



# DEBATES OF THE SENATE

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(HANSARD)

Thursday, November 20, 2025

The Honourable RAYMONDE GAGNÉ,  
Speaker

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## THE SENATE

Thursday, November 20, 2025

The Senate met at 1:30 p.m., the Speaker in the chair.

Prayers.

[Translation]

### ROYAL ASSENT

The Hon. the Speaker informed the Senate that the following communication had been received:

RIDEAU HALL

November 20, 2025

Madam Speaker,

I have the honour to inform you that Mr. Ken MacKillop, Deputy of the Governor General of Canada, signified royal assent by written declaration to the bills listed in the Schedule to this letter on the 20<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2025, at 10:29 a.m.

Yours sincerely,

Ryan McAdam

*Executive Director, Office of the Secretary to  
the Governor General*

The Honourable  
The Speaker of the Senate  
Ottawa

Bills Assented to Thursday, November 20, 2025:

An Act to amend the Citizenship Act (2025) (*Bill C-3, Chapter 5, 2025*)

An Act to authorize Gore Mutual Insurance Company to apply to be continued as a body corporate under the laws of the Province of Quebec (*Bill S-1001*)

### BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I received a notice from the Government Representative in the Senate, who requests, pursuant to rule 4-3(1), that the time provided for the consideration of Senators' Statements be extended today for the purpose of paying tribute to the Honourable Lise Bacon, who passed away on October 29, 2025.

I remind senators that pursuant to our rules, each senator will be allowed only three minutes and they may speak only once and the time for Tributes shall not exceed 15 minutes.

## SENATORS' STATEMENTS

### TRIBUTES

THE LATE HONOURABLE LISE BACON, C.M., G.O.Q.

**Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate):** Honourable senators, it is with deep emotion that I rise today to pay tribute to a great Quebecer, a great Canadian and a pioneer whose legacy will be forever inscribed in the annals of our democracy: the Honourable Lise Bacon.

Born in Valleyfield in 1934 and raised in Trois-Rivières, she grew up in a home where social justice and freedom of thought were fundamental values. In an era marked by the "great darkness," she learned at a very young age to take a stand, to refuse to accept injustice and to assert her rightful place as a woman.

By the age of 17, Lise Bacon was already a Liberal activist, and at age 19, she became the treasurer of the Association des femmes libérales Louis Saint-Laurent. This marked the beginning of an exceptional career path that would lead her to the highest echelons of government, after a meteoric rise within the Quebec Liberal Party.

As the first woman elected president of a political party in Canada, the second woman elected to the Quebec National Assembly after Claire Kirkland-Casgrain, and the first woman to assume the role of deputy premier of Quebec, Ms. Bacon broke glass ceilings with an admirable grace and strength.

After being elected to the Quebec National Assembly in 1973, she headed up several key ministries, including the ministries of the environment, immigration, cultural affairs and regional development. She championed vital causes, such as the promotion of the French language and the recognition of artists. The Valenti-Bacon agreement, which requires a French version of any American film distributed in Quebec, is a testament to her fierce determination to protect our culture.

As environment minister, her work to harmonize government actions on the St. Lawrence River is one of her most enduring legacies. She was always a staunch and passionate advocate for Quebec, vigorously defending its interests both at home and on the international stage during her many missions.

When Premier Bourassa had to take leave for medical treatment in 1990, she discreetly but skilfully ensured the stability and continuity of the government.

Many observers flat out said that she had all the qualities to become premier.

After being appointed to the Senate in 1994, she continued her work with the same dedication, diligently chairing the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications, the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets, and

Administration, and the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs, while providing inspiring leadership as deputy chair of the Quebec Liberal Caucus.

Honourable senators, today we pay tribute to an exceptional stateswoman, a great woman who devoted her whole life to progress, equality and justice. May her example guide future generations of political leaders, and may her memory inspire all those who wish to serve our great country with honour, passion and dedication.

May she rest in peace.

**Hon. Leo Housakos (Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, the passing of the Honourable Lise Bacon has left a huge void not only in the political landscape, but also in the hearts of all Quebecers touched by her work, her strength and her character.

She was a pioneer: Quebec's first female deputy premier, the first female president of a political party in Quebec, and the second woman elected to Quebec's National Assembly.

Her historic achievements are just one aspect of a long record of perseverance, commitment and dedication to the people of Quebec.

Her path was not an easy one. In 1970, she sought the Liberal nomination in Trois-Rivières, but the party chose her brother, Guy, instead of her. That was how things were back then, unfortunately. Lise did not give up. She worked even harder, and it paid off: She won the nomination in Bourassa. That was the beginning of an impressive ministerial career.

• (1340)

When I think back on her journey, I feel lucky that I was able to witness her impact up close. For years, Lise Bacon was the MP for my riding of Chomedey. Even though she was a Liberal Party member, I couldn't help but admire her strength, her sense of fairness and her ability to truly bond with the people she represented.

She was always close to her constituents; as she saw it, representing their interests is the primary responsibility of parliamentarians and politicians. In 2008, our paths crossed again in the Senate for about a year before she retired. Our time serving together gave me an even deeper appreciation of her quiet dignity and determination, combined with an unwavering willingness to listen to others.

Her death is a great loss to all of us, yet her legacy survives through initiatives like the Bacon plan, which laid the foundation for child care services in Quebec, and through the key role she played in strengthening Quebec's place within Canada. She will live on in our memories for her historic achievements and for the integrity she showed in performing her duties.

Ms. Bacon had a very special gift: She could be extremely tough, yet kind at the same time, and her keen intellect always shone through. I extend my deepest condolences to her family, friends and everyone who had the privilege of working with her. Thank you.

[ Senator Moreau ]

**Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear.

**Hon. Manuelle Oudar:** Honourable senators, I rise on behalf of the Independent Senators Group to pay tribute to the Honourable Lise Bacon following her passing on October 29, 2025, at the age of 91.

Senator Lise Bacon shaped our country with courage, intelligence and humanity. She grew up in a time when certain doors never opened, especially for women. In 1970, she became the first female president of a political party in Canada. Three years later, she was elected to Quebec's National Assembly, becoming one of the pioneers who opened the door to Quebec politics for women. In 1985, she became the deputy premier of Quebec, a position no woman had ever held before.

As a minister, she held several different portfolios, including cultural affairs, the environment, energy and resources. She crafted the Bacon plan, Quebec's first child care policy, which laid the groundwork for the universal child care network.

Throughout her career, she was a stalwart advocate for the Charter of the French Language, the environment, energy, regional development, the cultural and social rights of creators and, above all, women's place in society.

Her commitment continued in the Senate for more than 15 years, during which she made a mark on this chamber with her humanity and vision. Lise Bacon taught us that power is never a destination, but rather a responsibility in the service of a more just society. She showed that it is possible to govern with conviction while remaining attentive to others and faithful to the common good.

Those who knew her remember her warmth, her willingness to listen and her ability to bring out the best in everyone. Her home was always open to her loved ones, as well as to her colleagues from all walks of life, who found advice and solidarity there. She had a gift for seeing the beauty in everyone, defending the most vulnerable and raising important issues without ever forgetting the power of a kind word or the significance of a simple gesture.

