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# House of Commons Debates

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Speaker: The Honourable Francis Scarpaleggia



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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, November 18, 2025

The House met at 10 a.m.

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*Prayer*

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1000)

[*English*]

### CRIMINAL CODE

**Jamie Schmale (Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes, CPC)** moved that Bill S-228, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (sterilization procedures), be read the first time.

He said: Mr. Speaker, today I rise to introduce Bill S-228, seconded by the member for Lethbridge. This legislation is identical to amended Bill S-250, which the Senate unanimously endorsed and sent to the House of Commons in October 2024.

Bill S-228 directly confronts the abhorrent and ongoing reality of the forced and coerced sterilization of women, indigenous women and other marginalized individuals in Canada. By making it explicit in the Criminal Code that performing sterilization without consent constitutes aggravated assault under subsection 268(1), we would send a clear message that such acts will not be tolerated in our society.

I want to express my deepest gratitude to Senator Boyer, whose vision and leadership have been instrumental in shaping the bill, along with Senator Wells. Most importantly, I honour the survivors. Some of them are with us in Ottawa today, specifically from the Survivors Circle for Reproductive Justice. Combined, their courage, resilience and unwavering advocacy have brought this issue to the forefront.

Without their voices and determination, this legislation would not be before us today. Let us allow this opportunity to get the bill passed. Now is the time to act to protect the vulnerable, uphold justice and ensure that such violations never happen again in Canada.

(Motion agreed to and bill read the first time)

## PETITIONS

### FIREARMS

**Lianne Rood (Middlesex—London, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition to the House that comes from firearms owners who are concerned about past legislation and new orders in council in which the government targets law-abiding firearms owners.

The petitioners say that Bill C-21 does nothing to tackle firearms violence, but rather adds red tape to law-abiding Canadians. They also describe how the bill does little to tackle the true source of firearms violence: gangs and organized crime.

The petitioners are calling on the government to repeal Bill C-21 and devote greater resources to police so they can combat the sources of illegal firearms.

• (1005)

### HUMAN RIGHTS IN INDIA

**Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition today on behalf of Canadians who are concerned about human rights protections in India.

The petition calls upon the House of Commons to formally ensure that all trade deals with India, including the early progress trade agreement, the comprehensive economic partnership agreement and the foreign investment promotion and protection agreement, are premised on mandatory human rights provisions, initiate targeted sanctions against extremists guilty of inciting violence against religious minorities in India, and, lastly, promote mutually respectful and mutually beneficial human rights dialogue in Canada and India.

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### QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURN

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if a revised response to Question No. 282, originally tabled on September 15, 2025, could be made an order for return, this return would be tabled in an electronic format.

**The Speaker:** Is it agreed?

*Government Orders*

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

[For text of questions and responses, see *Written Questions website*]

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

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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**REQUEST FOR EMERGENCY DEBATE**

## EXTORTION IN CANADA

**The Speaker:** I wish to inform the House that I have received notice of a request for an emergency debate. I invite the hon. Leader of the Opposition to rise and make a brief intervention.

• (1010)

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, let us say someone mortgaged their house and took risks. They stayed up late wondering how they would pay the bills. Finally, after all that, they have success: a wonderful business with 30 to 50 people that is growing every day. Then suddenly the phone rings, and on the other end of the line, someone is threatening that if they do not pay millions of dollars to a gang, their house will be burned down, their children's bedroom will be shot up in the middle of the night or their employees may be killed. That sounds like an extreme case, but it has now become the norm.

Radical open door and open border policies by the Liberals have allowed gangsters to visit this country and gain visitor visas, which are granted to them without any criminal background checks. Catch-and-release laws passed by the Liberal government under Bill C-5, which lowered the jail sentence for extortion with a gun, have caused an extortion crisis across this country. To put it in perspective, since the Liberal government took office, extortion is up 330%. In British Columbia, it is up 400%. In the Lower Mainland, it is up 500%. Countless families have received threatening phone calls.

Just the other day, I met with the sons of a lifelong successful businessman who was mercilessly killed by gangsters without any provocation. People are living in terror in places like Surrey, north-east Calgary, parts of Edmonton, Brampton, Windsor and elsewhere. Over the weekend, I attended events at numerous businesses where literally dozens of people told me they have personally received threatening phone calls. They lie awake at night wondering if a bullet will fly through their children's front window or if they will be gunned down when they walk out the door.

This crisis was entirely avoidable, but Liberal policies have provoked it. The Liberals have released extortionists onto the streets with lower prison sentences. They have brought foreign gangsters and criminals to our shores by granting visitor visas and opening up our country to terror. After much pressure from Conservatives, they finally agreed to ban the Bishnoi group, but it was too late. They let the Bishnoi gangsters into this country in the first place because they do not protect our borders, and their radical policies on immi-

gration have endangered many of the very people who came here lawfully and legitimately.

If we look at these facts and look at the numbers, we have no choice but to conclude that we have a Liberal extortion emergency in this country. People are living in terror, and it is a shame that the Liberals have allowed this crisis to form and grow. It is a shame that the very communities that have vested support in the Liberal Party are now the ones paying the biggest price for the violence and carnage that Liberal policies have unleashed.

We as Conservatives will state clearly that extortion is a crisis after 10 years of the Liberals. We need an emergency debate to address this extortion crisis, and we must enact a serious plan to end extortion so Canadian small business owners can go back to living their lives, creating jobs, serving customers and making life affordable again for this country.

Our plan is very clear. We need mandatory jail time to lock extortionists up and throw away the key; stronger borders to keep and kick extortionists out of our country; and a clear self-defence law so that people can protect themselves in their homes when invaded by extortionists or other burglars.

This is an emergency. We have the answer. Let us restore safety, tranquility and peace to our streets.

## SPEAKER'S RULING

**The Speaker:** I thank the hon. Leader of the Opposition for his intervention. However, I am not satisfied that this request meets the requirements of the Standing Orders at this time.

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**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[*Translation*]

**BAIL AND SENTENCING REFORM ACT**

The House resumed from November 3 consideration of the motion that Bill C-14, An Act to amend the Criminal Code, the Youth Criminal Justice Act and the National Defence Act (bail and sentencing), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to speak to Bill C-14, which is quite a substantial bill with a relatively broad scope. It is clear that this is something that the House has been very interested in. Several private members' bills have been introduced that deal directly or indirectly with the same subject as Bill C-14. I expect that this will open the door to some very interesting debate, if not in the House, then at least in committee.

*Government Orders*

According to the minister, Bill C-14 seeks to tighten bail rules. It also affects other aspects of the Criminal Code and even the Youth Criminal Justice Act, or YCJA. I will not get into all of the details because there is a lot of material in there, but I do want to go over a few aspects of the bill. Before I do that, however, I just want to give a little background on the situation.

Contrary to popular belief, we know that the number of inmates awaiting trial has never been higher. Considering how many bail reform bills that have been tabled, a lot of people seem to believe that accused persons are normally released pending trial. However, inmates awaiting trial accounted for 64% of the prison population in 2019-20. By 2022-23, the percentage had gone up to 72%, which is extremely high. This is not a great look for Canada. I believe the only country with a higher percentage is the United States, which is not exactly a good role model, generally speaking. The idea that accused persons are systematically being released is therefore a misperception.

The other factor to consider is that there is no such thing as zero risk of recidivism. We may want to eliminate the possibility of a crime being committed by a person awaiting trial, but the only way to achieve that would be to systematically imprison everyone who is accused of any offence, however minor. This would very likely create other problems, not least of which would be prison overcrowding. It is important not to lose sight of the fact that prisons are often referred to as schools for crime, so increasing the prison population could potentially create more problems than it would solve. All of this must be kept in mind.

It is also important not to give in to the temptation to think that the judges analyzing an accused person's risk of recidivism do not take a whole host of criteria, particularly the person's criminal history, into account when they determine whether the person should be released. The judge analyzes the accused person's record and also looks at the nature of the offences. A great deal of data is taken into consideration by the judges. They have some discretion, and it is not a given that a person will be released so easily. People must not think that judges have no tools for keeping accused persons in custody while awaiting trial. An in-depth analysis of the bill is in order.

I would like to go over some general clauses and provide a few examples of what is in the bill. As a reminder, judicial discretion is generally a central consideration when analyzing the justice system. Members may be tempted to systematically tell judges what they should do and to tie their hands, but that could lead to situations that would simply not make sense, situations where judges would be forced to do things they do not want to do, just because parliamentarians tried to be more cautious than those on the ground were suggesting.

● (1015)

There is a possibility that some things might conflict with certain provisions in the bill. For example, section 718 of the Criminal Code already sets out how a sentence is determined. It would conflict with one element in the bill, namely consecutive sentencing. For repeat offenders, the bill would require consecutive sentences for offences arising out of the same initial event. That would conflict with the principle set out in section 718 of the Criminal Code,

which provides that sentencing should have certain objectives, including “to denounce unlawful conduct” but also “to deter the offender” and “to separate offenders from society, where necessary”. Sentencing also seeks “to assist in rehabilitating offenders” and “to provide reparations for harm done”. Lastly, sentencing should “promote a sense of responsibility in offenders, and acknowledgement of the harm done to victims or the community”. There are already provisions for analyzing how a sentence should be imposed. Would this bill not override these provisions by systematically imposing consecutive sentences?

There are also clauses dealing with freedom of expression that should be studied in committee, including the one that would make interfering with access to essential infrastructure an aggravating circumstance for sentencing purposes. In a way, would this not curtail freedom of expression, for example in the event of protests that may be deemed illegal? Certain protests that took place not too far from here come to mind. That could potentially be considered an aggravating circumstance. Do we want to go down that path? That raises some questions.

That being said, we should not throw the baby out with the proverbial bathwater. Some of the amendments proposed in the bill are interesting, particularly with regard to the YCJA, the Youth Criminal Justice Act. For example, one of the clauses seeks to fill a sort of legal vacuum in the YCJA regarding the length of time a record is kept when a young offender is the subject of an investigation and the investigation is dropped. The courts have attempted to fix this legal vacuum by suggesting record retention periods. A retention period is codified in the bill, but the proposed period may need to be reviewed, because the bill suggests that records should be retained for two years for a young person who is the subject of an investigation that is discontinued, whereas when a young person is convicted of an offence but given an absolute discharge, their record is kept for one year. The bill says that the active record for someone who has been the subject of an investigation that was subsequently dropped should be retained longer than for a young person who has been convicted. There are some minor contradictions like this that will need to be addressed.

One interesting amendment to the YCJA is the codification of the definition of “violent offence”. The bill codifies what was determined by the Supreme Court in 2005. It expands the application of the definition of “violent offence” found in paragraph 2(1)(a) of the Act. The emphasis is on the repercussions of the offence on the victim, rather than the legal characterization of the offence. The amendment establishes that the definition of a violent offence is based on whether it caused harm, including psychological harm, rather than on whether the offence involved the use of force, in line with the Supreme Court's rulings in this area. This could be a good amendment. Still, it remains to be seen whether it is actually useful, given that the court has already codified this.

*Government Orders*

However, the bill has a blind spot with regard to offences involving a firearm. There is a definition of what constitutes a violent offence, which was not defined in the YCJA, but offences involving a firearm are left out altogether. As we know, firearm use is a serious problem among young offenders nowadays. It is extremely difficult for Crown attorneys to get someone committed to custody for an offence involving a firearm. It might be worthwhile to look into this aspect at committee, as it seems to be one of the bill's blind spots.

In light of the section on the YCJA, which adds some valuable elements to the bill, we suggest that the bill be passed at second reading and referred to the committee so that it can be studied in greater depth with a view to making good recommendations while still preserving certain essential criteria, such as judicial discretion. That work will be particularly meaningful.

I would like to take the few seconds that I have left to thank two of my colleagues—they know who they are—for the groundwork they did on Bill C-14. They have already given us some good ideas about what we should be looking at in committee. I want to acknowledge them here, and I will certainly be calling upon them again for additional matters.

• (1020)

[*English*]

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I was surprised today by the Conservatives' attempt to bring forward an emergency debate when talking about the issue of extortion. Extortion is actually in Bill C-14, so there is time in which we can see tangible actions being taken in order to deal with important issues like extortion. I appreciate the Bloc's position in seeming to support the bill's at least going to committee.

Does the member believe that it is in the best interest of people who are concerned about extortion to see the legislation go to committee at the very least, so we can hear more about these types of important issues?

[*Translation*]

**Christine Normandin:** Mr. Speaker, I understand my colleague's question. However, he may be conflating different issues.

The issue of extortion, as addressed in Bill C-14, is important. However, from what I read, the Conservatives' request for an emergency debate does not specifically target extortion itself; rather, it focuses on the fact that the government is letting people with a known criminal past into the country and that those people are then committing crimes here.

Members may or may not agree with the substance of the Conservatives' request, but I think these are two different issues that need to be looked at separately. We do need specific sanctions for extortion crimes, but we also have to consider the fact that people who may be more likely to commit such crimes are being let into the country.

[*English*]

**Dane Lloyd (Parkland, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I think we can both agree that there are at least two key reasons for our Criminal Code and our corrections system. One is the protection of the public, and

the other is the hope that these offenders will somehow be rehabilitated in prison. We know, after 10 years of the Liberal government, that the Liberals have failed to protect the public in policies such as Bill C-75 and Bill C-5, but what is less talked about is their failure to rehabilitate offenders.

I want the member to talk about whether she is aware of the early resignation of the Office of the Correctional Investigator and his concerns that the government has failed to fund programs on mental health in prisons, which are essential to rehabilitating prisoners.

[*Translation*]

**Christine Normandin:** Mr. Speaker, there is a lot to unpack in this question, but I would like to repeat a statistic I mentioned at the beginning of my speech. There are more accused persons awaiting trial in prison today than there were, say, five years ago. During the Liberals' time in office, more accused persons have been kept in prison than in the past, yet the Conservatives are complaining that it is not enough.

However, it is important to remember that keeping offenders in prison comes at a cost and that this is money that is potentially not being invested in rehabilitation programs. Is there a lack of funding for rehabilitation and for mental health programs in halfway homes? Yes, there is. However, several factors are linked to this.

If I had to draw one conclusion, I would say that systematically keeping more people in prison while awaiting trial is not a solution and will not automatically lead to safer streets. We need to be able to work in those gray areas. However, yes, rehabilitation is a key aspect and it is certainly associated with additional funding.

• (1025)

[*English*]

**Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, it is quite problematic that the Liberals tabled the bill with very little data regarding bail, and a huge focus at committee needs to be on making sure that we are moving toward an evidence-based decision-making model regarding bail. I wonder if the member agrees that the federal government must show its leadership by creating a framework for data collection regarding bail.

[*Translation*]

**Christine Normandin:** Mr. Speaker, indeed, we should base our decisions much more on data and science than on media hype, which can sometimes be politically slanted, but can also lead to decisions that do not achieve the desired outcome.

Unfortunately, when it comes to releasing accused persons, if we had more data, we could make better decisions. I still think that it is worth sending the bill to committee because it contains some interesting provisions.

Often, when there is complete disagreement on the principle of a bill, it is rejected at the second reading stage. However, since there are elements in this bill that may be of interest, it is worth sending it to committee, but the work done there will have to be based on statistics and science.

[English]

**Dane Lloyd (Parkland, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have this opportunity to rise before the House and speak to Bill C-14, an act that seeks to amend the Criminal Code, the Youth Criminal Justice Act and the National Defence Act.

Before I get started with my speech, it is really important to talk about the request for emergency debate that the member for Battle River—Crowfoot, the leader of His Majesty's loyal opposition, brought forward. Extortion is an extremely real issue for people across this country. It is rising, and it is unacceptable. In fact, I just received a message from a constituent that I would like to read into the record. It reads, "Hi.... Not sure if you know what we're living through right now in Spring Meadows Estates." That is a community just west of Edmonton in my riding. The message continues, "Our neighbour is a victim of this targeted extortion. His house has been shot up twice now in the last three weeks. We live in fear, don't go out after dark, and if we are out and it's turned dark, we are nervous to come home. I can't believe we're living this way."

I shouldn't have to talk about such things happening in a country like Canada, but this is what my constituents, in what was once a peaceful rural community just outside Edmonton, are telling me is happening to them.

I know that the Leader of the Opposition has been going across the country speaking to business owners about the extortion attacks they are facing in their communities. It is clear that, after 10 years of the Liberal government, the Liberals have failed to tackle the issue of extortion; they have failed to put in the tough penalties needed to protect Canadians.

In 2019, the Liberal government passed Bill C-75, which amended the Criminal Code to codify the so-called principle of restraint. The new legislation directed courts to release accused persons at the earliest opportunity, with the least onerous conditions. The Liberals even doubled down on this failed legislative approach in 2022 by passing Bill C-5, which repealed mandatory minimum sentences and even allowed house arrest for the most serious of sentences. Minimum sentences were repealed for using a firearm in the commission of an offence, discharging a firearm with intent to harm and extortion involving a firearm, among other things.

Folks in my area have been reaching out; they are concerned. As I said, a home was shot up twice. I had to read the news article twice because I thought it was the same article, but, in fact, the same property was shot up twice.

However, house arrest is now a consideration for offences including sexual assault, kidnapping, abduction of a person under 14, theft over \$5,000 and arson, among other things.

### *Government Orders*

In 2023, Conservatives stood in the House hearing the cries of victims and tried to reverse these nonsensical parts of Bill C-5 through the introduction of legislation from my colleague, the member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, through his private member's bill, Bill C-325. The Liberal government voted it down.

In 2023, the Liberals started to recognize their failure. They were feeling a lot of heat from Conservatives and from Canadians, but they tried to get away with making only the most minor changes to bail rules, the bare minimum changes, with Bill C-48. I must say that this bill was clearly far from sufficient to deal with the problems we are facing in this country. Although the legislation created reverse onus provisions, the scope of those reverse onus provisions were so narrow that they did not apply to the growing number of violent actions that criminals are committing in Canada.

Earlier in this parliamentary session, my Conservative colleague, the member for Oxford, presented Bill C-242, the jail not bail act, which was voted against by the same Liberal government.

For years, police have been calling for bail reform. Police and correctional officers have pointed out that there are very important amendments that should be made and very important provisions that should be brought forward in the bill, and they are concerned that they have not been brought forward in the Liberal legislation. However, after 10 years of the government's soft-on-crime legislation, they are desperate to see any action from the government. While Conservatives can support many elements of Bill C-14, we believe there is room for significant improvements with amendments.

I want to talk a bit about the human costs behind some of the numbers we are talking about. We are talking about legislative policies and legalisms that can feel abstract, but there are real victims who are dealing with the consequences of these actions.

• (1030)

In July of this year, a young woman, Bailey McCourt of Kelowna, B.C., was brutally murdered in broad daylight by her estranged partner. She leaves behind two young children and grieving friends and family. For the people who do not know about this case, I will say that it is absolutely shocking. Her estranged partner was abusive. He was charged with assault but was let out on bail. He was then convicted of his violent act, but instead of being sentenced and put behind bars for his violent actions, he was released the very same day to await a hearing.

People who know the story will know that it ends tragically. Mere hours later and only a short distance from the very courthouse where the decision was made, the man proceeded to murder Bailey McCourt and seriously injure a bystander who tried to help. That is unacceptable.

*Government Orders*

In my riding, a criminal who was on house arrest went to the beach and took a young, five-year-old, girl. Now this person is responsible for the death of that young girl when they should have been on house arrest for breaking and entering with a weapon.

Should these people be allowed to roam freely in our communities? They should not, but that is the state of the law today in Canada, and it is unacceptable. Liberals have really failed when it comes to criminal justice, instead of being tough on the people who are terrorizing our communities.

After the government has finally been gotten through to, after years of failure, Bill C-14 starts to do the important work of scrapping failed Liberal bail policy. However, Conservatives want to emphasize that unless we take strong action on the so-called principle of restraint by putting forward an equally strong if not stronger principle of public and community safety, unless we presume detention when dealing with major and violent offences, we would not be seriously taking action that is going to result in people's being safer in our communities.

While the government is aiming to expand reverse onus for offences such as violent or organized crime, auto theft and human smuggling, among others, we are calling on the Liberals to repeal the principle of restraint and restore strong mandatory minimum sentences. When people talk about minimum sentences, they may think that 10 years, 15 years or 20 years is a bit harsh, yet the Supreme Court of Canada recently made a decision that a one-year mandatory minimum sentence was too much for people who knowingly possessed the most disgusting, most evil images of acts of torture against children, some as young as three years old: child sexual abuse material, formerly known as child pornography.

I think Canadians would look at that and think one year is far too little, yet the party in government is beholden to the opinions of the judicial elite, which is so out of touch with what everyday Canadians see as right and just. We live in a democracy, and it is the people who need to decide.

The people elect us to the House to stand up and put in good laws that protect our communities from people who would traffic in the images of children, people who would shoot up houses in extortion schemes, people who would murder, and people who would traffic firearms illegally. The bill would create uncertain outcomes in the charging of offences. We advocate, as Conservatives, restoring strong sentences for people who commit these serious crimes. We also call for the expansion of the reverse onus for a wider suite of serious crimes.

In summary, after 10 years of the Liberal government and repeated failed legislation, while there may be a glimmer of hope that the government is starting to recognize the errors of its way, we need stronger action today to protect our communities.

• (1035)

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if the member was sincere in his comments about stronger action, the Conservative Party could stop the filibuster on bail reform legislation.

A commitment was made by the Prime Minister to bring in bail reform legislation. This type of legislation deals with the issue of extortion, yet the leader of the Conservative Party stands up today and says he wants an emergency debate on extortion. Does he really? He has the opportunity to instruct his caucus to pass the legislation to committee; then we could actually see some action on extortion.

Why is the Conservative Party refusing to at least send this important legislation to committee?

**Dane Lloyd:** Mr. Speaker, I will not be lectured by the member or by any members of the Liberal Party who, for 10 years, due to their actions, have failed to protect our communities, because of legislation that has released onto our streets violent criminals who are using firearms to extort our community and who are assaulting women and then murdering them when they are released on bail. I will not take any lessons from the Liberal government, which wasted months and months to bring forward the weak piece of legislation that is before us.

**William Stevenson (Yellowhead, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I recently visited a penitentiary in my riding where there is chronic underfunding and overcrowding. I know it is going to be difficult to know what the Liberals are thinking, but maybe the member can comment on whether it is possible that the Liberals' solution is soft-on-crime bail rather than building extensions or new penitentiaries to keep more criminals in jail.

**Dane Lloyd:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is my neighbour in Yellowhead.

People think that if we put in strong sentences, more and more people will go to jail, but the facts show otherwise. Strong sentences deter people from going to jail, and the police have to deal less with people committing offence after offence. In fact when I was in my riding, in Drayton Valley, I talked to an RCMP officer who said he had arrested a drug trafficker who was released mere hours after they were arrested. The fact is that our police are overwhelmed by the failed Liberal bail system; we have a revolving door justice system.

I spoke earlier in a question about the Office of the Correctional Investigator. The correctional investigator talked about the government's chronic underfunding of mental health and programs in prisons. Conservatives want to put people behind bars, but we want people who come out of prison to at least have skills, training and better mental health so they do not commit more crimes. The correctional investigator is resigning two years early because the government—

• (1040)

**The Deputy Speaker:** I need to interrupt the member to allow for questions and comments.

The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader has the floor.

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, the response the member gave to my first question is unfortunate. Let me ask him a very simple question. Bail reform legislation is before us today. Will the member and the Conservative Party agree to have the legislation pass before the end of the year? Will the Conservative Party give Canadians a Christmas present by allowing them to have bail reform before the end of the year, yes or no?

**Dane Lloyd:** Mr. Speaker, the member knows full well the legislative process of the House, and that legislation needs to go through debate and to committee. He knows that the public safety committee and the justice committee have a lot of serious pieces of legislation before them. He also knows we have a chamber of sober second thought, the other place; we do not call it the Senate. He knows that the legislation is not going to pass before Christmas.

However, Conservatives will support any legislation that seeks to make our bail system stronger, but we have pointed out that the legislation is extremely weak and could benefit from serious amendments.

**Rachael Thomas (Lethbridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, a number of critics have spoken out with regard to the bill, saying that it goes a certain distance but certainly not far enough to protect Canadians. A big part of that is the fact that Bill C-5 and Bill C-75 are still intact and very much need to be scrapped. I wonder if the hon. member would care to comment on that.

**Dane Lloyd:** Mr. Speaker, people who live in rural Alberta and close to rural Alberta know that Bill C-75 and Bill C-5 have helped unleash a crime wave in our communities and in communities across Canada. I actually witnessed a brazen attempted vehicle theft of a Ford F-350 at a neighbour's house at seven o'clock in the morning, when people are going—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Resuming debate, the hon. member for Markham—Unionville.

**Michael Ma (Markham—Unionville, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to be here speaking for Markham—Unionville.

The Liberals claim they want to “balance firmness with fairness” in Bill C-14 and that they want “a justice system that works for everyone.” This is a false equivalence. There is no “everyone” when it comes to our justice system; there is a value hierarchy, and there is only one spot at the top. Whom do we choose to serve? Whom do we build our justice system around?

Day in and day out, the Liberals have shown us whom they truly value. They cater to the common criminals, with fairness for the thief, the murderer and the drug dealer, and firmness for the honest citizen and the compliant taxpayer. They do not value the everyday hard-working Canadian upon whose back this nation was built. We are treated like a tax farm to be extracted from and then fed to the bandits like in some sick joke. The world the Liberals have legislated into being through Bill C-5 and Bill C-75 is madness incarnate.

Human narratives are post hoc rationalizations. We commit to a position dictated by our incentive structures, and then we invent reasons why we took the given position. A metaphor I have encountered that captures this dynamic equates our gut instinct to an

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elephant, and our rational mind to an elephant rider: The elephant moves around any which way it wants, and the rider invents the reasons why the movement occurred. The Liberal elephant is committed to sitting with criminals, and the Liberal elephant rider creates narratives to justify soft-on-crime policies.

The principle of restraint is embedded in the very core of the Liberal doctrine on justice, so much so that even though the Liberals were forced to make numerous concessions to Conservative advocacy around the errors of Bill C-5 and Bill C-75, they have still left the principle unchanged in Bill C-14. Let me remind the House what Bill C-14 really is: a direct Liberal admission of failure regarding their soft-on crime policies, without altering the underlying pro-criminal commitments that undergird their doctrine of justice.

There is a good parallel to this in the world of science. Scientific paradigms are world views that are ways of looking at and interpreting bodies of facts. We can look at the facts of physics through the paradigm of Newton and the paradigm of Einstein, but we can never hold two competing paradigms at the same time, because each is a totalizing way of looking at the world.

In what we might call a justice paradigm, the Liberals are committed to catering to criminals. When they speak of restraint, they speak only of their favourite little lawbreakers. There is no room to look at the world from the world view of the everyday Canadian when the Liberals have chosen to take up a pro-criminal paradigm of justice.

This has been a prolonged build-up for what is a very simple solution. The Liberals must know in their heart of hearts that they need to go all the way and repeal Bill C-5 and Bill C-75 in full. They keep saying that they are a new Liberal government and are different from the old Liberal government. Well, I ask that my colleagues show us.

Bill C-14 succeeds, from a pro-order lens, where it would move in the direction of undoing the damages of C-5 and Bill C-75. The bill fails where it would retain the principle of restraint.

There can be no balance in our system of justice between competing world views. The Liberals need to take one path and go all the way. What Bill C-14 represents is a patchwork of compromises. The Liberals have found such a big tent that competing factions sit uncomfortably together under a single roof.

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• (1045)

The ideological incoherence in Bill C-14 maps the incoherence of the Liberals' factional support structure and the basis of power. To use a metaphor from earlier, the Liberals have more than one elephant, but only a single elephant rider to rationalize policy commitments post hoc to the entire world. What a mess. The Liberals will be perpetually locked into half measures to keep a tenuous coalition together.

With my remaining time, I want to outline some potential positive directions for Bill C-14 if the Liberals accept my commentary on the justice paradigms. First of all, the Liberals need to put law-abiding Canadians first by choosing to commit to the maintainers of order. It is already impossible to hold the principle of restraint as a core value. When we put something together at the centre of our value hierarchy, we will necessarily build a new system around it.

Second, once the public safety of law-abiding Canadians is set as the true north of our justice paradigm, it becomes impossible to uphold the errors of Bill C-5 and Bill C-75. Restoring mandatory minimums, ending the catch-and-release system and removing the house arrest option for serious offenders are the logical consequences of accepting a new set of priorities.

Finally, Liberals will have to come to terms with their big tent and prune the factions that are clearly against the well-being of law-abiding Canadians and the productive society they enable. The principle of restraint for criminals is a principle of constraint on our productive economy.

In conclusion, I want to remind the Liberal colleagues that the situation with our justice system has deteriorated to such an extent this is no longer a question of partisan politics. If they continue with this patchwork of compromises, what will the spillover effects be? How many more Canadians need to be shot dead in their own homes by repeat offenders for this systemic madness to bleed into genuine societal chaos? We are not talking about riots in the streets, though that is always possible. We are talking about the everyday chaos of a low-trust society, a slow and steady descent into balkanization and tribalization when citizens see they cannot trust their justice system to serve their interests.

If the Liberals continue to wine and dine on the luxury belief of restraint for criminals, the least of their concerns will be the fracturing of their own coalition. They are to fear the fracturing of our society and of the tax base that funds their capacity to engage in those ludicrous luxury beliefs.

• (1050)

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think we found out from one of the member's colleagues a little bit earlier that the Conservative Party has no intentions of passing Bill C-14. Bill C-14 is a reflection of what Canadians want to see as a part of the Prime Minister and the Liberal caucus' campaign commitment. Overwhelmingly, never before have as many Canadians voted for a political party as they did for the current Prime Minister in the last election. This was an election platform commitment.

Will the member agree that this legislation should be able to pass before Christmas?

**Michael Ma:** Mr. Speaker, if the Prime Minister is serious about delivering his promise, he should attack the fundamental root cause of this problem and repeal Bill C-5 and Bill C-75. As I said in my speech, let us not fool around with more compromises. Let us get at the root cause of this problem.

We hear this from our Canadian citizens. We hear this from our police force. Let us fix this once and for all, and stop fooling around with all these compromises.

**Rachael Thomas (Lethbridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals keep saying that Canadians want this legislation. It is true that Canadians certainly want change. They want to make sure their communities are safe. They want to make sure people can walk in the evening without fear. They want to make sure businesses can operate without being shot up. Certainly, Canadians want that. They want to know the safety and security, the well-being of their communities, is protected. However, this bill, Bill C-14, does not go far enough.

I wonder if the hon. member, my colleague, would care to comment further on that.

**Michael Ma:** Mr. Speaker, we are hearing from Canadians and from law enforcement that the current bill, and the existence of Bills C-5 and C-75, are not working. In fact, over the weekend, we had a seminar on crime and heard a very emotional testimony from an elderly couple who lost their 25-year-old daughter. That is the reason we need to fix the fundamentals of what is going on. Let us not give bail to all of the repeat offenders.

**Hon. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with all due respect to the member, he did not answer the question the parliamentary secretary asked about letting this bill go to committee.

The member for Lethbridge then asked him a question about what is wrong and why the bill does not go far enough.

The whole point of letting the bill pass at this stage is so it can go to committee to fix what apparently the member for Lethbridge, this member and all Conservatives do not think goes far enough. Why will Conservatives not let this bill pass so it can go to committee, where their concerns can be raised?

**Michael Ma:** Mr. Speaker, what we are looking at with the Liberal government is that, even when bills are sent to committee and recommendations are approved, it still ignores them, so I am not sure we would be addressing this issue.

We are appealing for a fundamental fix. Let us repeal Bill C-5 and Bill C-75.

• (1055)

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I do not believe the Conservative Party of Canada is listening to what Canadians are saying. They want bail reform. The Prime Minister, and every Liberal member of Parliament, wants to see bail reform. The roadblock to achieving it is the Conservative Party. On the one hand, its members say they want it, but on the other hand, they are denying every Canadian bail reform—

**The Deputy Speaker:** I have to interrupt the parliamentary secretary to give a chance to the member for Markham—Unionville to respond.

**Michael Ma:** Mr. Speaker, the point is that this does not fundamentally address the issues laid out in Bills C-5 and C-75. Let us get to it. Let us repeal Bills C-5 and C-75, fix the problem fundamentally and address—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Resuming debate, the hon. member for Newmarket—Aurora.

**Sandra Cobena (Newmarket—Aurora, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians have been clear, painfully clear, that we need a justice system that is respected by those who break the law and trusted by the people who live with the consequences. We need laws that actually protect families, not laws that look good on paper while leaving our communities vulnerable. Trust cannot exist without real accountability. When offenders face symbolic consequences, not real ones, the system loses credibility and communities lose confidence.

Just a week ago, Parliament had a chance to change that. Conservatives introduced the jail not bail act, a common-sense bill that the Liberals voted against. It would have put public safety first, replacing the current principle of restraint with a principle rooted in the reality that the safety of Canadians must come before the convenience of offenders. It would have created stricter bail rules for major offences, the kinds of rules that shatter lives, including firearm violence, sexual assault, kidnapping and home invasions. It would have strengthened risk assessment so that bail could be denied when reoffending is reasonably foreseeable, not only when it meets the far higher bar of a substantial likelihood. How did the Liberal government respond? It voted against it. It voted against protections, against safer streets and against the frontline officers and first responders who run towards danger while others run away.

Now, the same government that weakened the guardrails of our justice system claims that Bill C-14 will fix everything. Bill C-14 is not a solution, not a complete solution. It is a hollow echo of the Conservative proposal, a half measure drafted by a government that still refuses to acknowledge the crime crisis unfolding across the country.

The Liberals unleashed a very dangerous experiment in Canada with weak bail laws, weakened penalties and a justice system that prioritizes release over responsibility, and Canadians have paid the price. Violent crime is up 41% since 2014, and homicide, sexual assault and extortion are all higher. Neighbourhoods are traumatized and lives are shattered.

Still, Bill C-14 refuses to fix the root of the problem. First, it would keep the principle of restraint, the very rule that instructs the courts to release offenders as early and as easily as possible. Second, it refuses to restore mandatory minimum penalties for violent

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firearms and weapons offences, penalties the government eliminated under Bill C-5. Third, it would still permit house arrest for serious crimes, including some trafficking-related and violent offences. Finally, it fails to introduce a presumption of pretrial detention for repeat violent offenders, the people who repeatedly terrorize communities because the system lets them.

The government weakened the guardrails. Now it offers a band-aid solution: a band-aid for violent crime, a band-aid for intimate partner violence and a band-aid for human trafficking. Band-aid solutions are not enough.

Since entering public life, one of the hardest truths I have had to confront is how deeply human trafficking affects our communities, including my community in Newmarket—Aurora. We do not see it often on the front page of the newspaper. We see only hints of it, such as a help poster in a bathroom stall or a number taped beside a sink. Behind all those small signs lie devastating stories.

Slavery may have been abolished centuries ago, but today, in our own neighbourhoods, there are young girls and boys being treated as a commodity. They children who have been reduced to property. Human trafficking is the fastest-growing crime in Canada. Profits have skyrocketed. Online recruitment has exploded, and victims are younger, more vulnerable and more isolated.

• (1100)

What makes this crime so sinister is what traffickers call breaking the spirit. It is a deliberate, violent, psychological assault on a human being until they no longer recognize their own worth or their own voice. This is happening in Canada, on Canadian soil, in communities like ours.

Bill C-14 scratches the surface. It may make it slightly harder for traffickers to get bail, but it would do almost nothing to strengthen sentencing, victim protections or enforcement. Human trafficking of minors once carried strong mandatory minimums that deterred predators. The Liberals weakened or repealed many of them, and Bill C-14 would not restore them. Cases collapse into reduced charges through plea deals, and Bill C-14 would do nothing to stop that. Victims are often left in the dark when their traffickers are released, and Bill C-14 would not fix that either. When a crime is this vile and this morally repugnant, half measures are not enough.

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Just a few weeks ago, a jewellery store in the Upper Canada Mall in Newmarket, which is in my community, was ambushed by a group of masked robbers. They smashed the display cases, terrified shoppers and shattered the sense of safety that families rely on. Last weekend, it happened again in the same mall, but to another store. This time, a police officer and security guards were pepper-sprayed. The message this sends is unmistakable: They can do this because nothing will happen to them.

This is what weak bail laws create: a culture of impunity and a revolving door where offenders are back on the streets before the paperwork is done. Who carries the burden? It is the families, the business owners, our brothers and sisters, our neighbours, our employees, the seniors who walk in the mall for exercise and the parents who are deciding whether it is still safe to bring their children.

While Bill C-14 would adjust some bail considerations, it would still allow for release on the least restrictive conditions, even for crimes that target the very sense of safety in a community. For gang-related robberies, auto theft rings, home invasions, extortion and coordinated retail attacks, public safety must be the first and central consideration.

I remember a Canada where we could walk at night without fear and where parents did not think twice about letting their children go to the mall or ride their bike. Safety was not a luxury; it was a quiet part of our daily life that was taken for granted. That freedom is being fractured. We need strong laws that confront the crime wave being unleashed by weak bail policies and weakened penalties. Canadians deserve to feel safe.

• (1105)

**Hon. Ruby Sahota (Secretary of State (Combatting Crime), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member talked about violent crime, as well as the retail crime that happened at a jeweller's. Bill C-14 would address these exact issues so that these types of criminals who are committing organized retail crime do not get back out on the streets. It would also address home invasions, auto theft and violent crime. It would do many things. There are 80 different changes to the Criminal Code in Bill C-14.

I would like to know what is holding up the Conservative Party. Why can we not get this bill to committee and get it passed as soon as possible?

**Sandra Cobena:** Mr. Speaker, Bill C-14 would not repeal Bill C-75, which brought in the principle of restraint.

I am even more concerned that it took the Liberals six years to learn that there is a crime wave happening in Canada. The principle of restraint is not working, yet Bill C-14 still directs that if a release is ordered, it must be on the "least onerous conditions" necessary. This is what breeds violence and crime in our communities.

**Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton—Bkejwanong, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for another intelligent speech. We are studying violence against women and girls at the status of women committee, and we heard testimony yesterday that the reverse onus provision in Bill C-14 would not work. As long as people come with a plan, the judges tend to send them back out on bail.

Could the member comment on a stronger measure that she would like to see in this bill?

**Sandra Cobena:** Mr. Speaker, in 2022, the Liberals brought in Bill C-5, which took away the mandatory minimum sentences brought in under the Harper government. Bill C-14 fails to do two main things. There is only a partial reversal for house arrest eligibility, and it would not reinstate mandatory minimums. This bill fails to make real sentencing reform and would put our communities at risk.

Recently, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled against the one-year mandatory minimum for cases involving child pornography, and the Liberals did nothing about it. As a mother, I am disgusted that the Liberal government does not take crimes against innocent children seriously.

**Hon. Ruby Sahota:** Mr. Speaker, that is absolutely false. We are taking these crimes very seriously. In fact, that is why the second bill we presented in this House was Bill C-2, which would give law enforcement lawful access tools to be able to catch pedophiles, catch child predators online and catch extortionists. The Conservative Party of Canada had those tools removed and put into another bill.

Why is the Conservative Party of Canada failing to be the partner it ought to be in Parliament when it comes to public safety?

**Sandra Cobena:** Mr. Speaker, I will repeat myself. Bill C-14 fails to do two main things. There is only a partial reversal of house arrest eligibility, and it would not reinstate mandatory minimums.

As the member of Parliament for Newmarket—Aurora, I send monthly surveys to my constituents, and crime is one of their top concerns. It is not only because we now watch it on the news; it is because we hear it from our neighbours, we live it and we see it in malls.

Crime has been increasing. If we take a step back, we know this is the result of the Liberals' bail reform. They are not repealing Bill C-5 or Bill C-75.

**Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we are discussing bail reform. One thing from the Liberals' side of the aisle that I find amazing is that they think there is an act of God and they need to reform these laws. They do not finish the answer and say we need bail reform because they have bungled this file over the last 10 years. Bill C-5 and Bill C-75 are the reasons we need bail reform.

They messed it up. Why should we think they are the ones who can fix it?

• (1110)

**Sandra Cobena:** Mr. Speaker, I agree with my colleague. This is a direct result of 10 years of the Liberal government's weak bail laws. These are the consequences our communities are living through.

It is a bit hypocritical that the Liberals appear to feel so strongly about it, when we, the Conservatives, put the jail not bail act forward for a vote and they voted against it.

[*Translation*]

**Eric Lefebvre (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we are here today to speak to Bill C-14, an act to amend the Criminal Code, the Youth Criminal Justice Act and the National Defence Act regarding bail and sentencing.

Canadians have waited a long time for the Liberal government to take serious measures to end violence in communities across the country. Since 2015, this government has chosen to let violent offenders walk free rather than protect innocent Canadians. The reality is that there are now more dangerous criminals on our streets and in our communities, which are becoming less and less safe.

