawa, Ont.
Rebecca Patterson	Ontario	Ottawa, Ont.
Iris G. Petten	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. John’s, Nfld. & Lab.
Jane MacAdam	Prince Edward Island	West St. Peters, P.E.I.
Judy A. White	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. George’s, Nfld. & Lab.
Paul J. Prosper	Nova Scotia	Hants County, N.S.
Joan Kingston	New Brunswick	New Maryland, N.B.
John M. McNair	New Brunswick	Grand-Bouctouche, N.B.
Réjean Aucoin	Nova Scotia	Cape Breton, N.S.
Krista Ross	New Brunswick	Fredericton, N.B.
Rodger Cuzner	Nova Scotia	Cape Breton, N.S.
Marnie McBean	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.
Toni Varone	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.
Paulette Senior	Ontario	Pickering, Ont.
Mary Robinson	Prince Edward Island	Charlottetown, P.E.I.
Mohammad Al Zaibak	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.
Manuelle Oudar	La Salle	Quebec City, Que.

SENATORS OF CANADA

ALPHABETICAL LIST

(May 1, 2024)

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address	Political Affiliation
The Honourable			
Al Zaibak, Mohammad	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.	Non-affiliated
Anderson, Dawn	Northwest Territories	Yellowknife, N.W.T.	Progressive Senate Group
Arnot, David M.	Saskatchewan	Saskatoon, Sask.	Independent Senators Group
Ataullahjan, Salma	Ontario (Toronto)	Toronto, Ont.	Conservative Party of Canada
Aucoin, Réjean	Nova Scotia	Cape Breton, N.S.	Canadian Senators Group
Audette, Michèle	De Salaberry	Quebec City, Que.	Progressive Senate Group
Batters, Denise	Saskatchewan	Regina, Sask.	Conservative Party of Canada
Bellemare, Diane	Alma	Outremont, Que.	Independent Senators Group
Bernard, Wanda Thomas	Nova Scotia (East Preston)	East Preston, N.S.	Progressive Senate Group
Black, Robert	Ontario	Centre Wellington, Ont.	Canadian Senators Group
Boehm, Peter M.	Ontario	Ottawa, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Boniface, Gwen	Ontario	Orillia, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Boyer, Yvonne	Ontario	Merrickville-Wolford, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Brazeau, Patrick	Repentigny	Maniwaki, Que.	Non-affiliated
Burey, Sharon	Ontario	Windsor, Ont.	Canadian Senators Group
Busson, Bev	British Columbia	North Okanagan Region, B.C.	Independent Senators Group
Cardozo, Andrew	Ontario	Ottawa, Ont.	Progressive Senate Group
Carignan, Claude, P.C.	Mille Isles	Saint-Eustache, Que.	Conservative Party of Canada
Clement, Bernadette	Ontario	Cornwall, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Cordy, Jane	Nova Scotia	Dartmouth, N.S.	Progressive Senate Group
Cormier, René	New Brunswick	Caraquet, N.B.	Independent Senators Group
Cotter, Brent	Saskatchewan	Saskatoon, Sask.	Independent Senators Group
Coyle, Mary	Nova Scotia	Antigonish, N.S.	Independent Senators Group
Cuzner, Rodger	Nova Scotia	Cape Breton, N.S.	Progressive Senate Group
Dagenais, Jean-Guy	Victoria	Blainville, Que.	Canadian Senators Group
Dalphond, Pierre J.	De Lorimier	Montreal, Que.	Progressive Senate Group
Dasko, Donna	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Deacon, Colin	Nova Scotia	Halifax, N.S.	Canadian Senators Group
Deacon, Marty	Waterloo Region	Waterloo, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Dean, Tony	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Downe, Percy E.	Charlottetown	Charlottetown, P.E.I.	Canadian Senators Group
Duncan, Pat	Yukon	Whitehorse, Yukon	Independent Senators Group
Forest, Éric	Gulf	Rimouski, Que.	Independent Senators Group
Francis, Brian	Prince Edward Island	Rocky Point, P.E.I.	Progressive Senate Group
Gagné, Raymonde, *Speaker*	Manitoba	Winnipeg, Man.	Non-affiliated
Galvez, Rosa	Bedford	Lévis, Que.	Independent Senators Group
Gerba, Amina	Rigaud	Blainville, Que.	Progressive Senate Group
Gignac, Clément	Kennebec	Lac Saint-Joseph, Que.	Progressive Senate Group
Gold, Marc	Stadacona	Westmount, Que.	Non-affiliated
Greene, Stephen	Halifax - The Citadel	Halifax, N.S.	Canadian Senators Group
Greenwood, Margo	British Columbia	Vernon, B.C.	Independent Senators Group
Harder, Peter, P.C.	Ottawa	Manotick, Ont.	Progressive Senate Group
Hartling, Nancy J.	New Brunswick	Riverview, N.B.	Independent Senators Group
Housakos, Leo	Wellington	Laval, Que.	Conservative Party of Canada
Jaffer, Mobina S. B.	British Columbia	North Vancouver, B.C.	Independent Senators Group
Kingston, Joan	New Brunswick	New Maryland, N.B.	Independent Senators Group
Klyne, Marty	Saskatchewan	White City, Sask.	Progressive Senate Group
Kutcher, Stan	Nova Scotia	Halifax, N.S.	Independent Senators Group
LaBoucane-Benson, Patti	Alberta	Spruce Grove, Alta.	Non-affiliated
Lankin, Frances, P.C.	Ontario	Restoule, Ont.	Non-affiliated
Loffreda, Tony	Shawinegan	Montreal, Que.	Independent Senators Group