We remember the paths she forged and the courage she showed, inspiring our collective strength. May we, in turn, cultivate the same generosity of spirit and carry on her legacy with the same conviction.

To my dear friend, the Honourable Lise Bacon, thank you for lighting up this place with your warmth, your compassion and your unshakable faith in the future. Your legacy will live on forever. Thank you, colleagues. *Meegwetch.*

**Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear.

**Hon. Clément Gignac:** Honourable senators, I rise today on behalf of the Canadian Senators Group to pay tribute to a prominent figure in Quebec and Canadian society, the Honourable Lise Bacon.

Lise Bacon embodied excellence, rigour and dedication. Throughout her career, Ms. Bacon demonstrated a deep commitment to justice and the collective well-being. During her years of service in Robert Bourassa's government, she worked

tirelessly to advance the interests of Quebecers. Her time as minister of cultural affairs was particularly noteworthy. She was one of the architects behind the Valenti-Bacon agreement, which requires every American film distributed in the province to be available in French.

Let's not forget that the many positions she held throughout her career were rarely, if ever, held by women. As my colleagues mentioned, Ms. Bacon was the second woman elected to the National Assembly, the first woman elected as president of a political party in Canada, and the first woman to serve as deputy premier of Quebec.

Her exemplary career paved the way for women in public life. Back in 1973, Ms. Bacon was the only woman elected to the National Assembly, but women now account for about 45% of all elected officials in the National Assembly, more than ever before in Quebec. Our society owes her a great deal.

Mrs. Bacon was not just involved in national politics. As a senator, she forged closer ties with our allies, particularly France. For eight years, Senator Bacon chaired the Canada-France Inter-Parliamentary Association. In recognition of her outstanding work, France appointed her to the rank of Officer of the Legion of Honour in October 2003.

Although we were both members of the same political party in Quebec and we both served as ministers and, of course, as senators, I did not have the opportunity to work closely with Mrs. Bacon, so I will quote two friends who knew her well: John Parisella, former chief of staff to Robert Bourassa, and Guy Ouellette, the former member of Parliament for Chomedey, who is here with us today.

[English]

In an interview with *The Globe and Mail*, John Parisella, former chief of staff to Mr. Bourassa, said that Lise Bacon:

... had a very close collaboration with the premier and played the game of being an opponent. She was a person who knew what she wanted to say, rather than asking what others wanted her to say.

[Translation]

In his tribute to Mrs. Bacon last week at her funeral, my former colleague Guy Ouellette said:

It is often said that some people lead the movement while others follow, but Lise Bacon was part of the very small group who came up with the movement in the first place. She sowed the seeds of courage, broke down barriers and gave a voice to the voiceless. Her voice resonates, soft and strong, in the chambers of our memory.

On behalf of the Canadian Senators Group, thank you very much, Mrs. Bacon, for your outstanding contribution to Quebec and Canadian society.

**Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear!

[English]

**Hon. Brian Francis:** Honourable senators, on behalf of the Progressive Senate Group, I would also like to pay tribute to the late Honourable Lise Bacon.

Listening to her career highlights, it is no wonder that the term "trailblazer" is synonymous with her name. As we have heard, the Honourable Lise Bacon not only paved the way, particularly for women in politics, but also helped encourage others to follow her through the doors that she opened. This kind of mentorship and leadership helped shape her career as a fierce and loyal public servant, determined to do her best to improve the lives of Quebecers and, indeed, all Canadians.

Though she was a well-respected member of this chamber from 1994 to 2009, most of us, including myself, did not have the privilege of serving with her. The Honourable Dennis Dawson, my former deputy leader, did have that privilege, and he shared these words on the passing of his former colleague and friend:

Mrs. Bacon left a lasting mark on my life and career.

She welcomed me to the executive of the Quebec Liberal Party in the 1970s, and then again to the Senate in 2005.

At both stages, she was for me a source of inspiration and a model of dedication.

Within the Quebec Liberal Party, I witnessed her leadership and her rigor.

In the Senate, I had the privilege of working alongside her on the Transport Committee, which she chaired with skill and humanity.

I then had the honour of succeeding her as chair, striving to carry on her work with the same sense of duty.

I owe her much — for her advice, her trust, and her example.

Today, a great woman has left us, but her influence lives on in our institutions and in our hearts.

Thank you, Mrs. Bacon, for all you contributed to public life and to those fortunate enough to have known you.

• (1350)

Honourable senators, on behalf of the Progressive Senate Group, I offer sincere condolences to the family and friends of the late Honourable Lise Bacon. *Wela'lin*. Thank you.

**Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear.

[Translation]

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, please join me in rising for a minute of silence in memory of the Honourable Lise Bacon.

(Honourable senators then stood in silent tribute.)

### VISITOR IN THE GALLERY

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Mr. Guy Ouellette, former Member of the National Assembly of Quebec. He is the guest of the Honourable Senator Gignac.

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

**Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear!

[*English*]

### ROHINGYA CHILDREN

**Hon. Salma Atallahjan:** Honourable senators, I rise on the occasion of World Children's Day, a day when we recommit ourselves to protecting children's rights, including the right to education, health care and protection from harm.

Today, I'll focus on the children of the Rohingya, a Muslim ethnic minority from Myanmar and the world's largest stateless population.

Last week, I travelled to Bangladesh to visit the Rohingya refugee camps, welcoming the opportunity to be on the ground to engage in conversations and see the situation first-hand. Nothing could have prepared me for what I saw.

The first thing that struck me was seeing the children who stood there staring at us when we arrived. Some children were barefoot and looked malnourished. A few small children were running around without any clothes or shoes. We were introduced to this small 14-year-old girl who took it upon herself to look after me because I was limping. Composed beyond her years, she calmly spoke about her relatives — those who were raped, those who were killed. I wondered, "What horrors has this child lived through?"

Yet, despite everything, she stood before a crowd and talked about the importance of girls' education. She talked about her dream of becoming a teacher, a dream I knew she may never achieve because refugee children are barred from studying past Grade 10. Her future is severely limited by the circumstances forced upon her.

Later, behind the van's tinted windows, I saw children holding beautiful lotus flowers. As I watched, one peeled a stem and ate it. In that moment, it struck me: "I am looking at the face of hunger."

And I was.

Rohingya refugees receive a food basket of just \$12 per person per month, barely enough for bananas, a little protein, spices, oil and rice. In April, even that was cut down to \$6, enough only for rice and oil. That is not sustenance. That is survival stripped to its bones.

Those of us who walked through the camps saw something painfully clear: a deep, overwhelming hopelessness. It was written on every face. It has stayed with us since we left.

And yet, Bangladesh, an emerging economy, continues to do what few countries have done. It opened its border, its land and its heart to more than a million Rohingya. For this, we owe them a profound gratitude.

But gratitude is not enough. We must do better. We owe it to the Rohingya children whose dreams are fading and to Bangladesh, which shoulders responsibilities no country should face alone, and to our own conscience as a nation that claims to stand for human rights. Thank you.

**Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear.

### VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of members of Senator Cardozo's family: Alice and Anthony Cardozo and their partners; Joann Garbig; and his brother Robin Cardozo.