Unfortunately, there are countless victims. Savannah Rose Kulla-Davies, a mother of four, was killed by a criminal released on bail in Brampton. Bailey McCourt was killed just three hours after a criminal was released on bail in Kelowna. Hung Trang and Ban Phuc Hoang were killed by a criminal released on bail in Edmonton. In Manitoba, a criminal killed his sister while out on bail. Out of respect for those victims and their families, Bill C-14 needs to go further. We must do it for them, in their memory, to prevent further victimization.

In his comments on violent repeat offenders in Winnipeg, Winnipeg mayor Scott Gillingham said that these figures confirm what frontline officers see every day, namely that it is always the same people who go through the justice system, committing violent crimes over and over again. After numerous warnings to this government, I am still a little perplexed. Conservatives on this side of the House have been asking Liberals to abandon their bail plan for years. Why did they wait so long?

A number of years ago, the Liberals passed bills C-5 and C-75. These two bills caused crime to skyrocket and made our communities less safe. Bill C-5, which repealed certain mandatory minimum penalties, eliminated mandatory prison sentences for serious firearm- and drug-related offences. Bill C-75, the Liberal catch-and-release bill, granted bail to repeat violent offenders. These bills form the foundation of the Liberals' soft-on-crime plan. It is hard to believe that a government would deliberately pass legislation that reduces prison terms for the most dangerous members of our society. The result is that Canada is less safe today than it was when the Liberals came into office.

Numbers do not lie. Here are some statistics on how the situation has evolved since 2015. Violent crime is up 55%. Gun-related crime is up 130%. Extortion has exploded, increasing by 330% all across Canada. Sexual assaults are up 76%. Homicides are up 29%. I think most Canadians would agree with me that this has been one

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of the greatest failures, if not the single greatest failure, of this Liberal government.

In early October, our Conservative team moved a motion asking the House of Commons to immediately pass the bill introduced by my colleague, the hon. member for Oxford, Bill C-242, or the jail not bail act. Unsurprisingly, the Liberals voted against the motion. That is another clear sign that they do not take this matter seriously. For more than seven months now, the Prime Minister has been promising to reform the bail system in Canada. By not voting in favour of our motion, he continues to delay the implementation of measures that would make our streets safer. Canadians have waited long enough.

While I am pleased that we are talking about these matters, Bill C-14 still does not go far enough to protect our communities.

Firstly, the principle of restraint remains intact, which preserves the existing bail culture. We must strengthen our criminal justice system to ensure that the most violent offenders in Canada cannot be released. Secondly, the mandatory minimum sentences that were repealed by Bill C-5 have not been reinstated. We must repeal Bill C-5 in order to guarantee that criminals who commit firearm-related offences, sexual assaults or kidnappings, or who engage in human trafficking, are given prison terms instead of house arrest.

• (1115)

The Liberals have weakened our bail system, putting criminals back on our streets. They have made our communities less safe, unfortunately. Their solution is to introduce a bill that begins to address the problem, but ultimately does not go far enough. It does not truly solve the crisis facing Canadians. It does not fix the broken bail system.

The same goes for Bill C-4, making life more affordable for Canadians act. Starting in 2015, the Liberal government created a cost of living crisis. That is what happens when a government runs one inflationary deficit after another.

I hope that Bill C-14 will be different and that the Liberals will agree to our amendments. Unfortunately, I doubt they will.

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The Conservatives fought to undo the Liberals' decision on bail. I am proud of my colleagues who do battle daily to make our communities safer. There is still a lot to do to fix everything this Liberal government messed up, and Bill C-14 is just the beginning. Unfortunately, it does not go far enough.

My priority will always be to build safer communities. I appreciate the work being done to reduce violence, but we need to do more for the victims I named earlier today.

The Conservative call to strengthen our bail system is part of our plan to stop crime and make our communities safer. Our plan includes a number of priorities that we would like to see the government implement.

We would like to see a “three strikes and you're out” law to keep the most dangerous criminals behind bars. Everyone agrees that the most dangerous criminals should be kept off our streets.

We would also like to see mandatory minimum sentences for repeat offenders. After three strikes, we propose that repeat offenders receive a minimum sentence of 10 years. That is part of our plan to incarcerate the most dangerous people in our society longer and give them time to rehabilitate.

We would like to see repeat offenders designated as dangerous offenders. That means they could only be released after demonstrating good behaviour and abstaining from all drug use. That should also include training to upgrade their skills to allow them to contribute as proud members of society and get their lives in our great country back on track.

Repeat offenders are dangerous. That is why they should only be released when they no longer pose a threat to our society. For the safety of all Canadians and for the future of our children, we need to go further than what Bill C-14 proposes.

• (1120)

[*English*]

**Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I really appreciated the comments my colleague made on the condition of this bill and on the recommendations. I am sure, as he has been listening, that he has heard a member across the way constantly ask if we are ready to do this because we are in a crisis.

Having been here for a decade now, I can tell members that what the government does is delay and deny, until finally Canadians have had enough and it starts to act. We are now finally acting, to some degree, on these terrible bills, Bill C-5 and Bill C-75.

What does he think the government has done in lieu of doing the work it should have been doing to get this bill in front of the House over five years ago?

[*Translation*]

**Eric Lefebvre:** Mr. Speaker, of course the government should have introduced a bill and dealt with this issue a long time ago.

In my speech today, I named some of the people who became victims all because the Liberals have allowed this problem related to the Criminal Code to drag on. Unfortunately, some innocent victims lost their lives. Now, let us do what we must to move forward and work to improve Bill C-14.

The government definitely needs to go further than what it has presented us with.

[*English*]

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, members of the Conservative Party of Canada have demonstrated inside the House that they have absolutely no shame. They do not understand, nor do they appreciate, that this was an election platform issue. We have provinces, municipalities and many stakeholders, including law enforcement officers, that want to see Bill C-14 passed.

The Conservatives have come up with lame excuses to try to justify the inappropriate, disrespectful speeches they have provided to date and to try to justify that they do not want to see this legislation passed before Christmas. I find that sad and unfortunate. Canadians will pass judgment at some point in time on their behaviour and their rejection of bail reform legislation.

Can the member justify to his constituents why they will not pass this legislation before the end of the year?

[*Translation*]

**Eric Lefebvre:** Mr. Speaker, with all due respect to my colleague, I find that rather amusing. The Liberals have been in power for 10 years and have done nothing for the past five years. They have suddenly seen the light at the end of the tunnel and want to get this done in three months. They did nothing for 10 years, and now they want us to rush this bill through because they suddenly woke up.

I have to insist that Canadians be shown a little respect. We have to get this right.

[*English*]

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the member can reflect on the fact that we have stakeholders, as I have indicated, like law enforcement, the provinces and municipalities, and Canadians in general, that want bail reform legislation. The Prime Minister and every Liberal member of Parliament want to see this legislation pass before the end of the year.

Does the member not recognize that instead of Conservatives putting the political best interests of the Conservative Party first, they should put the interests of Canadians first, allow this bill to go to committee and allow it to pass before the end of the year?

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[*Translation*]

**Eric Lefebvre:** Mr. Speaker, I will give the same answer. This government has been doing nothing for 10 years. We have been calling on the government to get the job done for five years. Now the Liberals have suddenly seen the light and they hope to get this bill passed in three months.

We will take no lessons from the Liberal government. On this side of the House, we take our jobs seriously. We are working for Canadians. That is what we will continue to do.

[*English*]

**Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton—Bkejwanong, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that was an excellent speech. The real problem with Bill C-14 is that it does not remove the principle of the least restrictive punishment at the earliest possible opportunity. That is the problem, and it is the reason this bill is not going to fix crime. Would the member agree?

[*Translation*]

**Eric Lefebvre:** Mr. Speaker, that is precisely one of the reasons why we need to improve this bill. We cannot pass it as it now stands, like the Liberals want us to do. They have done nothing for five years. We will work to improve this bill to keep Canadians safe.

• (1125)

[*English*]

**Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for the opportunity to rise today realizing the gravity of this debate for millions of Canadians.

For those who are new to the country, which at some point most of us were or our ancestors were, Canada was once a safe harbour with a reasonable guarantee that someone could live out life free from harassment, harm or extortion. That meant peaceful communities where front doors were often left unlocked, and people had little fear of having their car stolen while they slept. It meant they could enjoy Canada's vibrant city life knowing that streets were safe and that stopping illegal drugs and firearms was a priority. It meant the most dangerous criminals were kept behind bars, where they belonged, not continually passing through a revolving door, going from our courts to back out on the streets. It meant we had a federal government that protected families from these harms through the strictest possible laws while ensuring they were enforced in our courts.

After 10 years of the Liberal government, the reality is much different. Terrible legislation, like Bill C-5 and Bill C-75, demonstrates that the consequences of reckless ideological Liberal policies are real.

Since 2015, violent crime is up 55%, firearms crime is up 130%, extortion has exploded 330%, sexual assaults have risen 76% and homicides are up 29%. In fact, a new report just released by the Macdonald-Laurier Institute analyzed crime data from 20 metropolitan areas representing nearly two-thirds of Canada's population. It found that Canada's violent crime rate has climbed steadily since the middle of the last decade. It has been an era defined by lenient bail, soft-on-crime persecution and police resources stretched way too thin. As stated in the report:

...the latest evidence suggests that the problem is broader and more entrenched than many realize. Policymakers can no longer rely on temporary explanations or regional anomalies. The challenge now is to restore public confidence and measurable accountability in how we protect our cities.

What logical government would stand by the policies that have resulted in a prolonged nationwide crime wave? Sadly, obstruction and inaction have been the Liberal approach for the better part of a decade. However, bills like Bill C-14 prove that determined and principled opposition can be effective in spurring change. This bill is a rare Liberal admission that the Liberals' criminal justice reforms have failed. While it is a step in the right direction of the Conservative approach to bail and sentencing, it does not repeal the principle of restraint or restore mandatory minimum sentences.

What drove the government to finally introduce Bill C-14? Bill C-75, in 2019, codified the principle of restraint, requiring law enforcement and courts to release accused individuals at the earliest reasonable opportunity and under the least onerous conditions. This effectively created a catch-and-release system, subjecting communities to dangerous offenders while they awaited trial. Bill C-5, in 2022, went further, scrapping several mandatory minimum sentences and liberalizing the use of house arrest for serious offences such as sexual assault.

Bill C-14, the bill we are debating today, makes a start at addressing the serious implications of Bill C-75 and Bill C-5. It clarifies that the principle of restraint would not require an offender's outright release. It also directs courts to take into account the number and gravity of charges facing the accused when determining bail. With Bill C-14, there is an incentive for those who have abused our justice system and grown accustomed to getting away with multiple serious crimes with little or no repercussions to think twice. There are other encouraging elements of the bill, such as requiring consecutive sentences for repeat auto theft, breaking and entering, extortion and arson offences.

The purpose of sentencing has been refocused on the protection of the Canadian public, at least to some degree, rather than solely on the rehabilitation of the offender. When sentencing, a judge must consider a new aggravating factor involving repeat violent behaviour over the last five years. The bill would also partially reverse Bill C-5's expansion of house arrest eligibility.

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Yes, there are many beams of light in the bill that attempt to break through the stormy skies of the last six years of a soft-on-crime agenda. However, it comes up short. The fact is that dangerous elements of the Liberal ideology on crime and punishment remain. Bill C-14 is not an outright repeal of the principle of restraint, and it would not restore mandatory minimums. It is truly a missed opportunity to toughen up penalties for serious violent offences. While consecutive sentences and aggravating factors are useful, they are still left to judicial discretion when applying them.

Why does it matter that we get the bill right? All major urban centres have seen an increase in violent crime, but so have our smaller cities and rural communities across Manitoba, Alberta and my home province of Saskatchewan.

● (1130)

There is simply no more time to waste. Canadians no longer feel safe in their communities. Every day that passes without a return to a common-sense approach to crime puts more innocent Canadians at risk. A Postmedia-Leger poll shows growing concern among Canadians about personal safety and the effectiveness of their justice system: 51% say they worry about safety in their neighbourhoods, including the risk of a home invasion. Concern is highest among young people aged 35 to 54, a group that is most likely to have families and own homes.

A striking 87% of Canadians believe they have the right to use reasonable force against an intruder, a number that climbs to 92% in Saskatchewan and Manitoba and among those 55 years and older. Leger executive vice-president Andrew Enns notes that this sentiment is long-standing but significant, warning that widespread distrust in the justice system can erode respect for the law. Certainly, criminals do not respect or fear these laws, whereas innocent Canadians are living in fear and facing consequences.

Overall, 54% believe that the justice system works against law-abiding citizens, while only 29% think it protects Canadians. That is a sad and regrettable reflection on the ability of the Liberal government to inspire confidence in its system of justice, but it is well deserved. The Liberals have consistently ignored police, municipalities, business owners and, above all, law-abiding Canadians in standing by policies that fail to keep us safe. Members should note that I said they “consistently ignored”, not that they failed to see or grasp the increased breadth of violent crime erupting across Canada over the last decade of their Liberal rule.

Unfortunately for residents of the James Smith Cree Nation in my home province, this reality is beyond real. On September 4, 2022, a mass stabbing spree unfolded across 13 locations in the Cree Nation and the nearby village of Weldon.

Myles Sanderson killed 11 people and wounded 17. He had 59 previous criminal convictions, including for assault with a weapon, robbery and threats. He had been granted statutory release in August 2021 after serving a sentence, but by May 2022 he was unlawfully at large after failing to keep in touch with his parole officer. In the wake of this tragedy, many questions surrounded the decisions of the court, the parole board and Corrections Canada. What rationale validates repeatedly releasing this violent criminal from custody despite his dozens of convictions?

Another tragedy unfolded this September at the Hollow Water First Nation, where 26-year-old Tyrone Simard, known to police and our courts, went on a horrifying rampage. He stabbed eight people across two homes in Hollow Water, killing his own 18-year-old sister, Marina, and injuring seven others.

Why was he out on bail? Three months earlier, he had been charged with assault with a weapon and mischief. A Winnipeg court released him just four days later with these conditions: a curfew, no alcohol or drugs, no weapons and, heartbreakingly, no contact with his sister. He violated every one of those conditions. He returned to Marina's home and took her life.

The law did not adequately protect Marina or the people of Hollow Water First Nation, James Smith Cree Nation or the village of Weldon. The Liberal system designed for restraint and lighter sentences has not served public safety. The government needs to remove Bill C-5 and Bill C-75 and strengthen Bill C-14, to repair the damage, in memory of those who have lost their lives and those left behind with horrific memories.

This House must replace restraint with a public safety primacy clause. Ensuring public and community safety is the governing principle of courts across our lands. We must restore mandatory minimum sentences for firearms offences, sexual offences, repeat violent offences and drug offences. Conditional sentence eligibility must exclude robbery, firearms trafficking and offences by chronic offenders.

It is not too late for the government to adopt the full Conservative plan to stop their decade of turning a blind eye to the rampant chaos, crime and disorder that Bill C-75 and Bill C-5 have encouraged. Bill C-14 must be the beginning of a full restoration of this country's promise of safety and prosperity for Canadians, wherever they live.

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated, whether among provinces, municipalities, different stakeholders or law enforcement officers, people understand and they want to see Bill C-14 move forward. Canadians want bail reform legislation. The Conservatives are being motivated by another factor.

*Government Orders*

We have the leader of the Conservative Party, who has referred to “extreme bloodshed and violence”. We have the MP for Oxford, who said, “We are now living in a war zone in Canada.” They are using these radical statements in order to generate funds. They are putting the raising of funds and their own political interests ahead of Canadian interests.

Will the member opposite not recognize that it is about time the Conservative Party starts focusing more on Canadians, as opposed to their own leadership and the Conservative Party of Canada, and allows the legislation to pass before the end of the year? Will she support that?

• (1135)

**Cathay Wagantall:** Mr. Speaker, there is a tiny bit of truth in some words in there. Canadians are desperate to have the government do the right thing. The bill has some good in it, but it is not responding to those very people he is saying are calling on the government to do the right thing, which is to shut down the legislation in Bill C-5 and Bill C-75. This is what they want. They want an outright repeal of the principle of restraint, and they want restoration of mandatory minimums.

**Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, what I just heard from the member for Winnipeg North is laughable. There is not a more partisan politician in this chamber. He would do anything for the Liberal Party of Canada. This includes absolutely ensuring that everything looks good from their point of view. The only reason we need bail reform is that this member and the rest of the Liberals passed terrible legislation for the last 10 years, making our streets unsafe. It is unconscionable for him to stand there and say we need to reform, we need to reform, when they were the ones who messed up the justice system in the first place. A Supreme Court ruling that allowed people who had child abuse pictures and videos to get a one-year sentence is unconscionable, and any member of Parliament who does not think that is not right should not be here.

**Cathay Wagantall:** Mr. Speaker, I concur with the member and all the things he just said. This individual seems to want to convince Canadians that the Liberals are on the right track, when they have been in the House hearing this side of the floor, over and over and over, talk about the issues with Bill C-5 and Bill C-75, which have caused the rampant, high levels of crime across our nation. People in Canada are calling on the government to do the right thing, not just to do a little bit of something rather than remove all the things that are causing the greatest angst in this country that I have seen in the 10 years I have been here.

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, the member avoided answering the question, which was very straightforward. Canadians expect to see bail reform legislation. The only reason we will not see bail reform legislation is that the Conservative Party is more focused on its own personal fundraising and its own political interest. This is the only reason, the only reason Canadians will not be able to see bail reform legislation.

Does she not see, in reflecting on her constituents, that the Conservatives need to reverse their policy?

**Cathay Wagantall:** Mr. Speaker, I represent Saskatchewan. I think the member knows how absolutely ridiculous that last statement was. There is no question, across this country, that what the

people of Canada want is for the government to finally step up and do the right thing. If the member can assure me they will include amendments that remove Bill C-5 and Bill C-75 from legislation, I will gladly support their bill.

They are not representing Canadians. They are not supporting Canadians. They are not answering the call of Canadians for protection and lowered crime in this country, which they basically caused the impetus for with Bill C-5 and Bill C-75.

**Doug Shipley (Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, just quickly, I have been here this morning for a couple of hours, and I have heard the members opposite from the Liberal government talking about bail reform. Maybe the member on our side, the Conservative side, could answer this since she has been here for over 10 years.

Who has been in power for the last two years? What do the words “bail reform” mean, and why are we sitting here talking about bail reform after someone has been in charge for 10 years?

**Cathay Wagantall:** Mr. Speaker, well, 20 seconds to say this is easy. The reason we are talking about bail reform is because these people did a terrible job of bringing in legislation, which has caused incredible angst across this country and increased crime. That is unconscionable.

• (1140)

**Fraser Tolmie (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise on behalf of the people of Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan. I rise today to speak to Bill C-14, the bail and sentencing reform act. I want to acknowledge the good work being done by the local Moose Jaw Police Service. Moose Jaw saw its crime severity index drop nearly 12% in 2024. Crimes against property are down 23%, and our clearance rates are up significantly. This shows what effective policing can achieve.

However, when I look beyond my hometown to the broader riding of Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan, the picture changes dramatically. The Saskatchewan RCMP jurisdiction has seen violent crime increase 45% over the past decade. How long has the Liberal government been in power? Coincidence or not, it is a decade. In 2024 alone, there were nearly 22,000 victims of violent crime, 6,700 more than 10 years ago. We had 41 homicides, the highest on record in the RCMP jurisdiction. This contrast tells us something critical: Local solutions matter, but municipal police cannot overcome failed federal policies or the Liberal soft-on-crime bail laws, which are forcing Canadians to defend themselves and live in fear.

### *Government Orders*

The Liberal government has finally admitted what Conservatives have been trying to say for years: Its criminal justice reforms have failed. In the Liberals' own press release for Bill C-14, they acknowledged a 41% rise in the violent crime severity index since 2014. Saskatchewan RCMP reports that violent crime is up 45% in 10 years; homicides were up 46% in 2024, the highest on record; firearms offences are up 271%, the highest rate in Canada; assaults on police officers are up 87%; half of all violent crime is attributed to intimate partner and family violence; and 336 prolific offenders were arrested by specialized teams in 2024 alone.

I served with the Royal Canadian Air Force. I studied war studies at King's College at the University of London in the U.K. I understand threat assessment, and I can tell members without hesitation that the Liberal government's bail policies represent a clear and present danger to Canadian communities. In 2019, the Liberals passed Bill C-75, which imposed the so-called principle of restraint, requiring judges to release offenders at the earliest reasonable opportunity. Was that at the beginning of the sentencing, or at the end? I am not sure, but under the least onerous conditions, it has caused problems.

Then, in 2022, the Liberals doubled down with Bill C-5, eliminating mandatory jail times for serious gun crimes, including robbery with a firearm, extortion with a firearm and weapons trafficking. The result is a catch-and-release system in which repeat violent offenders walk free within hours, if not minutes.

As someone who served as the mayor of Moose Jaw, I can say that municipal leaders cannot police their way out of a crisis created by federal legislation. These are not just statistics; these are real people. Bailey McCourt in Kelowna was murdered, allegedly by her ex-husband James Plover just hours after he was released on bail following an assault conviction. Savannah Kulla, a 29-year-old mother of four, was shot and killed at a Brampton strip mall. Her killer had just been released on bail.

In Saskatchewan, where half of violent crimes involve intimate partner or family violence, women and children are living in terror because the current government prioritizes criminals over victims. Saskatchewan RCMP officers are exhausted. They arrested 336 prolific offenders in 2024, but how many walked free within hours because of the Liberals' bail laws? How many are back on the streets right now, reoffending?

In rural Saskatchewan, when a home invasion happens on a farm 30 kilometres from the nearest town, families are on their own and response times are measured in hours, not in minutes. When someone breaks into their grain bin, steals their equipment and threatens their family, they need to know that the person will not be released to do it again.

● (1145)

Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers deserve better. Women fleeing violent partners deserve better. Police officers deserve better. They all deserve a government that puts public safety first.

The Liberals are finally accepting reality by copying our four-year campaign to scrap Liberal bail law, but they failed to take responsibility for their own failures. Bill C-14 is a clear vindication of Conservative criticisms. The government has admitted that its

policies failed. However, after finally getting through, or partially getting through, to the government, we must ensure that Bill C-14 would actually scrap Liberal bail by being as strong as possible.

Where Bill C-14 falls dangerously short is that the principle of restraint would remain intact. The government claims it is clarifying it. It has added language saying, "does not require" release, but the principle itself would still exist. It would still direct least onerous conditions and still create a culture of release.

Second, reverse onus is not detention. Bill C-14 would expand reverse onus, meaning that the accused must prove why they should be released, but this is just a procedural burden shift; it is not a presumption of detention. Dangerous offenders could still talk their way out.

Third, no mandatory minimum would be restored. Bill C-5 eliminated mandatory jail time for serious gun crimes. Bill C-14 would do nothing to restore them. Sentencing would remain highly discretionary. Judges could still give house arrest for robbery or for trafficking offences.

Fourth, the proposed bill is advisory, not mandatory. Too much of Bill C-14 would be guidance, not requirement. It would direct courts and encourage consideration but would not mandate action. In Saskatchewan, where there has been a 271% increase in firearms offences. We need mandatory protection, not suggestion.

Canadians deserve better. They deserve the full Conservative plan embodied in Bill C-242, the jail not bail act. Bill C-242 does not just clarify; it would eliminate the principle of restraint entirely and replace it with a public safety primacy clause. Public and community safety, not the earliest opportunity for release nor the least onerous conditions, would become the governing principle in bail decisions. It would be public safety, period.

*Government Orders*

Bill C-242 would create a major offences category to trigger a detention-first posture, not just reverse onus, for firearms offences, sexual offences, kidnapping and human trafficking, home invasion, robbery and extortion with a firearm, arson and violent assault. If someone is charged with a major offence and has been convicted of one in the last 10 years, bail would be barred. This is the 10-year look-back rule, a real consequence for repeat offenders.

Bill C-14 would encourage consideration. Bill C-242 would mandate it. Judges would need to consider prior convictions and breaches, outstanding charges, the number and gravity of offences, and patterns of offending while on release.

Saskatchewan RCMP did not arrest 336 prolific offenders just to have judges ignore their records. New violent charges while on bail would mean automatic detention; it would not be discretionary.

All major law enforcement organizations in Canada, the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, the Toronto Police Association, the Canadian Police Association, the National Police Federation and the Ontario Provincial Police Association, as well as the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and all provincial governments, whether Conservative, NDP or Liberal, support this, as do 79% of Canadians, who say that getting bail is too easy.

In rural Saskatchewan we understand that when someone makes a mess, they clean it up completely and do not just tidy around the edges. Bill C-242 would clean up the mess. Bill C-14 would tidy around the edges.

• (1150)

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member said it well at the very end, when he talked about the different stakeholders. He made reference specifically to the many different law enforcement agencies. We could add to that the premiers of all different political stripes, whom he made reference to, as well as mayors and municipalities, including big and small communities. If we were to ask them what they felt about Bill C-14, we would find almost unanimous support for this type of bail reform legislation.

Why will the Conservative Party not allow the legislation to pass? We have now heard others say that they will not even pass it this year. Does the member agree that the Conservative Party is going to prevent it from—

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member for Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan has the floor.

**Fraser Tolmie:** Mr. Speaker, let us be candid. The Liberals have made such a mess that when other levels of government or police forces hear that the Liberals may be thinking about trying to fix what they have broken, sure, they are going to get on board, but they want it completely fixed. Therefore if they were given a choice between the Liberals' bill or what the Conservatives offered, they would definitely go with what the Conservatives offered.

**Dan Albas (Okanagan Lake West—South Kelowna, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Bill C-14 would still allow judges to release offenders and would still direct courts to apply the least onerous conditions if release is granted. It is the same loophole the member mentioned

that let Bailey McCourt's killer walk free in Kelowna just hours after he was convicted of choking her.

Why would the Liberals preserve a culture of automatic release when public safety should be paramount?

**Fraser Tolmie:** Mr. Speaker, I could never defend what the Liberals are standing for. I am appalled that they actually think this would be a good law.

I am asked questions about what the Liberals thinks. I do not get into their heads, but what I hear from my local police force is that police are tired of bringing in front of a judge someone who committed a crime, and then having them released within hours. It is appalling. In addition, people are afraid to come forward, because they know that criminals who were just arrested will come back and come after them.

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, it is hard to believe the type of comments we are getting from the Conservative Party. Even though there are all forms of support for the legislation, the Conservative Party is determined to prevent the legislation from moving forward.

Let us be very clear to people who have been following the debate that the Conservatives, even though they talk about bail reform, are taking no action to support bail reform, because they want to use it as a political, partisan issue.

Will the Conservatives put party politics to the side, do what is in the best interest of Canadians, and allow the legislation to pass through?

**Fraser Tolmie:** Mr. Speaker, victims do not care about partisan politics; they care about their public safety.

Why do you not put your partisan politics away and allow for changes so the victims can be protected instead of the criminals?

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member used "you". The Deputy Speaker did put his partisan affiliations aside.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte.

**Doug Shipley (Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the question is for my great colleague from the beautiful town of Moose Jaw, which I had the pleasure of visiting this past summer, and I met with some of the police, the law enforcement officers there. The member was unavailable to meet me as he was out of town when I got there.

*Government Orders*

There has been a huge rise in crime in Barrie, my city. In fact, one police officer in our town was stabbed by a gentleman who had been arrested and released on bail 17 times in two years. Are you hearing the same things in your area?

**The Deputy Speaker:** I will just remind the member for Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte that he cannot use “you” referring to the Speaker. I was not there, so I actually do not know.

I invite the member for Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan to respond.

• (1155)

**Fraser Tolmie:** Mr. Speaker, I am sorry that I was not in Moose Jaw at the time. I was stuck in traffic jam on Highway 400 just south of Barrie.

I am hearing the same things in my community, about people repeatedly being caught and released. What happens is that the people who are caught and released start ramping up their crimes; the severity gets worse.

**Kelly DeRidder (Kitchener Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, nine years of the Liberal government has turned Canada into a country where mothers kiss their children goodbye in the morning and pray they come home at night. Last month, Savannah Kulla, a 29-year-old mother of four, was shot dead in broad daylight in a Brampton strip mall. Her killer was a man who had already been charged with firearms offences and intimate partner violence, a man the Liberal justice system let walk free on bail.

This summer, Bailey McCourt stood in a courtroom and begged a judge to keep her violent ex-husband behind bars. He had already choked her unconscious. The judge released him anyway on \$500 bail. Hours later, James Plover hunted her down and murdered her. Bailey's last words to the court had been that he would kill her. The Liberal system said that it would take a chance.

These were two women, and there were two killers who never should have been on our streets. That is the human cost of Liberal catch-and-release.

Since 2015, violent crime is up 55%, gun crime is up 130%, extortion is up 330%, sexual assault is up 76% and homicide is up 29%. This is not random; it is the direct, predictable and preventable result of the Liberals' Bill C-75 and Bill C-5. Bill C-75 codified the toxic principle of restraint, a directive that forces police and judges to release accused persons at the earliest possible moment and under the least onerous conditions, no matter how dangerous they are. Bill C-5 gutted mandatory minimums and handed out house arrest for serious sexual assault, robbery, firearms trafficking and kidnapping.

For four long years, Conservatives have stood in the House and demanded one thing: jail not bail, repealing the principle of restraint and restoring mandatory minimums and presumed detention for repeat violent offenders. All the while, the members opposite blocked us, voted against us and mocked us.

Now, after heartbreaking murders, with families having paid the ultimate price, the Liberals finally copy us with Bill C-14 and call it sweeping reform. This is surgical PR, a patchwork of press releases

and photo ops that nibble at the edges while the revolving door keeps spinning.

Let us be crystal clear about what Bill C-14 would not do. It would not repeal the principle of restraint. It keeps the very words that created catch-and-release; it merely adds a redundant sentence saying that restraint would not require release. That sentence is already in the Criminal Code twice, in sections 498 and 501. The bill is not reform but press release footnotes. It would expand reverse onus for some offences: violent car theft, home invasion, choking assaults and extortion. That is good, but reverse onus would still be just a procedural speed bump. The accused could still talk their way out.

What Canadians need is a brick wall. They need presumptive detention for every serious violent offence and every repeat offender.

The bill would add aggravating factors and a few consecutive sentences, but only in narrow combinations. Break and enter would count only if it is paired with gang-related auto theft, and only on the sentence offence. Extortion would run consecutive to arson only from the exact same event. Meanwhile, mass murderers like Alexandre Bissonnette would still get to stack parole eligibility because the government will not touch the Supreme Court's rulings.

The bill would ban house arrest for major sexual assault under two years. That sounds tough, until we remember that the Liberals were the ones who made house arrest possible, in Bill C-5. They fixed one hole that they punched in the boat, while robbery, firearms trafficking, kidnapping and chronic violent offenders would still get to serve their time in their living room.

The bill would do nothing to restore the mandatory minimums the Liberals repealed. Sentencing would remain a judicial lottery: uneven, uncertain and unsafe. It would add no new judges, no new courtrooms and no funding to clear the backlogs.

*Government Orders*

• (1200)

We see 50% of charges in the Waterloo region dropped because the system is clogged. Waterloo Regional Police told us personally that one in five people on Liberal release orders is caught breaching conditions. More than half of those breachers are repeat violent offenders caught multiple times on the same toothless conditions, and because of the Liberal backlog, half of the charges those officers lay never see a courtroom. In one in five breaches, half the charges are dropped. This is not justice. This is a subscription service for crime.

Just last month in Richmond Hill, a 53-year-old predator allegedly groomed a child online, arranged a meeting at Lake Wilcox and sexually assaulted them. Bill C-14 would do nothing for that child. There would be no reverse onus, and house arrest would still be on the table if the sentence is under two years. That is playing Russian roulette with our children's lives.

Bill C-14 is a half measure dressed up as a victory. Canadians deserve the full Conservative plan, the real jail not bail plan we have been fighting for since day one.

Here is what real reform looks like. We should repeal the Liberal principle of restraint and replace it with a public safety clause. Public and community safety should be the governing principle in every bail decision. We should presume detention, not just reverse the onus, for every major violent offence, such as the use of firearms, sexual assault, kidnapping, human trafficking, home invasion, robbery, extortion with a firearm and arson, and for every repeat violent offender. We should restore mandatory minimums for those exact crimes, the ones the Liberals repealed with Bill C-5. We should end house arrest for robbery, firearms offences, trafficking and chronic violent offenders, with no more living room sentences. We should mandate judges to consider the full criminal record, every conviction, every breach and every outstanding charge, and lower the risk threshold from "substantial likelihood" to "reasonably foreseeable". We should bar anyone with an indictable conviction from acting as a surety, with no more criminals vouching for criminals, and require non-residents to surrender their passports. We should also fund courts, hire judges and clear backlogs so officers' work is not wasted and victims see justice.

This is what police chiefs from coast to coast are begging for. This is what victims' families are pleading for. This is what Savannah Kulla and Bailey McCourt deserved but never got.

We will move amendments to make Bill C-14 live up to its promises. We will fight to turn Liberal redundancy into Conservative reality. However, if the government refuses, if it clings to its failed ideology, then Bill C-14 will fail the only test that matters: keeping Canadians safe tonight, tomorrow night and every night after.

Canadians have had enough of Liberal clarifications and half measures. They want Conservative convictions. It is past time to jail, not give bail, and keep our streets safe.

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I noticed the member indicated that the Conservatives are

going to move amendments. They have changes they want to make to the legislation.

Surely to goodness members realize that that is what we do at the committee stage. Members have to allow the legislation to get through second reading. The Conservatives say they want to make changes, so they should allow it to go to committee.

Why will the Conservatives not allow, at the very least, the legislation to go to committee today so they can see if they have majority support for their amendments? After all, the Liberals are in the minority, even at committee. Why will the Conservatives not allow the legislation to go to committee today?

• (1205)

**Kelly DeRidder:** Mr. Speaker, we are continually being told that we are attacking, that we are not being non-partisan with these issues and that we are not working with the government to pass bills on these issues, but the truth is that it is the other way around. We believe in democracy, and we believe the public needs to know what is in this legislation and what the Conservatives are doing to protect them and to make sure these criminals end up in jail.

[*Translation*]

**Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I have been listening carefully to my Conservative colleagues' speeches today, and what I am hearing is actually quite surprising. I get the feeling that, rather than wanting to move this legislation forward, the Conservatives are trying to stir up discontent among the public by giving examples that, although deserving of discussion, should not be overblown. I do not know what their objective is here.

This morning, the Leader of the Opposition was calling for an emergency debate on a somewhat far-fetched issue by saying that the Liberals are now responsible for certain crimes in society. This is, of course, political, but I am not convinced that it is helping to advance the current debate. Perhaps my Conservative colleagues should reframe their comments if they want them to be relevant.

[*English*]

**Kelly DeRidder:** Mr. Speaker, it really unfortunate for the member opposite to say that these are exaggerated things happening in this country. These are real things. These are real lives being lost. These are the real consequences of what the Liberals have done to our justice system.

We are not trying to block anything. We are trying to show Canadians how we are working to protect them and make sure these criminals go to jail.

*Government Orders*

**Anna Roberts (King—Vaughan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it was an excellent speech. The hon. member mentioned human trafficking. Yesterday, York Region, along with Hamilton police, arrested a man for the human trafficking of children under the age of 18.

Could the hon. member please tell the people watching today that our children are our future? Canada has no future without them. Would she agree?

**Kelly DeRidder:** Mr. Speaker, first off, these things are absolutely devastating. Our children are our next generation and our children are not safe.

I have no words to say other than that these offenders should not be on our streets. They should not be victimizing our children. Our children are our legacy. We need to, as a country, keep them safe.

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I have news for members of the Conservative Party. At the end of the day, there are murders. Even children are murdered. There have been all sorts of violent crimes, even when Harper was the prime minister of Canada. This is not something new. What is new is we have a Prime Minister who has made an election commitment to Canadians to have bail reform.

Will the Conservatives agree to allow bail reform to take place this year?

**Kelly DeRidder:** Mr. Speaker, yes, there was crime before the government came in, but since then, violent crime is up 55%, gun crime is up 130%, extortion is up 330%, sexual assault is up 76% and homicide is up 29%. We need to keep these criminals in jail.

• (1210)

**Kevin Waugh (Saskatoon South, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have been looking forward to this debate all day on Bill C-14, an act to amend the Criminal Code, the Youth Criminal Justice Act and the National Defence Act.

For the last 10 years in this country, crime has been going one way, and that is straight up. In fact, even in my home province of Saskatchewan and my city of Saskatoon, in the last decade under the Liberals, there have been pathetic soft-on-crime policies, and serious crime has gone up everywhere.

I just looked at the Saskatoon Police Service website, and the crime stats are amazing. I am going to share some of them with members here today.

If we compare today's crime stats to those of 10 years ago, assaults in my city are up 35%, kidnapping and hostage-taking are up 33%, sexual violations are up a massive 66%, and stalking and break and enters with firearms are both up 300%. That is over the last 10 years.

My riding has the highest concentration of seniors in this country. In reading these numbers, I was reminded of an incident that took place in my riding of Saskatoon South this summer. I have to share it with everyone.

A 75-year-old senior woman was taking her dog for a walk, as she normally does every day in the morning. They were walking by one of the beautiful community gardens we have in the riding, and as she was walking by, she noticed someone in the garden moving

around from plot to plot. The senior then asked this lady if she actually had a plot in this garden and what she was doing. She said that if the person did not have a plot, she should leave, as some had spent hours with their garden.

That was all it took for this 27-year-old to attack the 75-year-old senior walking her dog. The victim was grabbed by the hair, thrown to the ground and then attacked, believe it or not, with a gardening tool. We are grateful that this did not end as badly as it could have, but the victim lost a chunk of hair. There were no broken bones, but just think of the trauma this 75-year-old had while walking her dog and then getting into an incident with a 27-year-old.

The attacker was apprehended thanks to the Saskatoon city police a short time after. The police found her hiding in a nearby bush and took her into custody. Guess what. She was charged with aggravated assault, assaulting a peace officer, breach of undertaking and breach of probation. Police say the woman punched a female special constable in the face while she was being booked into custody. No one is surprised that she was wanted elsewhere in the province. She ended up in Saskatoon South, and because of this gardening incident, she was finally caught.

After hearing about this attack, I sent a sympathy card to this senior, and after receiving it, she showed up at my constituency office. She laid out the whole story in front of us about what happened that day: leaving her place with her dog, going through this community garden and finding this 27-year-old rummaging row by row. Then, of course, she talked about the crime that is happening in our city. Crime is, in fact, out of control after a decade of Liberal soft-on-crime policies.

These are real stories. A 75-year-old woman, who normally feels safe in my city and my constituency, was attacked for no reason whatsoever. I will give a few more examples, if I can.

Earlier this month, there was a big drug bust in my riding; it was in Stonebridge. According to the Saskatoon Police Service, on November 6, police seized over \$22,000 in cash, 750 grams of fentanyl, over half a kilogram of meth, 362 grams of cocaine, multiple mobile phones and assorted paraphernalia consistent with the illegal drug industry.

• (1215)

During the election, I specifically remember door knocking on that block. It is unnerving to think that I most likely knocked on that door in Stonebridge, completely unaware of what was happening on the other side. I wonder how many of us in the House have been in similar circumstances in their communities, when there have been incidents reported and later convictions. Members may have kind of wondered and said, "Oh yeah, I did door knock that area."

*Government Orders*

I wish I could tell members that was an isolated incident in my city, but the truth is I cannot. Just last year, police concluded a nine-month investigation that saw the arrests of five high-level drug dealers, three of whom were operating in my riding. The total amount of everything seized was as follows: 4.2 kilograms of cocaine, almost three kilograms of meth, \$16,000 in cash, a nine-millimetre carbine rifle, a prohibited handgun, ammunition, cell phones, various other equipment, and multiple vehicles.

In May, police arrested two men in Saskatoon for more drug trafficking. They conducted search warrants in a few locations in and around the city. They again seized a number of drugs, drug paraphernalia and over \$400,000 in cash.

During the summer, my colleague, the member for Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte, and I met with the Saskatoon chief of police, Cam McBride. In fact, we met for over an hour. We discussed how soft-on-crime bail laws have allowed our cities to be taken over by violent repeat offenders. It was a fascinating conversation in my office.

During this meeting, Cam McBride, the city police chief, said that officers who are on the streets arrest the same people so often that the officers know them by name, saying they catch them on Monday, they are released, back on the street, and then they catch them again on Tuesday night. This is a result of disastrous catch-and-release policies and lax liberal laws, such as Bill C-5 and Bill C-75.

Earlier this year, I sent out a questionnaire to constituents asking what their views are on crime in our city. Overwhelmingly, the response was that the justice system needs to change in this country. The Liberals need to scrap their useless justice policies and adopt Conservative policies that actually are tough on crime.

I have gone to many ride-alongs in my city with paramedics and police. The first thing I noticed is that they know people by name. Repeat offenders are picked up early in the day and, unfortunately, released in the afternoon or night.