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address	Political Affiliation
MacAdam, Jane	Prince Edward Island	West St. Peters, P.E.I.	Independent Senators Group
MacDonald, Michael L.	Cape Breton	Dartmouth, N.S.	Conservative Party of Canada
Manning, Fabian	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. Bride's, Nfld. & Lab.	Conservative Party of Canada
Marshall, Elizabeth	Newfoundland and Labrador	Paradise, Nfld. & Lab.	Conservative Party of Canada
Martin, Yonah	British Columbia	Vancouver, B.C.	Conservative Party of Canada
Massicotte, Paul J.	De Lanaudière	Mont-Saint-Hilaire, Que.	Independent Senators Group
McBean, Marnie	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
McCallum, Mary Jane	Manitoba	Winnipeg, Man.	Non-affiliated
McNair, John M.	New Brunswick	Grand-Bouctouche, N.B.	Independent Senators Group
McPhedran, Marilou	Manitoba	Winnipeg, Man.	Non-affiliated
Mégie, Marie-Françoise	Rougemont	Montreal, Que.	Independent Senators Group
Miville-Dechêne, Julie	Inkerman	Mont-Royal, Que.	Independent Senators Group
Moncion, Lucie	Ontario	North Bay, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Moodie, Rosemary	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Oh, Victor	Mississauga	Mississauga, Ont.	Conservative Party of Canada
Omidvar, Ratna	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Osler, Flordeliz (Gigi)	Manitoba	Winnipeg, Man.	Canadian Senators Group
Oudar, Manuelle	La Salle	Quebec City, Que.	Non-affiliated
Pate, Kim	Ontario	Ottawa, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Patterson, Rebecca	Ontario	Ottawa, Ont.	Canadian Senators Group
Petitclerc, Chantal	Grandville	Montreal, Que.	Independent Senators Group
Petten, Iris G.	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. John's, Nfld. & Lab.	Independent Senators Group
Plett, Donald Neil	Landmark	Landmark, Man.	Conservative Party of Canada
Poirier, Rose-May	New Brunswick—Saint-Louis-de-Kent	Saint-Louis-de-Kent, N.B.	Conservative Party of Canada
Prosper, Paul J.	Nova Scotia	Hants County, N.S.	Canadian Senators Group
Quinn, Jim	New Brunswick	Saint John, N.B.	Canadian Senators Group
Ravalia, Mohamed-Iqbal	Newfoundland and Labrador	Twillingate, Nfld. & Lab.	Independent Senators Group
Richards, David	New Brunswick	Fredericton, N.B.	Canadian Senators Group
Ringuette, Pierrette	New Brunswick	Edmundston, N.B.	Independent Senators Group
Robinson, Mary	Prince Edward Island	Charlottetown, P.E.I.	Non-affiliated
Ross, Krista	New Brunswick	Fredericton, N.B.	Canadian Senators Group
Saint-Germain, Raymonde	De la Vallière	Quebec City, Que.	Independent Senators Group
Seidman, Judith G.	De la Durantaye	Saint-Raphaël, Que.	Conservative Party of Canada
Senior, Paulette	Ontario	Pickering, Ont.	Non-affiliated
Simons, Paula	Alberta	Edmonton, Alta.	Independent Senators Group
Smith, Larry W.	Saurel	Hudson, Que.	Canadian Senators Group
Sorensen, Karen	Alberta	Banff, Alta.	Independent Senators Group
Tannas, Scott	Alberta	High River, Alta.	Canadian Senators Group
Varone, Toni	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Verner, Josée, P.C.	Montarville	Saint-Augustin-de-Desmaures, Que.	Canadian Senators Group
Wallin, Pamela	Saskatchewan	Wadena, Sask.	Canadian Senators Group
Wells, David M.	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. John's, Nfld. & Lab.	Conservative Party of Canada
White, Judy A.	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. George's, Nfld. & Lab.	Progressive Senate Group
Woo, Yuen Pau	British Columbia	North Vancouver, B.C.	Independent Senators Group
Yussuff, Hassan	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.	Independent Senators Group