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

**Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear!

### CBC/RADIO-CANADA

**Hon. Andrew Cardozo:** Thank you, Your Honour. No, he is not my twin, but he does look like me.

Honourable senators, I want to focus on some key issues of Canadian culture in the recent budget. But, first, I want to note that for Senator Burey, Senator Patterson and myself, this week marks the third anniversary of our appointment in the Senate of Canada.

**Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear.

**Senator Cardozo:** Of course, it remains a deep honour for me to serve in this important chamber of Parliament and certainly with all of you as colleagues.

I have raised the issue of the future of CBC/Radio-Canada at various times, and several of you have spoken on it in the chamber and in committee. The recent budget took the important step of providing the public broadcaster with \$150 million extra for this fiscal year. The important thing about this allocation is that it is a vote of confidence in its continued role. The CBC is not being defunded.

As news media across Canada are facing enormous challenges, with most advertising having moved from traditional media to American-based social media, the role of CBC/Radio-Canada becomes more important than ever before. The Senate Transport and Communications Committee has undertaken a study on local programming by the broadcaster where we have heard from Canadians across the country on their needs and expectations.

I am pleased to see that in recent months, the CBC has opened several new local bureaus in smaller cities and towns across Canada.

Local news media is what Canadians yearn for most, and the Canadian public broadcaster has a special obligation to fill that gap across this vast country.

On news media at large, I am glad that various programs directly or indirectly tied to the Department of Canadian Heritage will continue to support the presence and growth of traditional and new online news media. While some Canadians understandably have concerns about a government department providing funding directly to the media, I am engaging with many interested Canadians to explore future funding mechanisms that will secure independent media for decades to come.

[*Translation*]

Canada has a long tradition of creating strong cultural institutions, including the Canada Council for the Arts, the National Film Board of Canada, the National Arts Centre and national museums in the National Capital Region, Halifax and Winnipeg.

Living beside a highly influential cultural power like the United States has made the needs of all of these national cultural institutions even more urgent than before.

[*English*]

CBC/Radio-Canada and the federal cultural institutions keep us from becoming that fifty-first state. They are the essence of what constantly builds Canada and our unique and complex Canadian identity.

**Some Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear.

[*Translation*]

#### VISITOR IN THE GALLERY

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Marie-Françoise Suzan, Minister-Counsellor at the Embassy of Haiti in Ottawa. She is the guest of the Honourable Senator Youance.

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

**Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear!

#### CANADA-HAITI PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

**Hon. Suze Youance:** Honourable senators, on November 18, I presided over the creation of the Canada-Haiti Parliamentary Association. This date is symbolic, because it was on this day in 1803 that the Battle of Vertières took place, marking the culmination of the Haitian revolution that led Haiti to declare independence on January 1, 1804.

Over 200 years later, the people of Haiti are still waging a battle to democratically embark on the road to development in a nation governed by the rule of law.

• (1400)

It won't be an easy road, as the country faces multiple political and security crises, in addition to being hit hard by natural disasters. Most recently, the disproportionate death toll in Haiti from Hurricane Melissa reminded us of how intensely vulnerable the country is to climate change.

Haiti is now grappling with a complex and multi-faceted crisis involving armed conflict, political instability and a deteriorating humanitarian situation. Furthermore, the chaos going on in Haiti creates a very attractive environment for transnational crime.

We must also recognize how much Haitians have contributed to Canada's development with their knowledge and expertise. Since the first waves of immigration, deep ties have been forged between Canada and Haiti.

I mentioned in my maiden speech that I want to devote part of my term to restoring democracy in Haiti and supporting its development. I am now proud to say that I am not alone, because more than 20 parliamentarians from coast to coast to coast, from both chambers and from several different groups and parties, joined me to participate in the first meeting of the Canada-Haiti Parliamentary Association. By the way, it's not too late for you to join.

Together, we can engage Canadians, other parliamentarians and the international organizations we are a part of to ensure that Canada is able to fully play a constructive role in supporting the solutions put forward by Haitians and their diaspora, while respecting their sovereignty and dignity.

Honourable senators, I hope you will be able to participate in our first event on the Hill on January 15. This event is being organized in collaboration with the Embassy of Haiti in Canada.

In closing, I would like to congratulate the Haitian soccer team on qualifying for the World Cup for the first time in 52 years. Canada awaits you.

Thank you.

#### VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Lou Arteau, a theatrical artist, and her partner, Bernard Boissonneault. They are the guests of the Honourable Senator Cormier.

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

**Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear!

[English]

### REMEMBRANCE DAY

**Hon. Charles S. Adler:** Honourable senators, I'd like to share some personal reflections post-Remembrance Day. Two weeks ago today, our treasured colleague Senator Yonah Martin spoke these words: "I owe my life . . ." to the Canadian military. The Canadian military punched well above its weight, as it always has, and stopped the forces of authoritarianism from conquering the entire Korean Peninsula, which is why South Korea is a free, prosperous and joyful country, while North Korea is a concentration camp.

A year ago, in my maiden speech, I shared with you that while I've never been in Auschwitz, Auschwitz has always been in me. But my love for Canada will always conquer my concentration camp nightmares. I owe my life to the Canadian military.

Two weeks and two days ago, Veterans Affairs held a candlelight ceremony at the Canadian War Museum. It's where I first got to see and touch the Manitoba poppy blanket created by Sheilah Lee Restall and its message brought to the world by the Speaker at Winnipeg City Council, Devi Sharma. The blanket is 85 feet long and made of 8,000 poppies sent to Winnipeg from all over Canada. They were crocheted and knitted into a blanket, with 2,000 ribbons with the names of Canadians who served and sacrificed.

At the ceremony, I met with veterans and members of the military serving right now. I saw a sea of faces from all over the world. I saw Canada's diversity, but what gave the diversity meaning was unity. What gave diversity meaning that night was the Canadian military uniform.

Diversity is Canada's poetry. Unity is the prose. It is the same beautiful Canadian story I see here in the Senate: the handsome and beautiful faces of the world all wearing a Canadian Senate pin.

Nine days ago, on November 11, I was asked to lay a wreath at the Winnipeg Cenotaph. I was announced as "representing Canada." As I laid that wreath, I thought about Yonah Martin's parents and mine.

As the piper was piping, I found myself praying for those who died so that Senator Martin's parents and mine and millions of others could live. As I drove home, I reflected on what it meant to me to be thought of as representing Canada. I felt something that I had never felt before, a connection to something much larger than myself.

No personal or professional accomplishment has ever felt as meaningful. As I look around me and I see my treasured colleagues, I see them differently than I used to. Before November 11, I saw you as intelligent, highly accomplished fellow Canadians. Today, I see every one of you as the country I owe my life to. I love every one of you. I love you, Canada.

Thank you.

**Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear.

### NATIONAL CHILD DAY

**Hon. Rosemary Moodie:** Honourable senators, I rise again this year to highlight the celebration of National Child Day in Canada. National Child Day is a celebration of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was adopted by the UN on November 20, 1989, and signed by Canada. I want to re-emphasize Canada's commitment to upholding children's rights.