Last week in our city, the city police held a news conference to talk about a couple of issues. There are two hurdles that need to be navigated in my city for a full complement of officers to be realized: number one is recruitment and number two is the backlog. The provincial government is trying to help out. It has offered \$8 million to pay for dozens of officers, but the public will unfortunately not see the impact any time soon.

The city police in my city have asked for an increase of \$158 million in the city budget. That will be debated next week in Saskatoon. Every community is under pressure for new hires. It is a growing challenge, with fewer people today interested in a career of policing. That is disappointing.

I look at the RCMP in our province. We have had some major incidents, unfortunately, in our province over the last number of years. Hundreds more RCMP, if not thousands, are needed in our municipalities and cities to have the full complement of RCMP officers, which the government has promised. We are well short of that. In Saskatchewan right now, where we have the home of the RCMP Depot Division in Regina, we are short more than 100 RCMP officers in our communities.

I just wanted to say, in wrapping up, that this is an important bill. We know that there are lots of shortfalls. We look forward to further debate on Bill C-14.

• (1220)

**Will Greaves (Victoria, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, everybody agrees that the government has a responsibility to continue to reduce crime in this country. We have heard from several Conservative colleagues just this morning about the high rates of crime, in particular in the province of Saskatchewan. Indeed, unfortunately Saskatchewan does have the highest crime rate of any province in Canada, according to data released by Statistics Canada earlier this year. To that end, I wonder whether the member has spoken with his colleagues in the Government of Saskatchewan, who have been in power for nearly 20 years, about what they are doing to address crime in their province.

More to the point, Conservatives are keen to talk down this country at every available opportunity. In doing so, they miss the good news. Crime is down in Saskatchewan by 5% over the previous year and nationwide by 4%. Will Conservatives help maintain that trend by supporting the government's bail and sentencing reforms?

**Kevin Waugh:** Mr. Speaker, it is ironic that the member is from the city of Victoria, as there have been many encampments and lots of crime over the last number of years in Victoria. As we have noticed, many people from Saskatchewan are not travelling to the United States of America these days, for one reason or another. We would like to be hosted in B.C., but the crime in his city of Victoria is as bad as anywhere else in the country.

We are saying what the public wants to see right now, and we have been talking about this for three or four years. The Liberals have had 10 years to fix this, and now they are coming in with a band-aid approach to Bill C-75.

**Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague from Saskatchewan gave a great speech. I think all Canadians are asking this about this particular government: Are we confident that the same Liberals who broke our current justice system, the reason we are dealing with all this crime across Canada, are going to fix the problem? Are you confident in this government?

**The Deputy Speaker:** The Speaker is not going to answer that question, but the member for Saskatoon South will.

**Kevin Waugh:** Mr. Speaker, no, of course we are not confident. I mean, over the last 10 years, this has been a disaster. The Liberals have finally woken up and realized that Bill C-5 and Bill C-75 were a joke. We on this side of the House have been talking about it for years.

*Government Orders*

We need tougher action on bail and release. We need to get criminals behind bars. In downtown Calgary, 75 people were charged for most of the assaults and what is going on in the city. A small number of people in Calgary are causing the biggest headache for the police service in that city.

[Translation]

**Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to issue the same warning that I gave my colleague earlier. This is a very serious matter. We must be careful not to undermine public confidence in our institutions. It seems to me that, since this morning, the Conservatives have been trying to stir up discontent among the public by saying that everything is broken, criminals are being set free and the system is not working.

It is surprising, nonetheless, that this morning the Leader of the Opposition said that we need an emergency debate on Liberal extortion, that the Liberal Party is responsible for extortion.

I am asking my Conservative colleagues to bring the discussion back—

**The Deputy Speaker:** I must give the member for Saskatoon South time to answer the question.

[English]

**Kevin Waugh:** Mr. Speaker, the problem right now is being soft on crime. It is just wicked in this country.

I give credit to my leader, who went coast to coast hearing from individuals across the country about extortion, which is why we wanted the emergency debate. The incidents are happening in Calgary, in Edmonton, in Vernon, in Surrey and in Ontario. There is a 330% increase in extortion, and nobody in the House, other than our leader and our Conservative Party of Canada members, are talking about it.

**Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate having the time to talk about Bill C-14, the bail and sentencing bill the government has proposed to fix all the Liberal problems from over the last 10 years, supposedly.

I am going to ask Canadians a question: Are they confident that the same Liberals who broke our justice system are actually going to fix our justice system? As Conservatives, we are asking that exact question. Here is a government that has been in power for 10 years, despite it calling itself new. Now, the members are pretending they want to fix the problem. Maybe some of them actually want to fix the problem, but again, this is a problem they created.

Problems of rampant crime, drug use and overdoses due to their soft-on-crime and safe supply ideology are not just figments of our imagination, as many Canadians are realizing the hard way. These statistics are from “British Columbia Crime Trends, 2014 - 2023”: In 2014, the total of violent offences was 53,209. In 2023, that number went to 86,205 offences. It is not just us talking about it. These effects are real.

This is partly due to the Liberals' Bill C-75 and the principle of restraint in the bill, which ensures release at the earliest opportunity is favoured over detention. It requires reasonable bail conditions. This has really gone across the justice system across the nation.

Whether it is prosecutors or the judiciary, they are following the direction of the government, and it has actually been ruinous for our country.

Across British Columbia, violent crime has increased almost 50%, while the total number of sexual assaults has gone up over 95%. These are incredible numbers. Extortion has shot up a staggering 481% across the province of B.C. The consequences of Liberal policies are real, and people are feeling that, as my colleague from Saskatchewan just alluded to. Since 2015 in Canada, violent crime is up 55%; firearms crime is up 130%; extortion has skyrocketed by 330% across Canada; sexual assaults are up 76%; and homicides are up 29%. These are stats, and sometimes numbers do not really deal with the real story behind those numbers.

I am going to start with some communities in my riding, and I will start with my birthplace, Dawson Creek. Recently, *The Fifth Estate* did a story about my birthplace, where I was born and lived until the age of five. My mom homesteaded in Dawson Creek. They were in Dawson Creek for a long time. The headline from CBC reads, “Behind the fear: The unsolved killings in Dawson Creek, B.C.” Anybody who thinks of the name Dawson Creek thinks of a very peaceful town, a farmer town, and I would like to think it still is.

This quote is from the story:

Just how “crazy” can be found in the data. The town’s homicide rate is 14 times the national average, according to Statistics Canada. Overdoses in town increased five-fold from 2016 until 2023.

In this environment, safety in town appears elusive for criminals and regular townfolk alike. Residents complain criminals are arrested, but rarely spend much time in jail. People vanish without a trace. The lives of addicts crumble, with some becoming armed agents of a desperate chaos. No one seems able to stop any of it.

The Liberals formed government in 2016, and this is what we have after 10 years of Liberal rule.

I will go to the next community we will talk about today, which is Fort Nelson. Fort Nelson is about four hours north of my hometown of Fort St. John. I spoke with a frustrated local police officer just last year. He said that 15 people are responsible for 90% of the calls, and that really speaks to the recidivism of criminals who are being brought in and released without being incarcerated.

● (1225)

This is an article titled “Fort Nelson ‘tow truck war’ continues with another arson investigation”, from September 29. It states:

According to police, several vehicles were engulfed in flames when the fire department arrived at the scene.

They said On-It Towing has been the victim of many suspicious fires in the past 16 months, adding evidence at the scene points to each fire being intentionally started.

*Government Orders*

In case members did not know, Ben Wall is the owner of that particular towing company. I actually did a video with him this summer highlighting his plight because police officers basically know who it is, but they cannot keep the ones who are doing it behind bars.

I texted him this morning to ask about the total damage caused by these repeat criminals. Ben said, this morning, “I don't have an accurate calculation, but it's somewhere between \$1.5 million and \$2 million; 10 separate arsons and two vandalisms where equipment or property was damaged. Amazingly, no real theft that we are aware of in all of this. That dollar value would be based on insurance payouts. We have lost somewhere between \$200,000 and \$400,000 in procurement costs.” That is the disparity between what the insurance is paying him and what the value of the piece of equipment is. He also referred to new equipment, set-up costs, lost revenue, administrative costs and so on. Members should listen to this last line, which is very important: “nothing to say of how life-destroying this has been.”

I know that Mr. Wall has felt threatened, and his family has felt threatened in that community. Seemingly, criminals are getting away with what they are doing, with no end in sight.

This is from Fort St. John, my hometown, where I live today. This is an article from March 19, titled “Wanted man with long criminal history arrested by Fort St. John RCMP”. It states:

Despite being charged over 20 times in the past for breaching his release conditions, a judge once again let Calliou out on bail. Calliou was bound by a court-imposed curfew condition requiring him to reside in Prince George. A warrant was then issued for his arrest after police said...Calliou was known to be breaching the condition and was believed to be in the Peace Region.

It is another really sad example of recidivism in my riding alone.

I will finish with these two stories. I do not have an article to quote, but I heard it from the person directly. Cori Ramsay was recently in Ottawa, just two weeks ago, and she is a Prince George city councillor. She said she was on a ride-along with the local RCMP, and they watched somebody trying to break into the local Value Village. The person was arrested and brought to jail. That person was released within one and a half hours, and on the same ride-along that very night, within four hours, the police had rearrested the person for another crime. It is bad enough for Canadians to hear the statistics, but they are hearing it from real-life stories. That is one story of thousands in our communities that are just being allowed to happen because of such bills as Bill C-75 and the Liberal government's poor past policies.

I have another story from Prince George. The firefighters were just here in Ottawa, as members know. The Prince George firefighters have told me many stories of some of the challenges of downtown Prince George. I asked them, “How much time is actually spent fighting fires?” They said, “Well, 90% of our time is spent dealing with overdoses and fires started by those same people addicted to drugs.” Again, this is because of Liberal soft-on-crime policies and safe supply. Those are the real effects that these policies are having in our communities, and they have built up over 10 years. Now the Liberals are pretending, “Hey, folks, we are new”, even though they are not, and we know they are not.

As I started off with when I first began to speak, I ask Canadians if they are confident that these same Liberals who broke our justice system are actually going to fix our justice system. We have just laid out the case that they are not.

• (1230)

**John-Paul Danko (Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, a report from this summer says that Prince George saw a significant drop in crime severity, down 13.87%, the lowest point since 2020. I will note that Prince George, as well as Saskatchewan, is actually policed by the RCMP. The Leader of the Opposition has referred to the RCMP as “despicable”.

Will the member opposite disavow those comments from his leader and stand up for the men and women who are keeping his community safe?

**Bob Zimmer:** Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that people, after having so many crimes committed on their private properties, are just not calling anymore. They realize that criminals are not getting incarcerated for what they are doing and there is a revolving door.

Our local RCMP have been awesome. We have worked with them. Whether it is Prince George, Fort Nelson, Fort St. John or Dawson Creek, they have been excellent. They are doing their best to bring justice back to our streets despite the Liberal government's legislation.

• (1235)

**Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton—Bkejwanong, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague gave an excellent speech. I have been here for 10 years, and the Liberals have been saying they are going to address criminal justice from the beginning. First, they had Bill C-75, and the police said that it was awful and allows repeat offenders out on the streets. Then they had Bill C-5, which took away mandatory minimums and put house arrest in place. That made things even worse. They saw crime skyrocketing, and under Arif Virani, when he was the minister of justice, they tried again at bail reform.

I would ask the member the same question he is asking Canadians: Is he confident that Bill C-14 is going to fix the problem the Liberals have been talking about fixing for 10 years?

**Bob Zimmer:** Mr. Speaker, as I said when we started, whether Bill C-75, Bill C-5 or anything we can name, all these pieces of legislation are still on the books, and all of a sudden, we are supposed to believe that Bill C-14 is going to fix all the problems. That is what the Liberals are telling Canadians.

We know it is not true and it is not going to happen. That is the premise of the question I asked in my speech today. I just hope Canadians are seeing through what the Liberals are trying to do in trying to erase history. I think Canadians are living with the effects of crime on their streets, and that is not going to be erased any time soon.

*Government Orders*

**Will Greaves (Victoria, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague, who is also from B.C., omitted the good news that the crime severity index in our province has decreased by 11% year over year, according to Stats Canada.

At the heart of the Conservatives' complaints about this matter is the fact that Canadians fundamentally chose our party to form government. Are Canadians confident that the government will reduce crime? That is the member's question. Evidently, based on the election seven months ago, the answer to that question is yes.

If Conservatives were serious about the question of confidence, then they would not be playing games in this chamber on confidence motions; their House leader would not be hiding behind those curtains, pretending his voting app is not working; and Conservative MPs would not be making flimsy excuses for why they do not show up to vote non-confidence in the government.

At the end of the day, Conservative members are asking whether Canadians have confidence in the government. The real question is whether Conservatives are prepared to accept the confidence Canadians have expressed in the government, our vision for the future and our efforts to resolve these challenges.

**Bob Zimmer:** Mr. Speaker, that ought to be the record for the longest question in the history of this place.

Liberals are great at talking. I think you are perfect evidence that Liberals can talk a lot. We heard about that last election, that there was a lot of talk. You were not given a mandate necessarily. You have a minority government; you did not get a majority, so there is something there. Canadians are not willing to trust you as a majority government.

I will go back to the simple stats from British Columbia, since you quoted them. For total offences in 2014, there were 53,209. In 2023, there were 86,205. The stats speak for themselves.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Before I return to questions and comments, I would just remind the member not to use “you”. The Speaker is not participating in debate.

Questions and comments, the member for Regina—Lewvan.

**Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comment from the random Liberal on the far left over there about the RCMP and the “despicable” comment. Does he know the budget that he just voted for cut \$98 million from the RCMP budget?

I represent Depot, and I talked to the commanding officer. The Liberal government cut \$98 million from the RCMP budget, and it asked the RCMP to hire 1,000 new recruits with \$0 in the budget. The RCMP is now short \$220 million from the Liberal government. That is despicable.

**Bob Zimmer:** Mr. Speaker, my colleague from Saskatchewan points to the fact that Liberals say one thing during elections and do another when they are actually in government. This is just further proof of that.

The Liberals are cutting Veterans Affairs and many other things Canadians rely on. I hope Canadians look at this debate and see who is telling the truth about who is really going to cut crime. The

Liberals have had a chance for 10 years, and they simply have not gotten it done.

**Hon. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. In the previous exchange, the hon. member for Regina—Lewvan referred to a member in the House as a “random Liberal” from the back. I do not think it is appropriate to be referring to any member in any kind of way. It was clearly meant to be done in a demeaning way. Perhaps the member has had an opportunity to reflect on that and would like to stand up and apologize for referring to any member in the House in any way other than the honourable manner in which we are all treated.

• (1240)

**The Deputy Speaker:** I thank the chief government whip. It is a good reminder to members to be careful with the words they use. There are a lot of new members in the House, and the rules are clear not to impugn the intent or motive of any members. I thank the chief government whip for the reminder.

The hon. member for Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies is rising on a point of order.

**Bob Zimmer:** Mr. Speaker, I know we need to keep going with the debate but, with regard to the member who just brought up that previous point of order, we have been talking about pretty serious issues, about crime and victims and all the rest. Their group has been giggling and laughing the whole way through. I find it a little rich that he is going to somehow challenge our member for not doing something properly when he has been completely disrespecting this place and the debate that is occurring today.

**Hon. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, for the record, I was sitting in the lobby and I witnessed this on the TV screen. I came in here in order to bring it to your attention. To say that I have been sitting here giggling about this is absolutely incorrect and false. If I could use another word to describe that, I would, but I cannot in this place.

**Marilyn Gladu:** Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order, I was here witnessing the debate, so I can actually testify that the Secretary of State for Combatting Crime was one of the ones talking and giggling while the members were in debate. I just wanted to add that information.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I am going to take all of what the members have said, and I am going to draw the members' attention to the Standing Orders. Standing Order 16, on decorum, is a great standing order that all members should remember. They are all useful rules that members should remember when speaking to each other and about each other in the House as well.

I am going to draw the attention of the House to Standing Order 18 specifically. A couple of lines into it, it says, “nor use offensive words against either House, or against any Member thereof. No Member may reflect upon any vote of the House, except for the purpose of moving that such vote be rescinded.”

*Government Orders*

The heading is “Disrespectful or offensive language. Reflection on a vote.”

I know that there was a constituency week last week, so many members have now returned. Sometimes we forget riding names. We also forget some of the Standing Orders.

As a good reminder, do not make comments about other members that are insulting or are meant to be insulting. Also, do not try to educe the motive behind what a member is saying. Those are all rules that we should be reminded of.

I also want to remind members of Standing Order 16(2), not to cross between the Speaker and the member who is speaking.

With that said, I consider the matter closed.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Oxford.

**Arpan Khanna (Oxford, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is always an honour to be in the chamber to rise on an issue that is affecting Canadians from coast to coast to coast. I have spoken about this issue many times. I brought forward the jail not bail bill to help crack down on repeat violent offenders.

We held town halls right across our beautiful country, in Surrey, Winnipeg, St. Thomas, Vaughan and Peel. Canadians are very concerned. They are very scared of what is going on in their communities. The town halls were packed with hundreds of concerned residents who showed up without any political affiliation. For many of them, it was the first time they had gone to a town hall meeting. They expressed deep concern about public safety.

I was in Vaughan recently with my hon. friend, the member for King—Vaughan. We met with victims, business owners, young students and other Canadians. They said they do not recognize the country they knew and still love today. They are concerned about the level of crime that is happening in their community, as well as the severity of the crime. The shift that is happening in our system now, whether it is in a big city or a rural community like Oxford, is not just about an increase in crime but about the type of crime. There are shootings in broad daylight, violent home invasions and carjackings. This is stuff we have never seen before at this level in our country.

The government often talks about charter rights, but we are seeing it protecting the charter rights of criminals. I talk to Canadians every day, and they are saying that criminals are getting a free pass and a free ride. Liberal policies on crime are easy on criminals and tough on Canadians. In my riding of Oxford, a victim in Beachville wrote to me and said it feels like she is the one on house arrest, while her attacker is walking free around the community. She has to change her behaviour to avoid seeing him at a public library, a museum or a grocery store. The criminals are not worried about anything. That is the type of system the Liberals have created.

Conservatives have always asked, “What about the charter rights of law-abiding Canadians who follow the rules and are not criminals?” What about the charter rights of that 71-year-old grandma who went to buy groceries? All she wanted to do was go to the store, pick up some food, come home, make a nice meal and enjoy time with her family. She was brutally stabbed to death in a parking lot. She had done absolutely nothing wrong. What about the charter

rights of Bailey McCourt or Cait Alexander, or any of the other victims going through these troubling times?

Liberal policies have caused a massive shift. Instead of them being about public safety and keeping Canadians safe, they have shifted toward empowering the criminals. There is no deterrence in our system right now. Criminals know how to game the system, and they are gaming it every single day. There is no fear of consequences. The law is supposed to deter people from committing crime, but when soft-on-crime, catch-and-release legislation like Bill C-75 and Bill C-5 is brought in, these are the problems that come from it.

This did not happen overnight. This is a direct result of the policies the Liberals brought forward, and now we are living with this nightmare. The headlines we are seeing are like something from a Hollywood movie. Just last night, in Abbotsford, there was another extortion call. We never had an extortion problem in our country. When I was in Surrey, doing my jail not bail town hall, I met with residents who shared stories of their homes being shot at. This one gentleman said a bullet flew over his daughter's bed. If she had been standing up or walking around, she could have been hit.

● (1245)

The Prime Minister was in B.C. a few days ago. He was taking a nice stroll on the beach, looking at the water and admiring what was going on. Not too far away, there was a town hall on extortion. Families and victims were coming together to share their concerns. In all of the press conferences the Prime Minister did while he was in B.C. and at all of the tour stops he did, buying ice cream and living the good life, not once did he speak about extortion. I would think that a prime minister who cared about public safety would talk about one of the biggest crises happening in that community, but he did not. These people's words meant absolutely nothing to him.

This is about action. For seven months, the Liberals delayed, denied and obstructed. For years, we talked about bringing forward legislation and pushed them to raise these issues, and we were ignored. They simply ignored our calls to take action. I have said this before and I will say it again: I am glad they have finally admitted that we have a problem. That was step number one. With any problem, if we do not accept that there is a problem, which they did for four years, the problem continues. I am happy that they are finally acknowledging, through political pressure, that we have a problem.

*Government Orders*

The piece of legislation the Liberals have brought forward, as I have said before and will say again, is trying to treat a gunshot wound with a band-aid. This is a band-aid solution that would stop some of the bleeding, but it would not heal the wounds or the problems we see in today's society. It is a step in the right direction for sure, but it does not go far enough. It would not stop the crime wave we are seeing in our communities.

I brought forward the jail not bail act, which would go a lot further than Bill C-14. It would repeal the Liberals' principle of restraint that allows repeat violent offenders to be released at the earliest opportunity and on the least restrictive conditions, which justices of the peace are constantly quoting as they release these criminals. The Liberals said that, yes, there is a problem with the principle of restraint, and they were going to tinker around with it and make some changes, but it still exists.

The Conservatives believe in making sure that public safety is a primary consideration. The Liberals talk about law enforcement. They make these big announcements, like hiring 1,000 new RCMP personnel. They have been saying that for years. They are not hiring anybody. The Minister of Public Safety just said it is not his job to hire.

The Liberals are ignoring the will of Canadians. They are ignoring that their actions are causing the problems we are facing today. That is why we brought forward legislation in the House to stop extortion. They voted against it. We brought forward legislation to stop these violent carjackings and auto thefts happening in the community. They voted against it. We brought forward a motion to fast-track the jail not bail act, which has support right across our country. They blocked it. They have been standing in the way of keeping our communities safe.

Conservatives are united. We will continue to raise these issues. We will come back to a Canada where anyone from anywhere can live on a safe street, raise their families, enjoy a stroll in the park and have coffee with their friends without the café being shot at. We will have a life where everyone feels safe, secure and protected. The Liberals cannot do it. We will.

● (1250)

**Hon. Nathaniel Erskine-Smith (Beaches—East York, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to recognize the loss of Olga Crombie in my community. She was a devoted wife, mother and pillar of her family, known for her fierce love, strength and selflessness. Her legacy will live on through her family. I want to give a special mention to her son, Steve.

I appreciate the member's remarks. Public safety can be complex, especially around pretrial detention. When it comes to repeat violent offenders, I think there is agreement in this House. We should know, though, that of those who are in pretrial detention, over 70% across this country are waiting for trial, and they are innocent until proven guilty. The evidence is that those who are subject to pretrial detention in the aggregate are more likely to recidivate when the case is closed.

Could the member speak to the complexities of pretrial detention and recidivism?

**Arpan Khanna:** Mr. Speaker, there is a presumption of innocence in our country. That is a fundamental principle that we will defend all the way. The people we are targeting are the repeat violent offenders who have made this a business, who are part of organized crime and who are constantly terrorizing our communities.

The statistics do not lie. In Kelowna, the RCMP and the mayor said the same 15 people were responsible for almost 1,500 crimes. They are not innocent people. They were found guilty of committing those crimes. The same 40 people in Vancouver committed 6,000 crimes.

We are targeting the small number of people who repeatedly and constantly attack our communities. That is who we are going after with this bill.

**Larry Brock (Brantford—Brant South—Six Nations, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for drafting the jail not bail act.

Can the member please describe the substantial difference between the approaches in the jail not bail act and Bill C-14 when it comes to repeat violent criminals, and how we create a presumption of detention in his bill?

● (1255)

**Arpan Khanna:** Mr. Speaker, I could spend all day discussing the differences between our bills. The Liberals have kept the principle of restraint intact in their legislation. We would repeal it and add the principle of public safety as a primary consideration. We would make changes to the conditions for those being released. We would make changes to the legal test to make it tougher for repeat violent offenders to get bail. We would make it mandatory for judges to look at a person's criminal history.

We would make all of these changes to toughen our system so that repeat violent offenders stay behind bars, where they belong.

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I find it interesting that the member focused some attention on extortion. I understand the importance of that particular issue. I have had many discussions on it. The Prime Minister has raised the issue. Many members of the Liberal caucus have discussed the issue.

One of the issues that Bill C-14 deals with is extortion. We hear the Conservatives talk a lot about extortion. They have a chance to do something about it that will make a difference by allowing this bill to pass. Will he commit to allowing this bill on bail reform to pass before the end of this year?

**Arpan Khanna:** Mr. Speaker, all the member said was that they talk and talk. The Prime Minister has talked about it. He has talked about it. They have had discussions about this and discussions about that. Talking is all they have been doing for the last 10 years.

Our deputy leader brought Bill C-381 to the floor of Parliament last year. What did the Liberals do? They voted against it. They had an opportunity to stand up for their residents, but they did not.

Winnipeg has one of the highest crime rates in the country, yet the member is constantly defending the failed Liberal policies that put his community at risk every single day. When we had the town hall in his community, we had folks from all walks of life. Even Liberals showed up. Liberal members said they were not sure what was going on with their own party, they needed change now and they supported the jail not bail act.

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, the member does not understand the issues relating to Winnipeg. If he understood them, he would know that the City of Winnipeg has taken action, and so has the province in passing legislation.

Will he recognize that it takes more than just the federal government, and that he should likewise be encouraging the provinces and cities to take action?

**Arpan Khanna:** Mr. Speaker, I understand that all levels of government have to work together. The problem with the Liberal members is they do not want to take responsibility for fixing in the chamber what they have control over. The Criminal Code is a federal responsibility. The RCMP is a federal responsibility. The CBSA is a federal responsibility.

Instead of pointing fingers at everybody else, maybe they should look at themselves in the mirror and take some responsibility for their own actions.

**Fred Davies (Niagara South, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to an issue that is fundamental to what Canadians want from their government: security, safety and the conviction that the law will protect innocent people rather than reward violent criminals.

Canadians nationwide are dealing with the fallout from a justice system that puts violent repeat offenders ahead of the security of families and small business owners after 10 arduous years of Liberal soft-on-crime policies. The government has now acknowledged with the introduction of this bill that the catch-and-release strategy has failed. However, it is not enough to ensure that Canadians are safe in their country and that those who commit crimes are jailed and not out on bail.

It is good to see that the government has finally responded to the pleas of the Conservative Party. We have been advocating over the last four years for the scrapping of Liberal bail. One of the things we want to see in this bill changed, enhanced or improved is the adoption of the principle of public and community safety. At its base level, that means eliminating the principle of restraint, presuming detention for major offences and turning Liberal redundancy into mandatory actions from judges.

Let me tell members why. I made a promise to a group of people in my riding several months ago after the brutal assault of a three-year-old toddler on a street on which I grew up, at my grandparents' house in Welland. I made the promise that I would stand in this House until bail reform and the justice system were changed for people like Daniel Senecal. This repeat offender was recently released after serving just one year after sexually assaulting a 12-year-old boy. He served one year for that sexual assault and then was released into the community. Within weeks, he brutally sexually assaulted a three-year-old girl in Welland. While she was in her

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bed at night, this three-year-old toddler was brutally assaulted and left for dead.

I know everybody in this House is familiar with that case, and as I continue to talk over and over again about it, I am grateful to the many people in my community who have supported the petition that I launched and that was tabled in the House about a week ago. Tens of thousands of people have called on the government to change bail laws and initiate bail reform.

It is becoming almost a habit in my riding on Saturday mornings to meet with people who are survivors of sexual assault or who have children who are survivors of sexual assault. We sit and have coffee on Saturday mornings in my office, and they give me the strength to carry on in this quest. This last Saturday, more people arrived. It seems they know that the only voice they have is their representative on the floor of the House of Commons. They have spoken to municipal councils around southern Ontario to ask municipal governments to help support this effort to get bail reform on the floor of the House of Commons.

In a vacuum, people will do anything they can to raise awareness, from the delegations around southern Ontario to municipal councils to the protests that have popped up across Niagara. There were several protests in front of courthouses and municipal buildings. These are people who are frustrated with the lack of action after 10 years of catch-and-release.

A police officer came to my office a couple of weeks ago, and I asked him, "What is the pattern of catch-and-release, because I hear a lot about it and the Conservatives have been talking about it?" He looked at me and said that I would not believe it, but over the span of about 60 days, he arrested the same guy 30 times. In some cases, it is now a situation where they sit in the back of a cruiser, they do a promise to appear and then they let someone out, only to rearrest them a few hours later.

That brings me to the question of release after the shortest possible time under the least onerous conditions.

• (1300)

Daniel Senecal, the guy who raped and beat a three-year-old toddler, was out early, reoffended and is now in jail awaiting trial. Under this legislation, he would get out again in probably about seven years, if he is convicted. We are waiting for that trial.

The parliamentary secretary to the government House leader asks over and over again why we do not just let this bill go to committee, where we can do the work and make amendments. Well, we did that with Bill C-3 at the immigration committee. We did a lot of work, as my colleague will attest to. We did months of work and made lots of positive amendments to the legislation, but once we brought it back to the House, the government wiped it out in a single vote.

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I understand the government would rather us not talk about that here on the floor of the House of Commons, because it raises too many of the issues that are inherent in this bill, too many of the shortcomings, but we will take it to committee eventually and we will propose amendments. I guarantee that when those amendments come back to this House, the government will reverse everything we would like to do to improve this legislation. That is a travesty.

When we talk about co-operation, the government likes to say that this is a minority Parliament and that we should co-operate. I say to prove it, because we have tried and members have voted us down. We will try again with this legislation. I request that the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader commit today to taking our amendments seriously and not just throwing them out when it comes to report stage. I hope he will accommodate that request today.

I want to move on to a couple of things in this proposed act about the CBSA. I am going to refer to it as the CBSA facade. We heard the minister say that he wants to hire 1,000 new recruits at the RCMP and 1,000 new recruits at the CBSA. That sounds interesting and sounds like a lot, but once we take into account retirements, attrition and people who leave the profession, it amounts to a drop in the bucket of what the CBSA actually needs to protect Canadians today.

There is not enough training capacity to train 1,000 new officers for the CBSA right now. This is the first problem. Second, we have a serious problem of morale at the CBSA and a very high level of suicide. The morale level is bad, and the government needs to dig into that to make improvements at the CBSA so it becomes a profession that people would like to join.

Interestingly, the CBSA recently reduced its detention capacity across Canada. We are talking about jail and not bail, and the CBSA has actually reduced by over 40% the detention capacity across Canada. How is this reality reflected in the legislation we are talking about today?

There is lots more I could speak about. I would like to take some time to talk about the extortion problem in this country and the crime issues. In my community, I have several businesses that I still manage, and I see that the level of crime in our streets has gone up substantially over the last number of years. It saddens me that in my small town of Port Colborne, crime is at a fearful level for the business community. We have never seen the number of security cameras we see today at our homes, at businesses, at commercial buildings and on our streets in our communities and municipalities. We rely on them now for policing and to help police catch criminals roaming our streets.

In conclusion, I really hope the government will take up our suggestions at committee when the bill goes to committee and will help us improve it. Let me be clear. I will continue to rise in this House day after day on this issue until criminals like Daniel Senecal spend the rest of their lives in jail and until he never gets another chance to assault a little toddler, as he did in Welland such a short time ago.

• (1305)

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in some ways, I am encouraged by the member's words. I will give him my word. At the end of the day, hopefully we will see this bill go to committee. The Conservatives will make that determination. If it goes to committee, all amendments will be taken seriously and considered.

Having said that, my word is that a majority of the House will ultimately determine the fate of the legislation. We do not have a majority. We require others to provide a majority.

Would the member not agree that bail reform is important, not only for parliamentarians but for Canadians? That is who this is all about, the constituents we serve. Will the member give his commitment that he will do whatever he can to see this bail—

**The Deputy Speaker:** I have to give a chance to the member for Niagara South to respond.

**Fred Davies:** Mr. Speaker, absolutely, I am fully committed to ensuring that bail reform is strengthened in this country, but this bill does not do it. We will take it to committee. We will refine it. We will introduce amendments.

I would caution the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader that the reason all of the amendments were reversed on the immigration bill was that the Liberals relied on a few members of the NDP who did not sit in committee and did not have the benefit of the debate we had. When this bill goes to committee, I would encourage all members of the House to take our amendments seriously and accept them.

• (1310)

**Michael Ma (Markham—Unionville, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, today, when we are discussing Bill C-14, the Liberal government seems to be rushing us through its consideration and wants to send it to committee. Members have talked about the ineffectiveness of committees.

We are rushing through a bill that does not address the fundamental issues in Bill C-5 and Bill C-75. I would like to ask the member to comment further on that. Why is the Liberal government rushing us through Bill C-14, an incomplete bill with short-falls?

**Fred Davies:** Mr. Speaker, this legislation is urgently needed to fix the problems of the individual I spoke about being released early. The urgency is to ensure that repeat offenders do not get the opportunity to reoffend and that violent offenders, particularly with offences against children, do not see the light of day.

Under the current legislation, my guess is that Daniel Senecal will be released in about seven years, if he is convicted. There is urgency to fix the problem, but we need time to debate the bill adequately in the House so Canadians can hear our perspective, see our point of view and understand why there are issues with this bill. If we debate it reasonably in this House, we will come to a good solution for all Canadians.

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**Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, to my hon. colleague, this may seem slightly off topic from the current bill, but it was important for me to rise as a member of a party that has never been a recognized party in the House so that Canadians know that those of us who are not permanent members of committees are aware of what happens in committee.

This is prompted by the member's comment that NDP members were not sitting on the committee. I am not putting myself in their shoes, but having been in their shoes many times, I want to assure Canadians that when we bring forward amendments as members of parties in this place but not recognized parties, we have access to what happens in committee. In the case of the colleague who sits right in front of me, the hon. member for Vancouver East, no one knows more about that piece of legislation than she does, having worked on it through many iterations and through many committees.

The hon. member may disagree with the way colleagues voted, including me, but it was not because we did not have access to the information. We had more than enough access to the information. We wanted to see Bill C-3 pass.

**Fred Davies:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member's comment. I agree that without permanent membership on committees, there is limited access, at least for me as a member of the committee, to hear the perspectives of people who are in a non-party situation. However, we worked through so many amendments, which took a long time and a lot of work, only to come back here and have them all wiped out with one vote. Not one single amendment—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Resuming debate, the hon. member for Calgary McKnight.

**Dalwinder Gill (Calgary McKnight, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as always, it is an honour to rise in the House on behalf of the people of Calgary McKnight. I want to speak specifically to this bill today because the safety of Canadians is something I am very passionate about, as I am sure many of my colleagues, members of the House, are as well.

I believe that along with the cost of living crisis, the increasing crime level across Canada is the most important issue needing to be tackled by the current Parliament. This rising wave of crime is not just something I have observed; recent reports by Stats Canada tell the same story. Since the Liberals were elected in 2015, violent crime is up 55%, gun crime is up 130%, sexual assaults are up 76%, homicides are up 29% and extortion is up 330%.

In Calgary, roughly 75 repeat offenders are responsible for a large chunk of the crime calls all around the city. A Calgary police superintendent said that the same 75 criminals commit hundreds of disturbances, from assault with a weapon to store robbery and illegal drug use. We have heard stories like this from all across the country. In Vancouver, the same 40 offenders have been linked to over 6,000 negative police contacts. Calgary police inspectors say that these criminals just cycle through the system and continue to recommitt offences upon release.

In my riding in northeast Calgary, there were five attacks on transit workers over the course of this summer. In one incident, a bus driver was pepper-sprayed and then beaten so badly that they were sent to the hospital in critical condition. In another case, a bus driv-

er was stabbed and beaten, and, again, was taken to the hospital with life-threatening injuries.

This summer in Kelowna, a woman was murdered by her ex-husband just three hours after his assault conviction. He was supposed to have been released for a 10-week period while waiting on delivery of a psychiatric report, but only four kilometres away from the courthouse and only three hours later, he attacked his ex-wife and another woman with a hammer, ultimately killing his ex-wife.

Just last month, a mother of four was gunned down by her ex-boyfriend outside a Brampton strip mall while he was out on bail. Another man who was out on bail committed a mass stabbing in Manitoba this September and even killed his 18-year-old sister. The stories go on and on.

I commend the effort and bravery of our police and other first responders in fighting the rise in crime, but I am disappointed by the Liberal government's agenda to limit the ability of our justice system to keep dangerous offenders behind bars. The rise in crime has come in large part due to Liberal Bill C-75 and Bill C-5.

Passed in 2019, Bill C-75 forced judges to release offenders at the earliest possible opportunity and under the least onerous conditions. To make matters worse, in 2022, Bill C-5 further weakened deterrence by repealing numerous mandatory minimum sentences for serious offences like sexual assault. It also repealed mandatory jail time for serious gun crimes like extortion with a firearm.

Extortion has turned into one of the fastest-growing crimes in Canada. Police across the country have reported waves of threats against small business owners in communities like Brampton, Surrey, Vancouver and Calgary. Families in their homes are regularly shot at, firebombed and threatened. Just last week while I was in my riding, four separate constituents approached my office for help after receiving extortion calls. South Asian communities have faced the brunt of extortion cases in Canada, and authorities in B.C. even had to establish a special task force dedicated to these incidents.

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Extortion has gotten so bad that over half of Canadians no longer feel safe in their homes. That is why, last year, my Conservative colleague, the member for Edmonton Gateway, introduced Bill C-381, the protection against extortion act. The bill would have delivered stricter mandatory minimums for extortion and treated arson as an aggravating factor. Shamefully, the Liberals watered it down and left Canadians stranded without the protection they desperately need.

• (1315)

More recently my colleague, the member for Oxford, introduced Bill C-242, the jail not bail act. Bill C-242 would prioritize public safety and the rights of survivors rather than the freedom of criminals. It would introduce tougher bail rules for major crimes like gun offences, sexual assault, robbery, kidnapping and human trafficking, and it would require judges to take an offender's full criminal record into account. Most importantly, Bill C-242 would stop the revolving door of bail by blocking repeat violent offenders from being released over and over again.

Now it seems that the Liberals are finally starting to listen to mayors, premiers and police associations from coast to coast calling for an end to the failed catch-and-release bail experiment. After Conservatives campaigned for four years to scrap Liberal bail, the Liberals have finally accepted the reality that the rights of survivors are more important than those of criminals.

Bill C-14 would expand reverse onus bail rules for certain violent and weapons-related offences and would ask judges to more intently consider community safety and an offender's history, but it would still keep the existing principles of restraint and the foundation of the bail system.

Considering the state of fear that Canadians currently live in and the fact that Canada's violent crime severity index has gone up by 41% in the last 10 years, I do not believe that Bill C-14 as it currently stands would go far enough to address the issues of bail reform or to restore the trust in our justice system to keep the public safe.

A Conservative plan for bail would prioritize public safety over the principle of restraint. We would restore mandatory minimums for firearms, sexual assault, kidnapping, human trafficking, robbery, extortion with a firearm, arson and other serious violent crimes. We would exclude people who have committed robbery, gun violence and trafficking, as well as property offenders, from being eligible for conditional sentencing. We would also mandate the consideration of criminal history instead of just encouraging judges to keep it in mind.

I believe that unless these changes are made, serious and dangerous offenders will continue to be released onto our streets to pose a threat to our communities.

• (1320)

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have made reference to the issue of extortion, which is indeed a very serious issue.

The Prime Minister, who was elected in April, made a commitment to Canadians, as all Liberal MPs have done. We are going to deliver on bail reform. The only thing that is standing in the way of getting bail reform before the end of the year is the Conservative Party of Canada.

The issue I have is that, as members talk about extortion, they could put the talking aside, pass the legislation and actually take tangible action against extortion. Do I have a commitment from the member that he will do his best to pass the legislation before the end of the year?

**Dalwinder Gill:** Mr. Speaker, Conservatives have been calling for bail reform for years now, and we have proposed numerous bills to keep repeat violent offenders behind bars.

If the Liberals were really serious about keeping Canadians safe, they would support the Conservative jail not bail act. The Liberals are now trying to cover up a problem they have created. If they were really serious about fighting crime, they would support our jail not bail act.

I hope we can work together to deliver a positive result for Canadians.

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I asked a very specific question. To the member's credit, he did not skip a beat. He went right back to his speech and completely ignored the question.

If the member is serious about extortion, and if the leader of the Conservative Party is serious about extortion, as opposed to giving their political drivel in regard to how they want to filibuster the legislation, will the member commit to having Bill C-14, an election platform commitment from the Liberal Party, pass before the end of the year, yes or no?

**Dalwinder Gill:** Mr. Speaker, there was a rally in B.C., and a member from the Liberal Party attended that rally, which was about defunding police organizations. How can crime be stopped if Liberal members are attending those kinds of rallies in B.C.?

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, how ridiculous is that? The Liberal Party does not support defunding police services. The member knows that, yet he continues to refuse to answer a very specific question.

Will the member agree that it is in Canada's best interest that we have bail reform legislation? It is before us today. The Conservatives can attempt to amend it. Will the member commit to allowing the legislation to pass before the end of the year? Again, is it yes or no?

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• (1325)

**Dalwinder Gill:** Mr. Speaker, it is difficult to trust someone to fix a problem they created. Liberal Bill C-5 and Bill C-75 have proven to be disasters and have caused harm to Canadians. I hope the Liberals can right their wrong and provide effective relief to Canadian communities and families.