SENATORS OF CANADA

BY PROVINCE AND TERRITORY

(May 1, 2024)

ONTARIO—24

	Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
	The Honourable		
1	Salma Ataullahjan	Ontario (Toronto)	Toronto
2	Victor Oh	Mississauga	Mississauga
3	Peter Harder, P.C.	Ottawa	Manotick
4	Frances Lankin, P.C.	Ontario	Restoule
5	Ratna Omidvar	Ontario	Toronto
6	Kim Pate	Ontario	Ottawa
7	Tony Dean	Ontario	Toronto
8	Lucie Moncion	Ontario	North Bay
9	Gwen Boniface	Ontario	Orillia
10	Robert Black	Ontario	Centre Wellington
11	Marty Deacon	Waterloo Region	Waterloo
12	Yvonne Boyer	Ontario	Merrickville-Wolford
13	Donna Dasko	Ontario	Toronto
14	Peter M. Boehm	Ontario	Ottawa
15	Rosemary Moodie	Ontario	Toronto
16	Hassan Yussuff	Ontario	Toronto
17	Bernadette Clement	Ontario	Cornwall
18	Sharon Burey	Ontario	Windsor
19	Andrew Cardozo	Ontario	Ottawa
20	Rebecca Patterson	Ontario	Ottawa
21	Marnie McBean	Ontario	Toronto
22	Toni Varone	Ontario	Toronto
23	Paulette Senior	Ontario	Pickering
24	Mohammad Al Zaibak	Ontario	Toronto

QUEBEC—24

	Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
	The Honourable		
1	Paul J. Massicotte	De Lanaudière	Mont-Saint-Hilaire
2	Patrick Brazeau	Repentigny	Maniwaki
3	Leo Housakos	Wellington	Laval
4	Claude Carignan, P.C.	Mille Isles	Saint-Eustache
5	Judith G. Seidman	De la Durantaye	Saint-Raphaël
6	Larry W. Smith	Saurel	Hudson
7	Josée Verner, P.C.	Montarville	Saint-Augustin-de-Desmaures
8	Jean-Guy Dagenais	Victoria	Blainville
9	Diane Bellemare	Alma	Outremont
10	Chantal Petitclerc	Grandville	Montreal
11	Éric Forest	Gulf	Rimouski
12	Marc Gold	Stadacona	Westmount
13	Marie-Françoise Mégie	Rougemont	Montreal
14	Raymonde Saint-Germain	De la Vallière	Quebec City
15	Rosa Galvez	Bedford	Lévis
16	Pierre J. Dalphond	De Lorimier	Montreal
17	Julie Miville-Dechêne	Inkerman	Mont-Royal
18	Tony Loffreda	Shawinegan	Montreal
19	Amina Gerba	Rigaud	Blainville
20	Clément Gignac	Kennebec	Lac Saint-Joseph
21	Michèle Audette	De Salaberry	Quebec City
22	Manuelle Oudar	La Salle	Quebec City
23			
24			