UNICEF Canada's Report Card 19 was published this year, and this report looks at the pillars of child and youth well-being in wealthy countries. Despite being among the 10 wealthiest countries, Canada ranks only nineteenth among 36 nations when it comes to child well-being, as indicated by UNICEF. One in six children in Canada, or more than 1.3 million young people, are still growing up in poverty, according to Campaign 2000's 2024 report. In terms of mental health, Canada ranks thirteenth in life satisfaction, with children's reported happiness declining since 2018. Despite improvement in the adolescent suicide rate, we rank thirty-third out of 42 countries. The findings of this report highlight the pressing need for ambitious action to address the state of children's well-being.

As a country, our efforts to improve the health and well-being of our children and youth are siloed between provinces, territories, civil society and the federal government. Canada lacks a clear, unified vision for how we ensure better outcomes for our children and youth. We need a national strategy. A strategy like this would give the Government of Canada its mandate to ensure systematic consultation and engagement with children and youth as they plan for their future.

We have a responsibility to Canadian children to set clear targets and indicators to create the best possible outcomes for them. This year's theme for National Child Day is "Our Rights, Our Future," highlighting the importance of supporting and empowering children to reach their full potential and be change makers.

Dear colleagues, National Child Day is a great opportunity for us to reflect on the current state of children and youth well-being and on our commitment to advocate and promote their rights. We must make children and youth well-being our highest priority and work towards ambitious policy-making. Thank you. *Meegweitch.*

[Translation]

**Hon. Julie Miville-Dechêne:** Thank you for giving me a last-minute opportunity to speak about World Children's Day.

Yesterday, I welcomed representatives from World Vision and Save the Children to the Senate to talk to us about another aspect of this international day: the plight of children in times of war.

I was there with Senator Ataullahjan, who spoke to us about the plight of children in Rohingya camps, along with Senator Al Zaibak and Senator Coyle.

• (1410)

The numbers are alarming. According to the United Nations, in 2024, a record number of children were subjected to violence in conflict zones. Twenty-two thousand, five hundred children were killed, injured, denied humanitarian aid, or recruited to participate in conflict. Those who survive are traumatized by their suffering and loss.

Violence has increased against children in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia and Nigeria, but also in Gaza and, more recently, in Sudan, where there have been reports of massacres of civilians, pregnant women, and children. In Haiti, too, sexual violence against children is on the rise amid the chaos. It is as serious as guns and bombs.

The conflict in Sudan is one of those forgotten and virtually invisible conflicts where children are being targeted. Around El Fasher, massacres are on the rise, but the world has not reacted with horror because the warring parties have adopted a radical tactic: They refuse to let journalists in, so there is no media coverage, no images and no awareness.

Children in Sudan are dying, either from hunger or from gunfire. Radio-Canada journalist Sophie Langlois went to the refugee camps on the border. She observed that children there are still going hungry because humanitarian organizations don't have enough provisions to fill their bellies. Worse still, mothers would rather see their emaciated children die from a bullet than from hunger. Starvation is a slow and terrible way to die, as the body's vital systems shut down one by one.

Our mission should be to protect children in times of war. In fact, our mission should be to protect all children so they have a chance to experience wonder, to learn and to enjoy their childhood, not live a life of fear and hunger.

Thank you.

[English]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### FOOD AND DRUGS ACT

BILL TO AMEND—THIRD REPORT OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE PRESENTED

**Hon. Rosemary Moodie**, Chair of the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology, presented the following report:

Thursday, November 20, 2025

The Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology has the honour to present its

### THIRD REPORT

Your committee, to which was referred Bill S-202, An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act (warning label on alcoholic beverages), has, in obedience to the order of reference of Thursday, June 12, 2025, examined the said bill and now reports the same without amendment but with certain observations, which are appended to this report.

Respectfully submitted,

ROSEMARY MOODIE

*Chair*

*(For text of observations, see today's Journals of the Senate, p. 428.)*

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, when shall this bill be read the third time?

(On motion of Senator McPhedran, for Senator Brazeau, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for third reading at the next sitting of the Senate.)

### CRIMINAL CODE INDIAN ACT

BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

**Hon. Scott Tannas** introduced Bill S-241, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Indian Act.

(Bill read first time.)

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, when shall this bill be read the second time?

(On motion of Senator Tannas, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading two days hence.)

## QUESTION PERIOD

## AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

### IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

### SPENT FOWL IMPORTS

#### SKILLED WORKER PROGRAM

**Hon. Leo Housakos (Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable colleagues, my question is for the government leader in the Senate.

A recent report by the Institute for Canadian Citizenship reveals that most highly skilled immigrants — health care providers, scientists, engineers and senior executives — who receive their residency status here eventually leave Canada within five years. They are leaving at twice the rate compared to low-skilled labour.

Government leader, how can you tell this chamber that Canada is still a magnet for the high-skilled labour that we so desperately need in order to build our economy when we have such high numbers of high-skilled labour fleeing the country within five years of gaining residency here?

**Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate):** It's a very important question, and that's probably the reason why the government tabled an important budget for 2025 to increase the growth of our economy and to make the Canadian economy stronger. When we build a strong economy, we create opportunities for highly paid jobs that require those kinds of individuals whom you are referring to, Senator Housakos. I think that's the intelligent thing to do. That's what the government is committed to doing with this budget.

**Senator Housakos:** Thank you for acknowledging that over the last 10 years, the government has failed, and now in the recent budget, they are taking steps in order to address the problem. That in itself is a problem.

When you have high-skilled labour — scientists, engineers and health care providers — who are needed in all sectors, but they are seeing the options before them in a society where it's hard to buy a house and sustain a family, then we understand why they are leaving. The only thing the government has given them is generational debt to deal with.

**Senator Moreau:** You like to raise the issue of the last 10 years, Senator Housakos. However, I like to think that over the last 10 years, some good things have been done by the government because six months ago, there was a general election and the judgment was made by Canadians to keep you on the same side of this room, which is the same side of the room for the opposition in the other place.

I guess over the last 10 years, that government made good decisions, and the government is still making good decisions.

**Hon. Michael L. MacDonald:** Senator Moreau, for years, Canadian poultry producers were told by government officials that the DNA test for identifying spent fowl imports was scientifically valid and reliable. Yet, in response to my question on September 17, 2024, regarding illegal imports of spent fowl, the response on November 15, 2024, which was provided and signed off by the minister, said the opposite, claiming the test was unable to provide consistent and reliable results. This information was alarming to the Chicken Farmers of Canada and industry stakeholders because they had always been told the opposite by your government. When they asked for clarification, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada admitted the answer provided by the minister was wrong.

Can you correct the record and confirm today that the DNA test for identifying spent fowl imports is scientifically valid and reliable? If it is, why was I provided incorrect information by the minister?

**Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate):** Senator, I have the utmost respect for the question you're asking, and I don't want to provide you with the wrong answer. I will raise the issue. It is a very important issue. I will engage myself to raise this issue with the minister and discuss it with him so that I will be able to provide you with the correct answer.

• (1420)

**Senator MacDonald:** For the benefit of the Senate, a spent fowl is a laying hen, which lays eggs for 75 to 100 days. Then its laying productivity declines, and it goes into the food market. That's what a spent fowl is.