**Harb Gill (Windsor West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have a friend who owns a shop in Rexdale, Ontario. His shop was shot up twice in the span of the last 15 days. Again it was an extortion-related issue. We have had 10 years during which extortion-related issues have gone up 330% in Canada and over 360% in all of Ontario. Based on these trajectories, we have not had any sensible solutions proposed by the Liberals over the last 10 years.

The question for my colleague is this: What are we going to do as a Conservative Party?

**Dalwinder Gill:** Mr. Speaker, Liberal Bill C-5 and Bill C-75 are the root causes of the issues we are trying to tackle here today. The Conservatives have led the debate on key issues like the cost of living and the carbon tax, forcing Liberals to take action. I hope the Liberals take note of my constituents' concerns that I have shared here today.

**Anna Roberts (King—Vaughan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour today to speak to Bill C-14, an act that proposes a long-awaited reform to Canada's bail and sentencing framework. For too long, the system has focused more on the rights of offenders than on the safety of our communities. Together with police associations, provincial governments, victims and survivors, we have listened to our communities and advocated for stronger bail and sentencing regulations.

However, it is important to remember that these reforms come after years of Liberal policy failures. It took Liberals years to even acknowledge the problems they caused with Bill C-75 and Bill C-5. Even now, under Bill C-14, they have not removed the principle of restraint, the rule that tells police and judges to focus on releasing accused people as quickly as possible under the least restrictive condition. The principle remains the heart of Canada's catch-and-release crisis.

The numbers tell the story of rising crime in our communities. In my riding of King—Vaughan, between 2020 and 2024, assaults increased by 73%, robberies increased by 119% and homicides increased by 100%. In case we missed it, twice the number of people were murdered between 2020 and 2024. Breaking and entering increased by 69%; sexual violations increased by a staggering 194%, and thefts of a motor vehicle increased by 122%. Between 2019 and 2025, York Regional Police charged 19,522 individuals with criminal offences. Of those, 32.6% were charged again for breaching bail or other release conditions. These numbers show a system that too often fails to protect the public from repeat offenders.

Recently, at a town hall in Vaughan, the community came together to hear the story of Darian Hailey Henderson-Bellman, a beautiful young woman of 25 years who was fatally shot on July 28, 2020. The accused killer, Darnell Reid, had been arrested four previous times for violating the condition of his bail, for contacting her. He was also arrested and charged in May 2020 for being in possession of an illegal firearm.

The Liberal catch-and-release principles of restraint ensured that he only spent six days in custody before being released again. A mere three months later, he shot and murdered a young, beautiful soul with her whole life in front of her. Darian's parents, Mr. Paul Henderson and Mrs. Flo Bellman, told the community that courts must make public safety a priority and consider the rights of victims and survivors when deciding bail.

Mr. Henderson said, "Right now, it's on the police officers, Crown attorney and victim to say why the offender should stay in custody, which doesn't make any sense.... What we're suggesting is that [this] needs to be flipped around."

He continued, "If he hadn't been released on bail again, Darian would be alive today.... The courts put faith in a surety to justify bail, even though the same surety had failed multiple times before with no consequences. That failure cost our daughter her life."

The pain for Mr. Henderson and Mrs. Bellman is unimaginable. They relive the tragedy every single day: the moment their daughter was shot, the grief of losing her and the knowledge that the system failed her.

• (1330)

The sad story for Mr. Henderson and Mrs. Bellman is their having to relive the tragic death of their daughter and the brutal way in which she was killed. She was shot four times, including once in the eye. Her parents went on to say, "The system seems to prioritize the rights of offenders over the safety and well-being of victims and survivors.... The daily loss of life is unacceptable.... Violent offenders—keep them off the streets to protect those who are most vulnerable in our communities."

According to an article, the Durham Regional Police's "Chief Peter Moreira said the number of people out on bail committing serious crimes is a 'growing epidemic' across Ontario."

He said, "without a strong deterrent, those people who have already demonstrated that they don't deserve to be in the public spaces, living among us, are out there reoffending and victimizing more and more people".

York Regional Police chief, Chief Jim MacSween, was clear that the Liberal policy on violent offenders needs to change. Chief MacSween stated, "Once again, we're seeing cases where individuals released on bail are involved in serious crimes within our communities. To ensure public safety and protect our officers, we need a bail system that effectively addresses repeat violent offenders while maintaining public confidence."

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King—Vaughan has seen this first-hand. Months ago, a father of four, Abdul Aleem Farooqi, was shot and killed in front of his children during a home invasion in Vaughan. Just last week, York Regional Police announced arrests and charges. One of the suspects, Mohammad Abuhmaid, a 26-year-old from Mississauga, was out on bail at the time of the murder. He faces multiple charges, including first-degree murder, breaking and entering with intent, robbery with a firearm, possession of stolen property over \$5,000 and breach of probation.

Police said, “There are four separate forms of release that he was out in the community on.... The offences vary in severity...but it is concerning when this type of event happens.”

In addition, a 16-year-old remains at large, wanted for multiple offences, including first-degree murder and robbery with a firearm. These tragedies are preventable. If bail laws had prioritized public safety instead of the Liberal principle of restraint policy, Mr. Farooqi might be alive today. His children would still have their father, but this family now has to live with unimaginable loss.

Bill C-14 proposes some improvements, but it does not go far enough. It fails to remove the principle of restraint, the very clause added in Bill C-75 that tells judges and police to prioritize release. Mandatory minimums repealed by Bill C-5 have not been restored, leaving sentencing highly discretionary. The limits imposed on conditional sentences do not go far enough. Those sentenced for robbery, firearms and human trafficking offences can still access home arrest.

A police detective recently told me a story about an individual he arrested who was in possession of an illegal firearm. When arrested, the individual laughed and said that he would be out before the paperwork was finished. He also told the detective that since the Liberals removed the mandatory minimum for illegal gun possession, he would not have to do a minimum of three years in jail. He would be out in no time. He was smiling from ear to ear.

The Liberals have spent years ignoring the mess they created with Bill C-75 and Bill C-5. They finally admitted that changes were needed, but their so-called reforms still leave dangerous repeat offenders in the systems that prioritize their release over public safety.

• (1335)

[*Translation*]

**Angelo Iacono (Alfred-Pellán, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for my colleague across the floor. The Conservatives have constantly changed their position on Bill C-75, first vowing to repeal it entirely, then targeting the principle of restraint and now proposing to amend it. Bill C-14 now clarifies that restraint does not mean “automatic release”.

With such constant flip-flopping, why trust a party that is so unclear on the principles of fundamental justice?

[*English*]

**Anna Roberts:** Mr. Speaker, I would like the member to look in the faces of the people in my community and tell them that they have made everything possible. I believe that the Carney Liberal candidate for Victoria—

**The Deputy Speaker:** I have to interrupt the member.

The member cannot use the first name, the last name or the full name of the Prime Minister in the House. Members do make mistakes about the rules in this House.

I will let the member for King—Vaughan finish.

**Anna Roberts:** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister said earlier that the Liberal candidate from Victoria is on the record calling to defend the police, to disarm most police and promote drug decriminalization. If they believe that—

**Kevin Lamoureux:** Defending?

**An hon. member:** Defunding.

**Anna Roberts:** Excuse me, Kevin. Defunding the police—

**The Deputy Speaker:** I am going to interrupt the member. The member cannot use the first name, the last name or the full name of any member of the House, including a certain parliamentary secretary. I will let the member finish within 10 seconds, and then we will go back to questions and comments.

The hon. member for Victoria is rising on a point of order.

**Will Greaves:** Mr. Speaker, as a newer member of this House, I wonder if the Speaker could speak to whether it is appropriate to use personal adjectives and describe other members as “very annoying” in comments made on the floor.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I suspect that if I say it is a matter of debate, I will have further points of order raised by members. As long as it is fair as part of debate, I am not going to delve into whether people have hurt feelings or do not like the way certain members are being described.

**An hon. member:** Oh, oh!

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order.

We have dealt with this matter before, earlier in the House. I would refer members to the rules of decorum, which are in Standing Order 16 and Standing Order 18. That is my ruling, and I am going to invoke Standing Order 10 so that we can proceed with debate before Standing Order 31 statements and question period.

I will let the member for King—Vaughan finish within 10 seconds.

• (1340)

**Anna Roberts:** Mr. Speaker, I apologize. I am a little under the weather today, but I want to state something clearly. My community of King—Vaughan is very upset because police officers have no jurisdiction when they arrest someone. Police officers put them in jail, and they are out before we know it.

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**Michael Guglielmin (Vaughan—Woodbridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague gave an excellent speech. The member comes from the Vaughan area, essentially exactly where my riding is, and she knows all too well the serious consequences that we have had in our community with respect to crime. At one point we had seven shootings in just three weeks in our community. Something definitely needs to be done.

I have been listening to this debate, and I keep hearing over and over again how Conservatives are apparently delaying bail reform. However, we have wanted bail reform for the last four years. Now that the bill is on the table, we want the Liberals to go the full way and get rid of the principle of restraint.

I wonder if the member could elaborate on why the Liberal government needs to take seriously the consideration of our amendments on the principle of restraint and why they do not need to just clarify it but to remove it altogether.

**Anna Roberts:** Mr. Speaker, I want to let the hon. member for Vaughan—Woodbridge know that we need to protect our citizens. We currently have a citizen who came back to Canada today to testify in committee, and she has to leave because the law did not protect her. She has death threats every single day. We need to make sure that these individuals stay behind bars so that women and children can live in this country as we used to live, with the protection of the police.

**Kristina Tesser Derksen (Milton East—Halton Hills South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my opposition colleague for highlighting the story of Darian Hailey Henderson-Bellman. Her family lives in my riding, and it is a heartbreakingly tragic story.

The member mentioned the burden of reverse onus. Currently, the onus is on the Crown prosecutor to prove that an accused should be denied bail. In Bill C-14, as proposed, reverse onus provisions would shift that onus to the accused to prove why they should be permitted bail.

Is the member aware of the reverse onus provisions contained in Bill C-14? How does she expect those changes to make a positive impact on public safety?

**Anna Roberts:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for bringing that question to the forefront. I will tell you that I met with the parents. I will tell you that the problem is—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Members are to speak through the Chair and not directly to other members using “you”.

I will let the member for King—Vaughan continue.

**Anna Roberts:** Mr. Speaker, we met with the parents at our town hall. This individual was let out four times, and he went and killed their only child.

We have to toughen those laws to make sure that someone who continually repeats crimes is kept in jail if we are going to keep people alive.

**Amanpreet Gill (Calgary Skyview, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after this last Liberal decade, Canadians across the country are living with a level of fear and disorder that none of us should ever accept as normal. Every single day, families wake up to a new story of violence, and repeat offenders are being released on bail only to reof-

fend, sometimes within hours. Every day, Canadians watch the consequences of a justice system warped by the Prime Minister's reckless catch-and-release ideology, and every day, the government insists that everything is fine, but everything is not fine.

In my province of Alberta, in the city of Calgary, I have seen first-hand the devastation that Liberal soft-on-crime bail laws have caused, and it is the people in these neighbourhoods who have to actually deal with the crimes of repeat violent offenders. It is the families in these communities who bear the burden when repeat sex offenders breach their conditions and nothing changes. It is everyday Canadians who now, unfortunately, think twice before going out to the park, walking to the grocery store or just stepping outside after dark. This is not a failure of circumstances. It is a direct consequence of the choices made by the Liberal government.

The devastation is clear. Since 2015, violent crime has gone up 55%, firearm offences are up 130%, extortion has shot up an insane 330%, sexual assaults have gone up 76% and homicides across the nation have risen nearly 30%. These are not just numbers. Each data point represents a Canadian who might not come home again, families that will never be whole again and communities that will never be the same.

We are also seeing a worrying rise in extortion across the country. Calgary and Surrey have become the clearest examples. Police have launched dozens of new investigations in just the last few months. Business owners are being threatened, intimidated, and in some cases, even shot at. This situation has become so serious that Surrey has created a special police team and has set up a \$250,000 reward fund just to help stop the growing crime wave. This rise in extortion shows exactly what happens when repeat offenders know they can go through the revolving door of bail to return to threaten the people in their communities. In Calgary and Surrey, Canadians should not be living in fear of criminals demanding money or threatening their families, yet this is becoming more common under a Liberal failed system.

Despite all of this, the Liberals continue to defend laws that contribute to this crisis, such as Bill C-75, which is a bill that prioritizes the release of criminals rather than protecting communities, and Bill C-5, which replaced mandatory minimum sentences for violent firearm crimes and other serious offences. These actions have led to the government treating violent criminals as victims and law-abiding Canadians as an afterthought.

*Government Orders*

For years, Conservatives have warned the government that its approach to bail and sentencing was unleashing chaos. For years, Liberals have denied, deflected and dismissed, and for years, Canadians have been paying the price. Now, after nearly a decade of failure, the Liberals suddenly claim that they want to fix the bail system, but what they have tabled is too little too late and nowhere near enough.

Bill C-14 is the latest example of the government scrambling to copy Conservative ideas after spending years blocking them. In fact, the Carney Liberals have been copying Conservative proposals—

• (1345)

**The Deputy Speaker:** I will interrupt the member and remind him that he cannot use the first, last or full name of the Prime Minister or any member of the House of Commons.

I will invite the member to continue with that in mind.

**Amanpreet Gill:** Mr. Speaker, Liberals have been copying Conservative proposals at a fascinating pace. Conservatives proposed extending reverse onus for major violent crimes. The Liberals voted against it, then copied it.

MP Khanna introduced the jail not bail act—

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member referenced the last name of the member for Oxford. He can refer to other members by their riding names, but not by their family or first names.

I invite the member to continue.

**Amanpreet Gill:** Mr. Speaker, the member for Oxford introduced the jail not bail act, which recognizes attacks on first responders as a major offence. The Liberals opposed it then recycled the idea.

While the Liberals would have Canadians believe this bill fixes the bail crisis, it does not. The person who commits a violent crime should not be sitting at home watching Netflix. They should be off of the streets. This is not a plan to protect Canadians; it is a press release pretending to be a bill. That is why Conservatives will work tirelessly to ensure that Bill C-14 scraps Liberal bail.

Thankfully, we have already put forward the real solution, Bill C-242, the Conservative jail not bail act, which was introduced by the member for Oxford. Unlike Bill C-14, which tinkers at the margins, Bill C-242 would reshape the system to protect the public. It would repeal the Liberal principle of restraint and replace it with the public safety primacy clause, thereby ending the culture of automatic release. The bill would create a major offence category that would trigger a true presumption of detention, not just a burden shift for offences such as firearm crimes, sexual offences, kidnapping, human trafficking, home invasions, robbery, extortion, arson and violent assault. The bill would tighten the risk standard and would require judges to consider the full criminal history of an accused person.

Bill C-242 also includes a 10-year look-back provision, so if someone convicted of a major violent offence were to commit another major violent offence while already on bail, they would face, with near certainty, a presumption of detention. It would strengthen surety rules by banning individuals with indictable convictions

from acting as a guarantor and would require a passport surrender for non-residents where required. That is what a real plan to protect Canadians looks like, and it is what Conservatives are offering.

The need for this reform is urgent. A recent National Post poll found that more than half of Canadians no longer feel safe in their own neighbourhoods. In a country like ours, which is thriving, peaceful and proud, that should shock every member of the House. Tragically, that fear is entirely rational. People see what is happening around them. They see the revolving-door justice system, police arresting the same offenders repeatedly, crime scenes where their children play and a government that refuses to take responsibility.

We have a Minister of Public Safety who says, without embarrassment, “I’m not responsible for hiring of the [RCMP or CBA] officers”. If the minister responsible for public safety is not responsible for ensuring we have enough frontline officers, who is? This is the level of accountability Canadians are being offered.

In Calgary, especially in the downtown area, but throughout the entire city, residents have witnessed some of the worst increases in violent crime since the Liberal government took office. Transit stations have become unsafe. Small business owners are robbed repeatedly. Families are living in fear of being caught in gang-related shootings, and seniors feel trapped in their own homes. These are serious concerns from real people, and they deserve more than symbolic legislation.

Conservatives will not stop until we scrap Liberal catch-and-release laws. We will not stop until violent offenders face serious consequences and safe streets are the norm in Canada, not an exception.

The government has a choice. It can adopt a fully Conservative plan, stop the revolving-door bail system and protect Canadians, or it continue down this reckless path it embarked on a decade ago. Canadians already know which side Conservatives are on. We are on the side of victims, of families and of safe and strong communities. We are on the side of common sense.

It is time to scrap Liberal bail and restore public safety in this country. Conservatives and Canadians are ready. The only question that remains is whether the Liberals are ready.

• (1350)

**The Deputy Speaker:** Before I go to questions and comments, I would remind members, as we are approaching the hour for Standing Order 31 statements and question period, that Standing Order 16(2) still applies. Members cannot cross between the Speaker and a member who is speaking, because it makes it quite difficult to see if the member speaking is done or not. Therefore, I invite members to pass on to other members that we are not supposed to be doing that in the chamber.

With questions and comments, the hon. member for Alfred-Pellan has the floor.

[*Translation*]

**Angelo Iacono (Alfred-Pellan, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there is something I do not understand. The Conservatives are really putting politics ahead of the country. Canadians welcome legislation that would ensure that perpetrators of sexual assault would no longer be eligible for house arrest. It is about protecting survivors and keeping our communities safe. Is there a female colleague in the Conservative caucus who will stand up and ask her colleagues why they are opposing a measure that guarantees that perpetrators of sexual assault will no longer be able to serve their sentence at home?

Is there a female colleague on the other side of the House who could do that?

• (1355)

[*English*]

**Amanpreet Gill:** Mr. Speaker, we are taking crimes very seriously, even sexual crimes. Bill C-242, the jail not bail act, is entirely constitutional and covers everything.

On this side of the aisle, we are here to protect our women, our children and everyone, so all Canadians are safe on the streets, so Canadian homes are safe and so Canadians are not being threatened with calls.

**Fraser Tolmie (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, one of the things that I hear from police officers and victims, particularly in my community, is that victims are afraid to come forward to testify because the person who has committed the crime against them has been released on bail within hours, if not minutes, of being detained by the police.

Does the member agree with that, and should there be tougher punishments for criminals?

**Amanpreet Gill:** Mr. Speaker, yes, it is very serious.

We introduced our bill, Bill C-242, from our member for Oxford. That is what we need to act on. We cannot release offenders back onto the streets. We have to be serious with respect to them.

We have seen what we have gone through in the last failed Liberal decade. The crime rate is skyrocketing. Just in Surrey alone, the extortion cases are up almost 550%. That is a very high number. We cannot have this in Canada.

**Harb Gill (Windsor West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there is a member opposite who has called in the past for the police to be defunded. His assertion was that disarming the police would be the best

### *Government Orders*

way to solve crime. As a former police officer, I find that extremely offensive, as do Canadians.

The question for my colleague is this: What is his opinion on this matter of defunding the police?

**Amanpreet Gill:** Mr. Speaker, it is a shameful that a member from across the aisle was involved in a rally to defund our police.

On the one hand, I spoke with police officers last week. They are looking to us. They are looking to the Government of Canada to provide them more tools. They need more men. A while ago there was an announcement that 1,000 new police officers would be hired, and none have been hired.

On the other hand, the Liberals are announcing that they are going to those rallies because they want to defund the RCMP. That is not right.

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely silly to try to imply that the government or the Liberal Party does not support the funding of the police.

I can tell the House what is serious. We have the Conservative Party consistently wanting to filibuster on Bill C-14—

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

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, as I said, it is absolutely silly for the Conservative Party to try to give a false impression that the Liberal Party, or the government, does not support funding our police. What is real is that the police, the provinces and the municipalities all support Bill C-14. They all want bail reform. Canadians want bail reform. It is the Conservative Party of Canada that continues to filibuster Bill C-14.

When will the Conservatives allow Bill C-14 to pass? Canadians want it and we want it. Why will the Conservatives not agree to pass the legislation before the end of the year?

**Amanpreet Gill:** Mr. Speaker, that is a question he should be asking his own caucus member, who joined that rally. He should not be asking us. It is now up to the Prime Minister. Is he going to fire the member of Parliament sitting right in that aisle, or is he going to keep him?

When it comes to Bill C-14, the Conservatives will support any bill designed to increase safety for Canadians, but we believe this bill is weak. It is better if—

• (1400)

**The Speaker:** Unfortunately, the time is up and we have to go to members' statements.

*Statements by Members***STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS***[English]***PRIME MINISTER'S AWARDS RECIPIENTS**

**Sima Acan (Oakville West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the exceptional teachers receiving the Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching Excellence in my beautiful riding of Oakville West. This award celebrates the achievements of educators who go above and beyond. These are leaders in the classrooms, mentors and coaches who support our children throughout their journey and who take the extra step and exceed the curriculum to help students succeed. To date, this award has honoured over 2,300 teachers and is considered Canada's highest honour for teachers teaching in early, primary and secondary education.

I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to Ms. Phi Tran and Mr. Vittorio Lafarte, recipients of the regional certificate of teaching excellence, and Mr. Kevin Carter, who has been awarded the regional certificate of teaching excellence in STEM. I thank them for their exceptional contributions to help build the foundations children need to make the best start possible in life.

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**TOURISM INDUSTRY**

**Tony Baldinelli (Niagara Falls—Niagara-on-the-Lake, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this week, the Tourism Industry Association of Canada is hosting its annual Tourism Congress in Gatineau. This year's theme is "Tourism Builds Canada". Tourism definitely powers my communities of Niagara Falls and Niagara-on-the-Lake. In fact, Niagara is home to more than 40,000 tourism workers.

Across Canada, one in 10 Canadian jobs is in tourism, an industry that generates \$130 billion in economic activity, but it could be so much more if not for bad Liberal policies. Under the Liberal government, tourism is simply not a priority. According to the TIAC, cuts to the international convention attraction fund, the tourism growth program and Destination Canada's core funding, and the exclusion of tourism from the capital cost allowance, undermine the sector's potential.

In a country where so much is broken after 10 years of the Liberal government, leave it to the Liberals to cut programs that actually work. Tourism builds Canada. Unfortunately, the Liberal budget fails to unleash its full potential.

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**GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES IN HAMILTON**

**John-Paul Danko (Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, last week, Hamilton welcomed the Minister of Public Safety and the Secretary of State for Sport to announce federal funding for the amazing new Hamilton YWCA. Then the Secretary of State for Combatting Crime joined the mayor's community safety round table to discuss federal action to stop crime. We hosted the Minister of Industry to advance our government's buy Canadian policy, meeting student leaders, workers and innovators supporting Canada's next generation of jobs. The Minister of Housing and Infrastructure also met with Hamilton housing partners to continue

work making housing more affordable and to confirm Hamilton's light rail transit system remains a federal budget priority.

This budget delivers billions of dollars in further investment and opportunity for Hamilton and cities across Canada. Leadership is not American-style slogans, conspiracy theories, anger and division. Effective government, real leadership, is being part of a great team that delivers results for Hamilton and all Canadians.

\* \* \*

**50TH ANNIVERSARY OF SPRUCE MEADOWS**

**John Barlow (Foothills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, with breathtaking colours more vibrant than one can imagine, sounds and smells tantalizing the senses, and the cheering on of world-class athletes, the two- and four-legged variety, as they achieve the unimaginable, this is what it means to experience Spruce Meadows, Canada's premier show-jumping facility, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary.

As the bold vision of Ron and Margaret Southern, Spruce Meadows is a world-renowned institution recognized for equestrian excellence and cherished for honouring the traditions and values of southern Alberta. The Southern's hard work, prairie hospitality and deep community roots built something truly remarkable. Their daughters, Linda and Nancy, are carrying on that family legacy, a legacy that is unforgettable as we cheered on Eric Lamaze and Hickstead, Captain Canada Ian Millar and Big Ben, and Erynn Ballard, who became Olympians and Canadian legends.

To the Southern family and the volunteers, staff, athletes and fans who poured their hearts into this journey, I thank Spruce Meadows for welcoming the world to Foothills for 50 years.

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**SCIENCE MEETS PARLIAMENT**

**Salma Zahid (Scarborough Centre—Don Valley East, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today is a day to celebrate science. The Office of the Chief Science Advisor and the Canadian Science Policy Centre have brought 45 researchers from across Canada to Ottawa today for Science Meets Parliament. These researchers are among our brightest emerging leaders, representing the full spectrum of disciplines, from natural sciences and engineering to health sciences and social sciences. They are on the Hill to share their insights, connect with parliamentarians and strengthen the vital link between science and policy in tackling Canada's most pressing challenges. Trusting relationships between those who generate evidence and those who apply it is essential.

Opportunities like today allow both communities to meet, exchange ideas and build mutual understanding. As chair of the Standing Committee on Science and Research, I am proud to be a champion for science. Please join me in welcoming the participants of Science Meets Parliament.

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• (1405)

#### PUBLIC SAFETY

**Amanpreet Gill (Calgary Skyview, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the people of Calgary to express concern over the recent sentencing decision that chips away at the public confidence in the justice system.

In a case of extortion in our city, the offender received an 18-month sentence, with six months to be served under house arrest. That is an extremely light outcome given the seriousness of the crime.

This was not a minor offence. The victim was targeted in Calgary and pressured to repay more than \$200,000 tied to third party illegal gambling. He was shown images of cut-up body parts in an attempt to scare him. The threat cannot be dismissed as any less than extremely serious.

This case makes one thing clear: Our laws do not reflect the seriousness of extortion and organized crime. It is time to strengthen the law so that criminals face real consequences and Calgarians receive the protection they deserve.

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#### JASWANT SINGH KHALRA

**Sukh Dhaliwal (Surrey Newton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, 30 years ago, human rights defender Jaswant Singh Khalra stood here in Ottawa to urge parliamentarians to pay attention to the disappearances and unlawful killings of thousands of Sikhs in Punjab, India. Just months after that visit, he was abducted, tortured and killed for his courage and conviction.

Before his tragic death, he shared a powerful message, one that continues to inspire people around the world today. He reminded us that we must never stay silent in the face of injustice.

As we honour Jaswant Singh Khalra's courage and sacrifice, let us reaffirm our shared commitment to truth, justice and human rights, the values that form the foundation of our democracy.

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#### AFFORDABILITY

**Cheryl Gallant (Algonquin—Renfrew—Pembroke, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians spend more on taxes than anything else. They spend more on taxes than they do on housing. The government is the single most expensive purchase we make, yet the Liberals have the gall to stand here and tell us that making government more expensive is an affordability measure.

The Liberals had a chance to lower food costs for Canadians by scrapping the industrial carbon tax. Instead, they chose to make food more expensive by increasing the tax. It drives up the cost of

#### Statements by Members

fertilizer and farm equipment. The Liberals promised Canadians they could have their cake and eat it too, but the price of baked goods is up nearly 6% over last year.

Now we know the Liberals' plan. They will ban plastic food packaging, removing thousands of products from store shelves. It is not unaffordable if it is unavailable.

Canadians should not have to wait a generation for change. They need an affordable Conservative government now.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### PHILANTHROPY

**Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette—Manawan, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, philanthropy is the quiet force that lifts society up. It is a living connection between liberty and fraternity, between the individual and the community. It reminds us that the greatness of a people is measured not only by its laws and institutions, but also by the generosity of its members.

November 15 was a day for remembering a certain truth, that philanthropy is hope in action. Today, as philanthropists are here visiting the Hill, I want to salute them and send them my heartfelt thanks.

I especially want to pay tribute to Philanthropie Lanaudière, which embodies the quest for justice and solidarity. Through its actions, the team and its partners are challenging indifference and opening doors so that all people can find their place and live with dignity. They are proof that real wealth is about sharing, not accumulating.

On this day, let us remember that to give is to affirm life and prepare for the future. May philanthropy remain a guiding light and a duty for us all.

\* \* \*

• (1410)

[English]

#### LOUIS RIEL

**Ginette Lavack (St. Boniface—St. Vital, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, November 16 commemorates the memory of Louis Riel, a visionary leader, the founder of Manitoba and a Father of Confederation.

[Translation]

On Sunday, I had the honour of joining the Prime Minister in attending the ceremony for the 140th anniversary of the execution of Louis Riel.

Over a century after one prime minister betrayed Louis Riel, it is particularly significant that another prime minister is now choosing to fully honour him. Louis Riel reminds us that the fight for justice and equality is still relevant today. His legacy lives on in St. Boniface and across Canada and inspires our commitment to respect, partnership and reconciliation with the Métis nation.

*Statements by Members*

I want to commend the Manitoba Métis Federation and the Union nationale métisse Saint-Joseph du Manitoba for their hard work in keeping his memory alive.

[English]

On behalf of the House, I pay tribute to Louis Riel and his enduring vision for our country. May this day always remind us of the strength and resilience of the Red River Métis nation.

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[Translation]

**THE BUDGET**

**Jason Groleau (Beauce, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government has presented a red ink budget, a “generational credit card” budget. It is spending money hand over fist, and the taxpayers of today and tomorrow are the ones who will have to pay the price. For the Liberals, one plus one always equals 10.

Even Fitch Ratings, which assesses Canada's credit rating, is sounding the alarm. It is warning that the Liberals never stick to their own budget limits and that this is worsening the state of our public finances. Even the Parliamentary Budget Officer is against this budget. He said that the government has basically dropped its commitment to reducing the debt-to-GDP ratio. There is a reason why they want to get rid of him.

This Prime Minister is offering us a credit card with no limit, but he is mortgaging our children's future and even our grandchildren's future.

The Conservatives will continue to stand up for families, workers, businesses and taxpayers. We will stand firm against this irresponsible, spendthrift government.

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**BATTLE OF VERTIÈRES**

**Natilien Joseph (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, “freedom is never given—it is taken.” Those words were made famous by General Jean-Jacques Dessalines.

The Battle of Vertières took place on November 18, 1803. It was one of the greatest battles in modern history. As a federal member of Parliament and a son of Haiti, I would like to acknowledge the strength, courage and resilience of the Haitian people, who vanquished Napoleon's army to throw off their chains and win their freedom. The Battle of Vertières is a perfect illustration of the courage, dignity and determination of the Haitian people.

However, since then, the country has faced challenges that persist to this day. In that context, Canada's co-operation is particularly meaningful. As an ally of Haiti, it provides support, but that support does not replace the leadership that must come from Haiti itself.

By highlighting the Battle of Vertières, I am paying tribute to the heroes of the past.

*Ansanm, tout bagay posib.*

[English]

**PRIME MINISTER OF CANADA**

**Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians want stronger paycheques, safer streets, secure borders and a self-reliant country. They cannot get that from the Prime Minister, who puts Brookfield, the company he chaired, first.

When the Prime Minister met Donald Trump, he brought home nothing for Canada, only an \$80-billion U.S. nuclear reactor deal for Brookfield, giving Donald Trump the jobs, the investment and a 20% stake in Westinghouse profits. Canadians get nothing. While chair, the Prime Minister directed Brookfield to avoid \$6.5 billion in Canadian taxes through shell companies he established in Bermuda and in the Cayman Islands on top of a bicycle shop.

The Prime Minister's inflation tax and industrial carbon tax make groceries even more expensive, while Brookfield's CEO claims that inflation boosts its profits. When the Prime Minister goes abroad, Brookfield gets the deal. When he comes home, Canadians get the bill.

\* \* \*

**YOUTH EMPLOYMENT**

**Hon. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I speak for the people of London West when I say that we welcome the passage of the budget. I want to highlight one of the concrete steps that it takes, one that came directly out of a pre-budget consultation held in my riding: the creation of Canada's climate corps. This is a practical, skill-driven program that will train young Canadians for real jobs in resilience, emergency response, retrofits, green construction and community infrastructure.

When I met with young people in London West, the message could not have been more clear. They want opportunities that are hands-on, well-paid and connected to the real needs of our local economy. The climate corps delivers exactly that. It links youth to in-demand careers and helps employers fill critical labour shortages. This is what building one strong Canadian economy looks like. By focusing on results, we are making sure that federal investments land where people actually live. London West helped shape this initiative.

I will keep working to ensure that our young people are at the forefront of the line.

• (1415)

#### PRIME MINISTER OF CANADA

**Andrew Lawton (Elgin—St. Thomas—London South, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I wish our high-flying Prime Minister coveted results as much as air miles. Since taking office, he has made 28 trips, flying 153,000 kilometres, which is enough to circle the globe four times. He is off again this week, heading to the United Arab Emirates and then South Africa. That is no surprise from the Prime Minister, who collects passports like Pokémon and identifies as European when he is hanging out in Davos with his fellow global elites.

What do Canadians have to show for this? There are no trade deals and no tariff relief, just photo ops and hollow letters of intent. The Prime Minister blew past his own deadlines with the United States with no deal, and his eight-day junket to Asia made no progress. Chinese tariffs stay, India added new ones, and not a single tariff has been lifted on Canadian goods in eight months. As for accountability, he has appeared in question period just 11 times this fall.

If the Prime Minister is this bored with Canada, can he please make his next junket a one-way ticket?

\* \* \*

#### COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

**Zoe Royer (Port Moody—Coquitlam, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, community foundations across Canada are the heart of our neighbourhoods, bringing people together, pooling resources and ensuring that local needs are met with care and with community-led solutions. In my community, the Coquitlam Foundation and the Port Moody Foundation continue to make a tremendous impact through support for the arts, the environment and youth scholarships and grants.

This week, Matthew Sebastiani and foundation leaders from across Canada are here in Ottawa, reminding us how vital their work is nationwide. I thank all foundation volunteers, donors and community leaders for lifting people up. They strengthen families, neighbourhoods and the foundation of who we are as a country.

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## ORAL QUESTIONS

[*Translation*]

### FINANCE

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians needed an affordable budget for an affordable life. They can no longer pay their bills or buy groceries, yet the Prime Minister's latest budget has saddled them with more inflation.

According to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, this is the largest deficit in the country's history other than during the pandemic. It is twice as big as Justin Trudeau's deficit. It is \$16 billion more than the Prime Minister promised during the election. He broke his promise to reduce the debt-to-GDP ratio. The deficit is \$78 billion, which is \$5,000, plus inflation, for every single family.

### Oral Questions

How are families supposed to pay another \$5,000 for a costly budget?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am glad to see that the Leader of the Opposition read the executive summary of the budget. One thing is for sure: We are not going to take any lessons from the Conservatives.

Yesterday, the Conservatives voted against investment in infrastructure. The Conservatives voted against investment in housing. The Conservatives voted against productivity and innovation in this country. The Conservatives voted against investment in defence.

Those of us on this side of the House will always fight for a strong Canada. We will build a strong Canada together. Today, the Conservatives should be asking themselves why they do not support Canadians.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, what are Canadians getting for the 150,000 kilometres this Prime Minister has travelled? That is the equivalent of circling the globe four times.

He met with the Americans, and they doubled tariffs on our steel, aluminum and vehicles. He met with Indian officials, and they increased tariffs on our peas. He met with the Chinese, and they also increased tariffs on our farmers and fish harvesters.

Why is it that whenever the Prime Minister gets on a plane to meet with foreign leaders, Canadians have to pay even higher tariffs?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, that is precisely the question Canadians are asking themselves at home. How could the Conservatives have the nerve to vote against Canada yesterday?

Our budget is all about strengthening Canada's sovereignty. Our budget invests in our military capacity. Our budget increases military salaries.

How are the Conservatives going to go back to their ridings and explain to their constituents that they voted against Canada yesterday, when we all need to work together to meet a historic moment in our nation's history?

• (1420)

[*English*]

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians are cash-strapped and needed a break. Instead, the Prime Minister gave them the costliest budget in Canadian history and put it all on the national credit card.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer revealed that the Prime Minister doubled Trudeau's deficits, added \$16 billion more to the debt than he promised and is increasing the debt-to-GDP ratio, breaking another promise. The \$78 billion of additional debt works out to about five grand for every single cash-strapped family in this country.

### Oral Questions

How does the Prime Minister expect single moms, seniors and small business people who cannot pay their bills to pay another five grand for his inflation?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we will take no lessons from the Conservatives. What they did yesterday under their leader was to vote against investment in infrastructure. Under their leader, they voted against investment in housing. Under the Conservative leader, they voted against productivity and innovation in our country. Under their leader, they voted against investment in our sovereignty.

On this side of the House, we will build a strong Canada, we will empower Canadians and we will protect our sovereignty, because we believe in Canada.

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### HOUSING

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I do not think anybody has been able to cram that many slogans into one answer, and this is coming from me.

Let us take housing. The minister says they are spending billions of dollars more on housing. The results are out today, and housing starts are down 17% year over year. Where we need the most, in Toronto, they are down 42% year over year. In Vancouver they are down 36% year over year. In Ontario they are down 35%, and in B.C. they are down 22%.

Why is it that the more the Liberals spend, the less we can build?

**Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition is ignoring the year-to-date results. He is looking at month to month. He is twisting the facts. He is getting confused with the numbers. Conservatives have a tough time with numbers sometimes; we understand that.

Year to date, 2025 versus 2024, we are up 5% with housing starts.

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### INTERNATIONAL TRADE

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, what are Canadians getting for the 28 trips, the 150,000 kilometres, which is enough to circle the world four times, that the Prime Minister has billed back to Canadians? He met with the Americans, and they doubled tariffs on our steel, aluminum and autos, and tripled them on our forestry. He met with the Chinese, who increased tariffs on our farmers and fish harvesters. He met with the Indians, and they increased tariffs on Canadian peas. He met with the Brits, and they are keeping their blockade on our beef.

Why is it that whenever the Prime Minister gets on a plane, Canadians end up paying more tariffs abroad?

**Hon. Maninder Sidhu (Minister of International Trade, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have good news for Canadians. Germany just signed a \$1-billion deal with Lockheed Martin Canada to support jobs right here in this country. This is what Canadians are get-

ting from the Prime Minister's being on the world stage, selling what Canada has to offer. It is about unlocking new markets and creating good jobs here in Canada.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, with the Prime Minister billing millions of dollars for his high-flying trips around the world, 28 trips and 150,000 kilometres, now is the time for a scorecard. The Americans have increased tariffs on Canadian autos, aluminum, steel and lumber. The Indians have increased tariffs on our peas. The Chinese increased them on our farmers and our fish harvesters. Now, allow me to introduce a comprehensive list of all the tariffs the Prime Minister has successfully had reduced on Canada.

• (1425)

**Hon. Maninder Sidhu (Minister of International Trade, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Conservative leader continues to stand against support for Canadian workers and businesses. He has refused to support our government's plan to double non-U.S. exports over the next decade. In fact, he called Canadian exports other than oil "pixie dust". Does the Conservative leader think our \$5 billion in beef exports is pixie dust, or the LNG headed to South Korea from B.C.? What about the 7.6 billion dollars' worth of fish and seafood caught by hard-working Canadians? Whether it is imaginary taxes or pixie dust, the Conservative leader needs to get on board and out of the way.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### CANADIAN IDENTITY AND CULTURE

**Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Quebec announced last week that it is laying off 87 employees in its media division. Over the past two years, nearly 800 people have lost their jobs at TVA. That is a tragedy for Quebec culture. It is a tragedy for news diversity in Quebec. Quebec's largest private television network is teetering on the brink, and Ottawa is just watching it die a slow death.

How many more layoffs will it take before the government wakes up?

*Oral Questions*

[English]

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture and Minister responsible for Official Languages, Lib.):**

Mr. Speaker, our thoughts are certainly with the families and communities affected by these job losses. However, my Bloc Québécois colleague's question might have been more relevant if the Bloc Québécois had not voted against the most important budget in the history of the country, which includes funding for local journalism. The member opposite is rising in the House to say that what is happening is so unfortunate, while also voting against investments for local journalism in Quebec and across Canada. I cannot understand it.

**Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, try to imagine how the people at TVA feel about the Liberal message. The Liberals are talking about historic investments in culture, but there is not a penny for TVA. The government does not care about them. That is the message that the Liberals are sending to the people at TVA. These same Liberals are the only ones who refused to appear on TVA, which was asking for money because it has run out. TVA broadcasts our music and our stories. It sparks debate. Quebecers identify with TVA, but Ottawa could care less.

What do the Liberals have against our television?

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture and Minister responsible for Official Languages, Lib.):**

Mr. Speaker, in the budget that the Bloc Québécois voted against, there is \$150 million for CBC/Radio-Canada, Quebec's largest cultural producer. The Bloc voted against that. There is \$26 million for the National Film Board of Canada, which is located in Montreal, and the Bloc voted against that. There is \$127 million for the Canada Media Fund and \$48 million for the Canada Music Fund. The Bloc voted against all these cultural initiatives in Quebec and across the country. That is outrageous.

**Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, yes, but there is nothing for private broadcasters. In order to please the very powerful American president, the Prime Minister decided to abolish the digital services tax. The revenue from that tax could have been used to create a fund to provide long-term support to the cultural and media sectors. That would have helped TVA, which is in great need. Not only did the Liberals refuse to create a fund, but they also did absolutely nothing to secure the future of private television in Quebec and Canada.