NOVA SCOTIA—10

	Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
	The Honourable		
1	Jane Cordy	Nova Scotia	Dartmouth
2	Stephen Greene	Halifax - The Citadel	Halifax
3	Michael L. MacDonald	Cape Breton	Dartmouth
4	Wanda Thomas Bernard	Nova Scotia (East Preston)	East Preston
5	Mary Coyle	Nova Scotia	Antigonish
6	Colin Deacon	Nova Scotia	Halifax
7	Stan Kutcher	Nova Scotia	Halifax
8	Paul J. Prosper	Nova Scotia	Hants County
9	Réjean Aucoin	Nova Scotia	Cape Breton
10	Rodger Cuzner	Nova Scotia	Cape Breton

NEW BRUNSWICK—10

	Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
	The Honourable		
1	Pierrette Ringuette	New Brunswick	Edmundston
2	Rose-May Poirier	New Brunswick—Saint-Louis-de-Kent	Saint-Louis-de-Kent
3	René Cormier	New Brunswick	Caraquet
4	Nancy J. Hartling	New Brunswick	Riverview
5	David Richards	New Brunswick	Fredericton
6	Jim Quinn	New Brunswick	Saint John
7	Joan Kingston	New Brunswick	New Maryland
8	John M. McNair	New Brunswick	Grand-Bouctouche
9	Krista Ross	New Brunswick	Fredericton
10			

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND—4

	Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
	The Honourable		
1	Percy E. Downe	Charlottetown	Charlottetown
2	Brian Francis	Prince Edward Island	Rocky Point
3	Jane MacAdam	Prince Edward Island	West St. Peters
4	Mary Robinson	Prince Edward Island	Charlottetown

MANITOBA—6

	Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
	The Honourable		
1	Donald Neil Plett	Landmark	Landmark
2	Raymonde Gagné, *Speaker*	Manitoba	Winnipeg
3	Marilou McPhedran	Manitoba	Winnipeg
4	Mary Jane McCallum	Manitoba	Winnipeg
5	Flordeliz (Gigi) Osler	Manitoba	Winnipeg
6			

BRITISH COLUMBIA—6

	Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
	The Honourable		
1	Mobina S. B. Jaffer	British Columbia	North Vancouver
2	Yonah Martin	British Columbia	Vancouver
3	Yuen Pau Woo	British Columbia	North Vancouver
4	Bev Busson	British Columbia	North Okanagan Region
5	Margo Greenwood	British Columbia	Vernon
6			

SASKATCHEWAN—6

	Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
	The Honourable		
1	Pamela Wallin	Saskatchewan	Wadena
2	Denise Batters	Saskatchewan	Regina
3	Marty Klyne	Saskatchewan	White City
4	Brent Cotter	Saskatchewan	Saskatoon
5	David M. Arnot	Saskatchewan	Saskatoon
6			

ALBERTA—6

	Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
	The Honourable		
1	Scott Tannas	Alberta	High River
2	Patti LaBoucane-Benson	Alberta	Spruce Grove
3	Paula Simons	Alberta	Edmonton
4	Karen Sorensen	Alberta	Banff
5			
6			

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR—6

	Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
	The Honourable		
1	Elizabeth Marshall	Newfoundland and Labrador	Paradise
2	Fabian Manning	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. Bride's
3	David M. Wells	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. John's
4	Mohamed-Iqbal Ravalia	Newfoundland and Labrador	Twillingate
5	Iris G. Petten	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. John's
6	Judy A. White	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. George's

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES—1

	Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
	The Honourable		
1	Dawn Anderson	Northwest Territories	Yellowknife

NUNAVUT—1

	Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
	The Honourable		
1	.....		

YUKON—1

	Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
	The Honourable		
1	Pat Duncan	Yukon	Whitehorse

CONTENTS

Wednesday, May 1, 2024

PAGE

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

QUESTION PERIOD

CONTENTS

Wednesday, May 1, 2024