Senator Moreau, in spite of the industry raising concerns about spent fowl over and over, illegal imports of chicken continue into this country unabated. More than \$377 million in duties, interest —

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Thank you, Senator MacDonald, for the question.

**Senator Moreau:** Senator, as you know now, I was born and raised on a dairy farm, so I don't pretend to know a lot of things about chicken farms, but I'm sure that I will provide you with the proper answer as soon as I raise the issue with the minister. Since you didn't have the time to finish your question, I'll be meeting with you after Question Period to make sure that I have the proper question to ask and to raise with the minister.

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

## CYBERCRIME

**Hon. Tony Loffreda:** Senator Moreau, last year we learned that victims of fraud reported financial losses totalling \$531 million to the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre in 2022. Three quarters of these reports were cybercrime related, and only about 5% to 10% of cybercrimes are reported.

In June 2024, in a response to a question I asked your predecessor, he explained that the government recognizes the importance of strengthening Canada's capacity to counter cybercrime, noting significant federal investments in the RCMP's National Cybercrime Coordination Centre.

Earlier this year, I was happy to learn about the government's new National Cyber Security Strategy. This is welcome news. What concrete measures does this strategy include to help reduce the staggering cyber-enabled financial losses facing Canadians?

**Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you, Senator Loffreda. This is an important issue as well.

Cybersecurity is a whole-of-society responsibility. The Government of Canada has called on other levels of government, Indigenous communities, the private sector and academia to be partners in the creation of a series of action plans, each of which would work to address key challenges identified in the National Cyber Security Strategy. This broad collaboration is needed to ensure that the action plan improves Canada's national cyber resilience at all levels, not just for the Government of Canada.

By implementing the strategy through a series of action plans over time, Canada will have a flexible mechanism ensuring timely responses to an ever-changing cyber environment. Together, the government will ensure that cyberspace is safe, open, secure, stable and accessible to all Canadians.

**Senator Loffreda:** Thank you for that. I think we all agree that cybersecurity has become one of the most pressing issues facing society, and we cannot afford to be laggards.

Since an update was not available at the time of my previous question, could you now provide the latest developments on the Department of Finance's data governance review and its implications for improving cyber resilience and advancing cybersecurity protections for all Canadians?

**Senator Moreau:** I don't have a specific update for you at this time, senator, but I will certainly follow up on my predecessor's inquiries with the government on this issue, and I will try to get back to you as soon as I can.

[Translation]

**CANADIAN HERITAGE***ACTION PLAN FOR OFFICIAL LANGUAGES 2023–2028*

**Hon. René Cormier:** Senator Moreau, the Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages just began a study on the responsibilities of federal institutions in the arts, culture and heritage sector.

I would remind senators that this sector is recognized as a priority in the modernized Official Languages Act. It generated \$65 billion in spinoffs in Canada in 2024, and it helps to ensure our country's cultural and economic sovereignty.

A witness told the committee that the *Action Plan for Official Languages 2023-2028* is an essential lever for the arts and culture sector in francophone minority communities and, I would even go so far as to say, for several sectors that support the development of official language minority communities. However, the lack of guarantees regarding funding for this plan after 2028 is causing serious concerns.

Is the \$4.1 billion in funding to support official languages for the current period from 2023 to 2028 still guaranteed?

Can you give us any indication of how this plan will be financed after 2028?

**Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you, Senator Cormier. You may recall that in my first speech in the House, I talked about how important the issue of the French language is to me. I truly appreciate the question.

Through the latest action plan, the government has made the largest ever investment in official language minority communities. As you mentioned, this investment amounts to \$4.1 billion that directly contributes to protecting and promoting French and ensuring the vitality of official language minority communities. I know that this issue is also near and dear to the Speaker of the Senate's heart. That amount includes \$304 million paid directly to community organizations and a 12.5% increase in the funding provided to over 300 groups working to promote official languages.

By April 2025, more than \$800 million had been invested and all 82 initiatives in the five-year strategy were already in place.

**Senator Cormier:** There are two years left in this action plan. My question was whether the funding is guaranteed for these final two years.

On a slightly different note, Part VII of the Official Languages Act requires regulations to be made. The modernized Official Languages Act was passed 29 months ago, and we are still waiting for the regulatory framework that will clarify the obligations of federal institutions in this area. The regulations urgently need to be studied. When will the draft regulations —

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Thank you, Senator Cormier.

**Senator Moreau:** As you know, Senator Cormier, the tabling of regulations is subject to parliamentary privilege. Unfortunately, I can't speculate on the government's legislative plans. However, I'm confident that the government has already begun taking steps to publish regulations and, like you, I hope they will be tabled as soon as possible.

Regarding the first part of your supplementary question, I'm confident that the funds have been committed for the next two years.

[*English*]

## HEALTH

### MEASLES ELIMINATION STATUS

**Hon. Flordeliz (Gigi) Osler:** Senator Moreau, last week, Canada officially lost its measles elimination status, a designation we've held since 1998. Canada lost the status because of sustained measles transmission in multiple provinces over the last 12 months.

Not only is measles one of the most contagious, infectious diseases ever known, but the measles vaccine is highly effective. As one Canadian immunologist said:

It should be a national embarrassment to join a list of countries whose public health systems have been torn apart by war or civil unrest, but the more immediate tragedy is that we will see more lost pregnancies, more premature babies and more children who won't ever grow to their full potential due to the terrible and short and long-term effects of measles.

Senator Moreau, what specific actions is the federal government taking to address this serious threat to Canadians' health and well-being?

**Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate):** This is a very important question. Thank you for raising it.

This is a concerning development and something the government is taking very seriously. In October 2025, health ministers from across the country were briefed on the status of measles in Canada, and they committed to working together in discussing coordinated action, including strategies to build trust through community engagement.

I have been informed that the Public Health Agency of Canada is working closely with partners at all levels of government to respond to the measles outbreak and help Canada regain its measles elimination status.

I do want to take a moment to reiterate to Canadians that the science is clear: Vaccines are the best way to protect against measles and save lives, and it's a responsibility that each and every one of us shares with the government.

**Senator Osler:** Canada's loss of measles elimination status should be a wake-up call to the gaps in our public health infrastructure. The current patchwork of paper and electronic records among provinces and territories places an unnecessary burden on parents. The Canadian Public Health Association states that the "... federal government plays a crucial role in ensuring that vaccination data is collected, shared, and used to protect..." health.

Senator Moreau, when will the government establish a national electronic immunization registry?

**Senator Moreau:** Thank you. I understand, senator, that earlier this year, health ministers agreed to continue to work to modernize the sharing of public health data among federal, provincial and territorial governments, and on a common approach to this work. This will build on lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic, incorporating Indigenous perspectives and enabling more timely and effective responses to public health challenges.

• (1430)

I agree with you that a modern public health information-sharing agreement is expected in 2026 with bilateral agreements to follow.

## NATIONAL REVENUE

### EXCISE STAMPS

**Hon. Duncan Wilson:** Senator Moreau, the cannabis industry's current excise stamp requires each of the 13 provinces and territories to have a unique stamp applied to cannabis products. When these products are reallocated to different regions, these stamps must be manually removed and replaced, and the old stamp must be saved for the Canada Revenue Agency, or CRA. Removal, replacement and re-storage add labour and logistical costs, leading to lower margins and higher prices, which in turn serve to incentivize the illicit market.