Why have the Liberals abandoned private broadcasters?

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

Mr. Speaker, like my colleague who just listed the budget points that highlight our achievements and commitments to culture, I am baffled to see that Bloc members are demanding landing strips, ports, docks in Saguenay, investments in major projects, support for health care and housing in Quebec and then, oops, they cross the bridge over the Ottawa River and vote against all of that.

Why did the Bloc Québécois not stand with the Liberals to vote for Quebec and for this budget?

**FINANCE**

**Jasraj Hallan (Calgary East, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's costly credit card budget puts today's reckless spending on tomorrow's taxpayers. He is maxing out Canada's credit card. Watchdogs are exposing the Liberals' accounting tricks. Fitch and the budget watchdog say that Canada's credit score is at risk because the Liberals always break their own made-up fiscal targets.

How many more fiscal watchdog reports is it going to take for the Prime Minister to finally rein in his costly credit card spending?

**Hon. Wayne Long (Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have some advice for the leader opposite. He should go back to his lobby and push reboot on chat CPC, because all it does is rehash the same tired old talking points.

Last night, the House passed a generational budget. We are going to invest in infrastructure, in defence and in housing. We will transform the country from reliance to resiliency. It is too bad that the members opposite did not support us.

• (1430)

**Jasraj Hallan (Calgary East, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the CRA is a mess under that guy, and he is trying out to be a comedian in here. The budget watchdog exposed the Liberals' shady accounting tricks. He said that the Liberals have a less than 8% chance of meeting their own fiscal targets, which they made up while trying to hide \$100 billion under so-called investments.

The Prime Minister tried this trick in the U.K. He is trying the same trick on Canadians. Instead of cooking the books to hide his \$100-billion ego, why does he not just rein in his out-of-control, costly credit card spending?

**Hon. Wayne Long (Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, they want to talk about slogans and quoting slogans. They quote the food professor so much, one would think he was the leader's personal chef, serving up the same tired old leftovers time and time again.

Last night, we passed a generational budget that will transform this country. It is too bad that the party opposite did not support our budget.

**John Brassard (Barrie South—Innisfil, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, every Canadian should be thanking their lucky stars that we have a Parliamentary Budget Officer whose job it is to be independent and honest about the state of government deficits, debts and spending. The budget watchdog, last week, called out the creative accounting in the Prime Minister's credit card budget, saying that he is using "a definition of capital investment that expands beyond the current treatment in the Public Accounts and international practice".

### Oral Questions

In other words, the Prime Minister is cooking the books, and his out-of-control deficit is pouring more gas on the debt and deficit fires.

How many more alarms must go off for the Prime Minister to rein in his spending in his credit card budget?

**Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this budget is a game changer for families across the country, whether it is the school nutrition program, which I know the Conservatives like to talk down, that is feeding hungry mouths in my riding of Thunder Bay—Superior North and all across the country, or our early learning and child care program that is reducing fees.

Listen to this: “ELCC has taken a huge mental and financial load off our family, particularly during these times.”

That is from a parent. We cannot beat that.

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### GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS

**John Brassard (Barrie South—Innisfil, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, what is the Liberals' response to the interim PBO's warnings? They put him on notice that they will be looking to replace him with someone who has “tact and discretion”. Presumably, that means replacing the budget watchdog with someone from the Prime Minister's inner circle of corporate buddies, who take their marching orders from him.

The independence and oversight of the budget watchdog is designed to call out deception and raise the alarm, to ensure that every MP and Canadian knows when the books are being cooked.

Why are the watchdogs who are challenging the wolves on the credit card budget being threatened?

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, of course, there is a well-worn process for the appointment of the Parliamentary Budget Officer, which involves consulting with all members of the House, including the Leader of the Opposition. We look forward to the members' feedback on that very important job search.

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[Translation]

### FINANCE

**Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's credit card budget passes the bill for today's spending on to our children. After 10 years of this government, families are struggling. They have to put 50% more of their household expenses on their credit cards just to get by. Meanwhile, Fitch Ratings says that federal finances run a high risk of further deterioration since the Liberals keep exceeding their own fiscal anchors.

Will the warning from Fitch convince the Prime Minister to stop his reckless and irresponsible spending?

**The Honourable Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is fascinating to listen to the Conservatives during question period. It is not surprising that Quebeckers and Canadians rejected a leader who spends his time writing slogans for question period that his members happily regurgitate. The Conservatives are incapable of supporting a budget that presents a real vision for building Quebec and Canada. This budget includes investments, particularly in defence, that will support good jobs in Chaudière-Appalaches, at the Davie shipyard and among all its suppliers. It will also support good jobs at Base Camp Connect in Lévis, which provides communication systems to the Canadian Armed Forces.

That is what they voted against yesterday, and that is a shame.

**Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, is the minister telling us that Fitch and the Parliamentary Budget Officer are liars? In fact, the Liberals want to fire the Parliamentary Budget Officer. In his recent report, he confirmed that the government has abandoned the fiscal anchor to reduce the debt. He warned that this poses a direct threat to Canada's credit rating and investor confidence.

I have a straightforward question. How many more alarming reports from the Parliamentary Budget Officer will it take for the Prime Minister to end this financial mess?

● (1435)

**Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is important to note that Canada has the best fiscal position in the G7, with the lowest debt-to-GDP ratio among G7 countries. The situation we are currently facing, given the changing world economic order, requires us to be ambitious and serious for the country's future. That is exactly what budget 2025 does, with investments in infrastructure and defence. It is aiming for greater affordability with a tax cut for the middle class, and it is investing in productivity and innovation.

That is budget 2025.

[English]

**Billy Morin (Edmonton Northwest, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after 10 years of Liberal deficits, Canadians are having to put nearly 50% more of their expenses on credit cards. Fitch Ratings, the agency that gives the Liberal government its credit score, says that the Liberal government frequently blows through fiscal anchors. On top of this, the Parliamentary Budget Officer is also ringing the alarm bells: “With Budget 2025 the Government abandoned the previous fiscal anchor to reduce the federal debt-to-GDP ratio over the medium term.”

How many more fiscal watchdog reports is it going to take for the Prime Minister to rein in his costly credit card spending?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Wayne Long (Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let us look at some facts. I know the party opposite does not really like to talk about facts. We have the best credit rating in the world and the lowest net debt-to-GDP in the G7. The IMF has projected Canada to have one of the fastest-growing economies in the G7. We are laser-focused on building the strongest economy in the G7.

The party opposite talks slogans, rhetoric and outdated slogans, but we are focused on building the strongest economy. We will deliver for Canadians because that is what Canadians expect from a serious government.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**FORESTRY INDUSTRY**

**Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, here is the proof that this budget fails to meet the needs of Quebecers. Yesterday, the same day that the budget was passed, the Arbec forestry company laid off nearly 100 workers in Amos.

However, just three weeks ago industry representatives, including representatives from Arbec, were in Ottawa pleading for support. They were asking the federal government to advance them 50% of all future countervailing and anti-dumping duties payable. They also asked for a wage subsidy so that they would not have to lay off workers.

There was nothing for them in the budget and what happened? One hundred workers are losing their livelihoods. What is the government waiting for? When will it take action?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we will always be there for forestry workers. We have a fund specifically designed to help businesses.

Yesterday, in a dramatic turn of events, the Bloc Québécois voted against projects in Quebec. The Bloc Québécois voted against the Port of Saguenay expansion, against the Port of Montreal expansion and against Exploramer and its shark pavilion. The Bloc Québécois is opposed to the shark pavilion, Espace Hubert-Reeves, the Forillon shipyard and the Montreal North sports centre.

Today, Quebecers are dumbfounded. Where was the Bloc Québécois yesterday?

**Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, our hearts go out to the 100 or so workers at Arbec, in Amos, who have been laid off.

The company had no choice, because Ottawa ignored the needs that the industry and the Bloc Québécois have been hammering home for weeks. We need a wage subsidy, specifically in order to avoid layoffs like these.

For the industry in general, the federal government must offer 50% of the Americans' countervailing and anti-dumping duties. The Liberals did nothing in the budget, and 100 families in my riding are finding out that they will be struggling to make ends meet this holiday season.

Now, what is the government going to do for them?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, members of the Bloc Québécois are a little late to this situation. They must have been busy yesterday voting against the budget and against projects in Quebec. Still, I have some news for them.

We are already in contact with Arbec. We are already negotiating a line of credit. We are prepared to support them, to help them pivot.

Instead of focusing on voting against projects in Quebec, the members of the Bloc Québécois should look at how they can support the government so we can move our country forward together.

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[English]

**FINANCE**

**Hon. Rob Moore (Fundy Royal, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's costly credit card budget puts today's reckless spending onto tomorrow's taxpayers.

After 10 years of the Liberals, Canadians are having to put nearly 50% more of their expenses on their credit cards. Fitch Ratings says, "federal finances run a high risk of further deterioration" since the government frequently blows through its fiscal anchors.

How many more fiscal watchdog reports is it going to take for the Prime Minister to rein in his costly credit card spending?

● (1440)

**Hon. Wayne Long (Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as a proud member from southern New Brunswick like the member opposite, I believe in the budget we passed last night. The budget has transformational, generational investments in defence and infrastructure. There is a \$5-billion trade corridors fund, which will mean an amazing amount of dollars for Port Saint John and the port of Belledune.

On this side of the House, we listen to Canadians, we believe in our budget and we know our budget will transform Canada. It is too bad the members opposite did not support us last night. I know Canadians stand with us. We will—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Fundy Royal.

**Hon. Rob Moore (Fundy Royal, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the member knows that his constituents and mine are struggling to make ends meet, and it is the government's reckless spending that is making matters worse.

Not only is Fitch Ratings warning that Canada's economic position is at risk of getting worse, but thanks to the Liberals' disregard for sticking to their own fiscal anchors, the Parliamentary Budget Officer is also warning that this deterioration is already taking place, and Canadians are the ones paying the price. It is no wonder the Prime Minister wants to fire the Parliamentary Budget Officer, because he is actually telling Canadians the truth and the truth hurts.

I will ask this again: How many more fiscal—

*Oral Questions*

**The Speaker:** The hon. government House leader.

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member is an experienced member, so experienced, in fact, that he was here for the 10-year river of Harper red ink, with the biggest budget deficits on record in the history of the country. It is funny; he was not talking about that then. What he has done is vote against a budget that creates opportunity right throughout Atlantic Canada and right throughout the province of New Brunswick and that creates opportunity for young people in New Brunswick in energy and infrastructure.

We are going to keep building this country despite the member, his history of red ink and his negativism.

[*Translation*]

**Bernard Généreux (Côte-du-Sud—Rivière-du-Loup—Kataskomiq—Témiscouata, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's deficit budget passes the bill on to current and future taxpayers. Meanwhile, Canadians are being forced to put almost 50% more of their expenses on their credit cards.

The Fitch credit rating agency has warned that federal finances run a high risk of further deterioration. The Parliamentary Budget Officer says that borrowing costs are going to rise.

How many more reports from financial watchdogs will it take for the Prime Minister to stop this irresponsible spending?

**Hon. Anna Gainey (Secretary of State (Children and Youth), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, we are investing to build strong families and communities. The budget investments will create good jobs and careers for young people. It will protect the supports that help families get ahead.

Our new government is delivering a budget that will build, protect and strengthen Canada. I encourage the members opposite to vote for the budget this afternoon.

[*English*]

**John Williamson (Saint John—St. Croix, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after 10 years of Liberal mismanagement, Canadian families are putting 50% more of their household bills on credit cards than they did just 10 short years ago because of Liberal inflationary spending.

Fitch Ratings warns that government overspending puts finances at “high risk of further deterioration”. The budget watchdog warns that the Liberals have abandoned their own debt-to-GDP anchor, which is key to preserving Canada's AAA credit rating. It is no wonder this costly Prime Minister is trying to fire anyone who can use a calculator in this place.

When will the Prime Minister stop maxing out Canada's credit card and get back to basics?

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister responsible for Canada-U.S. Trade, Intergovernmental Affairs, Internal Trade, and One Canadian Economy, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, like his colleague from Fundy Royal, the member would remember very well the time he served in Prime Minister Harper's office. They were overrun with credit card spending and government cutbacks. The Conservatives pretend to be interested in things now, like the fight against crime, but they

were cutting CBSA officers and underfunding the RCMP. What did they do yesterday? They voted against investments in his province, in my province of New Brunswick and in infrastructure that will build the strongest economy.

We have no lessons to take, as the finance minister said, from the member.

• (1445)

**Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's costly credit card budget loads today's reckless spending on tomorrow's taxpayers, while Canadians are having to put nearly 50% more of their expenses on their credit cards, fearing the potential loss of their homes and businesses and facing the threat of bankruptcy. If only the government was concerned.

The warnings from Fitch and the parliamentary fiscal watchdog are ringing alarm bells. Abandoning one fiscal anchor and replacing it with another is already failing to build investor confidence in Canada.

How many more fiscal watchdog reports will it take for the Prime Minister to rein in his costly credit card spending?

**Hon. Stephanie McLean (Secretary of State (Seniors), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday in this House, the Conservative Party voted against budget 2025—

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

**The Speaker:** Not from the top, but the member can continue.

**Hon. Stephanie McLean:** Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives voted against food in schools for children. They voted against an income tax cut for the middle class. They voted against \$75 million in apprenticeship training. They voted against a refundable credit for personal support workers. They voted against \$45 million to address violence against women, and they voted against crucial support for seniors, like old age security.

Canadians want to know who—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Sudbury.

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## NATURAL RESOURCES

**Viviane Lapointe (Sudbury, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, northern Ontario has a proud mining legacy. We are known across the globe as a mining powerhouse, and we are ready to lead in the clean economy.

*Oral Questions*

The Minister of Energy and Natural Resources visited our region last week, where he saw first-hand the real opportunities that northern Ontario offers to our government's plan to grow our economy. Having major projects from northern Ontario included on the list sends a clear signal that northern Ontario is at the centre of Canada's critical mineral future.

Can the minister tell us what this means for the workers and local communities of our region?

**Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Crawford mine will help anchor Canada's leadership in clean industrial materials. It will supply high-grade, low-carbon nickel for batteries in green steel, with projected emissions close to 90% lower than the global average, while creating 1,000 direct jobs and 3,000 indirect jobs over the 40-year mine life. This is an example of acting decisively, building a stronger, more reliant Canada and getting projects built faster with the Major Projects Office.

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**CARBON PRICING**

**John Barlow (Foothills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government is the most expensive in Canadian history, and every dollar the Prime Minister spends comes out of the pockets of hard-working Canadians, driving up the costs of everything.

Food prices are 50% higher than the target rate, and experts have warned the Liberals that the industrial carbon tax is driving up the cost of fertilizer, farm equipment and food. The Liberals like to say this tax is imaginary, but they are increasing their own imaginary tax in the budget. Is what they tell parents of the 700,000 kids lined up at food banks that they are imagining things?

Why is the Prime Minister increasing the industrial carbon tax when food is already unaffordable?

**Hon. Heath MacDonald (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this budget meets the moment, speeding up national building projects and boosting trade diversification for agri-food and agriculture, for our economy and for the generations to come that the member speaks of.

There is \$150 billion for infrastructure alone in the plan, including for trade corridors, AgriMarketing, AgriStability, the clean fuel regulations and biofuel incentives; CFIA funding for digital trade; and investments in CanExport, EDC and Global Affairs. This is all for trade diversification and growing agriculture. There is also the buy Canada plan, which is so important to all our agriculture farmers and ranchers out there.

**John Barlow (Foothills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, what this budget does is put intergenerational debt on Canadian families.

Here is a fact the minister just ignored entirely: Food inflation is rising 40% faster in Canada than it is in the United States. Canada is the only G7 country where food inflation has actually increased for four straight months. We have a record-shattering 2.2 million Canadians forced to go to a food bank in a single month.

Why is the Prime Minister breaking his promise to Canadians, increasing the industrial carbon tax and increasing food costs for Canadians who already cannot afford to put food on the table?

• (1450)

**Hon. Heath MacDonald (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we all know the Canadian Climate Institute's most recent research shows that industrial carbon pricing systems have essentially no impact on households.

Agriculture plays a significant role in their achievement to lead the G7 nations. We are going to stand alongside our growers, our ranchers and our farmers.

**Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster—Meadow Lake, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government is the most expensive in Canadian history. Every dollar the Prime Minister spends comes out of the pockets of Canadians and drives up the cost of everything.

The cost of baby formula has jumped nearly 84% since 2017. The growing reports of parents going to desperate measures to feed their babies is truly alarming, yet when the Liberals had a chance to lower food costs, they chose to increase them.

Why is the Prime Minister increasing the industrial carbon tax and making food more expensive?

**Hon. Buckley Belanger (Secretary of State (Rural Development), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I just want to point out that when it comes to the budget, Saskatchewan is watching. Saskatchewan is here.

For 10 years, the Saskatchewan Conservatives have voted against billions of dollars in project commitments and programs that would have helped my home province move faster and build stronger. They did this just for their petty and immature political games.

That ends today, because this Saskatchewan MP is voting for the budget and for the interests of Saskatchewan.

**Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster—Meadow Lake, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberal budget and those initiatives are not working. Parents are still struggling to afford baby formula under the Liberal government's watch, and now StatsCan is reporting another year-over-year increase of 6% on the price of baby formula.

The Liberals had a chance to lower food costs for Canadians by scrapping the industrial carbon tax, but they chose to make food more expensive by increasing it, so I will ask this again: Why, when so many parents are struggling to feed their babies, is the Prime Minister increasing the industrial carbon tax and making food more expensive?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Buckley Belanger (Secretary of State (Rural Development), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I know the Conservatives have not developed a budget in the last 10 years, so they are a little out of practice. What part of this budget would they cut? Would it be the RCMP heritage project? Would it be the thousands of houses that we are going to commit to building in Saskatchewan? Would they shut down the nation-building mine in northern Saskatchewan, or take out the \$370 million in biofuels to benefit our canola farmers? Would they vote against \$257.6 million for firefighting aircraft?

Where would you cut? What would you sacrifice on Saskatchewan's behalf?

**The Speaker:** Once again, go through the Chair, please.

[*Translation*]

The hon. member for Montmorency—Charlevoix.

**Gabriel Hardy (Montmorency—Charlevoix, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I was with a beef farmer in Château-Richer last week, and we were talking about the federal industrial carbon tax, which is driving up the cost of energy, transportation and processing throughout the supply chain. This has resulted in a 17% increase in the price of beef for his customers.

However, he is not the only one noting these increases. According to Statistics Canada, the price of apples, oranges, chicken, fruit juice, carrots and even coffee has risen by 35%. Food prices are rising 40% faster in Canada than in the United States.

Why do the Liberals keep raising the price of groceries for Canadians?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, perhaps I should begin with a reminder that industrial carbon pricing does not apply in Quebec. My colleague might want to familiarize himself with the issue. Furthermore, industrial carbon pricing is not what is making food more expensive in Canada.

Our government wants to continue fighting climate change while supporting families across the country. I hope the Conservatives will also decide to help families.

• (1455)

**Gabriel Hardy (Montmorency—Charlevoix, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there is another completely made-up tax: the fuel tax.

Yesterday, the Liberals had the opportunity to lower the cost of food by getting rid of the fuel tax, but they chose to keep making food even more expensive. Families and couples where both partners have jobs are coming to food banks in Quebec to get food because they have to choose between putting food on the table, a roof over their heads and gas in their cars to get to work. It will cost Canadian families 17¢ more per litre every time they go to the pump.

Why is the Prime Minister maintaining the fuel tax and continuing to make food even more expensive?

**Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, my colleague had the opportunity to vote to lower taxes for 22 million Canadians. Yesterday, he had the opportunity to vote for a

school food program for the most vulnerable children in Quebec. Yesterday, he had the opportunity to vote for investments in housing, infrastructure and the Espace Hubert-Reeves. Yesterday, he had the opportunity to invest in defence to increase the salaries of the men and women in the Canadian Armed Forces, but he voted against all that.

Now, the good news is that he can redeem himself after question period by supporting the ways and means motion. If not, he can always take a walk behind the curtains, like some of his colleagues did.

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[*English*]

**THE ECONOMY**

**Jagsharan Singh Mahal (Edmonton Southeast, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government is the most expensive government in Canadian history. Every dollar the Prime Minister spends comes out of the pockets of Canadians and is driving up the cost of everything. The Liberals could have lowered food costs by scrapping the plastic packaging tax, which drives up the cost of produce by 34% and costs the average household \$400; instead, they chose to keep it.

Why is the Prime Minister keeping the packaging tax and making food more expensive?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, why does the member opposite keep choosing to make things up? There is no plastic packaging tax. Does he want me to repeat it for him?

I wish the Conservatives would look at the facts, and I wish they would work with us to continue to work for Canadians.

**Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Clarke, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, every dollar the Liberals spend comes out of the pockets of hard-working Canadians. Senior Liberal appointee Pierre Tremblay nearly doubled his former travel budget to allow him to spend thousands of dollars on unnecessary limo rides.

Instead of asking young Canadians to sacrifice their future, why does the Prime Minister not ask one of his top bureaucrats to maybe sacrifice a limo ride here and there?

**Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the government is spending less so we can invest more. We have invested \$60 billion in the first tranche of major projects and \$57 billion in the second tranche. This is creating jobs and making Canada stronger.

*Oral Questions*

**Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Clarke, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we have heard that tired line from the current government and the previous one: “Canadians have never had it so good”, but the reality is that Canadians are struggling, families are struggling and workers are struggling, yet the government keeps defending the indefensible. While Canadians are lined up in record numbers at food banks, Liberal bureaucrats are living the Liberal life of luxury.

Will the government take any disciplinary action against the individual and maybe even curtail his travel budget?

**Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the agency is an independent agency. It does good work and is helping us build a nuclear future for this country. We are building at Darlington, we are building at Pickering and we are building at Bruce. We are building Canada strong.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### CANADIAN IDENTITY AND CULTURE

**Marianne Dandurand (Compton—Stanstead, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in regions like mine, the Eastern Townships, we have local media and cultural organizations, both anglophone and francophone, that play an essential role in keeping us informed and keeping our culture alive. Today, with the rise of digital technology and globalization, the ways we stay informed and consume culture are evolving.

I would like to ask the Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture how our government will protect and promote the rich culture and diversity that make our region so strong.

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture and Minister responsible for Official Languages, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in the face of global uncertainty, it is vital that we protect our identity and our cultural sovereignty. That is why budget 2025 invests historic amounts in culture, identity and media, including \$38 million for local media across the country. The government made a strategic choice to strengthen our cultural and media sectors by investing \$150 million in CBC/Radio-Canada. This sector accounts for \$65 billion in GDP and nearly 670,000 jobs.

To invest in our cultural sovereignty is to invest in our future and preserve the stories told—

• (1500)

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Windsor West.

\* \* \*

[English]

#### PUBLIC SAFETY

**Harb Gill (Windsor West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, extortion is out of control. It is up 330% across Canada and nearly 360% in Ontario since 2015. Two weeks ago a home in Windsor got sprayed with bullets in an extortion attack. As a former police officer, I know that criminals are taking advantage of our weak bail laws and the lack of tools for law enforcement.

Canadians deserve safety, not excuses. When will the Liberals get serious and support our Conservative plan to crack down on

rampant extortion and protect our communities? For God's sake, will they do something?

**Hon. Ruby Sahota (Secretary of State (Combatting Crime), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we take extortion very seriously in Canada. Extortion with a firearm carries a maximum sentence of life in prison.

Extortionists think they are not going to get caught. Do members know why that is? It is because we have not given law enforcement the tools they need to catch extortionists. Those tools are in our Bill C-2, but Conservatives do not agree with the bill and will not give our police lawful access tools in order to catch extortionists, so they know they are going to get away with it.

**Tamara Jansen (Cloverdale—Langley City, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, at a time when Canadians are being terrorized in their own neighbourhoods, our globe-trotting Prime Minister jet-setted into B.C. for a carefree stroll down the White Rock Pier, while families in Surrey were barricading their doors and while homes and businesses were being shot up for the second and third times. He took a sunset stroll while gangs told victims to give them five more names of people to extort, or they would be next. It is mind-boggling that he flew out to crack jokes on the pier instead of tackle extortion.

Why will the Liberals not support the Conservative plan to crack down on the extortion crisis?

**Hon. Ruby Sahota (Secretary of State (Combatting Crime), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives have no plan. If they had a plan, they would support Bill C-14. In Bill C-14 we would make sentencing for extortionists consecutive. It would also make it harder for extortionists to get bail.

That is why it is so important that the Conservatives support these measures and support Bill C-2. I think they do not support them because that would mess up their fundraising plans.

**Marc Dalton (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, CTV just reported an extortion-related shooting in Abbotsford. In B.C., entire communities are living in fear as extortion has exploded nearly 500%. This is unacceptable and an indictment of the soft-on-crime, hug-a-thug Liberal government.

Conservatives are providing solutions, and the Liberals are silent. Just this morning our Conservative leader requested an emergency debate on extortion. The Liberals shot it down.

When will the Liberals take extortion seriously and not give empty platitudes?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, just because my colleague does not read the legislation the government puts on the floor of the House of Commons does not mean it does not exist. I would invite him to read Bill C-14, the bail and sentencing reform act, which would make it difficult for people who are charged with violent extortion to be released on bail. I invite him to read Bill C-2, the strong borders act, which would give tools around lawful access to law enforcement to actually catch the guys who would commit extortion, before it impacts people in his communities.

If the member wants to reduce the temperature of the House and work across partisan lines, there is something he can do: He can vote for these bills to crack down on extortion. Alternatively, he can continue to make partisan hay out of them.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**EMPLOYMENT**

**Bienvenu-Olivier Ntumba (Mont-Saint-Bruno—L'Acadie, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as a young person, I know that having a summer job that is supported by the Canada summer jobs program can make all the difference for young people. It allows them to acquire valuable skills.

What is the government doing to help young people get their careers off to a good start?

**Hon. Anna Gainey (Secretary of State (Children and Youth), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member for Mont-Saint-Bruno—L'Acadie is an excellent example of how the Canada summer jobs program helps young people succeed.

The Canada summer jobs program supports quality jobs for young people to help them develop skills and gain experience in the job market. With the 2025 budget, we will support approximately 100,000 jobs through this program. That is 24,000 more jobs than last summer. We are also supporting the youth employment and skills strategy and the student work placement program, which together will support more than 75,000 jobs.

We are here for young people as we build a strong Canada.

\* \* \*

● (1505)

[English]

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

**Amarjeet Gill (Brampton West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, extortion is up 330% across Canada since 2015. It is a national crisis, but yet again the Liberals refused an emergency debate.

In Peel, police charged a man in two shootings, in Brampton and Caledon, linked to organized crime. Extortion cases are skyrocketing. Communities are afraid. Families are worried. Businesses are being targeted.

Conservatives have a plan to stop this surge. When will the Liberals finally act in support of a Conservative plan to crack down on Canada's rampant extortion crisis?

**Hon. Ruby Sahota (Secretary of State (Combatting Crime), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what is the Conservative plan? We heard it in the House earlier today; it is to stall our legislation. We brought Bill C-2. We brought Bill C-12 and Bill C-14, all measures that would help with these types of crimes. The legislation would give tougher sentences. It would make it harder for offenders to get bail.

However, the Conservatives do not want to support real solutions; they just want to delay, they want to cut and they want to fundraise for their own personal means.

\* \* \*

**PHARMACARE**

**Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, last year Parliament passed legislation to deliver diabetes medication and contraception medication to every Canadian through our public health care system. This is vital to millions of people's health and the foundation of universal pharmacare.

In budget 2025, Liberals promised Canadians they would protect pharmacare, but they did not allocate any money to it.

Will the Prime Minister clearly confirm he will keep his word and make funding available to every province and territory that wants to sign a pharmacare agreement with the federal government?

**Hon. Marjorie Michel (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government will always protect Canada's health care system, including pharmacare and dental care. These are clear commitments, and we will keep them. I am having conversations with all provinces and territories to see how we can best support them to strengthen our health care system, including pharmacare.

\* \* \*

**NORTHERN AFFAIRS**

**Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, Inuit rely on hunting and trapping in a harsh environment. Nunavut is vast, with over 45,000 kilometres of coastline, and with no search and rescue base. When Nunavummiut are in trouble, they must wait for help from Halifax, which is over 2,000 kilometres away. Nunavut needs a centrally located search and rescue base in Sanirajak.

Will the government provide that, or will it continue to keep Inuit at risk of losing their lives while they are out on the land?

**Hon. Rebecca Chartrand (Minister of Northern and Arctic Affairs and Minister responsible for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, budget 2025 makes historic investments with the new \$1 billion Arctic infrastructure fund. This is designed to strengthen airports, seaports and all-season roads, which are critical lifelines for search and rescue. By improving northern transportation and communications infrastructure, the budget directly enhances the safety of the north. It is ensuring faster response times and better coordination when emergencies occur on land, sea or ice.

These are the investments that reflect our commitment to equity, reconciliation and protecting the lives in Canada's north.

**The Speaker:** Before we proceed, I would just like to mention that it is not permitted to take pictures in the House. I did not see any of that going on today, but yesterday I and others saw members taking pictures with their phone.

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1510)

[English]

### WAYS AND MEANS

MOTION NO. 7

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.)** moved that a ways and means motion to introduce a bill entitled An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on November 4, 2025, be concurred in.

[Translation]

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

[English]

**Hon. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, we request that it be adopted on division.

(Motion agreed to)

[Translation]

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne** moved that Bill C-15, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on November 4, 2025 be now read the first time and printed.

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

\* \* \*

[English]

### BAIL AND SENTENCING REFORM ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-14, An Act to amend the Criminal Code, the Youth Criminal Justice Act and the National Defence Act (bail and sentencing), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

### Government Orders

**Doug Shipley (Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak on behalf of the great people of Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte about—

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

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** Order. I would ask members who are having private conversations to please either exit the chamber or stop having private conversations. The House is sitting, and we are resuming debate.

I will ask the member for Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte to begin his remarks again.

**Doug Shipley:** Mr. Speaker, perhaps I should take a minute or two to thank the great people of Barrie who attended the Barrie Santa Claus parade this past weekend, even in the rain. It was great to see everybody out there. It was nice, a good parade. I thank the Greater Barrie Chamber of Commerce for putting it on.

Let us get into the fun stuff. I am pleased to rise today to speak on behalf of the great people of Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte about Bill C-14.

Bill C-14 seeks to amend the Criminal Code, the Youth Criminal Justice Act and the National Defence Act to clarify that the principle of restraint introduced by the Liberal government does not require release. It also proposes to expand reverse onus offences and would direct courts to weigh the number and gravity of outstanding charges when determining bail. Finally, it would add new aggravating factors, mandate certain consecutive sentences, restrict house arrest for sexual offenders and strengthen youth custody and disclosure powers.

Conservatives have been pushing for meaningful changes to fix our broken bail system for years, and I am pleased to see that steps are being taken to ensure safety in our communities after decades of decline under the Liberal government. In fact, this piece of legislation is a rare admission from the Liberal government that its approach to the criminal justice system has failed. By tabling this legislation, it is acknowledging the 41% increase in the violent crime severity index in the past decade and the increases in homicide, sexual assault and extortion offences, which happened under its watch.

### *Government Orders*

Residents in my community and across Canada are living in fear. Communities that were once peaceful and welcoming are now plagued by crime. The downtown core of almost every major city in Canada is overwhelmed by drug use, break-ins and public disorder. The numbers do not lie. Since 2015, violent crime is up 55%, firearms crime has surged by 130%, extortion has skyrocketed by 330%, sexual assaults are up 76% and homicides have risen by 29%.

The Macdonald-Laurier Institute recently released the “Urban Violent Crime Report”, which studied the crime rates in 20 of Canada's largest census metropolitan areas. The results are shocking. Over the past decade, the violent crime rate and sexual assault rate increased in all 20 census metropolitan areas. Notably, the violent crime severity index is up by 71% in Kitchener, 63% in Quebec City and 61% in St. Catharines. These are not just numbers. These troubling statistics represent shattered lives, broken families and communities living in fear.

How did we get here? The Liberal government introduced soft-on-crime legislation like Bill C-5 and Bill C-75, which gave high priority to releasing repeat violent offenders and took away mandatory jail time for certain violent crimes, unleashing a crime wave across the country. Specifically, Bill C-75 enshrined the principles of restraint in law, which direct the courts to release offenders at the earliest reasonable opportunity and under the least onerous conditions. Bill C-5 abolished most mandatory minimum sentences and made house arrest a possibility for serious, heinous crimes like sexual assault and drug trafficking.

In 2023, the Liberal government tabled Bill C-48, which expanded reverse onus provisions but did not make it more difficult to get bail and did nothing to make it harder for repeat violent offenders to get bail.

I have talked to police services across the country and have been on ride-alongs in several cities from coast to coast, and I hear the same thing time and time again, which is that a very small number of people are responsible for the majority of crimes. These are offenders who are arrested and released the same day and go on to commit crimes while on release. These individuals are placing a strain on our courts, our communities and our first responders.

We witnessed a string of violent incidents over the summer, including the tragic murder of Bailey McCourt by her ex-husband just hours after he was released on bail following an assault conviction. In my own community, OPP Constable Greg Pierzchala, a Barrie resident, was ambushed and murdered by a violent repeat offender who was out on bail and under a lifetime firearms ban.

Just last year, Constable Jim Peters, a Barrie police officer, was stabbed while on duty by a repeat violent offender who was on probation at the time of the stabbing. Thankfully, Jim has recovered. In the two years leading up to this incident, the individual responsible had been arrested and released 17 times and had over 100 interactions with the Barrie Police Service.

Recently, Tom Stamatakis, president of the Canadian Police Association, appeared before the justice committee. I asked him how incidents like these are affecting the mental health of officers on the front lines. He told the committee that officers are being assaulted

every day by repeat offenders. He shared a horrifying story from April, when an offender attempted to set a police officer on fire by pouring a flammable liquid on him during an arrest attempt.

● (1515)

Thomas Carrique, who is the OPP commissioner and president of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, told the justice committee something similar. He stated:

When these perpetrators are brought before the courts, and when they are released and the officers can clearly see an elevated risk—they're released into communities, and they further victimize innocent, law-abiding Canadians, including police officers in the lawful execution of their duties—it is very demoralizing for our officers.

Police services are facing serious recruitment and retention challenges because of the extraordinary risks officers face when trying to apprehend these individuals. This is not just a public safety crisis, but it is a mental health crisis for those on the front lines. Officers are exhausted and demoralized; they are leaving the profession in record numbers. Who suffers? It is every Canadian who depends on them for safety. These tragedies are not isolated and did not happen in a vacuum. They are a result of dangerous offenders' being released on bail, time and time again, because of the Liberal government's catch-and-release bail laws.

While the Liberal government was denying that there were any issues with our bail system, Conservatives were fighting for solutions. In just this session, Conservatives have introduced several pieces of legislation to address skyrocketing crime rates, including Bill C-242, the jail not bail act, to extend reverse onus for major crimes and protect first responders, and Bill C-246, which proposes to make a consecutive sentence mandatory for such crimes as sexual assault. The Liberal government has ignored or voted against both pieces of legislation.

While we welcome any constructive efforts to try to fix our broken bail system and bring safety back to our communities, Conservatives believe that the legislation does not go far enough. The most significant example of the legislation missing the mark is on the principle of restraint. Bill C-14 now confirms that restraint does not require release. However, it still provides a pathway to release and retains the directive to apply the least onerous conditions on an offender.

*Government Orders*

Conservatives believe that the principle of restraint clause should be replaced entirely by a clause that prioritizes public and community safety as the governing principle. We also believe that the bill does not reform sentencing in a truly meaningful way. Conservatives believe that we must restore mandatory minimum sentences for serious violent offences, including firearms, kidnapping, human trafficking, robbery, extortion with a firearm, arson and others. The repeal of these sentences under Bill C-5 was wrong and has led to crime and chaos in our communities.

Another point that we hope to see improvements on is what offences would be eligible for house arrest. We are very concerned that individuals charged with robbery, drug trafficking and firearms offences would still be eligible for house arrest under the legislation. That being said, it is promising to see changes proposed to the youth criminal justice system. Last session, while studying the auto theft crisis in Canada, we learned about the startling prevalence of young people involved in violent crimes.

Commissioner Thomas Carrique of the OPP noted that a significant number of youth are participating in organized auto theft rings, many of them armed.

Deputy Chief Robert Johnson of the Toronto Police Service told the committee that one-third of individuals arrested for carjacking in Toronto were young offenders.

Beyond auto theft, Clayton Campbell, president of the Toronto Police Association, recently informed the justice committee that in Toronto alone, more than a dozen youth were charged with murder in the past year and 102 illegal firearms were seized from youth in the city. This underscores the urgent need to update our justice and bail laws to reflect the changing landscape of offender profiles in Canada.

Conservatives will work collaboratively to ensure that the legislation is strengthened and genuinely achieves the goal of keeping our communities safe. We hope that all parties will come together during the committee process to pass reasonable amendments. Unless these changes are made, serious and dangerous offenders will continue to walk free, communities will remain at risk and families will continue to live in fear.

Canadians deserve better. They deserve a government that puts their safety first. They deserve a justice system that protects victims, not criminals. That is why we are calling on the Liberal government to work with us to end the scourge of crime, chaos and disorder in our streets. It is time to restore safety, accountability and justice for all Canadians. Conservatives will always stand on the side of victims, families and safe communities.

• (1520)

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, during question period we heard a number of members talk about the issue of extortion. Extortion is such an important issue. The Prime Minister, as well as many of my colleagues, has raised this issue. When we look at Bill C-2 or Bill C-14, there comes a point in time when the Conservative Party needs to recognize that Canadians want action.

This is action. It is substantive. Bill C-14 will help address extortion and many other issues.

Will the member commit to seeing the legislation ultimately pass through the system before the end of the year?

**Doug Shipley:** Mr. Speaker, I have to be honest. I thank the member for not yelling at me as you were all morning at everybody else. I appreciate that.

I will mention, when say you want action, that the type of action I am hearing from the Liberal Party across is action such as that of your member for Victoria, who is on record calling for defunding the police, for disarming most police and for promoting drug decriminalization. That is on record. The Conservative Party does not stand for any of those motions. The type of action that we would be going for is putting criminals away under a tighter bail system.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** I will remind the hon. member to address his comments through the Chair.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan.

• (1525)

**Fraser Tolmie (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am very familiar with my colleague's community. I was there this past summer, riding through there on the 400. It never disappoints. Unfortunately, he was not there at the time.

My colleague spoke about action. One concern I have is with regard to convictions. He spoke about someone in his community being arrested and released 17 times but never convicted.

What is falling short in the Liberal bill that the Conservatives are suggesting should be adopted by the Liberals? What are his thoughts on that?

**Doug Shipley:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for dropping by Barrie in the summer. I welcome all of my colleagues from all sides to get off Highway 400 and come into Barrie. It is a great city. We are always welcoming everybody there, and we will give them a little tour around. We are doing a great job right now. Our mayor is currently cleaning up under a state of emergency, cleaning up what has been left behind and trying to clean up encampments. It is looking quite good. Come by and look at the fine work that Barrie, the Barrie Police and the mayor are doing there. I thank the member for those words about my city.

*Government Orders*

Yes, I am glad that the hon. member mentioned the tragic incident of the Barrie police officer who was stabbed while on duty at a local fast-food restaurant. He was just trying to enjoy himself but got caught in a situation there. As I had mentioned, the perpetrator had been arrested, just within the past two years prior to this, 17 different times and released on bail. They had over 100 interactions.

Today, we are talking about reforming the bail act. It is amazing. We are reforming something that has been done over and over under the Liberals, but we are not getting it straight. We need to get this right. We need to make sure that the public is safe. We need to make sure that police officers are safe. We need to make sure that criminals, especially ones who have had 17 different arrests and convictions in two years, stay behind bars.

[*Translation*]

**Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the bill eliminates the ladder principle when there is a reverse onus at the bail stage.

The Bloc Québécois is questioning this measure because the Supreme Court has never ruled that remand is prohibited.

I would like to hear my colleague's opinion on that.

[*English*]

**Doug Shipley:** Mr. Speaker, I have to apologize. There was a lack of my getting my translator up to my ear in time, so I will just go over some of the things that we are trying to resolve here today. I hope this helps him with some answers.

I would like to highlight that, through 2015 to 2023, total violent crime was up by 49.84%. Total homicides were up 27.75%. Sexual assaults were up 74.83%. Total violent firearms offences were up 116.41%. Extortion was up 357%. Auto theft was up 45.7%. Total sexual violations against children were up 118%. These are just absolutely atrocious numbers. These are all numbers that have happened under the Liberals' watch from 2015 to 2023. We need to take a closer look at bail reform and make sure that criminals stay behind bars.

**Ron McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am thankful for the opportunity to speak to Bill C-14, a bill the government has introduced to strengthen bail and sentencing laws. With over 80 clauses, it represents a major step in modernizing Canada's criminal justice system and reinforcing public safety. Today I would like to speak to the House about three of the amendments that aim to protect our communities by strengthening our sentencing regime. These amendments would create new aggravating factors targeting offences against first responders, as well as theft and mischief offences that harm essential infrastructure, and retail theft.

Recently I met with Keegan Gordon and Steve Piccolo of the Coquitlam firefighters, who were here in Ottawa for the annual firefighters legislative conference. Both Keegan and Steve spoke of the need for the protections the bill offers to first responders. An aggravating factor is a circumstance or detail about an offence that makes the crime more serious and can lead to harsher sentences. These factors send a message to the court that certain conduct justifies harsher sentences.

Among these amendments are specific provisions aimed at better protecting our first responders, who face a disturbing rise in violence and threats that happen while they do their critical work. Every day, firefighters, paramedics and police officers put themselves in harm's way to keep our communities safe. They accept that their jobs come with risk, including running toward burning buildings, volatile scenes and the unknown. However, no one should have to accept being assaulted while doing their job.

Risk is part of the job; abuse is not, yet across Canada, the stories keep coming. More first responders are being threatened or attacked while simply doing their jobs. In October, a paramedic in Kamloops, B.C., was assaulted while refuelling her ambulance at a gas station on a Sunday evening. An unknown man walked up and hit her, unprovoked. In March, Greg Stubbs, a paramedic on Vancouver Island, was attacked and seriously injured while responding to a call at an encampment in downtown Victoria, and in Winnipeg, union leaders reported nearly 100 assaults on first responders in 2025 alone, including a firefighter's being struck in the face with a metal pole while on duty.

Our police officers, paramedics and firefighters need to know that their safety matters. Bill C-14 proposes a new aggravating factor at sentencing for offenders who commit violent acts and other crimes against all first responders in the course of their duties. This amendment would respond to ongoing calls to denounce and deter violence against first responders. The proposed amendment would build on earlier amendments, including former Bill C-3, which amended the Criminal Code and the Canada Labour Code to create an aggravating factor when the victim of an offence is a health care worker. Ultimately, this change would ensure that judges consider imposing tougher sentences when violence targets those who serve.

The message in Bill C-14 is clear. If someone targets first responders, they can expect zero tolerance. They would be held accountable for their conduct. Just as we must protect those who respond in moments of crisis, we must also protect the systems they rely upon to do their jobs: our power grids, communication networks and transportation corridors. Bill C-14 aims to do this by enacting a new aggravating factor; this would apply to theft and mischief offences that have an impact on essential infrastructure.

Across Canada, we have seen a sharp rise in thefts and damage targeting power lines, railways and telecommunications networks. These are crimes that may look like property offences on paper, but they can shut down hospitals, delay first responders and put whole communities at risk. According to Statistics Canada, metal theft, which includes copper wire along with other things, such as man-hole covers, grew 56% between 2018 and 2022. Bell has documented more than 2,200 instances of copper theft nationwide since 2022, with hot spots in Hamilton, Cambridge, Windsor and Quebec's Saguenay region. In Calgary alone there have been over 40 incidents targeting telecommunications infrastructure, causing more than \$1.4 million in damages and repairs. Copper wire theft affects entire neighbourhoods, leaving homes without electricity, Internet or access to emergency communications.

● (1530)

When these crimes go unreported, the danger only grows, putting lives at risk.

Bill C-14 makes it clear that attacks on infrastructure are not minor property crimes; they are serious threats to public safety. The bill proposes an aggravating factor when offences like theft, mischief or robbery interfere with access to essential infrastructure, disrupt its functioning or make it unsafe or unfit for use. If someone steals, damages or disrupts the systems people in Canada count on, like our power, communication or transportation networks, it is a threat to public safety. The bill proposes that our justice system treat it this way.

Bill C-14 would also seek to address crimes that harm our businesses and communities, namely retail theft. When we talk about retail theft, we are referring to high-volume, profit-driven crime. These are thefts carried out repeatedly, often by organized networks, with the intent to resell, barter or fraudulently return merchandise. The government has heard concerns raised by provinces, territories and industry stakeholders about the growing problem of this type of theft.

We have seen media coverage and industry data that show organized retail theft in Canada has exploded, costing billions of dollars, involving repeat offenders and violence, and crippling local businesses. Specifically, the Retail Council of Canada has reported that retailers lost an estimated \$9.1 billion to theft in 2024, an increase from previous years, and organized theft has been identified as a contributing factor to several retail store closures. The RCC also reported that approximately 45% of theft incidents in 2024 involved violence against employees or customers. In the city of Vancouver, police reported nearly 7,700 shoplifting incidents last year, an increase of about 12% compared to the year before, with shoplifting in the downtown core up 40%.

Bill C-14 recognizes and responds to this reality, seeking to ensure our justice system treats organized, repeat, profit-motivated retail theft with the seriousness it deserves. While courts have long-considered profit motivation an aggravating factor under common law, this amendment would codify that principle in legislation. Codification is important because it ensures consistency across the country and clearly signals to judges, offenders and the public that these crimes are serious and will be treated as such.

### *Government Orders*

Bill C-14 would introduce aggravating factors at sentencing to ensure our courts recognize the seriousness of these crimes. By highlighting the impact on public safety, critical systems and communities, the law would signal to judges that these offences are not ordinary property or assault cases.

In closing, whether it is an attack on those who run toward danger, damage to the systems we rely upon or theft that undermines our communities, Bill C-14 makes it clear that this conduct is unacceptable and will be treated with the seriousness it deserves. We are standing with first responders, protecting critical infrastructure and supporting Canadian businesses and communities. With these measures, we are sending a simple but powerful message that Canada will not tolerate attacks on its people, its systems or its neighbourhoods.

● (1535)

**Anna Roberts (King—Vaughan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague's comments on the importance of our police officers and the work they do to keep us safe.

What does the member think of his colleague from Victoria, who is calling to defund the police?

**Ron McKinnon:** Mr. Speaker, I think all of our systems and first responders need to be appropriately funded and supported.

I am not sure what remarks the member mentioned, but I certainly support continuing the proper funding of our police services and our emergency services in general.

[*Translation*]

**Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, during the 44th Parliament, the Bloc Québécois introduced a bill to provide a framework for the use of the Jordan decision, and in particular to ensure that the Jordan decision cannot be invoked for primary designated offences such as sexual offences, murder, kidnapping, gun crimes or terrorism.

I would like to hear what my hon. colleague thinks of this idea.

[*English*]

**Ron McKinnon:** Mr. Speaker, I am not sufficiently familiar with the Jordan principle to respond to that, but I note that in this legislation, we are emphasizing the importance of increasing the severity of sentences for violent crimes and sex offenders, and informing our judicial system that we consider these matters with great seriousness. Judges should be very careful with these kinds of crimes when granting bail and considering release. We are implementing reverse onus provisions for many new crimes as well to ensure that our judicial system has more awareness of the danger that some of these individuals present and that we keep them off the streets.

*Government Orders*

• (1540)

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am wondering if my colleague can provide his thoughts in regard to the support for Bill C-14, whether it is from provinces, municipalities, law enforcement agencies or the many first responders. There is a general willingness from Canadians to see bail reform, and an all-inclusive number of people have been advocating for the changes that Bill C-14 would bring forward.

Could he provide his thoughts on how important it is that we respect the many consultations that have taken place? We want to see this legislation pass before the end of the year. Could he provide his thoughts on the importance of getting this legislation through and ultimately passed before the end of the year?

**Ron McKinnon:** Mr. Speaker, that is a great question. Of course, we have consulted very broadly and very widely with first responders, with police and with legislators across the country to provide the direction we are going in and to get this direction under way.

It is critically important that we pass this legislation soon so we can take the appropriate action in a timely manner. As the member mentioned, it is very critical that we do so before we rise for the break.

**Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we know the member for Victoria wants to defund the police. I had a conversation at a Remembrance Day ceremony with Mike Lokken, the commanding officer of the depot division, and I wonder if the member knows that this budget cuts \$98 million from the RCMP budget.

Did he know when he voted for this budget that it is cutting the RCMP budget by \$98 million? The Liberals are asking the RCMP to do more with less.

**Ron McKinnon:** Mr. Speaker, I know that in the budget, we are making a great many adjustments. One thing we are doing going forward is adding 1,000 members to the RCMP and 1,000 members to the CBSA. As we go forward, we are also adjusting various government expenditures right across the board to make sure we are paying for the right things at the right time.

**Tamara Jansen (Cloverdale—Langley City, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is time to speak plainly today, because families in Surrey and across Canada deserve the plain truth, not another round of empty words from Ottawa. Over the past months, as I have met with business owners and families across Surrey, Cloverdale, Clayton and Langley City, the conversations have been sobering. Everywhere I go, people lower their voices, look over their shoulder and tell me the same thing: “Tamara, we don't feel safe anymore.”

Not long ago, I hosted a small business round table in my office with several local business owners. One of them runs a handful of small restaurants in Surrey, family-run places where the food is good, the staff knows people's names and the community keeps them alive. He sat across from me, hands folded the way people do when they are trying to stay composed, and I asked him how things were going. He took a moment and said that staff had been followed to their cars, that they had had threats, that they were watch-

ing the parking lot instead of customers and that this was not how he wanted to run his business.

He was not angry, nor dramatic; he was simply describing the quiet fear that has settled over too many hard-working families in our community, families that came here believing Canada was safe, stable and full of opportunity. He was sad, and that should trouble every single one of us, because what he described is not normal. It is not the Canada that we built. It is not the future we intend to hand down to our children and grandchildren.

Surrey is facing something no community should ever face. We have seen extortion-related shootings at banquet halls, restaurants, insurance offices and family homes. We have seen respected businessmen murdered. We have seen houses shot at twice in the same week because criminals felt confident enough to return. In neighbourhoods like Cloverdale, neighbourhoods that once symbolized calm, quiet and safety, families are now installing cameras, reinforcing doors and staying home instead of accepting invitations to birthdays and family gatherings. This is not how Canadians should live.

When the Liberal government introduced Bill C-14, people hoped that Ottawa had finally woken up and wanted to fix the mess it had created. They hoped this would be the moment the government understood the scale of the crisis: that extortion, gun crime and organized criminal activity were no longer occasional headlines but daily realities for innocent people. They hoped that at the very least, there would be a sign of courage, but hope collapses when leadership fails to show up. Unfortunately, Bill C-14 does not meet this moment. It is not strong enough. It is not decisive enough. It lacks the moral clarity that a government needs when the safety of its people is on the line.

To understand why we need to look at how we got here. Criminals in this country have learned that there is very little to fear from our justice system. They have learned that punishment is often shockingly lenient. They have learned that the federal government's reforms over the past decade have tilted the balance away from holding criminals accountable toward releasing criminals faster than police can file the paperwork.

The principle of restraint, the rule that police and courts must favour release on the least strict bail conditions, remains intact. Bill C-14 would not remove it. That principle may sound gentle and humane, but in reality it tells violent offenders that the justice system is more concerned about their comfort than our safety.

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Mandatory minimum penalties, the clearest signal a country can send that violent crime will not be tolerated, were dismantled by the government in 2022 with Bill C-5. What Canadians need to know today is that Bill C-14 would not restore them, not one. As a result, there is no certainty in sentencing, no clarity and no firm line drawn in the sand.

Worse still, crimes involving firearms, robberies, drug trafficking and even extortion can still be punished with house arrest, not with real jail time and not in a secure facility. This is house arrest in the very neighbourhoods where the victims live. It is impossible to overstate the danger of such a system.

I do not say this lightly: The criminals orchestrating these extortion networks understand our laws better than most members of Parliament. They understand the loopholes. They understand that even if they are caught, the consequences may be minimal. They operate with boldness because the law allows them boldness.

• (1545)

Among G7 countries, Canada stands out for how frequent and fast-growing extortion has become in our national crime data. This is a crisis created by Liberal laws putting violent offenders ahead of victims. Let me repeat: This crisis is the direct result of Liberal government choices, and the numbers speak with brutal clarity. Violent crime has risen sharply since 2015. Firearms offences have more than doubled. Extortion has risen at rates that should alarm every elected official in this country. Sexual assaults have increased dramatically, with women paying the highest price for the government's softness.

This brings me to an equally painful truth: Violence against women remains an afterthought in federal justice policy. I have spoken with women here in Surrey, Cloverdale and Langley who are still carrying the trauma of assault. Some cannot sleep. Some avoid certain streets or times of day, and some feel unsafe in their own homes. When they turn to the justice system for protection, they are too often met with leniency for the offender.

Bill C-14 could have changed that. It could have drawn a line so that repeat violent offenders, sexual predators and men who harm women would face serious consequences, but it does not. It would keep in place the same mindset that lets far too many dangerous people slip through the cracks. It would keep the possibility of simple house arrest for violent predators. It would keep the system tilted toward giving offenders second chances while leaving women to manage the fear on their own.

A government that claims to defend women cannot continue to defend the men who harm them. This is why the Conservative position is so different and so necessary. We believe the first duty of any government is to protect its citizens, not to soften the truth and not to sugarcoat a danger that is staring families in the face. Its duty is to protect.

This means restoring mandatory minimum sentences for serious violent crimes, because a society that will not offer consequences has no hope of restoring order. It means ending the era of get-out-of-jail-free cards for violent offenders. The law must defend the innocent before it comforts the guilty. It also means ending house arrest for crimes that were never meant to be served at home. There is

nothing compassionate about allowing a violent offender to live steps away from the people he has terrorized. Firm justice is not cruelty; firm justice is protection.

It means strengthening our border and supporting our police, not with announcements but with action. For too long, criminals have smuggled guns into this country faster than the government has responded. For too long, police have been asked to do more with fewer resources. A safe nation requires a government that gives law enforcement every tool it needs, not one that merely stands at a podium promising to do something someday.

Let me close with this. I often think about my grandchildren and the Canada they deserve: a Canada where children pedal their bikes in their neighbourhoods without fear, a Canada where women walk to their cars without hesitation and a Canada where business owners open their doors in the morning without checking the shadows in the parking lot. We can build that Canada again, but we will not build it with timid, half measures or softened legal language. We will build it with clarity, with conviction and with the courage to declare that safety is not optional; it is foundational.

Bill C-14 is not enough. Canadians deserve a justice system that stands up straight, speaks plainly and puts their safety first, not as an afterthought but as the beginning of every decision. We must place public safety at the very top of the law. Nothing should outrank it. We need to restore mandatory jail time for those who use firearms and for those who commit sexual offences. A nation that will not punish these crimes cannot call itself serious about justice.

We have to end the absurd practice of allowing house arrest for robbery, drug trafficking and firearms offences. These are not minor offences. They are acts that tear the fabric of our communities. When a person has shown time and time again that they are violent, the law must begin from a simple position: that they remain behind bars to keep the public safe. These are not radical ideas. They are the minimum standards of a country determined to protect its citizens.

Canadians are resilient and decent, but they are also tired of watching their neighbourhoods grow less safe while Ottawa proposes weak laws.

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• (1550)

**Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance and National Revenue and to the Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, how does the member opposite justify to the members of Cloverdale—Langley City her stance on this legislation?

This has been acknowledged, time and time again by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, by mayors across the country, by ministers of justice, even in her own province, and by police associations, including the Canadian Police Association, the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, the Police Association of Ontario, the Ontario Provincial Police Association, the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police, the Toronto Police Association and the London police. These are police associations that represent the rank and file, those men and women who are protecting our communities, day in and day out, who have been advocating for these changes. All of them say the same thing: that this legislation takes major steps in the right direction.

How can the member possibly call this legislation weak? Why will she not stand up for a strong piece of legislation to build stronger, safer communities across Canada?

**Tamara Jansen:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to call attention to a letter that the public safety minister, Mr. Anandasangaree, just received—

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

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Gabriel Ste-Marie):** I would like to remind the hon. member that we cannot refer to people by name, but rather by title.

The hon. member.

[*English*]

**Tamara Jansen:** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Public Safety just received a letter from the Surrey police today. I would like to quote it:

Surrey is one of the fastest-growing cities in Canada.... What we are now facing—a significant extortion crisis that has emerged in just a few short years—demands swift, decisive, and collective action. No Canadian should live in fear....

It says, “We therefore respectfully request an urgent meeting [between] City of Surrey, local federal and provincial leadership, and senior leadership from all over the Lower Mainland”.

This is a crisis that has not been dealt with, and this is from the Surrey police.

**Ryan Turnbull:** A request for a meeting is not—

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Gabriel Ste-Marie):** I would ask members to observe decorum in the House.

The hon. member for Repentigny.

**Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois is generally against mandatory minimum sentences because they have not been proven to deter criminals from committing

crime. What is more, they have been proven to cause countless injustices with respect to sentencing.

Can my hon. colleague tell me whether she has seen any studies that prove that mandatory minimum sentences have a deterrent effect on crime? Is she not concerned about the many injustices in sentencing?

• (1555)

[*English*]

**Tamara Jansen:** Mr. Speaker, what we do have is proof that mandatory minimums do work. Prior to their changing the laws, we did not have an extortion crisis or a crime crisis like we have now. The soft-on-crime framework is intact in this bill still. It keeps the culture of release. It offers no mandatory penalties for dangerous offenders, and it refuses to place public safety at the top of the law. What is missing is exactly what Canadians have been pleading for: firm consequences, clear standards and laws that favour the innocent over the violent. Until that happens, until they fix it, nothing will truly change.

**Hon. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member just referenced mandatory minimums. She said that it is proven that they can change behaviour. Can she cite one actual credible report that is based on data that backs up that claim? She said it has been proven. Those were her words a moment ago. I am looking for one actual report that has data in it that backs up that claim.

**Tamara Jansen:** Mr. Speaker, Canadians are tired of that spin. The government's bills, Bill C-75 and Bill C-5, turned our justice system into a revolving door of catch, release and repeat. Since then, violent crime is up 41%. In my own riding, I have sat across from small business owners who are terrified of extortion and families afraid to walk home at night. They are perfect examples of why the system does not work when we loosen it up.

[*Translation*]

**Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives want to step up the fight against crime. Would my colleague agree that we should crack down on criminal organizations by creating an organized crime registry?

[*English*]

**Tamara Jansen:** Mr. Speaker, I believe that, at this point in time, we have already done a few things that needed to be done, for instance, calling the Bishnoi gang what it was.

It is really important that we understand that, right now, people are facing gunfire and extortion in our neighbourhoods. Canadians need a bill that restores mandatory jail time for gun and sexual offences.

**Iqwinder Gaheer (Mississauga—Malton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to address an issue that goes to the very heart of Canadians' confidence in their justice system: bail reform. This is not a matter of legal procedure. It is about the safety of our communities, and it is directly tied to the responsibility that we bear as parliamentarians to uphold both justice and fairness.

Across the country, Canadians are seeing the impacts of more sophisticated criminal networks, of repeat violent offenders and of organized crime-driven offences. They are asking us a very simple question: Are we doing enough to keep them safe? That question carries immense weight because when public trust in the justice system erodes, the very fabric of our democracy is weakened.

With the introduction of Bill C-14, the bail and sentencing reform act, we strengthen this fabric. The bill sets out a clear, responsible path forward, one that protects public safety and upholds the rights enshrined in the charter. The purpose of our bail law is straightforward. It is to ensure that individuals awaiting trial are managed in a way that reduces risk, that supports accountability and that maintains the presumption of innocence.

Let me be clear. The conversation about safety is not theoretical. It is not happening in law school lecture halls or legal symposiums. It is happening in living rooms, in small businesses and in community safety meetings. In Mississauga—Malton, I have heard from families, from workers and from local leaders who see the consequences of repeat violent offending and organized crime first-hand. That is why our response, guided by experts throughout the justice system, introduces stronger and smarter tools for courts to assess risk and impose meaningful conditions.

Let me be clear. We do not abandon restraint. We honour it, but restraint cannot mean complacency. Restraint cannot mean turning a blind eye. Restraint cannot come at the expense of public safety.

We know the stakes. We are not debating abstract principles. We are debating whether a survivor of violence feels safe coming forward, whether a neighbourhood struggling with auto theft sees justice done and whether families feel secure walking home at night, knowing that dangerous repeat offenders are not slipping through the cracks. This legislation recognizes the urgency of that reality.

Firstly, we are expanding the reverse onus provision so that individuals charged with some of the most serious offences, from human trafficking to violent extortion and organized crime-related auto theft, must demonstrate why they should be released. That is a balanced approach, one that puts public safety first while safeguarding constitutional rights.

Secondly, we strengthen bail conditions, ensuring that courts consider real, concrete restrictions, including curfews, geographic limits and prohibitions on weapons or break-in tools.

Thirdly, we give judges more information. We extend the look-back period for prior convictions from five to 10 years, because courts should see the full pattern of behaviour and not just a fragment of it.

We also reinforce the critical principle that Canadians have been championing: that victims and communities deserve to feel safe. Let me say this clearly, because the stakes demand clarity. These re-

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forms are not about abandoning the presumption of innocence. These changes are not designed to punish those who pose no risk at all. They are about ensuring that when someone poses a demonstrable risk, such as a repeat violent offender, a member of a criminal organization or an individual with a pattern of dangerous conduct, our justice system has the tools to respond firmly and responsibly. That balance is a cornerstone of a democratic society where, by protecting rights, we protect people.

Bill C-14 speaks to the kind of country we want to be in, a country where our justice system is not feared but trusted. In my riding, many people work late hours in logistics, transportation, airport services and hospitality. Many are newcomers who walk home at night alone or who rely on public transit at unconventional hours. These are the people who stand to benefit the most from a justice system that takes repeat violent offenders seriously. These are the people to whom I am accountable when I stand in the chamber. Our laws must evolve to respond to the challenges that we face right now.

● (1600)

We must hold close to something else: Justice cannot simply be punitive, because justice without hope is not justice, accountability without rehabilitation is not progress, and punishment without possibility leads to dangerous cycles that we have seen before. We must hold dear the belief that we can make ourselves into better people even after we have wronged, and in fact especially after we have wronged. The justice system should be a part of that rehabilitation.

We need to make sure that the policies we bring forward work in criminal law terms, that they have a positive effect on recidivism and that we are not simply punishing people who should be helped through other channels. We have to keep in mind that in sentencing less-serious crimes, imprisonment is often ineffective and unduly punitive, and leads people down a path from which they may not return.

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We must remain a country that is vigilant about equity. We shamefully know that indigenous, Black and marginalized Canadians are disproportionately represented in the criminal justice system. That is why the implementation of the bill would be accompanied by clear data, careful oversight and continued collaboration with provinces and territories, because safety and fairness are not opposing forces; they are dual pillars of a society committed to justice.

The debate on bail reform is not simply about legislation; it is about the protection of Canadians, the strength of our democracy and the trust people place in their justice system every single day. Our government's reforms strike the right balance: firm where firmness is required, fair where fairness is essential, and grounded in the belief that public safety is inseparable from justice.

I urge all members of the House to support the legislation, stand for safer communities and stand for a justice system worthy of the people we serve, not for political gain but for the families, workers and small business owners in their riding and in all ridings across this country who simply want to feel safe in the place they call home.

• (1605)

**Lisa Hepfner (Hamilton Mountain, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my friend's speech was very eloquent. I know that he has a background in law, and I think a lot of parts of his speech were particularly poignant. He mentioned the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and I know that some of the things the Conservatives accused the Liberals of doing were actually overturned by the Supreme Court because they were found to be unconstitutional because they lead to some of the things that he said in his speech about the injustices in our justice system.

Does the member believe that Canadians want us to uphold the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, or should we just use the notwithstanding clause every time there is a political uproar about something?

**Iqwinder Gaheer:** Mr. Speaker, I think Canadians hold the Charter of Rights and Freedoms very dear in their hearts. During the election and during periods when the Leader of the Opposition campaigns, he has consistently referred to the "three strikes and you're out" rule. That law would be unconstitutional from the very foundation of where it comes from. It is not the type of law and society Canadians want. They want laws that work synchronously with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

**Ellis Ross (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I agree that it was a very eloquent speech, but the Liberals put a lot of focus on the Charter of Rights, and we have not yet heard one comment about the victims nor the charter rights of the victims.

When we talk about situations that hit home, such as when a repeat offender who molests a 12-year-old boy is released on bail and then sexually assaults a three-year-old girl who has to go to the hospital, and the news is full of these stories, does the member still agree that the Charter of Rights rises above the three-year-old victim's rights or her well-being, or those of the 12-year-old boy who was molested?

**Iqwinder Gaheer:** Mr. Speaker, I think the question is unfounded, because if my colleague were to listen to my speech and actual-

ly read the bill, he would know that we would be strengthening bail laws so bail would be harder to get in a case exactly like the one the member mentioned. If he supports the rights of victims, and the victims whom I have spoken to support the bill, I hope my colleagues from the other side can get on board as well.

[*Translation*]

**Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, judges lose a lot of independence with this bill. For instance, it imposes pretrial detention for a range of crimes that do not necessarily pose a threat to the public, such as car theft. Just because someone is accused of car theft does not necessarily mean that they are guilty or that they pose a threat to the public.

The Bloc Québécois is not opposed to all reverse onus provisions, like in cases of domestic violence for example, but I would like to hear a little more from my colleague on this subject.

[*English*]

**Iqwinder Gaheer:** Mr. Speaker, the ultimate responsibility for deciding bail and for deciding what the sentence eventually will be would always lie with the judge; the judge would have that latitude to play with.

When we talk about the reverse onus brought in specifically for auto theft, it is violent auto theft for which the reverse onus would be activated. When we are talking about just auto theft, the principles of justice would be maintained, and bail is actually guaranteed by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, so that principle would always be applied.

**Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, we keep referring to the charter, and as somebody who actually thinks Bill C-14 is important because we do need bail reform, I think we need to reflect on the principles of our entire body of law, from the Commonwealth through to Canada. It starts with Blackstone's principle from 1760, which is a hard one to hear right now, but it is foundational. The principle is that it is better that nine guilty men go free than that one innocent man be imprisoned.

These are tough choices, and it is not just about the charter.

• (1610)

**Iqwinder Gaheer:** Mr. Speaker, we know that Canadian law and the Constitution of Canada are a living tree, so I think it makes sense to look at other jurisdictions and their laws. When we look at the charter, we see that it will always apply to legislation we bring forward, so I suggest that all colleagues support the bill.

**Kurt Holman (London—Fanshawe, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am thankful for the opportunity to rise today to speak to Bill C-14 on behalf of the people of London—Fanshawe.

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Every week when I speak with residents across my riding, I hear concerns about how crime is affecting their daily life. People tell me that they no longer feel the same comfort and predictability they once felt in their own neighbourhood. They talk about rising incidents of crime in their community and about a justice system that feels too quick to release the same offenders again and again. People ask why the consequences for serious and repeat violent crimes seem weaker than ever.

These concerns are felt especially in the east end of London, in the community I represent. However, it is no longer just an east London problem. In recent weeks, I have attended town hall meetings alongside colleagues in nearby communities, and I am hearing the same stories and frustrations all around London and beyond. People everywhere are dealing with the same patterns, the same risks and the same reality: Repeat offenders are being pushed through a system that releases them by default.

When we look at Canada-wide data, we see that these concerns reflect a national trend that has been growing for years. Across Canada, we have seen the consequences of a system that defaults to release. We have seen heartbreaking cases where individuals with a long history of violence were released, only to commit another serious offence days or even hours later. Families across the country have endured tragedies that should never have happened.

Community groups, victims' advocates and frontline workers have pleaded for change because they see first-hand what happens when warnings are ignored. These voices deserve to be heard. They deserve a justice system that supports them instead of leaving them to pick up the pieces.

For nearly a decade, Canada's bail and sentencing laws have been shaped by Liberal Bill C-75 and Bill C-5. These bills weakened deterrence, reduced meaningful consequences for serious crimes and told judges to prioritize release. They created a system that made it easier for repeat violent offenders to walk free. Police services across the country have been dealing with the consequences ever since.

When I speak with frontline officers, they describe the same pattern: a number of prolific offenders cycling through the system without meaningful consequences. Officers tell me about the frustration of seeing the same individuals arrested on a Monday, released on the Tuesday and back in custody by the end of the week for another violent offence. This is not a theoretical problem; it is a day-to-day reality for the people tasked with keeping our communities safe, and they are asking Parliament to finally give them a system that works.

In London, the effects are clear. Communities that once felt predictable and safe now report rising incidents of property damage, violent behaviour and threatening encounters. Residents describe feeling uneasy on evening walks that used to feel routine. Families talk about being more cautious about where their children go after school. People who finish work late tell me they feel anxious waiting for transit or walking through parking lots. Neighbours who once left their doors unlocked now obsessively check them throughout the day.

These experiences are real, and they weigh heavily on people who simply want to feel safe in their own community. London's chief of police has spoken clearly about this. He has said that the current system is broken and that violent repeat crime is a symptom of a much larger problem in our justice system. He has stressed that communities are being put at risk when individuals with serious histories are released without meaningful safeguards and that Londoners are paying the price for decisions that fail to account for real patterns of violent behaviour.

The chief of police has called for urgent bail reform and tougher penalties for people who commit serious violent offences, making it clear that the status quo is failing the very people it is supposed to protect. He has insisted that it is time to move toward a jail not bail approach that reflects the reality officers and communities are facing every single day.

The warnings did not begin this year; they have been raised constantly by police chiefs, frontline officers, survivors of crime, mayors and community leaders. For 10 years, my Conservative colleagues have been raising these same concerns in the House, calling for stronger bail reform, while the Liberals ignored everyone sounding the alarm.

Now, with Bill C-14, the government is finally acknowledging that the system it created through legislation like Bill C-75 has failed. The bill would introduce a few measures that move in the right direction: It would expand some reverse onus rules, add new aggravating factors and make limited adjustments to sentencing.

● (1615)

Police services appreciate any help they can get, but these steps alone do not solve the underlying problems. The core issues remain untouched. Bill C-14 does not repeal the principle of restraint introduced in Bill C-75. That principle directs judges that if they choose to release someone, they must impose the least strict conditions possible. The instruction sits at the heart of the entire catch-and-release system. It remains embedded in the culture of bail decisions across Canada, and it continues to shape outcomes in a way that leaves communities exposed to unnecessary risk.

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Bill C-14 says restraint does not guarantee release, but it leaves the same framework in place. It keeps public safety as an afterthought, rather than the starting point. It does not create a true presumption of detention for violent or repeat offenders. It does not restore mandatory minimum sentences for serious violent crimes. It does not require judges to treat a long record of violence as the serious risk it is. It does not address the concerns raised by police services, including those raised in London, that the system continues to function as an open door for offenders who pose real danger.

This is exactly why Conservatives have put forward a practical solution through our jail, not bail plan, a plan built to close that open door and put public safety back at the centre of bail decisions. Under this plan, violent offenders face a presumption of detention instead of release. People who reportedly break conditions do not get an endless sequence of chances. Serious crimes like sexual offences, robbery, human trafficking, kidnapping, arson and major firearms offences cannot be handled through conditional sentences or house arrest; judges must consider full criminal history every time. People with serious criminal records cannot act as guarantors, non-residents who may flee must surrender passports, and consequences for breaking bail conditions must be automatic.

These reforms reflect what people expect from a justice system that protects them. They line up with what Londoners tell me they want, they match what police officers across the country say they need, and they reflect a simple principle: Safety must come first.

Conservatives will support Bill C-14 at second reading because it moves in the right direction, but we will work to make it stronger. We will push to repeal the principle of restraint. We will push to restore public safety as the main consideration. We will push to bring back mandatory minimums for serious violent crimes. We will push to expand ineligibility for house arrest. We will push to create a real presumption of detention for repeat violent offenders. We will push to ensure that judges must consider full criminal histories and outstanding charges.

People in London—Fanshawe want to feel safe. They want to know that violent repeat offenders will not be released without meaningful safeguards. They want a justice system that protects them, supports victims and holds dangerous individuals accountable. Bill C-14 does not go far enough, but we will work to strengthen that. We will work to rebuild safety and trust in our communities. We will stand up for victims, families and every person who deserves to feel safe in the place they call home.

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is concerning when we hear members of the Conservative Party talk as if they genuinely want to see bail reform, and then, when they have the opportunity to stand up and vote for it, to actually allow bail reform to take place in Canada, they back away. They are more concerned about raising money for their political party. They are more concerned about raising the issue and just having talking points than they are in regard to actions.

Will the member who just spoke make a commitment that he will do his very best at pushing the Conservative caucus to allow bail reform legislation to pass through the system before the end of the year?

• (1620)

**Kurt Holman:** Mr. Speaker, I feel personally offended with regard to making this a partisan issue. Canadian safety is what is being discussed here, especially with regard to the justice system. What I want to add, though, is that Bill C-14 does not go far enough, but it has support, because London—Fanshawe cannot afford more delays while Parliament debates the perfect solution. I am supporting Bill C-14 at second reading because people like me are asking for change right now, but supporting a bill to move forward does not mean pretending it fixes the core problems created by Bill C-75 and Bill C-5. It simply means I want the bill to reach committee, where it can be strengthened. Londoners want real safety, not half measures, and I will be pushing for real improvements.

To add to that, Bill C-14 expands reverse onus for violent offences. Expanding reverse onus is better than doing nothing—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** Questions and comments, the hon. member for Cloverdale—Langley City.

**Tamara Jansen (Cloverdale—Langley City, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I know the Surrey Police Board recently sent a letter to the Minister of Public Safety, begging for meetings with the federal government.

Does my colleague think that if the Liberals had supported our jail, not bail motion, we could have been much further ahead on protecting citizens today?

**Kurt Holman:** Mr. Speaker, yes, I do agree that with the Conservatives' proposal, we would have gotten a lot further dealing with the issues at hand, which are courtesy of the Liberals' Bill C-75 and Bill C-5.

I also want to expand on what I was discussing earlier. Bill C-14 would expand reverse onus for violent offences. Expanding reverse onus is better than doing nothing. The issue is that reverse onus still operates inside the same framework the Liberals created with Bill C-75, where release is still the normal outcome. For people with long, violent histories and repeated breaches, the starting point should be public safety. Bill C-14 does not make that shift, and that is why Conservatives want a real presumption of detention for serious repeat violent offenders.

[Translation]

**Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, during the 44th Parliament, the Bloc Québécois introduced Bill C-392 to provide a framework for the use of the Jordan decision, which results in cases being thrown out and criminals being released on the grounds that the proceedings are taking too long.

We would like to make it impossible to use the Jordan decision for sexual offences, murder, kidnapping, crimes involving firearms, or terrorism. I would like my colleague's thoughts on that.

[English]

**Kurt Holman:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to apologize to the member opposite; I am not familiar with the Jordan bill, and I was not here during the 44th Parliament.

Regarding Bill C-14, I do want to mention that police chiefs and stakeholders were consulted widely, but these consultations are not the same as action. Police chiefs have been calling for real bail reform for years. Communities have been saying the same thing. The government is only now agreeing that Bill C-75 created serious problems. Bill C-14 picks up a few pieces, but it does not address the core issue. The principle of restraint is still there, but an automatic release is still the culture. Listening means action and acting on time, not years later.

**Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance and National Revenue and to the Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is great to rise today to speak on the bail and sentencing reform legislation.

It is clear that every Canadian deserves to feel safe and secure in their community, yet too often people tell me that their sense of security has been shaken, shaken by the headlines they see, but also by repeat violent offenders in their communities who have them worried whether the laws are keeping up with today's realities.

Public safety, we all can agree, is a foundation of trust in every community. It is a trust between citizens, between citizens and their government, between citizens and a system that is supposed to uphold justice. It allows our communities to thrive, businesses to grow, families to live without fear and children to grow up in safe neighbourhoods.

That is why I am proud to support Bill C-14, the bail and sentencing reform act. The bill takes concrete steps toward building that trust and ensuring that the law protects everyone it is meant to serve. It gives law enforcement officers the tools they need and have been asking for.

### *Government Orders*

As the member of Parliament for Whitby, I have the privilege of meeting residents from every walk of life: families walking their children to school, small business owners opening their doors every day, educators shaping our future and first responders keeping us all safe. Without fail, they share a common expectation, which is to live in a community where they feel safe and can rely on our justice system, not just on paper, but in practice. Safety is essential for a healthy community, and Canadians deserve to know that the law will protect them and their loved ones.

Public safety is not just a commitment I have as an elected representative; it is also personal to me. My father served with the Peel Regional Police for three decades, serving and protecting our community, the one I grew up in. From him I learned that keeping people safe requires courage and commitment. It requires a strong sense of duty, but also a thick skin and, yes, compassion, especially for those impacted by crime.

I have vivid memories of growing up as a young boy and my dad's pager going off in the middle of the night, because he was a homicide detective for much of his career. He would put a bullet-proof vest on and run out the door to be the first on the scene to apprehend violent offenders. Many violent offenders in our community were brought to justice by the work that my father did over three decades. My dad was and remains my hero. If he is listening today, I hope he knows how much I appreciate his long and distinguished career in law enforcement and just how much I have learned from him over the years. He was dedicated to enforcing the law, and in many ways, I followed in his footsteps. We joke about it, but by improving laws today, hopefully I am making him proud.

Bill C-14 is one such effort. I have confirmed with my father, who I know supports this bill, that these legislative efforts we are here to debate today are pursuing a path that takes significant steps in the right direction.

I also want to extend my heartfelt thanks to the officers of the Durham Regional Police Service, the men and women who patrol our streets, respond to emergencies, investigate serious crimes and comfort families in the aftermath of tragedy. Their courage is what holds the fabric of our community's safety together, and we appreciate their work wholeheartedly and thank them for that work every day.

### *Government Orders*

In September, I had the opportunity to meet with our police chief, Peter Moreira, and his leadership team to discuss growing challenges in our community, such as repeat offenders, auto theft, organized crime, human trafficking, hate-motivated violence and the persistent social challenges at the intersection of poverty, homelessness, and mental health and addictions in our region. When those charged with protecting our communities tell us this bill matters, I believe we should listen. Effective public safety demands coordination, investment and the right tools for law enforcement. Canadians want a justice system that prioritizes safety and accountability, and that is exactly what Bill C-14 delivers.

Earlier this year, I hosted a public safety round table in my community and was happy to have the Minister of Public Safety join us. Last week, I did a virtual town hall on this legislation in my community with our Minister of Justice and Attorney General. We engaged directly with law enforcement, service providers, victim service organizations and residents, all of whom urged us to pass this legislation and to continue moving forward, and many of whom urged us to put aside any partisan politics. I would urge members opposite to put aside the delay tactics here and get this bill to committee.

• (1625)

Bill C-14 answers that call by strengthening bail for serious offenders, expanding the reverse onus provisions for repeat violent crime and ensuring courts put the safety of victims and communities first. It answers the call of those who have been asking us to make these reforms. These reforms reflect what Canadians have asked for and would make a real, measurable difference in preventing harm and restoring confidence in our justice system.

With over 80 targeted amendments, including changes to the Criminal Code, the Youth Criminal Justice Act and the National Defence Act, this bill aims to enhance the effectiveness of the justice system by clarifying processes and sentencing standards. New sentencing measures under Bill C-14 include protections against crimes targeting first responders, penalties for organized retail theft and safeguarding critical infrastructure. The bill would also mandate consecutive sentences for repeat violent crimes, remove house arrest as an option for serious sexual crimes and reinstate mandatory driving bans for offences causing death or physical harm. These are real, responsible changes that would protect people and help restore faith in our justice system.

This is what accountability and community protection and safety looks like in action. Justice must serve everyone, especially victims. The bill matters to people in my community, such as Kimberley Black, who was violently attacked while jogging in Whitby. Miraculously, she survived, but she is still recovering from the trauma of that attack. An 83-year-old woman, Eleanor Doney, was fatally attacked in her own front yard by a 14-year-old. Stories like these are the kinds that tear at the fabric of society and leave lasting negative impressions on people throughout the community. Bill C-14 matters to the victims of crime and is really a victim-centred approach to justice system reform.

I also want to say that police associations welcome Bill C-14 as a necessary step. They highlight that victims, officers and communities deserve safety, knowing that violent offenders will not continue

to harm neighbourhoods. They have advocated for exactly the kind of measures this bill contains.

For example, the Durham Regional Police Association says it is “optimistic” with the introduction of Bill C-14. It also says this is “a much needed step forward in our criminal justice system.” It also said, “many of these recommendations are reflected in the legislation”.

Those changes include consecutive sentence options for repeat violent offenders, restrictions on the use of conditional sentences, amendments to the principle of restraint, expanding the tertiary grounds for detention to include the number or seriousness of outstanding charges, expanding reverse onus provisions for violent repeat offences, empowering police to identify young people in the most serious and urgent circumstances and requiring courts to consider that a victim was a first responder in the line of duty as an aggravating factor at sentencing.

That is from the local police association in my riding, and again, the police association continually reminds me, and it is right, that it represents the rank and file. They are the beat cops who are on the ground in community and not necessarily always reflecting the leadership, such as the chief and superintendents, etc. Sometimes they have differences of perspective, and that is real.

What is remarkable in this case is that police associations and the police chief associations agree that this bail and sentencing reform act is taking meaningful steps forward. Keep in mind, the association also urges us, in its statement, to respect the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, including the provisions to strengthen bail conditions and prioritize public safety while ensuring those posing the greatest risk to communities remain in custody.