Industry leaders have identified this excise stamp system as an internal trade barrier that costs farmers and manufacturers roughly \$100 million per year.

These entrepreneurs are calling for a national excise stamp that would streamline production, reduce costs and improve efficiency. Earlier this week, Minister LeBlanc announced the upcoming release of the regulations for the Free Trade and Labour Mobility in Canada Act. Given this, coupled with the government's focus on cutting red tape and removing barriers to internal trade, might we expect to see the shift to a national excise —

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Thank you, senator.

**Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate):** The government announced, as part of the 2024 Fall Economic Statement, its intent to explore a transition from cannabis excise duty stamps specific to each province and

territory to a single national stamp. As you noted, this would make it easier for regulated cannabis producers to ignite new business opportunities in other provinces and territories.

It is important to note that the stamp is also used to track the destination of sales for revenue-sharing purposes. The federal government shares duty revenues with provinces and territories, with the provinces and territories receiving 25% and the federal government receiving 75%.

The government's work in evaluating the feasibility of a single national cannabis excise stamp is ongoing, but, as you know, I cannot provide any further timeline on when this will be implemented.

**Senator Wilson:** Senator Moreau, implemented in 2018, the cannabis excise tax is valued at the greater of 10% of the product's value or \$1 per gram. Although it was assumed then that cannabis would sell for \$10 per gram, the market has experienced wholesale prices closer to \$3. This means that the flat-tax rate prevails, resulting in producers facing a tax rate as high as 30% rather than the intended 10%. As a result, we are driving traffic to illicit producers and undermining the viability of law-abiding businesses that operate within the established regulations.

Can you speak to whether the government has a plan to address this taxation issue?

**Senator Moreau:** I agree with the premises of your question, but, as you well know, it is not possible for me to speak to any future potential changes to cannabis excise taxes as I can't provide you with any information concerning future decisions of the government regarding expenses or taxes. But as soon as those are announced, I would gladly communicate with you on these matters.

## GLOBAL AFFAIRS

### HUMAN RIGHTS IN MYANMAR

**Hon. Salma Atallahjan:** Government leader, for years Canada was regarded as a principled and reliable voice for the Rohingya, a persecuted people who continue to endure violence, forced displacement and profound insecurity. Yet as their circumstances grow ever more dire, Canada has been missing in action. Since a multi-year support strategy expired in 2024, the government has not followed through with a comparable framework.

Canada has not meaningfully expanded resettlement opportunities, has taken limited action to advance legal accountability and has yet to appoint a new special envoy to Myanmar.

Leader, how does the government reconcile its stated commitment to protecting the Rohingya with what looks increasingly like declining strategic engagement?

**Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate):** I don't have any specific information on that matter, but you raise a very important question. I look forward to working

with you to raise this issue with the government representative and to providing you with a proper answer. At this time, it's impossible for me to give you a forecast of what will happen with that. I certainly accept your invitation to follow through and ask questions on those very important issues.

**Senator Atallahjan:** Senator Moreau, today is World Children's Day, yet over half a million Rohingya children remained deprived of basic rights, facing malnutrition, forced displacement and sexual and gender-based violence. I was told that sexual predators have moved in and human trafficking is taking place in the camps.

Canada once had a meaningful human rights reputation. Now this reputation has been reduced to lip service. Will your government honour Canada's humanitarian commitments, or has Canada abandoned its role on the world stage?

**Senator Moreau:** At this time, I cannot comment or make any announcement on behalf of the government, but I must tell you that I was very moved by your declaration and the issue that your question raises. Even those who don't have children would wish the best for them in life and not what you described in your declaration and your question.

### ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

**Hon. Leo Housakos (Leader of the Opposition):** Government leader, last week, we learned that a Canadian citizen was told by Service Canada that she could not list Israel as her country of birth on her passport but that she could list Palestine. The government now dismisses this as a front-line error, yet this is hardly an isolated incident. This follows Global Affairs Canada recently listing the Israeli embassy as being in Palestine on its website, which was reversed only days later after public outcry.

Meanwhile, municipalities across our country are raising the flag of a non-existent Palestinian state, a blatant overreach of shameless diaspora politics that enables those who target Jewish communities.

All of this points to the same pattern. The Liberal government, now led by Mark Carney, has created ambiguity with its reckless recognition of a Palestinian state, feeding confusion into the bureaucracy, across municipalities and throughout Canadian society.

Leader, will you admit that these dangerous outcomes flow directly from this government's politically motivated recognition of the state Palestine, which has no borders and no government?

**Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate):** You're referring to the position of Canada concerning the two-state solution and recognition. It's not Mark Carney's policy. It's been the policy of the Canadian government since 1947. Between 1947 and today, there have been a few Conservative governments as well. Successive Canadian governments have supported the two-state solution.

In this context, Canada recognized the State of Palestine and offered our partnership in building the promise of a peaceful future for both the State of Palestine and the State of Israel.

Canada's recognition of the State of Palestine is a fulfillment of Canada's longstanding belief that the only way to ensure peace and security for Israelis and Palestinians is through a two-state solution. Canada is under no illusion that this recognition is a panacea, but this recognition is firmly aligned with the —

[Translation]

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Thank you, Senator Moreau.

[English]

**Senator Housakos:** Government leader, I'm not talking about a two-state solution. I'm talking about the recognition of a Palestinian state. One doesn't equate with the other. An historic number of governments — the Harper government, the Chrétien government — have a tradition of recognizing a two-state solution; we still recognize that. Your government went a lot further than that and recognized a Palestinian state without defining a border or a government. The only thing we know about this state is that it is currently being run by Hamas and that Gaza has been taken over by Hamas. Is that the state that your government is recognizing?

**Senator Moreau:** I guess I don't have to answer that question because you know exactly what I would say.

[Translation]

## PUBLIC SAFETY

### FIREARMS REGULATION

**Hon. Manuelle Oudar:** Senator Moreau, next week marks the beginning of the 12 days of action to end violence against women. Every year from November 25 to December 6, we all join forces to tackle this issue.

According to the United Nations, somewhere in the world, a woman is killed every 10 minutes. In Canada, there were 187 femicides in 2024, and 62 of them were committed with firearms.

How is the government ensuring that firearms licensing provisions effectively protect at-risk individuals in situations of intimate partner or family violence?

• (1440)

**Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate):** I believe that when the minister was here yesterday, he expressed the government's strong condemnation of all forms of violence, especially violence against women. The increase in gender-based violence is deeply disturbing and reminds us that we urgently need to explore its root causes. In 2023, as you know, Parliament passed Bill C-21, which amended a number of firearm provisions, including one that prevented individuals with a history of intimate partner violence from purchasing a firearm.

I'm a hunter myself, Senator Oudar, and I currently need to renew my firearm possession and acquisition licence. One of the things that the RCMP verifies when someone submits an

application to get or renew a licence is whether the applicant's conjugal partner has provided consent. If the conjugal partner hasn't signed the form, the RCMP has a duty to contact them.