In short, we have lots of support for this bill. Bills can always be improved through the parliamentary process. I never discount the fact that lively, good-faith debate in committee can surface issues and find ways to strengthen bills. To the members opposite who like to bring up what I would call excuses for not voting this bill through to committee, I say let us get this bill to committee, let us strengthen it if it needs to be strengthened and let us continue to put community safety first and ensure we give law enforcement and our justice system the resources and tools they have been asking for to ensure we can really keep our communities safe.

*Government Orders*

• (1630)

**Tako Van Popta (Langley Township—Fraser Heights, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I think there is probably broad agreement in the House that we need bail reform for serious, repeat violent crime.

I am happy that Bill C-14 is taking a step in the right direction, but my question today is about repeat non-violent crime, the property crime that is plaguing our downtown cores. I have some statistics from the Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association. For property damage, there have been 143 calls. For theft of autos, there have been 357 calls, and for open drug use, there have been 4,960 calls.

People are just coming out and being arrested. Later in the day, they are released. The next day, they are repeating these crimes again. They are not violent, but they are a nuisance and a plague to our cities.

• (1635)

**Ryan Turnbull:** Mr. Speaker, I agree with the member opposite that some of the things he points to are real issues.

While everything is not addressed in this one bill, it does have a specific focus on bail and sentencing reforms to address what Conservatives have said, over and over again, is a system that does not meet the right balance in ensuring communities are safe and people are held without bail in cases where it can be established that they are a threat to public safety. The issue of repeat violent offenders is what this bail and sentencing reform act is focused on.

Are you saying, by asking that question, that we should not move forward with the most egregious violent offenders and ensuring that our bail system is stronger because the bill does not deal with petty theft in our communities? That seems absurd to me.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** Members should address comments through the Chair.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Bourassa.

[*Translation*]

**Abdelhaq Sari (Bourassa, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague very much for his intervention and to congratulate him. I would also like to congratulate his father for his contribution to society.

Since my colleague had limited speaking time, could he now explain how this bill could make it easier to collaborate with municipal and regional authorities and reduce crime committed by potentially very dangerous individuals on the streets?

[*English*]

**Ryan Turnbull:** Mr. Speaker, in particular, the reverse onus on serious violent offences that this bill includes is really significant. Obviously, it reverses the onus such that the offenders and their counsel are going to have to prove that they are not a risk to society, rather than bail being sort of the default when a repeat offender is being considered for bail.

Putting those reverse onuses in place is going to significantly strengthen the ability for our justice system to hold those individuals without bail, especially and only when those individuals are up on charges that demonstrate a clear history of repeat violent crime.

**Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member's father's service. However, the member across the way was a part of the previous Trudeau government that brought in Bill C-5 and Bill C-75, which caused all the problems that it is trying to unwind with Bill C-14.

I just do not understand why, if you are having to fix it now, you brought in Bill C-5 and Bill C-75 in the first place.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** Again, members should address comments through the Chair.

The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance.

**Ryan Turnbull:** Mr. Speaker, obviously, the government is committed to addressing public safety issues and ensuring that repeat violent offenders, where it makes sense, do not get out on bail and have tougher sentences. I think we have always maintained that. I know the members opposite like to put forward proposals and legislation that would get struck down by the Supreme Court and be deemed unconstitutional or unaligned with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

We are looking to strike the right balance. When we see our justice system not striking the right balance between the liberties that Canadians enjoy and the consequences for people who choose to break the law, we are zeroing in and addressing those issues.

We have consulted all across the country. We are very clearly doing the right things in this bill because mayors, ministers of justice at the provincial level and all of the police associations agree with us.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

## MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** I have the honour to inform the House that a message has been received from the Senate informing this House that the Senate has passed the following bill, to which the concurrence of the House is desired: Bill S-201, an act respecting a national framework on sickle cell disease.

*Government Orders*

[English]

It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Regina—Lewvan, the Economy; the hon. member for Algonquin—Renfrew—Pembroke, Carbon Pricing; the hon. member for Riding Mountain, Mental Health and Addictions.

\* \* \*

● (1640)

[Translation]

**BAIL AND SENTENCING REFORM ACT**

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-14, An Act to amend the Criminal Code, the Youth Criminal Justice Act and the National Defence Act (bail and sentencing), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about Bill C-14 on the issue of bail and justice system reform more broadly, which is something that the Standing Committee on the Status of Women is currently studying. I proposed that the committee study the use of section 810 of the Criminal Code of Canada to see whether it is appropriate in terms of ensuring the safety of women who are victims of domestic violence, in particular. Together with the Conservatives, we also wanted to look at bail and other aspects of the justice system to see whether it adequately meets the needs of women who are victims of domestic violence.

I remember my female Liberal colleagues telling me there was no need to do this study because a bill was on its way that would deal with violence against women. I expressed reservations because I saw no reason not to study the justice system concurrently at the Standing Committee on the Status of Women, focusing specifically on women's lack of confidence. In too many cases, women do not report their attackers because they have lost faith in the system. I said that we could go ahead with the study and then look at the bill. Now I realize that what I am going to talk about today are the reservations that Bloc Québécois members will express in committee when we have the opportunity, we hope, to take a somewhat closer look at this bill. That was my introduction.

First, let us consider the broader context. The Liberal government is introducing Bill C-14 to make it harder to get bail. The bill is a political response to high-profile cases involving violent repeat offenders, including certain inmates released in Manitoba. As we know, there are even places in Canada where domestic violence against women is said to have reached epidemic proportions. This is a serious issue. We acknowledge it. We know that the Conservatives are pushing for an even tougher approach, particularly with Bill C-242. They often take a populist, "three strikes and you're out" approach. Would that necessarily be helpful? We are not so sure.

What we are seeing right now is that the system is already under pressure. Here are some statistics: In 2022-23, 72.56% of people in custody in Canada were awaiting trial. That was an all-time high. In 2019 and 2020, it was 64.89%. That represents an increase of almost 8% in three years. In addition, only 26.51% remained in custody following a conviction. This suggests that the problem is not

bail, or at least, that remains to be determined. Rather, the problem is a slow-moving system and a lack of resources.

Bill C-14 specifies that the principle of restraint "does not require the accused to be released". That is in clause 14, but it goes against the presumption of innocence and the St-Cloud, Antic and Zora decisions, which define release as the rule and detention as the exception. We in the Bloc Québécois are concerned about the decline in judicial independence and judges having less discretionary power. We want to study that aspect in committee.

There is also an increase in the number of instances where the burden of proof is reversed. Bill C-14 increases the number of situations where the accused must prove that they can be released. These include motor vehicle theft, extortion and breaking and entering a dwelling-house. Human trafficking offences are also being added. I would be interested in looking into this a little more, because right now, the All Party Parliamentary Group to End Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking, a non-partisan group that I am part of and that is studying this issue, is seeing statistics that show a worrying increase. Could this bill address a growing problem? We will have to see. There are also offences involving choking, suffocation and strangulation during an assault. Several victims have told us about these horrors. This seems to be a recurring theme in assault cases. In committee, we heard some rather disturbing testimony from victims. There is also a risk of pretrial detention turning into automatic detention in a large number of cases. We therefore need to study this further.

● (1645)

The Bloc Québécois supports the bill, but I would say we have concerns. We want to vote to send the bill to committee, but, as I said, we have many reservations. The main thing we want to do is protect victims at all costs without undermining the presumption of innocence. It is about finding a balance.

I would like to turn to another subject and talk about the real causes of crime.

Experts have repeatedly said that the housing crisis is throwing a wrench in the works. There is clearly a compelling connection. When a woman cannot find housing, she will not leave the cycle of domestic violence and poverty because she does not want to end up on the street. Addictions are also exacerbating this crisis. Because federal health transfers are lacking, we cannot seriously address this issue, which should be seen as a public health issue.

Insufficient psychosocial services is also among the causes. We use a different model in Quebec, where health and public services are combined. As I often say in committee, Quebec's community groups benefit from the system we set up, rather than relying exclusively on a hospital-centred approach. At least, that is our hope. Our system of community groups and psychosocial services are an integral part of what a victim care pathway should provide.

Extreme poverty also drives people to commit crime. Once again, I see a connection with the fact that it keeps women in a cycle of domestic violence. Last Friday, I took part in a women's finance day organized back home, in Granby. I heard powerful accounts from women who are now successful, but were once victims of violence, unable to escape their situation because they were trapped in a cycle of poverty. Once they decided to empower themselves economically, to lift themselves out of poverty, find a job and develop their personal wealth, they managed to break free from the cycle of violence.

Where does the responsibility lie? The federal government is amending the Criminal Code, but justice is administered by Quebec and the provinces, which lack funding. This is often overlooked, but it is another example of a fiscal imbalance that is making it hard to hire judges. As we have seen, the federal government is dragging its feet on appointing them. It is not great at judicial appointments. Sometimes its appointments even flout the government's own rules. The fiscal imbalance also undermines reasonable wait times and the availability of correctional and clinical services.

Some aspects of Bill C-14 are problematic, including for example the tacit withdrawal of the ladder principle. There are too many obligations imposed on judges, which creates a risk of automatic justice. Mandatory consecutive sentences can also lead to injustice. There is a problematic provision in the Youth Criminal Justice Act. Specifically, there is some confusion regarding how time served is calculated. This will have to be studied in committee. We must not throw the baby out with the bathwater. We would be curious to see how this could be improved.

Ultimately, the Bloc Québécois is proposing a real fight against organized crime, which includes a registry of criminal organizations. That is important. We also want to ban these criminal groups from displaying their emblems, which is also important. We want a reverse onus for the seizure of the proceeds of crime. We want it to be illegal for gangs to recruit young people, because that is a serious problem in the Montreal area.

We are also proposing to regulate the use of the Jordan decision for the most serious crimes. That was mentioned in committee. It is not right that, because of delays, perpetrators of domestic violence against women get away with it. This should be regulated, at least for certain crimes such as sexual assault. We are also proposing that the religious exemption for hate speech be removed.

Finally, Bill C-14 is filled with good intentions, but it also includes several risks. The bill could threaten the presumption of innocence, increase the number of innocent people being detained and undermine confidence in the justice system. My colleague from Rivière-du-Nord, who is the justice critic, could explain this even better than I can. The Bloc Québécois wants to strengthen security without sacrificing fundamental rights.

### *Government Orders*

I will close my speech by providing a few interesting statistics.

In Quebec, in 2022, women accounted for 89% of victims of sexual assault reported by the police, according to the Institut national de santé publique du Québec, or INSQ. Reported cases of women victims of sexual assault is 157.5 incidents per 100,000 women, compared to 19 incidents per 100,000 men. In Quebec, one in four women, or 25%, aged 15 and older reported having been sexually assaulted by someone other than an intimate partner. The rate for men is approximately 6%. In Quebec, in 2021, women accounted for 76.4% of victims of domestic violence, or offences committed by an intimate partner. Also in 2021, individuals aged 25 to 39 accounted for 48.2% of victims of offences committed in an intimate context. The rate was 725.3 per 100,000 among people aged 25 to 29.

• (1650)

I also have a relevant example from the news in Quebec. In March 2025, the Regroupement des maisons pour femmes victimes de violence conjugale, a coalition of women's shelters, issued a press release calling on the government to address the inadequacy of legislative measures and resources to protect women who are victims of violence.

With that, I will now answer my colleagues' questions.

**Abdelhaq Sari (Bourassa, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague very much for her speech. Before I ask my question, I would like her to know that I agree with several points she raised. In my experience with the Montreal police force and as vice-chair of Montreal's public safety commission, I have been confronted with these realities. I have witnessed a surge in violence, particularly among couples.

We are talking about financial aid, the appointment of judges, and so on. I agree on those points. Could my colleague also talk about the assistance we can offer in terms of prevention? That would be very important. What kind of help can we offer in terms of prevention, whether in Quebec or elsewhere in Canada?

**Andréanne Larouche:** Mr. Speaker, just this morning, on the radio, they were talking about the new Institut Écho initiative. I will try to learn more about it. This initiative, which was launched by the organization Regroupement des maisons pour femmes victimes de violence conjugale, is tackling the issue of housing and includes a prevention component, I believe, that could address these concerns.

In committee, we are often reminded that we need to take a holistic approach to the problem. We cannot think that simply addressing the issue of the justice system will solve everything. We also need to be proactive by working on prevention. In fact, our next study will focus on the rise of the anti-feminist movement.

*Government Orders**[English]*

**Tako Van Popta (Langley Township—Fraser Heights, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we hear a lot about the Liberal government's introducing the bill as a workaround for its old bill, Bill C-75, which introduced the principle of restraint. Therefore, why not just get rid of the principle of restraint as introduced by Bill C-75, rather than doing these awkward workarounds, which are likely not to be as effective as they could be?

*[Translation]*

**Andréanne Larouche:** Mr. Speaker, I will give my colleague a straightforward answer.

In committee, the Conservatives raised the issue of Bill C-75. At the moment, there is no consensus on the principle of restraint, either among the groups consulted or among the justice system stakeholders who testified before the committee. That is the answer I can give him.

**Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette—Manawan, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for Shefford and congratulate her on her excellent speech. I would like her to tell us more about what our party, the Bloc Québécois, has put forward. I would also like her to talk about the concerns she raised in her speech in relation to the Jordan decision.

**Andréanne Larouche:** Mr. Speaker, during the previous Parliament, the Bloc Québécois introduced a bill that sought to provide a framework for the Jordan decision. That was in response to requests from a lot of victims and groups of women who were victims of intimate partner violence. These women opposed the fact that the Jordan decision enabled some attackers to avoid going to trial.

The Jordan decision exists, but we would like to have a framework for it, at least for some specific crimes. That is what victims want. During the previous Parliament, the committee heard from victims while it was studying the Bloc Québécois bill to codify the framework for the Jordan decision. Many groups and many victims supported that idea and continue to support it.

We will see if we can raise this very important issue once again in this Parliament.

*[English]*

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the member can just provide her thoughts in regard to recognizing that the issue of bail reform, or justice in general, is a shared responsibility. Municipalities, provinces and the federal government all have a role to play, and we need to take that into consideration when it goes to committee also.

*[Translation]*

**Andréanne Larouche:** Mr. Speaker, it is true that I went over that point too quickly. My colleague's question gives me an opportunity to conclude my speech by reiterating the importance of this aspect and highlighting the imbalance it creates. It is all well and good for us to pass laws here at the federal level, but then we transfer the management of criminal issues to the provinces and municipalities.

Quebec is responsible for administering justice and addressing homelessness, which involves expenses and security issues for municipalities. They find themselves having to tackle these challenges head-on. That is why we have to be careful about the legislation we pass here, because inevitably, we end up putting these responsibilities on the provinces, Quebec and the municipalities.

● (1655)

*[English]*

**Kerry Diotte (Edmonton Griesbach, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise today to speak about public safety in Canada or, more accurately, the lack of public safety in our country under the Liberal government.

Bill C-14 is another classic miss by the Liberals. Right now, we should be strengthening Canada's bail laws and protecting law-abiding citizens. We should be making the public safer and keeping criminals in jail. We should be protecting victims from dangerous offenders and keeping murderers behind bars where they belong.

Instead, the Liberals have put forward a bill that does not come close to the changes we need to fix Canada's justice system. We need to be tough on crime. We need to keep criminals in jail. We especially need to keep repeat violent offenders behind bars. We should be increasing penalties for repeat violent criminals, including people who commit sexual assault.

This is about public safety. It is just common sense. Conservatives have been pointing this out for years.

The Liberals' soft-on-crime approach to bail is simply not working. We have taken issue with their generous bail laws in the past and sentencing reforms that return criminals to the streets. Time and time again, their laws have granted criminals the freedom to keep causing chaos. These revolving-door policies allow criminals to reoffend. Unfortunately for Canadians, under the Liberals, criminals essentially have a get-out-of-jail-free card. It is a dangerous game of Monopoly.

This summer, our country was plagued by a string of high-profile violent crimes. It is heartbreaking to know that each and every one of these crimes was preventable, and each crime was a failure of our system to protect our citizens. Sadly, many of these crimes occurred in my community of Edmonton.

Just this summer, Cody Desjarlais was in jail facing 27 charges, including impaired driving, yet he got bail. He was released on July 4, and less than two weeks later, he went on a crime spree. He stole a vehicle. He then used this stolen vehicle to plow into a 59-year-old cyclist. After that, he attacked and stabbed a 40-year-old man. He now has a laundry list of charges, including attempted murder, aggravated assault, possession of stolen property, two counts of dangerous operation, driving while prohibited, breach of release order, possessing a weapon dangerous to the public, assault causing bodily harm, assault with a weapon, failing to stop after an accident and theft of a motor vehicle.

Desjarlais should never have had the chance to go out on this crime spree. He should have remained behind bars. The public should have remained safe from him. Desjarlais' crimes were severe and dangerous enough but, sadly, crimes committed by others who got out on bail have been even worse.

Here is one story of a crime that did not have to happen. It was horrendous. It is the murder of Bailey McCourt. Bailey was murdered in a parking lot by her ex-husband, James Plover. However, here is the thing: Plover had been released on bail following an assault conviction just hours before murdering Bailey.

This murder obviously should never have happened. James should have been behind bars. Just that afternoon, he had been convicted of choking someone and uttering threats. He was a dangerous offender who should have been locked up. Instead, he was out and free to cause even more harm. Our justice system had the chance to protect Bailey McCourt, but our laws failed her.

Another person who fell victim to the Liberals' weak bail laws was Marina Simard. Marina was just 18 years old, with her entire life ahead of her. Sadly, she was murdered by her 26-year-old brother, Tyrone. Guess what. He was out on bail.

● (1700)

There are so many heartbreaking examples of this happening. There are too many to share in my time today, but I also must mention Savannah Kulla. Savannah was a 29-year-old mother of four who was brutally shot and killed at a Brampton strip mall. Her killer, Anthony Deschepper, surprise, surprise, was out on bail. Following Savannah's senseless murder, one detective shared some stark comments about the crime spree with the Toronto Sun. A detective told reporters:

If you continue to release these sorts of people, events like this are going to happen. It's inevitable.... There are so many people out there like this; no community is safe. And now, because of the broken bail system, a young woman has paid with her life.

This murder was preventable. It is just a matter of keeping criminals behind bars. How hard is that?

My heart goes out to the families and loved ones of these victims. To the families of Bailey McCourt, Marina Simard and Savannah Kulla, I say I am so sorry for their loss and for the heartbreak they have endured.

Let this be a reminder to all of us. The legislation we pass in this place has real consequences. We must stand up for Canadians, protect them and keep them safe. As I have said, Bill C-14 is a missed opportunity to do just that. It is a missed opportunity to strengthen

### *Government Orders*

penalties for serious violent offences. It is a missed opportunity for the Liberals to recognize the disastrous mistakes being made. It is a missed opportunity to keep Canadians safe.

The laws in our country must change. Since 2015, violent crime is up 55%. Firearms crime is up 130%. Extortion has risen 330% across Canada. Sexual assaults are up 76%, and homicides are up 29%. A recent poll by Leger Marketing asked Canadians about public safety. Unfortunately, the results confirm what Conservatives already knew: Canadians do not feel safe. The poll found that 51% of Canadians say they are worried about general safety in their own neighbourhood and that more than half of Canadians feel that the justice system is working against the interests of citizens.

Police officers across this country know that the lax Liberal laws are not working. The Saskatoon police chief, Cam McBride, has called for urgent bail reform. He said, "There are, at any point in time, violent [offenders] in our communities that really need the support and structure of incarceration or remand".

The Police Association of Ontario has blasted Canada's bail system, warning that it is putting communities at risk. The president of the association said:

Every day, our members work tirelessly to ensure the safety and security of the communities we serve, yet violent and repeat offenders are routinely released on bail and returned to the streets.... This ongoing threat undermines public safety, erodes confidence in our justice system, and puts both police officers and innocent people at risk.

There is one good thing this bill accomplishes. It is an admission by the Liberals that their criminal justice reforms have failed. In a press release, the Liberals acknowledged this problem themselves. They noted that there has been a 41% rise in the violent crime severity index since 2014. That is outrageous.

Conservatives will always work to toughen bail laws. We must put public safety and community safety ahead of the rights of criminals. We must keep serious, dangerous offenders off our streets. My colleagues and I are calling on the government to end crime, chaos and disorder in our streets.

● (1705)

**Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that the member for Edmonton Griesbach is back in Ottawa and back in the chamber. It is good to have him back.

He alluded to some of the mistakes of the previous Trudeau government over the last 10 years with Bill C-5 and Bill C-75. We are really in the place we are now with rampant crime and problems because of those failures.

*Government Orders*

The member alluded in his speech that Bill C-14 is really one thing: an admission of a failed Liberal attempt at justice. Does he agree?

**Kerry Diotte:** Mr. Speaker, I hear it all the time in my community.

It really is terrifying and so sad that in a country like Canada, people are afraid to be out on the streets in their own neighbourhoods. As a parliamentarian, I truly believe that the first order of business for Canadians, for parliamentarians, is to keep citizens safe. That should be job one. There should be no reason that people could not walk in their own community, day or night, safely. They should not be afraid to be out and about at any time of the day or night.

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, one of the things that should be highlighted in the legislation, which I believe has a wide spectrum of support from all members, is in regard to first responders and the violence against them. It is sad when that takes place, but this legislation deals with that particular issue. I am wondering if the member could provide his thoughts on our first responders.

**Kerry Diotte:** Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, first responders are often victims of crime; because they are first to respond, they are always in danger.

I have talked to first responders personally. They feel very strongly that we need tougher laws so that they are not in danger, and that the people who are repeat violent offenders must be kept in jail so that the first responders can do their job of treating people, as they should, and not have to deal with assaults on their person.

**Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there is a problem paying attention tonight.

The Liberal member for Winnipeg North just did something very interesting. He brought up a piece of Bill C-14 that he and his colleagues could have passed already. The private member's bill brought forward by the member for Cariboo—Prince George could have been passed two weeks ago. It would have helped to protect first responders by making it an aggravating factor to harm a first responder while in the line of duty. That private member's bill was put forward by our member of Parliament, but the Liberals would not let it pass with unanimous consent.

They ask us to pass Bill C-14 to protect first responders, but that is exactly what we put forward last week and the Liberals did not allow that bill to pass. It is a bait and switch, and the Liberals do it quite often. Would my colleague agree with that?

**Kerry Diotte:** Mr. Speaker, I absolutely agree with that, and we hear it all the time. I hear it from people in my riding.

It is soft on crime, and that is what we get.

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I am wondering if the member could provide his thoughts in regard to the importance of passing the legislation through the system so that, before the end of the year, Canadians will have bail reform.

**Kerry Diotte:** Mr. Speaker, this legislation needs a lot of work, obviously.

• (1710)

**Colin Reynolds (Elmwood—Transcona, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is a great honour to rise today on behalf of my constituents in Elmwood—Transcona to talk about Bill C-14, the bail and sentencing reform act.

We have seen crime increase year after year since the Liberals passed Bill C-5 and Bill C-75. These bills broke an otherwise normal, functioning bail system and directed the courts to release accused persons at the earliest reasonable opportunity and under the least onerous conditions, otherwise known as the principle of restraint. This has led to a revolving-door criminal justice system that saw the same repeat violent offenders receiving bail nearly immediately after they were initially arrested.

Now, many years later, we have businesses closing, extortion, auto thefts and home invasions on the rise, and chaos in our streets. We hear story after story about victims who are injured or even killed by a repeat violent offender who is out on bail.

Marina Simard was stabbed to death by her brother in northern Manitoba. Tyrone Simard was out on bail on the condition that he stay away from his sister. Bailey McCourt was murdered by her ex-husband James Plover just hours after he was released on bail following an assault conviction. Savannah Kulla, a 29-year-old mother of four, was shot and killed in a Brampton strip mall while her killer was out on bail.

These are not just horror stories from a Stephen King novel. These are real people who are victims of the Liberals' soft-on-crime bail. These laws put the rights of criminals ahead of the rights of victims.

We now see the consequences of these policies every day in our streets. Violent crime is up 55%. Illegal firearms crime is up 130%. Sexual assaults are up 76%. Homicides are up 29%. Extortion is up a whopping 330%. It never used to be like this. These are unnerving statistics and they are a direct result of Liberal hug-a-thug bail laws. We cannot get numb to this reality. This should not be our new normal. The Liberals have now tabled Bill C-14 to try to fix the problem they caused. It is a bit like having the same plumber come back to fix a system they did not install properly the first time.

*Government Orders*

Bill C-14 is a start, but it falls short of what this country needs for crime legislation. It does not remove the principle of restraint that releases criminals on the least onerous conditions. It does not restore the mandatory minimum sentences that were removed through Bill C-5. It does not remove the option of house arrest for repeat offenders. It does not do enough to protect public safety by ensuring that judges are required to hold criminals to account for their actions.

We know we cannot fix this problem on our own and we want to work with all members of the House to make a positive difference in the lives of law-abiding Canadians. However, we want to ensure that any new measures that get passed by the House actually work toward fixing the problems we see in our communities.

I have heard from my neighbours and members of my community that they are concerned with the overwhelming rise in crime over the last few years. Parents are afraid to let their children walk to school. Stores are closing down due to theft, and people no longer feel comfortable leaving their doors unlocked at night.

According to a Postmedia-Leger poll, over half of Canadians say that they no longer feel safe in their neighbourhoods and that the justice system is working against their interests. This is a heartbreaking statistic. What has become of our great country when the majority of our citizens say that they do not feel safe living here? We have let fear control our justice system, and we have put the feelings and comforts of criminals ahead of the safety of law-abiding Canadians.

The reality is that we need to empower law enforcement to do their jobs rather than demonize and belittle them. Officers do their jobs to protect our communities, yet the same people they arrest in the morning end up back on the street, usually victimizing the same person, by the afternoon due to our current broken bail policies.

Let us take a local example from my community. In Winnipeg, dozens of 7-Elevens have closed due to the crime wave. Not only is it no longer profitable to operate some businesses due to theft, but the safety of employees is constantly at risk when repeat violent offenders are not held accountable for their actions. We are incentivizing bad behaviour by not punishing the perpetrators.

• (1715)

Recently, some of my Manitoba colleagues and I hosted a jail not bail town hall to meet with Winnipeggers to discuss the damaging effects of crime in our city and what can be done to stop it. During this town hall, I heard many harrowing stories. For example, Julia, who lives in Valley Gardens, the neighbourhood I grew up in, no longer feels safe going on walks alone at night.

It did not used to be this way, and it does not have to stay this way. Members of my community, who are scared to even leave their homes, are looking to all of us for leadership. We must work together to pass meaningful legislation that protects victims and punishes repeat violent offenders. To that end, Bill C-14 is on the right track to fix the Trudeau-era bail policies, but it still needs work.

It may be surprising to some, but outside of the victims, the people who struggle the most from the current disastrous bail policies

are actually the police. I recently spoke with a family friend who works for the Winnipeg Police Service, and he recounted how dangerous the job is for him now compared to in years past, how he spends days arresting the same people for committing similar crimes and victimizing the same people.

The scary truth is, more often than not, it is a small group of people committing the same crimes over and over again. In Vancouver, the same 40 people were responsible for over 6,000 crimes. That is nearly 150 crimes per person in a single year. Our society cannot function like this. Hearing from our brave police officers how demoralizing it is to arrest the same people over and over for the same crimes is heartbreaking. The reality is that we can do something about it by passing concrete bail reform legislation that reverses the disastrous policies that have burdened our communities for nearly a decade.

Bill C-14 is the government's own admission that its bail experiment has failed. We have seen a 41% rise in the violent crime severity index since 2014. This means increases in homicide, sexual assault and extortion across Canada. This has led to the marginalization of law-abiding Canadians in favour of repeat violent offenders.

The current system is broken and backwards. It is unacceptable that law-abiding Canadians are living in fear. It breaks my heart that my grandkids are not being raised in the Canada I grew up in, the Canada where we could leave our front door unlocked, walk around our neighbourhood at night without fear and spend time downtown without having to look over our shoulder. This was avoidable, and we need to give future generations the same safety guarantees we grew up with.

I want to reiterate that the bill itself replicates a lot of the asks that our party has made to the government regarding bail reform. It is on the right track. It rights the wrongs from the previous Liberal government and seeks to hold criminals accountable. However, it is not perfect, and it is unfortunate that it took this long to reach this conclusion.

When I listened to the justice minister introduce this bill, I finally felt that the government was starting to get it, that it was finally on the right track when it comes to addressing the serious bail reforms that need to be undertaken in Canada. Bill C-14 has the backing of law enforcement officers and gives them some of the mechanisms they need to do their job, but at this point they are desperate for a solution, and we are ready to work with every member in this House for the betterment of all Canadians.

*Government Orders*

However, in the spirit of collaboration and working together for the good of Canadians, I hope the government will act upon our recommendations and ensure that Bill C-14 mandates jail, not bail for repeat violent offenders, and that career criminals remain off our streets in order to keep our communities safe. The stats show that when criminals are off our streets, crime rates go down, and crime is disincentivized.

We are all human beings, and we all make mistakes. Everyone in this room believes in second chances; some of us might even have needed one, but we do not believe in 18 second chances. At a certain point, enough is enough. As lawmakers, we must replace the current status quo and the principle of restraint with the principle of public safety, and instruct judges to hold criminals accountable for their actions.

[Translation]

**Carlos Leitão (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech. I obviously agree that violence, especially gun violence, is a very serious problem in our society. I would like to hear my colleague's thoughts on the importance of effective gun control.

• (1720)

[English]

**Colin Reynolds:** Mr. Speaker, I am a licensed firearms owner myself. I am not a criminal. I think that the current firearms confiscation is money being spent in the wrong area. We are confiscating firearms from legal firearms owners, and it does not properly address illegal firearm crime.

**Corey Tochor (Saskatoon—University, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we have heard from experts, since 2015, that if we brought in Liberal bail, we would have problems in our streets. Ten years later, we have premiers from coast to coast demanding to get rid of the Liberal bail. We have heard from police associations that want the Liberal bail gone. We now have lip service from the Liberals about reforming the system.

What we really need is to go back to how it was before they were elected, before Bill C-5 and before Bill C-75. I would like to hear the member's comments on why he thinks that the government is so deaf to all the premiers and police associations that are demanding this.

**Colin Reynolds:** Mr. Speaker, I think that the Liberals are deaf to this because they do not want to face the fact that their policies of Bill C-5 and Bill C-75 have failed and that they would have to admit defeat.

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is an amazing question that I just witnessed there. At the end of the day, there is wide support for the legislation. The Prime Minister, who was just elected Prime Minister earlier this year, has brought forward substantial bail reform legislation. I think that the stakeholders who are out there and I are very pleased that it would appear that we might even see it get to the committee stage. The real issue is whether the Conservative Party will allow for Canadians to have bail reform legislation in place, passed through the system, before the end of the year. That is what—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** The hon. member for Elmwood—Transcona.

**Colin Reynolds:** Mr. Speaker, the bill needs a lot of work. It is going to depend on whether the Liberals are going to work with us on addressing the issues that we have with the bail reform.

[Translation]

**Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Jordan decision stipulates that, once a certain time limit has been exceeded, criminals who have committed murder, sexual offences, or acts of terrorism may be released on the grounds that the delay in bringing their case to trial has been unreasonable.

Would my colleague agree with us so that the Jordan decision cannot be invoked to justify the release of these individuals solely on the grounds that the proceedings have taken too long?

[English]

**Colin Reynolds:** Mr. Speaker, I believe that there is a lot of work to be done. We have many issues to tackle. I think that the Liberals need to address some financial issues with the provinces regarding court systems and prison systems.

**Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, this has been a very difficult debate, and in the brief time I have, I want to thank members for contributing to this from all sides of the House. Canadians are crying out for bail reform, but we are still crying with a certain amount of lack of knowledge. This debate needs more evidence. Now, Bill C-14 attempts to balance things and attempts to recognize that the Charter of Rights and Freedoms is fundamental, but there are some other principles here that are being, I fear, so politicized that we are losing track of a basic reality.

Bail is granted to people who have not been convicted of anything. Bail is so that people who are innocent can continue to hold down a job, be with their families and contribute to society until we have determined whether they are guilty of anything, so we must recall that our system of justice is based on the presumption of innocence.

Lawyers have studied this bill in the Canadian Bar Association. I used to be a practising lawyer, so I used to be a member, but do not hold it against me; there is a recovery program for lawyers as well. The Canadian Bar Association has looked at this and said that the effect of Bill C-14 would be that innocent people would be jailed when they place a reverse onus on someone and they have to prove why they should be allowed to be out on bail. The expression “out on bail” is used in this place as though we are talking about convicted murderers who suddenly get a free day pass.

We do need bail reform, but let us look at it with a larger lens in the time I have. The administration of justice is not purely a federal responsibility. For example, are sureties ever required to provide the money that they put down as a surety for someone who is out on bail? The answer is no. If a person is out on bail and has asked someone to provide a financial guarantee, a surety, that they will abide by bail conditions, and they then violate those bail conditions, almost never is the surety asked to provide the money they have said they would provide. This is all provincial jurisdiction.

Another really significant issue is that the provincial courts are understaffed and underfunded, and it takes so long to get people through the system to determine their guilt or their innocence that many of the jails can be overcrowded. Provincial and territorial jails are overcrowded, yet 71% of the people within provincial and territorial jails who apply for bail do not get it. Much of the debate in this place since Bill C-14 was tabled has been based on the presumption that people get bail in Canada easily, but the data does not show that.

I also want to mention that we have a real problem with the collection of that data. Federally and provincially, we have no data at all on how often a person on bail commits a crime. We have lots of anecdotal evidence, and it must not be discounted, because the conscience of a community and the pain and grief of the stories that we have been hearing may be anecdotal, but they are important and cannot be dismissed. However, making significant changes to bail reform should be based on evidence. That evidence needs to be collected. There is no standardized data collection from the federal, provincial and territorial governments on how people conduct themselves on bail. It is not collected, so we do not know.

Passing laws in this place is serious business. Passing laws regarding criminal justice that could result in more innocent people being in jail is very serious business. I do not like flying blind. I do not like knowing from the experts that we simply do not have the data to know how many of the people who receive bail and are on bail conditions honour those conditions, whether bail contributes to crime and whether we could do so much better if we funded provincial courts and funded more judges in provincial courts to make sure that the time between arrest and release is very, very brief.

• (1725)

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. There have been discussions amongst the parties, and if you seek it I believe you will find unanimous consent to put the question on Bill C-14 at second reading.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** All those opposed to the hon. member's moving the motion will please say nay.

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

(Motion agreed to)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** The question is on the motion.

[Translation]

If a member participating in person wishes that the motion be carried or carried on division, or if a member of a recognized party

### Privilege

participating in person wishes to request a recorded division, I invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

[English]

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I request that it pass on division.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** I declare the motion carried on division. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights.

(Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

\* \* \*

• (1730)

### PRIVILEGE

PARLIAMENTARY BUDGET OFFICER

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am rising to respond to the question of privilege raised on November 17 by the member for Edmonton West respecting a letter from the Parliamentary Budget Officer concerning the response from the comptroller general of Canada, which was tabled by the Speaker on November 17. I submit that the government is working in good faith to provide the Parliamentary Budget Officer with the information his office has requested in a timely manner. This is in keeping with subsection 79.4(1), which states the Parliamentary Budget Officer is entitled to free and timely access to information under the control of the government. This is not in dispute at all.

The letter from the comptroller general to the Parliamentary Budget Officer states the government will comply with and endeavour to respond to the request by early December. I would further note that the request for information by the Parliamentary Budget Officer had a due date of November 19, which is seven days after the Parliamentary Budget Officer filed notice with the Speaker, on November 13, and three days before the member raised his question of privilege.

This is not a new concept for members to understand. When the House or a committee of the House would like information from the government, government members work with opposition members to come to a compromise on or an understanding of when the information can practically be provided, and in some cases, they agree to a mechanism to provide protected information that would not otherwise be made public. In exceptional circumstances, the Speaker is called upon to mediate the request.

*Private Members' Business*

The facts before the House are clear. The Parliamentary Budget Officer requested information from the government, and the government responded that it was working on compiling the information but needed some more time to produce it. That is how this works.

The comptroller general provided a justification in her letter as to why the government would need a bit more time to do so. She said:

As you know, proposed savings from the CER are subject to parliamentary approval. Once approved, they will be communicated to all relevant parties in a timely manner in accordance with the obligation of the Employer to do so when an employee's position may be impacted. Circumventing this process by providing the information to a third party beforehand could compromise employees' trust in the Government and jeopardize the management-union relationship.... Once departments have had a chance to review decisions, update their plans where relevant, and once the Budget has received the support of Parliament, implementation, including workforce changes, will begin in a transparent and respectful manner. This will ensure that we are providing you and your office with accurate and reliable information.

The member is suggesting something that is not the case. The government wrote to the Parliamentary Budget Officer on November 10, nine days before the due date set out by the Parliamentary Budget Officer, to advise him that certain steps would be required in order to comply with the request. Moreover, the member suggested that members needed this specific information before they could vote on the ways and means motion for the budget. This is not accurate.

The motion the House had before it on Monday, November 17, was, "That this House approve in general the budgetary policy of the government." A slight delay in providing the information to the Parliamentary Budget Officer did not in any way interfere with members' ability to vote on the general ways and means motion on November 17, nor has the government stated or intimated that it will not comply with the request of the Parliamentary Budget Officer. In fact, the opposite is true. The government has stated compelling reasons for a slight delay to the Parliamentary Budget Officer to ensure that he and his office are provided with accurate and reliable information to enable him and his office to report to Parliament.

In conclusion, there are no facts before the House or any grounds to find this matter to be a *prima facie* breach of privilege.

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## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1735)

[*English*]

### CORRECTIONS AND CONDITIONAL RELEASE ACT

**Mel Arnold (Kamloops—Shuswap—Central Rockies, CPC)** moved that Bill C-221, An Act to amend the Corrections and Conditional Release Act (disclosure of information to victims), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Madam Speaker, I rise today as the member for Kamloops—Shuswap—Central Rockies, and I thank my constituents for the trust they have vested in me to represent our region, which is blessed with a rich history and endless splendour. Kamloops—Shuswap—Central Rockies would not be the great region it is if not

for the citizens who call the region home. I am honoured to be their voice and advocate here in Parliament.

Canadians invest their trust in us, and they expect and deserve a return on that investment. They look to Parliament and every member of this House and the other chamber to work collaboratively to deliver meaningful results for Canadians.

What kinds of results do Canadians want? When I speak to the good people of Kamloops—Shuswap—Central Rockies, I am told that citizens want affordability, opportunity, conservation, safety and security. For safety and security, Canadians want laws and regulations that effectively denounce and deter crimes, and Parliament has work to do in this regard.

Our fellow Canadians also tell me that they want transparency and accountability in government. When Parliament or a government entity makes a decision that directly impacts the lives of citizens, citizens appropriately expect transparency and accountability in how the decision was determined. Governments are meant to be led and administered by representatives chosen by Canadians. It is important that Canadians be provided explanations of why decisions are made and how they are made.

Transparency and accountability are core principles of our democracy, and the bill we debate today seeks to enhance the application of these essential principles, specifically for the benefit of those victimized by crime.

I am honoured to be the sponsor of Bill C-221, which contains proposals identical to those in bills introduced in previous Parliaments. The proposals in this bill were proposed in the 44th Parliament by my friend and former colleague Dr. Colin Carrie, who served as the hon. member for Oshawa for over 20 years. Dr. Carrie was inspired to champion the proposals in our bills by the tragic events and pained experiences of a constituent of his, Ms. Lisa Freeman, whose father Roland Slingerland was brutally killed in Oshawa in 1991.

Ms. Freeman's experiences were truly tragic. From the murder of her father, numerous bail procedures and the eventual release of her father's murderer, Ms. Freeman experienced years of stress, anxiety and pain, some of which was caused by her uncertainty over the status of the man who murdered her father.

We as parliamentarians must examine the experiences of victims of crime like Ms. Freeman and resolve to support legislative proposals that reduce the stress, anxiety and other burdens that victims of crime live with.

Another hon. colleague, the new member for Oshawa, worked on Dr. Carrie's bill in the last Parliament as a member of his staff and will also be speaking to Bill C-221 today. I understand she will provide more context of Ms. Freeman's experiences, which were the original inspiration for the proposals in this bill. I thank her for her contributions and for being the seconder of the bill today.

In the last Parliament, Dr. Carrie's Bill C-320 progressed to a very advanced stage in the legislative process, with unanimous support at all stages of review by both Houses. In the last Parliament, Bill C-320 passed committee review in the other place and was reported back to that chamber December 17, 2024, which was the last day the 44th Parliament was convened. When the 44th Parliament was dissolved last March, Bill C-320 died on the Order Paper, ending its path, but I have chosen to bring these proposals back because they need to be passed.

● (1740)

The bill we are examining today, Bill C-221, contains the same proposals as Bill C-320 did in the last Parliament. I hope that members of both Houses may once again support these worthy proposals and work collaboratively and unanimously, as we did in the last Parliament, to move them to completion in this 45th Parliament.

Bill C-221 is aimed at supporting victims of crime. As such, it is important to expand on what is meant when we speak of victims of crime.

This bill seeks to amend the Corrections and Conditional Release Act. That act defines a victim as follows:

an individual who has suffered physical or emotional harm, property damage or economic loss as the result of the commission of the offence;

By this definition, a victim is not just the person or persons who have directly suffered physical or emotional harm, property damage or economic loss as a result of a crime. People who suffer emotional harm are also victims.

When a criminal offence results in the taking of a life, yes, the individual whose life is taken is a victim, but the suffering mentioned in the definition of a victim in the Corrections and Conditional Release Act does not end with the one who loses their life. The suffering includes those who experience emotional harm because of criminal behaviour. They are also victims.

This bill is important because it proposes to increase a victim's understanding of corrections and conditional release. Under current federal law, victims who share their contact details with the Correctional Service of Canada or the Parole Board of Canada and who fulfill the legal definition of victim are entitled to specific information about those responsible for harming them. This information includes key dates indicating when offenders may be eligible for review and release. Should this bill pass, it would amend the law to ensure that victims know when offenders could be released and, importantly, are provided the reasons for how officials determined the eligibility dates.

Victims of crime and their families seek clarity and transparency. They deserve to have their voices heard within the justice system and to know the reasons behind release or parole. By providing victims of offenders more advanced information about crucial eligibility and review dates, this bill is aimed at providing the clarity and transparency that victims seek. This legislation also lets victims know that we, as their elected representatives, hear them.

As I mentioned earlier, the proposals in this bill were inspired by and advocated for by Ms. Lisa Freeman, who was victimized when her father was brutally murdered. Ms. Freeman suffered the exact

### *Private Members' Business*

kind of emotional harm that the Corrections and Conditional Release Act cites in defining the word "victim".

Crimes, especially those that cause the loss of human life, have a ripple effect, like how a stone thrown in a pond creates ripples that emanate from the point of impact outward in all directions. There are many Canadians whose lives have been forever changed by emotional harm caused by criminal acts, especially crimes that take the life of a loved one.

I am one of those Canadians. I have a sense of the stress, anxiety and fear that victims like Lisa Freeman, her family and others in similar situations experience when they are not provided an explanation as to why the individual who has traumatized their life forever is released. I have that sense of understanding because every time I have to drive past a local pub only a few kilometres from my home, I experience it.

● (1745)

It is a pub that was built by an individual who only a few years earlier had killed my brother while driving impaired. My brother Rick was 17 when he was killed 47 years ago, and it still pains me every time I drive past that place that was built by the man who killed him. My mother and father, and the rest of our family, paid the great price of losing Rick, and we never knew or understood how the person who took his life was released and seemingly continued his life as if nothing had happened. I have never spoken about this pain before, not even to family.

Across Canada there are victims of crime who live in fear of the release of the criminal who has already caused much suffering and loss, and when the release occurs, victims are not provided with the reasons for the release.

I have brought the proposals of the bill back to the current Parliament for the many victims of crime across Canada who live with the burden of being victims of crime. When the proposals of the bill were debated and examined in the last Parliament, victims' rights advocates provided compelling testimony detailing how the passage of the proposals could support victims of crime, victims who already carry burdens. In the last Parliament, MPs and senators heard the voices of victims and afforded the proposals unanimous support, which carried the proposals very close to completion.

The 44th Parliament came to an end. Now, in the 45th Parliament, every parliamentarian is faced with a new opportunity to once again listen to the voices of victims and to move the proposals forward for the benefit of victims of crime in all 343 constituencies represented in the House.

I wholeheartedly believe in the bill, and I hope that every member of the House, the members of the committee that would study the bill, and the members of the other chamber will once again recognize the merit of this bill, Bill C-221. In this 45th Parliament, let us hear the voices of victims and act on their behalf, as we did in the 44th Parliament.

*Private Members' Business*

[Translation]

**Claude DeBellefeuille (Beauharnois—Salaberry—Soulanges—Huntingdon, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate my colleague. Sometimes, especially when we sit on Fridays, we study private members' bills that are based on deeply moving personal experiences. I thank my colleague for introducing this bill and I assure him of the Bloc Québécois's support.

My question is this. Would it not be possible to go a step further in the bill and stipulate that families be automatically registered to receive information, rather than the opposite, where the victim's family has to request the information? Does my colleague not think it would be simpler if it were automatic?

[English]

**Mel Arnold:** Madam Speaker, that was a thoughtful question. I believe that having the release of the information automatically happen might also impose on victims' rights, or that some victims may not want to know. To have it mandatorily imposed on them may cause more problems for some. I do not think it would be a great burden for them to sign up, and if the bill passes, at least they would be provided with the details of the reasons for the decisions.

• (1750)

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I will start off by complimenting my colleague across the way. I know that at times it is very difficult to share a personal story. With the loss of a brother, Rick in this case, we can only imagine and have a great deal of sympathy, but unless one has lived through the experience, it is difficult to have that empathy.

I do want to express my condolences. I could see the passion the member speaks of, and I respect that.

We need to consider victims. I appreciate the legislation the member has brought to the House, and I look forward to its passage to committee. If the member wants to add anything else to his general comments, I would appreciate that too.

**Mel Arnold:** Madam Speaker, I thank the parliamentary secretary for his comments, and I appreciate everyone here today, and the people back home, listening.

I am not speaking just for myself; I am speaking for the thousands of victims out there. I can manage. Members can tell it is emotional for me, but there are others who, I think, struggle with it far more than I do. It is for them that we as parliamentarians must see the bill through to completion as soon as possible.

[Translation]

**Abdelhaq Sari (Bourassa, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to begin by saying that my heart is filled with emotion as I rise here today to speak to Bill C-221, especially after listening to my colleague earlier. This bill is not just about tinkering with the wording, regulations and provisions. As the House will hear from my remarks, this is about restoring some sincerity in how we treat human beings. I see this as something deeply human. I am talking about the way our justice system recognizes—or, unfortunately, sometimes forgets—those who have suffered the most, whom I will refer to as victims.

When we hear from victims, they are not asking for any sort of privilege. They are asking for something much more essential: to be seen. They are asking us to listen to them. They are asking for respect. Too often, they tell us that they feel invisible in a system they do not understand, a system where decisions that affect them are made without explanation, without context and sometimes even without warning. That is precisely what this bill seeks to remedy.

Many victims feel hurt the most when they feel left out of the processes that determine what happens to the offender who has devastated their lives. Unfortunately, finding out that an offender is eligible for a temporary absence or parole without understanding how these calculations are made feels like an additional punishment for the victims. It is a punishment that we can and should avoid.

Let us be clear. Our institutions, like Correctional Service Canada and the Parole Board of Canada, do important, sensitive work. They support more than 9,000 victims a year. They provide a portal for victims, as well as information letters, help lines and personalized support. I want to highlight this work, which is neither simple nor obvious. Despite these efforts, something fundamental is still missing, and that thing that is missing most of all is understanding. We are talking about human beings. We are talking about people. We are talking about the victims' understanding not just of the dates but of the meaning behind the dates; not just of the decisions that were made but of the logic behind those decisions. Understanding is not just an administrative detail. Understanding means being able to breathe again. Understanding means being less afraid of the unexpected. Understanding means regaining some control in a life that has been turned upside down.

The purpose of Bill C-221 is exactly that: to explain to victims how and why certain key dates are calculated and what this means for them in practical terms. It is a simple but profoundly fair approach. It does not challenge the courts' decisions. It does not compromise public safety. It does not hinder correctional professionals. It reinforces a fundamental principle: the dignity of individuals, the dignity of human beings, the dignity of victims.

We know that this issue transcends party lines. This is not about politics; it is about compassion and humanity. Behind every case, there is a story. Today, we heard our colleague talk about one such story. When we listen to the details of that story, we can truly understand the depth of the anger that victims and their loved ones may feel. That is where a bill must come from. It comes from a feeling of being neglected, of not being listened to, and of not understanding exactly what is going on.

*Private Members' Business*

That is what inspired this bill: a family's suffering. Naturally, I share that point of view because it is vital that we do something about such situations. It is our duty to do so, for the spouse living with a silence that will never go away, for the family retraumatized by every court update, decision and deadline. This bill will not fix everything, but it is a concrete step forward toward a system that is better at recognizing victims and their experiences.

• (1755)

When we give victims information that is clear, transparent, understandable and written in plain language, we are not just explaining our calculations; we are sending the message that their suffering matters and their safety matters. Their presence in the legal process is not incidental, and it is not a number; it is essential.

I truly believe that a justice system is stronger when it protects those who have been made vulnerable. That is why I believe that this bill is a necessary step toward building a fairer, more humane and more dignified system for every Canadian.

It may be a small step for the legislative apparatus, but it is a huge step for every victim who, as of tomorrow, will finally get the explanation they have waited so long for. I encourage all members to participate in the study of this bill and to vote in favour of it.

**Claude DeBellefeuille (Beauharnois—Salaberry—Soulanges—Huntingdon, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I had the opportunity to do so earlier, but I would like to once again commend my colleague for introducing this bill. After listening to all the speeches, I can see that members largely agree: Victims have rights, including the right to information.

The bill that our colleague is proposing is almost a carbon copy of another bill, Bill C-320, which passed all legislative stages in the House and in committee but unfortunately died on the Order Paper. I would say that the bill before us today is part of a series of laws or regulations that aim to modernize the entire parole process by imposing certain conditions. It is high time that we focused on victims and their rights when someone has committed a horrible crime against a loved one.

The summary of the bill reads as follows:

This enactment amends the Corrections and Conditional Release Act to provide that information that is disclosed to the victim of an offence regarding eligibility dates and review dates applicable to the offender in respect of temporary absences, releases or parole must include an explanation of how the dates were determined.

It may seem simple. A family that has experienced a terrible tragedy will learn the conditions, know why the offender is allowed to be released, why a certain date was chosen and when it will take effect. Some families need this information in order to complete their grieving process or even to feel safe. As my colleague also said, some families do not want to know. Not knowing may be a coping mechanism or part of their grieving process.

However, like my colleague, we believe it is important to review all the elements mentioned in his bill, such as the eligibility and review dates applicable to temporary absences or parole. It is also important to review the date on which an offender is to be released on temporary absence, work release, parole or statutory release. The eligibility and review dates applicable to unescorted temporary absences or parole must also be reviewed. The bill also requires that

the date of escorted or unescorted temporary absences or parole be communicated.

Bill C-221 creates an obligation to communicate with the family to provide additional information about the abuser. Obviously, the Bloc Québécois agrees with that. We agree that victims who want and need help must be informed of the reasons for these dates. Some families or loved ones could even be given access to this information without necessarily making a request. We could ensure that these people receive the information automatically, but remove them from the list if they are not interested in receiving it.

The goal is to simplify a process and a task that often falls on the victims' shoulders. If they do not want to receive the information, they could say so, while everyone who wants it would receive it automatically. The idea is to create a very clear process, because the way that all this information is being managed for the victims seems rather inconsistent.

Here is an example that happened recently in Quebec. The family members of a victim asked for more information about the release of the criminal who murdered their daughter. I am talking about 17-year-old Brigitte Serre, who was stabbed 72 times during an armed robbery at a gas station in Saint-Léonard in 2006. The person who committed the crime, Sébastien Simon, had his first parole hearing. The family testified against his release.

• (1800)

A few years later, the family learned that a hearing would soon be held to determine whether the prisoner could be granted escorted release, for example, but they were not informed until after the fact. The family learned several months later that the inmate had received permission to leave prison and even work up to 40 hours a week at a community organization, without them being informed, without their knowledge. The family condemned this situation and wanted to know why they had only been informed after the fact.

The bill introduced by my Conservative colleague would enable families to seek redress and would prevent what Brigitte Serre's family went through in Quebec from happening again. Basically, it seeks to require the Correctional Service of Canada to document and explain why a prisoner was released on a given date and what assessment that decision was based on.

*Private Members' Business*

Of course, under the current legislation, some information is communicated to the families, but no details are shared regarding dates. Families are asking for that information to be shared with them. Some even need it. If an inmate manages to get a hearing and convince their social workers and caseworkers that they are following a rehabilitation process, with an action plan in place to help them gradually reintegrate into society, it is important to communicate that to the family.

The bill's demands are fairly simple, but there are still some questions. It establishes an important principle, that of informing the victims' families, but it does not really specify how this information should be communicated to families. Should it come in writing? Should it be accompanied by some form of support? For example, if a family receives a call or an email informing them that their child's killer has been granted temporary absences as of a certain date, could that retraumatize them?

The Bloc Québécois wants to know how this information will be communicated to families, especially since our political party believes that they should be supported when learning the reasons for release. We must acknowledge that no victim's family will be happy to learn that the murderer or the person who killed their loved one will be granted escorted or unescorted temporary absences before 25 years have passed. That is why we are concerned about how this news will be announced to the families.

I do not know if we will have the opportunity to discuss this at the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, but I think that part is essential. I think we can all agree that victims have a right to information. Now we will have to discuss how that information is shared. We are somewhat concerned about how Correctional Service Canada will make this requirement part of its procedures, especially given the staffing shortage, and about how this information will be handled and communicated to families.

That said, we know that victims' associations have been vigorously advocating for the information to be given to families and victims. We agree with all of their requests. I encourage my colleague to push for his bill because we definitely want the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security to study it. This would give the committee the tremendous privilege of contributing to amending an act to make it more compassionate, more considerate and more respectful of victims' right to information.

• (1805)

[*English*]

**Rhonda Kirkland (Oshawa, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is a privilege to rise in support of this bill. It holds deep meaning for victims of violent crime and for me, personally, as a resident and the newest member of Parliament for Oshawa.

Bill C-221 builds upon years of advocacy for greater transparency and fairness in Canada's parole system. It also continues the work of my predecessor, the former member of Parliament for Oshawa, Dr. Colin Carrie, who introduced this initiative as Bill C-320 in the 44th Parliament. It is inspired by the strength and determination of Oshawa resident, and my good friend, Lisa Freeman. I had the privilege of working with Dr. Carrie during the time when he was advancing this bill. We listened to victims and pushed for a jus-

tice system that acknowledges their needs. I saw how deeply Lisa's experiences and advocacy shaped this legislation.

Bill C-221 is rooted in real stories and responds directly to real failures that have left victims without clear information, timely notice or the transparency they deserve. I want to thank my colleague, the member for Kamloops—Shuswap—Central Rockies, for reintroducing this crucial legislation and providing me the honour of seconding it.

To understand why this bill matters, we have to understand its origin. More than 30 years ago, my community of Oshawa was shaken by the murder of Roland Slingerland. I remember that time. I was a young teenager, and the shock of his death spread quickly through the city. People talked about it in school, in the neighbourhood and around the dinner table. It was one of those moments that made the entire community stop and confront the reality of violence in our midst.

Roland was a caretaker at a rooming house. He was a navy veteran and a father of four daughters. He was murdered while trying to protect a woman fleeing domestic violence. The axe murderer who killed him had gone looking for his estranged girlfriend, and Roland refused to reveal where she was living. He did what any decent person would do. He put someone else's safety first, and for that courageous act, he lost his life.

What our community later learned was even harder to process. The man who murdered Roland Slingerland was on parole at the time for previous offences. He had already been released back into the community. The system that was supposed to safeguard the public did not do so. It failed Roland and his family, and the impact of that failure has lasted more than three decades.

For Lisa, that impact did not end with the trial. She has spent most of her adult life navigating the parole process, not by choice but because every decision made about the offender directly affects her sense of safety and her family's well-being.

However, time and time again, she was left without the information she needed. Major decisions were made without her knowledge. Transfers happened without notice. Security levels changed with no explanation. Hearing dates shifted unpredictably. Too often, the reasons behind these decisions were never provided at all. At times, she was shut out of the process completely, except Lisa refused to stay silent.

*Private Members' Business*

Many Canadians believe that, when a judge hands down a life sentence with no parole for 25 years, the meaning is clear, but for victims and their families, the reality is far more complicated. There are multiple forms of conditional release, multiple review stages and multiple opportunities for offenders to return to the community, sometimes years earlier than the public expects or the sentence implies.

When victims are not given the information they need, this complexity becomes overwhelming and damaging, and it forces families to relive trauma again and again. This is what Bill C-221 addresses. The current mandate under the Parole Board of Canada is that it is able to provide certain information to registered victims, but this practice is inconsistent today. Victims do not always receive timely or adequate information. They are left with vague dates, incomplete updates and no understanding of how decisions were made. This is not a minor administrative issue. It is a systemic failure that has caused real harm.

This bill would strengthen the Corrections and Conditional Release Act by requiring, by law, that when the Parole Board provides information about eligibility dates or review dates for temporary absences, releases or parole, it must include an explanation of how those dates were determined.

● (1810)

Victims would no longer receive information without context. They would no longer be forced to interpret a system that feels deliberately opaque. They would receive clear reasoning so they can understand what is happening, prepare for what is coming and participate meaningfully in the process as they wish. For victims, this is not symbolic; it is practical and essential. It would provide predictability where there has been stress and uncertainty. The bill recognizes that victims are not observers on the sidelines; they are people deeply affected by each step of the parole process, and they deserve to be treated with dignity.

What is also important is the overwhelming support the bill has earned. The previous version, Bill C-320, passed unanimously in the House. It passed unanimously at committee. Every party in the House supported it. Independent senators supported it. Victims' rights organizations across Canada also voiced their support because they recognized that transparency in the parole process is essential to restoring trust. The bill was as close to becoming law as possible before the government prorogued Parliament so that the Liberals could hold a leadership race. However, it made it all the way to third reading in the Senate. The consensus was clear across political lines, across both chambers and among those who work directly with victims every day. Today, with Bill C-221, we have the chance to complete that work. We have a chance to take a bill that has already earned national agreement and turn it into real protection for victims and their families.

The bill before us would not fix every problem with our parole system; much more needs to be done to ensure that victims' rights are upheld and that their participation is respected at every stage. However, it is a significant step. It is targeted and reasonable. It addresses a specific gap that has caused hardship and fear for too many Canadians. Above all, it would ensure that the experiences faced by Lisa and her family are not repeated.

Lisa never sought recognition or public attention. She simply refused to accept a system that repeatedly disregarded her. She supports other victims. She has written books; she holds workshops and vigils, and she continually pushes for transparency so that no one else will have to suffer what her family endured. Lisa's father showed courage that day when he protected someone in danger. Today, she carries that courage forward in her advocacy for victims, and the bill reflects her determination to create a better path for future victims. It will not change what she went through, but she hopes that others will be able to go through the parole process without the same harm and hurt that she did.

Bill C-221 is a testament to what can be achieved when victims speak and when lawmakers listen. It shows what is possible when a community refuses to let injustice stand unchallenged. The bill is ready to become law. Victims deserve information they can rely on, and they deserve a system that treats them with respect. The bill would deliver a simple and necessary change that will finally give victims transparency where there has only been disregard.

I urge Parliament to finish the work that began years ago, make this protection permanent and pass the bill through all stages quickly and unanimously.

● (1815)

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I will start off by picking up on the point that was just made about the support for this private member's bill within the chamber, which I perceive as overwhelmingly positive. As members know, there is a limited number of private members' bills and motions that will ultimately hit the floor of the House of Commons.

There are two things that I would point out about the member for Kamloops—Shuswap—Central Rockies. Number one, we need to recognize that an hon. member is very fortunate if they can get a bill passed through the House. A little bit relies on luck, because we have to be part of the draw. If we look at it, the number of the bill is Bill C-221, which tells us that the member has been fortunate to get the bill drawn.

*Private Members' Business*

Number two, when one is provided that opportunity, there is a multitude of issues one could bring to the floor of the House. The member has obviously prioritized this as a very important issue. We have seen governments of different political stripes talk about victims. We now have a private member who has brought forward legislation, and he shared a very intimate story. I always appreciate when members have the courage to share a personal story, because it is a very difficult thing to do. It made me reflect on an incident from a number of years ago.

I was at someone's home. Her son was missing, and she had the dreaded knock on the door from local law enforcement. She was told that her son's body had been found. There were the emotions that were tied into that, how she collapsed and how she had the courage to go through a process that is very complicated and exceptionally frustrating. One must imagine the emotions that someone has to live through to really appreciate why it is so important that, when we talk about legislation, we must incorporate the victims of crime.

That is how I see Bill C-221, which is a piece of legislation that ultimately has wide support, not only here in the chamber but, as has been pointed out by my friend across the way, in all sectors of society. I believe that it has that support because people can understand the rationale and the need to see it ultimately pass. I am anticipating that we will take a look at the need not only to be informed but also to have an explanation follow. For example, there could be an explanation for why a parole hearing has been scheduled so we have have a better appreciation of the system.

What I have found, and I used to be the justice critic in the province of Manitoba, is that there is a general lack of knowledge of the whole process of how our judicial system actually works. I have had the opportunity to raise it here on the floor of the House on several occasions. There is indeed federal, provincial and municipal processes, not to mention the many different stakeholders.

On the whole issue of drinking and driving, there is a phenomenal organization called MADD, Mothers Against Drunk Driving. There are so many stakeholders out there that are all trying to improve the system. A part of improving the system is through education. As complicated as it is, imagine being thrown into a position where something horrific has taken place in one's life, and one finds oneself having to go through a process that is exceptionally emotionally difficult to deal with, and one wants to find out what has happened to the perpetrator.

• (1820)

On the surface, the legislation comes across as very straightforward, as it is. In the question I posed, I hope it was implied that I am very supportive of this private member's bill. As has been pointed out, there was previous legislation that, for whatever reasons, did not get royal assent, along with other pieces of legislation. However, this does not take away from the efforts being presented to us today by a member highlighting the issue once again.

I reflect on Bill C-11, which is important legislation that also deals with victims' rights. It would transfer from the military courts to the civilian courts cases of sexual abuse and provide the support victims require, with the appointment of a victim's liaison officer to help facilitate the transfer.

This demonstrates very clearly that, whether it is a private member's bill or government-sponsored legislation, there is a certain expectation before us as legislators. That is ultimately to see legislation go to committee; if there is a need to make changes or amend it, then we should look at that.

I was encouraged to hear what the member from the Bloc put forward as a question, because I thought the same thing too. I wondered why information would not just be sent automatically. This seemed to make sense. What made more sense was the response. At the end of the day, I am sure there are individuals who do not necessarily want to know or to be reminded.

The true value of going to a standing committee, whether it is a private member's bill or a government bill, is that we are afforded the opportunity to have the dialogue necessary among the legislators. In a very short answer, I support the answer, and I do not necessarily support an amendment that would actually change it.

I look forward to the legislation going to committee. As has been implied, there might be some other potential amendments that could be brought forward. I would trust that any amendments would have, at least in principle, the support of the member and be within the scope of the legislation. What we ultimately hope to achieve, going through standing committees, is to have that dialogue. At the same time, and this is what I would like to highlight, we have to listen to what the stakeholders are saying. We need to listen to those interest groups and the victims themselves and at least afford the opportunity for them to be able to come to committee and possibly share their experiences, as the member for Kamloops—Shuswap—Central Rockies shared his personal story with the House.

I really believe that we need to do what we can as legislators to support the victims of crime. I applaud the member for bringing the bill forward.

• (1825)

[*Translation*]

**Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ):** Madam Speaker, first of all, I congratulate my colleague for introducing Bill C-221, especially in such an emotional situation. I have never experienced that, so it is hard for me to imagine, but I think victims have a right to know. The bill aims to share information about temporary absences more effectively. It is heartening to see all the parties working across party lines to support this bill for humanitarian reasons.

The Association québécoise Plaidoyer-Victimes, or AQPV, felt that the bill was in line with its demands. In a brief, the AQPV said:

The AQPV believes it is essential to explain how decisions on eligibility dates and review dates applicable to the offender in respect of temporary absences, releases or parole are made.

The AQPV wonders what form these explanations will take....

Earlier on, my colleague said, first of all, that victims need to want to receive this information. Next, this information must be communicated in a way that is clear and tailored to what victims want.

The association wrote in its brief:

...the AQPV believes that, when the sentence is handed down, the victim should already be informed of what a federal sentence consists of, as well as what the offender may be entitled to, including parole eligibility and the circumstances that may lead to it.

Correctional Service Canada documentation is “available online, including that concerning the possibility of parole”, but it is complex, even for a criminologist. The brief says that to “better support victims...it would be appropriate to provide them with a simple, clear and concise document, and to offer them a telephone meeting with a specialized resource”, if they want one, that is, “from an organization such as CSC's National Office for Victims (NOV)”, because this support “would help victims better understand the next steps and therefore make them feel safer”. This is essential.

The brief also talks about support services for victims when they receive information:

The AQPV would also like to raise the following questions:

How would the explanations of the way the dates were determined be provided to victims?

Would they be provided in writing only?

What measures would be taken to support victims when they receive this information?

In the AQPV's view, the information must

be communicated with sensitivity and humanity; and

come with the option of speaking with a person who is trained to support victims.

Even if the victim has expressed a wish to receive the information they are entitled to in writing, the victim should still be able to speak with a person who specializes in working with victims, such as someone from the NOV, who can answer any questions and explain how the dates were determined.

This is a very important bill, to say the least, and I hope everyone will support it so that it can pass as quickly as possible, so that it does not die on the Order Paper, like the previous version did.

I would like to thank my colleague once again for introducing this bill. We hope to proceed as quickly as possible.

● (1830)

[English]

**Juanita Nathan (Pickering—Brooklin, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I wish to thank the hon. member for Kamloops—Shuswap—Central Rockies for sponsoring this legislation. I also wish to thank all members who have contributed or will contribute to our consideration of this bill.

As members know, this legislation has already been tabled by the members opposite in previous sessions. It is an important non-partisan bill that focuses on the rights of victims of crime and their families.

Our government firmly believes that victims across Canada deserve our compassion, respect and support. Under the current federal law, victims of crime are entitled to receive certain information about the person or persons who harmed them. This information in-

cludes eligibility dates and review dates applicable to the offender for temporary absences or parole. If adopted, Bill C-221 would amend the law so victims of crime would be entitled to know not only when offenders could be released, but also how officials determine these eligibility dates.

### *Adjournment Proceedings*

Victims of crime and their families want clarity when it comes to the justice system. They also want transparency and for their voices to be heard. Bill C-221 would give victims and their families the clarity and transparency they seek. It would help victims get information about key eligibility and review dates up front. At the same time, it in no way detracts from the rights of offenders. Their privacy and legal entitlements are in no way diminished or threatened.

The bill also aligns with the advancements we have made in this country to recognize and uphold the rights of victims of crime. Our understanding of those rights and our willingness to apply that knowledge is the work of many people and governments. Governments of all political stripes and members from both sides of the chamber have taken and supported action.

This advancement of victims' rights began in Canada in 1988. That year, the House first endorsed the Canadian Statement of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime. This watershed development was soon followed by a federal law that gave victims of crime a voice at sentencing hearings. Since then, successive governments have affirmed the rights of victims based on our growing understanding of their needs. This progress is the result of Canada's evolving understanding of the rights of victims of crime and our willingness to apply that knowledge.

Bill C-221 continues these sensible, non-partisan, multi-generational advancements. The legislation makes clear that members of this House have collectively heard victims' voices and are acting on them.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès):** It being 5:34 p.m., the time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired, and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

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## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

• (1835)

[English]

## THE ECONOMY

**Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am happy to join today in the evening's adjournment debate. I asked a question a few weeks ago about food price increases, but I am sure my colleagues will give me one second to give a big shout-out and congratulations to our very own Saskatchewan Roughriders, the 2025 Grey Cup champions.

I had the opportunity on Sunday to watch the game with all three of my children. I am proud to report that this is the first time the Riders have won the Grey Cup when all three of them were alive, because they have not won since 2013. It was a joy for me to have the time to experience watching the Grey Cup victory by our Riders with my three children, Jameson, Clair and Nickson. It was a great family bonding experience.

I would like to get into the very crux of my argument. We have been talking for the last couple of years about the continued food price increases in our country. We know that there is data showing that food prices over the last 10 years have increased more in Canada than in the States, actually 48% faster. We know that inflation has been caused by several things. One is the industrial carbon tax, and a second is taxes on food packaging in grocery stores.

When we talk about the industrial carbon tax, some things my friends and colleagues from across the way do not understand is that it taxes each and every link along the transportation route. Food does not just magically appear in grocery stores; it has to get there. It has to get from the field to the grocery store, so the taxes paid by our farmers, by our truckers and by the grocery stores to keep the lights on and to keep food cool are also included in the ever-increasing cost.

To whoever will answer my question, I will say that I think food prices are a conversation across this country. I have been at home in my riding all week, and every time we have a conversation with someone who comes into our constituency office, they are talking about the ever-increasing price of life. There is an affordability crisis in our country, and it starts at the kitchen table. I know lots of families in which the parents do not eat any of the meat at the supper table until the kids are done eating, just to make sure there is enough for the kids to eat, and that is something that should never happen in our country.

We produce the highest-quality food, like great Canadian beef. We produce the best crops. That should be something that makes sure our country can and does have affordable food prices. I would also mention that in our country, food bank usage has doubled over the last 10 years. Canada is the breadbasket of the world, and if more people, especially in the middle class, are going to the food bank instead of the grocery store, it is an indictment of what the Liberal government has done over the past 10 years to food prices.

If we tax the farmer who produces the food and we tax the trucker who ships the food, we tax the consumer at the grocery store who buys the food, and I would like to have some answers. I remember the Minister of Finance's saying three years ago that food prices would drop by Thanksgiving. I remember his making that

solid commitment, but food prices have continued to increase, and they see that, and there just is not enough paycheque at the end of the month for people to buy groceries.

That is something that has to be fixed in our country, so I am looking forward to the response from the member opposite.

**Wade Grant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I too would like to start by congratulating the Saskatchewan Roughriders. It is a little-known fact that my stepmother is a born and bred Swift Current resident. She moved into our home in 1994, and she is a diehard Saskatchewan Roughrider fan.

I rise to address the member opposite's question and to set the record straight: There is no such thing as a food packaging tax in Canada, and there is no industrial carbon tax on groceries. These claims simply do not reflect the facts.

Canada has in place practical, evidence-based measures designed to reduce pollution, support competitiveness and build a clean economy for the future. Industrial carbon pricing, for example, applies only to large emitters, the biggest polluters in the country. It does not apply to farmers. It does not apply to consumers. It does not apply at the grocery store checkout. The system is structured to keep Canadian industries competitive while achieving emission reductions at the lowest possible cost.

Canada's federal output-based pricing system gives company leaders options. They can innovate to cut emissions, purchase credits from innovators or invest in cleaner processes. It is not a charge on families. It is a framework that rewards cleaner operations and helps Canada stay competitive in a global economy that is rapidly decarbonizing.

Let us be clear about food prices. The federal fuel charge was removed from farm fuels on April 1 of this year. Experts agree that higher food prices are being driven primarily by global forces, supply chain disruptions, the war in Ukraine and energy price volatility. None of these factors stem from Canada's climate policies. In fact, it has been clearly shown that the industrial carbon pricing adds virtually no cost to commercial goods.

As for the so-called food packaging tax, the regulations on single-use plastics are not taxes at all. They are straightforward environmental rules that prevent harmful plastics, such as checkout bags, cutlery and certain types of food containers, from ending up in our rivers, oceans and streams. These rules are expected to prevent more than one million tonnes of plastic waste over the next decade. Many Canadian businesses have already adapted, often finding that reusable or recyclable alternatives save money over time.

Finally, the clean fuel regulations do not require fuel prices to increase. They are protecting the environment and human health by significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions. It is also spurring tens of billions of dollars of investment in clean-fuel projects across the country, creating good jobs and positioning Canada to compete globally. These are not taxes on food. They are smart, practical measures that protect Canadians from the rising costs of pollution and climate change.

• (1840)

**Warren Steinley:** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the talking points from my colleague opposite, but Sylvain Charlebois, the food professor, who is well known on social media, would completely disagree with everything the member just said. He said that the member's government policy has been directly linked to food price increases. He said the policies that the Liberals have had, such as the industrial carbon tax, have increased the food prices. Therefore, the member opposite can forgive me if I am going to take the word of Professor Sylvain Charlebois over his.

The Prime Minister said he would be judged by the prices at the grocery store. Prices have continued to go up. He cannot deny the fact that prices for food have continued to go up for all Canadians from coast to coast, especially in rural and remote areas, where they see that, because trucking companies pay an industrial carbon tax on shipping food, food is more expensive. It is more expensive to get it to rural and remote areas. How can the parliamentary secretary possibly deny that fact?

**Wade Grant:** Madam Speaker, I want to be clear: Canada's environmental policies are designed to reduce pollution and drive innovation, not to raise grocery prices.

Clean-fuel projects, such as Imperial Oil's renewable diesel factory in Alberta, Char Technologies' clean-energy projects in Ontario and Quebec, and Air Products' hydrogen complex in Edmonton are creating jobs and keeping Canadians competitive in the global clean economy. Eliminating these measures, as the member opposite suggests, would risk investment, cost jobs and increase pollution.

Canadians deserve solutions that protect affordability today and build a sustainable and competitive economy for the future.

#### CARBON PRICING

**Cheryl Gallant (Algonquin—Renfrew—Pembroke, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise on behalf of the fiscally sane people of Algonquin—Renfrew—Pembroke.

Recently, I asked this reckless-spending government's minister if he could cancel the Liberals' plan to hike the price of fuel in the budget. Well, the budget is out, and the tax is still on. This tax is just one of many the Liberals have brought in that are hidden and quietly eat away at the purchasing power of Canadians.

The response from the Liberal Secretary of State, put up to shield the minister, shows how the Liberal Party, at its core, does not get it. Canadians spend more on taxes than anything else. They spend more on taxes than they do on housing. Government is the single most expensive purchase we make, yet the Liberals have the gall to stand here and tell us that making government more expensive is an affordability measure. I am not shocked. This is the same party that

#### *Adjournment Proceedings*

ran on the slogan, eat cake and have it too, but the brazenness with which they trick Canadians is shocking.

The Liberals promised a generational change, but what they meant is that it would be a generation before anything changes. They promised no cuts to the public service, but now frontline workers are being laid off and Canadians are left on hold. They promised no cuts to transfers for people or provinces, but now they are cutting veterans' benefits and student grants. Despite those cuts to people who did not vote Liberal in the last election, the Liberals are posting one of the biggest deficits in history. Their slogan should have been "more spending, fewer services".

Canadians are rightfully asking where their tax dollars are going. Despite the Liberals' best efforts to silence the Parliamentary Budget Officer, the truth is out. The Brookfield Prime Minister has reclassified corporate welfare as an investment. That is not a surprise, considering who he has running the government. Canada's Clerk of the Privy Council lives in a turnstile. One year, he is the top finance bureaucrat, bringing in corporate welfare for the electric utilities; the next, he is the CEO of an electric utility. One year, he is running Montreal's transit company; another year, he is head of Trudeau's Infrastructure Bank, giving money away to Montreal's transit company.

His is not much different from the résumé of our Prime Minister, who moved from an investment bank to a finance department, from central banks to investment firms. While some in the media have focused on the Prime Minister's significant conflicts of interest, when we look at the strategy he took at Brookfield, how could it not be? Under his watch, Brookfield targeted companies at the nexus of business and government. As CEO, he would invest in something such as a modular homebuilding company. Then, as a former central banker, he would lobby governments to build more modular housing. Now he is Prime Minister and holding photo ops in front of modular housing, which he will fund with our tax dollars.

This is what so many people get wrong about the World Economic Forum. There is no conspiracy; it is just a bunch of executives from public services playing a game of musical chairs with executives from global companies. They sit around in a circle like a bunch of good old boys, patting themselves on the back for being so clever. Then, they all fly home to implement bad policies or invest in bad companies. When it all fails, they use even more taxpayer dollars to bail each other out.

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The Prime Minister's friends get six- and seven-figure salaries, while Canadians get laid off. The real Liberal Party slogan should be “spend less on Canadians; invest more with their corporate friends”.

• (1845)

**Wade Grant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, Canadians expect a government that protects affordability and secures their future and their children's future, not one or the other.

The opposition paints climate action as a bill Canadians cannot afford, but what Canadians cannot afford is inaction. Climate-driven droughts, wildfires and storms are already disrupting our supply chains, our agricultural sector and our communities. Those events raise costs more than the climate solutions we are putting in place.

Let us be clear: Climate action is not a luxury; it is an economic necessity. When we talk about costs, we need the facts. The opposition suggests that cancelling the clean fuel regulations would magically lower grocery bills or fuel costs. That is wishful thinking. Prices today are being pushed by global energy volatility, supply chain pressures and corporate pricing power. Eliminating climate policy does not make world oil prices drop.

The clean fuel regulations have helped drive tens of billions in investments across Canada in projects such as low-carbon fuels and carbon capture and storage. These projects support good-paying jobs for thousands of Canadians across this country. As announced on September 5, we are making targeted changes to the CFR to further support Canada's biofuel sector while maintaining the primary purpose of the regulation, to reduce emissions.

Canadians want leadership that protects jobs while protecting the planet. They want clean energy growth, competitive industries and secure, affordable futures for their children. That is why our government is committed to smart, fair, predictable climate policy that strengthens the economy rather than undermining it. This is about responsibly managing today's costs while safeguarding tomorrow's prosperity. That is the Canadian way.

**Cheryl Gallant:** Madam Speaker, my favourite Liberal talking point is when the Liberals compare Canada to the other G7 countries. It feels like when a teenager comes home drunk for the first time and protests, “Well, all the other kids were drunker.” It is a bit like their claim that inflation was not their fault because there was inflation in other countries. I guess it was just a coincidence that all those other countries were running big deficits too.

I know that for some people, when a bunch of governments enact the same policies using the same propaganda, it can look nefarious. The truth is that these corporate progressive types are not very creative. They copy each other's policies and slogans in a desperate attempt to sell us the same corporatist, technocratic agenda.

We do not need Liberal protectionism, mandates or subsidies. We need to cut competition-killing regulation, enforce the competition promotion regulations and then just get out of the way so Canadians can build a brighter future.

• (1850)

**Wade Grant:** Madam Speaker, affordability matters, and so does economic security. The government will continue to pursue policies that protect workers, strengthen competitiveness and ensure that Canada leads in the clean energy future. That is how we build an economy that works for Canadians today and delivers opportunity for the next generation, for my children's generation and for six or seven generations ahead.

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS

**Dan Mazier (Riding Mountain, CPC):** Madam Speaker, my question is very simple. I am hoping the member does not just read the speech that was written for her by the Prime Minister's Office. Does the Liberal government believe that smoking fentanyl and meth should be legal or illegal?

**Maggie Chi (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, at a time when every community in this country is grappling with the devastating impacts of the toxic drug and overdose crisis, it is profoundly disappointing to see this issue reduced to clips and outrage instead of serious dialogue. Canadians expect better from us. They deserve a conversation rooted in facts, not theatrics, and the facts are clear: It is provinces and territories, not the federal government, that decide whether safe consumption sites may operate.

Every provincial and territorial minister of health can issue or refuse exemptions under the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act. Health Canada reviews applications only after applicants demonstrate full compliance with local, municipal and provincial requirements, and show robust safety measures to protect clients and surrounding communities. If they cannot do that, the application does not proceed.

Our role is to support communities through targeted investments, including the youth mental health fund, giving young people earlier access to care and reducing emergency room pressures; expanded funding to the substance use and addictions program for prevention, treatment and harm reduction; continued support through the emergency treatment fund for urgent provincial and territorial needs; and, through budget 2025, strengthened enforcement and border measures to disrupt the illegal drug supply poisoning Canadians. These are the investments that save lives and support communities; they are not shortcuts and not slogans.

Safe consumption sites are one tool in a much broader response. This crisis does not lend itself to theatrics. It demands seriousness and leadership. Families that have lost loved ones deserve to see us rise to that responsibility. Every community is hurting. Every family touched by this crisis is grieving. They are looking to this House for clarity, compassion and a thoughtful, evidence-based plan forward.

Our government understands that we can protect communities and care for people struggling with addiction. Responsible leadership requires both.

**Dan Mazier:** Madam Speaker, I guess the member picked the speech prepared for her by the Prime Minister's Office, so I will ask the question again: Does the Liberal government believe that smoking fentanyl and meth should be legal or illegal?

**Maggie Chi:** Madam Speaker, the gravity of this crisis requires a measured and serious approach. We owe it to Canadians and to the dignity of this House to do better.

#### *Adjournment Proceedings*

Our government continues to work closely with provinces and territories, supporting them through the emergency treatment fund and the substance use and addictions program, and strengthening enforcement to disrupt the illegal drug supply. These priorities are not mutually exclusive, and responsible leaders do not pretend they are.

This crisis requires empathy, evidence and action, not division. Let us bring more honour to this House by meeting this moment with the seriousness, compassion and integrity Canadians expect of us.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès):** The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 6:54 p.m.)

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