**Senator Oudar:** Thank you, Senator Moreau. However, as you know, these new measures must be supported by other amendments to the Firearms Act, which, once in force, will introduce the term "protection order," the meaning of which still needs to be assigned in regulations, to quote the government's own website. My question is, when will this order come into force?

**Senator Moreau:** As I have said to your colleagues in response to other questions, I can't speculate on the agenda in terms of the tabling of these additional regulations. I am confident that the government will move forward on this.

However, I would like to point out that budget 2025 allocates \$660.5 million over five years to advance gender equality, which includes measures to strengthen Canada's response to gender-based violence. When a more specific program —

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Thank you, Senator Moreau.

[English]

### CANADA BORDER SERVICES AGENCY

**Hon. Yuen Pau Woo:** Senator Moreau, last week, eminent legal scholar and international human rights expert Richard Falk was detained at Toronto Pearson International Airport on his way to a conference on Palestine. Ostensibly, he was detained to be questioned on whether he was a national security threat to Canada.

Would you be able to find out for us from the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship and the Minister of Public Safety about the grounds on which he was detained and why he was flagged in the first place, presumably on some sort of database which caused the Canada Border Services Agency, or CBSA, to pick him up?

**Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate):** Senator Woo, I will inquire into that. My understanding is that the Canada Border Services Agency is an independent agency. There is no political involvement in the way they should handle people at the border.

I will raise the issue. If I have any further information, I will gladly share it with you.

**Senator Woo:** I appreciate that.

It still begs the question: Even if the CBSA is independent — and I have no doubt it is — they had a reason for picking him up and questioning him as a potential national security threat. It would be valuable for us to understand why that happened.

I should clarify that I have his permission to release information through privacy restrictions. In your inquiries, could you also find out the nature of the questioning and whether there were any external groups — domestic or foreign — that pressured the CBSA to do this investigation?

[ Senator Moreau ]

**Senator Moreau:** It is a very important question. I'm not sure that, even in my inquiry, I would have access to that kind of information. I went through the facts of that situation. I know he's an elderly person.

**Senator Woo:** He's 95.

**Senator Moreau:** He's 95 years old. If I have that information, I will share it with you, as I said.

**Hon. Percy E. Downe:** My question is for the government leader in the Senate. Given that Canada's foreign affairs minister has condemned Richard Falk for his comments on the Boston Marathon massacre when he blamed it on former president Barack Obama and the State of Israel, the then-Minister of Foreign Affairs said:

There is a dangerous pattern to Mr. Falk's anti-Western and anti-Semitic comments. The United Nations should be ashamed to even be associated with such an individual.

He was condemned at the time by the head of the UN. He was also condemned in 2011 by former prime minister David Cameron when he published an anti-Semitic cartoon. The images posted by Mr. Falk on his blog showed a dog wearing a Jewish head covering while urinating on a depiction of justice and devouring a bloody skeleton. Why was he allowed into the country?

**Senator Moreau:** Honestly, I don't have the answer to that question, if there is an answer to that question. I will raise the question with the minister. If I have anything to say on that issue, I will get back to you. I understand it's a serious question. I don't have an answer to provide at this time.

**Senator Downe:** He also posted on his blog: ". . . the world is beginning to understand just how toxic Jewish religious practice and cultural indoctrination really is."

He also posted: ". . . Judaism is a pyramid scheme of social shaming leading to great accumulation of wealth by those at the apex . . ."

These comments are similar to others he has made.

There was also a leak by the Palestinian Authority. They tried to expel him on the grounds that he admitted he's a partisan of Hamas.

The question is this: Why was he allowed in?

**Senator Moreau:** Senator Downe, I'm afraid I will give the same answer to your supplementary question as I gave to your principal question. The facts you're raising here are serious. If I have the information, I will raise the question with the appropriate authorities. If I have an answer, I will get back to you, sir.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### THE ESTIMATES, 2025-26

NATIONAL FINANCE COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO  
STUDY SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (B)

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate),** pursuant to notice of November 18, 2025, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance be authorized to examine and report upon the expenditures set out in the Supplementary Estimates (B) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026; and

That, for the purpose of this study, the committee have the power to meet, even though the Senate may then be sitting or adjourned, and that rules 12-18(1) and 12-18(2) be suspended in relation thereto.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

### ADJOURNMENT

MOTION ADOPTED

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate),** pursuant to notice of November 19, 2025, moved:

That, when the Senate next adjourns after the adoption of this motion, it do stand adjourned until Tuesday, November 25, 2025, at 2 p.m.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

### BUDGET 2025

INQUIRY—DEBATE ADJOURNED

**Hon. Sandra Pupatello** rose pursuant to notice of Senator LaBoucane-Benson on November 5, 2025:

That she will call the attention of the Senate to the budget entitled *Canada Strong*, tabled in the House of Commons on November 4, 2025, by the Minister of Finance and National

Revenue, the Honourable François-Philippe Champagne, P.C., M.P., and in the Senate on November 5, 2025.

She said: Honourable senators, I am delighted to speak today to this inquiry on the budget.

It is gut-wrenching to watch what is happening to our economy these days. Few places are more exposed than my hometown of Windsor, feeling the effects of a slowdown due to events that are completely out of our control.

[*Translation*]

When I was minister of the economy, we were in a recession, which caused me a lot of sleepless nights and anxiety. I'm getting that familiar feeling again. You can imagine my anxiety. Will the budget bring relief to Canadian society? It will bring some relief. In this budget, I see a path to recovery, a way to make this trade war a starting point for something even better.

• (1450)

[*English*]

For example, the tool die mold sector is the canary in the coal mine for manufacturing. They know what's coming about three years before it lands on the plant floor. They make the tools that find their way there, so they know how quickly the economy is moving, well in advance of the manufacturing process.

I spoke to Louis Jahn from Jahn Engineering Ltd. about this budget. They make high-pressure tooling, including metal-stamping dies. He was frank: If you are planning to invest, this budget is going to help. He liked the focus on defence, the potential for diversification and the focus on nuclear energy, which is another area that he's encouraging his whole community and sector to work in.

The Strategic Response Fund is meant to help sectors like his, hit by steel and aluminum tariffs. He liked the expansion of the Scientific Research and Experimental Development, or SR&ED, tax credits and the focus on streamlining the process to make it easier. In fact, this budget will raise the total from \$3 million to \$6 million, from which the 35% tax credit is calculated. He loves the "Buy Canadian" sentiment that he found there. He hopes that continues when these "build big" projects start to move forward, especially in nuclear power and defence.

How are our manufacturers feeling these days? "Uncertainty," I think, is the best word for them. That means delays in investment decisions until the future is clearer. There is an uncertainty chart on page 9 of the introduction of that big book that we found, and you'll see uncertainty trundling along the bottom axis until it hits February 2025 and the advent of tariffs. Then it shoots straight up, and that's how the manufacturing sector is feeling, in particular.

Here are a couple of things that are true in the auto sector: In 2020 China exported 1 million cars globally. In 2025 they are on track to export 8 million. Just for some context, North America will make about 14.5 million cars this year, and Ontario will probably make about 1.5 million compared to the 8 million on track to be exported from China.

[ Senator Papatello ]

Their environment is as uncertain as our environment. They have open capacity in their plants, as we do, so they are dropping their prices and flooding the market — whichever market will take them — and flatlining sales for many of the cars that we sell and many of the parts in those cars that we produce.

As for the North American car companies called the "Detroit 3," or "D3" — General Motors, Ford and Stellantis — they are hurting, too. One, because the consumer has decided they're not all in on the electric car just yet, and they made massive investments to build them, especially here in Canada.

Two, because their president keeps shooting them in the foot with his tariff policy, each one losing several million dollars each quarter on tariffs that their president tells Americans we are paying, when, in fact, they are paying.

This sector has the largest supply chain of all sectors. It has a major impact on our auto parts community, the group that actually employs more people than that of the assembly of cars. In Ontario, it's about 70,000 people.

The American President has chosen a tariff shotgun with buckshot that goes all over the place. No less than 85% of our products are included in the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, or USMCA, but that means 15% are not. Those cars that are produced in Canada are also subject to a 25% tariff right now.

The imposed steel and aluminum tariffs are a big pain point. Think of Sault Ste. Marie, Hamilton, Manitoba and Longueuil in Quebec. These are all critical points for these companies.

There is a constant calculation about how much of that material is in the product. How do you calculate it? How do you make sure you don't make a mistake? The consequences are dire at that border as the products cross. You could actually lose your eligibility to export into the U.S.

Many other sectors feed off the success of manufacturing, so this level of uncertainty really smarts. It prevents investment decisions from moving forward. Plants are scrambling with government programs to help keep workers on the job, so they don't lose them.

I felt that job one for this budget in this sector was to be like the physician's creed, "Do no harm." In fact, I think it did a lot better than that. The budget identified \$25 billion in support of workers, businesses, auto workers, agricultural producers, manufacturers and more. It includes an accelerated depreciation of 100% in the first year for capital investments, access to funds that help our companies enhance their competitiveness and improved tax rates to keep up with the sharp drop that we've seen in those tax rates in America.

[*Translation*]

The aerospace companies I spoke with are excited about the emphasis on "Buy Canadian." Our aerospace companies are largely exporters. For example, Space Credibility, located just over in Kanata, exports 98% of its products. Much of their work is focused on research and development, so they welcome the

financial improvements in the budget. These companies see the benefit of collaborating with other sectors to manufacture higher-volume products, such as smaller satellites.

[English]

The Canadian tech sector — the start-up companies I spoke with — were very positive. I called Canada's best microecosystem for innovation, MaRS. They directed me to some of their clients.

Jason Robinson founded Evoco. Evoco is a great story. They make sustainable products from plants. Here is this young man out of Woodstock, Ontario, schooled in Hamilton, who created a global business in footwear and other sectors. They use his chemical platform to make bioleathers for industrial use in things like the armrests, seats, et cetera, in cars, and the biggest fashion houses in Europe — if you can imagine. There is 150% less carbon emitted, and it is less toxic in its production. He has many customers, and they're all outside of Canada.

For him, improving R&D tax credits increases his ability to invest. Going to the institutional banks is just not an option, so the Venture Capital Catalyst Initiative, which is destined to pull more private venture capital into our country, could be a big win for him. He hopes funds like the Federal Economic Development Agency, or FedDev, will continue to offer support for him that would be ideal. He's ready now to build a facility here. That's the level of demand for his product to export.

Sacha Sawaya founded Litmus Automation, an AI company that makes software for the industrial sector — manufacturers, food processors, utilities — companies that create tons of data. His company analyzes and crunches it, and it goes back to his customers to use it to be more competitive and to adopt winning strategies in this very uncertain global market. Litmus spent the first six or seven years in intense R&D. But as industries finally adapted to using the cloud and discovered that data is, in fact, a corporate asset, well, Litmus has grown.

Their customers are in the EU, Japan, the U.S. and India, but none are in Canada yet. This budget could change that. Sacha is delighted to see the modernization of the SR&ED tax credits, streamlining a complicated process.

This budget announced an expansion of what could be included, like buildings for use in processing in R&D, and expanding the qualifying total from \$3 million to \$6 million — a huge lift for companies like his, which spend millions of dollars each year.

The focus on "Buy Canadian" could be such a boon to our high-tech companies, our industries and even our government as it moves to more automation of its services and the use of AI. A

dedicated fund of almost \$1 billion to build our own sovereign AI computer capacity, Canadian-owned and operated cloud data storage. That would mean that our regulated industries, security-sensitive industries, defence and government would meet the safety standard that our public expects.

Litmus would look to take advantage of the new Productivity Super-Deduction for capital investments. It makes venture capital look at Canadian companies like Litmus more closely.

• (1500)

Bulking up funds in programs like the Strategic Response Fund helps our companies look for that partner funding. The fund announced for export-oriented tech companies is right up their alley.

With our manufacturing sector in the fight of its life, it is companies like Litmus that will give it a leg up. As Sacha said proudly:

Manufacturing isn't going anywhere. We are always going to need stuff. They're going to reinvent themselves with data, and we're going to help them.

I loved his energy.

The head of Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters, Dennis Darby, using two words to address the budget, said, "More, quicker."

I spoke to Sam Mugel. Sam is from Multiverse. Multiverse is a global AI company launched here and in Spain, with a start in our own Creative Destructive Labs and nurtured by MaRS. They specialize in AI compression — a bit of an education for me — that is used in edge industries, or those that can't or won't rely on the cloud: drones, autonomous vehicles or things you need to use when you don't have Wi-Fi — language learning and gaming, perhaps.

Interestingly, their customers are largely in Europe. Sam Mugel says their biggest customers could be in North America: large companies that are spending so much money on the cloud. What they do would save them money and let them use AI to be more competitive at the same time.

Sam's company raised \$300 million last year, half of which will be spent on computers, so the enhanced depreciation will be great for them. He is pleased with the "buy Canadian" focus in the budget and the promotion of AI in government services. He was impressed to see us take a page out of the European COVID recovery strategy, which was to offer funds to match investors' funds. There, it pushed private investors to invest in innovation. It de-risked their investment, and in Canada's case, it is also subject to a potential R&D tax credit.

Overall, this is a positive response to the budget and our future, not just for our new and burgeoning high-tech industries but our stalwarts too: Our manufacturers have been emboldened by our start-up community coming out swinging. As Sacha from Litmus says, it is “reinventing itself with data, analysis and AI.” We can’t control what surprises the American President has for us or the changing geopolitical landscape that is trying to upend our global supply chains. However, there is reason to be hopeful.

A few days ago, in the quiet of the night, you may have seen that the American President rolled back tariffs on about 200 food items, specifically in response to unsustainable higher prices in American grocery stores. With our larger sectors, such as manufacturing, this same move toward higher prices is taking more time while stockpiles dwindle. Yes, prices will be going up, as companies cannot eat the tariffs they are being forced to pay. Maybe we’ll see the same retrenchment on tariffs in that sector as well.

This is what Jim Farley, the CEO of Ford from Dearborn, Michigan, said a few days ago:

We are in trouble in our country. We are not talking about this enough. We have over a million openings in critical jobs, emergency services, trucking, factory workers, plumbers, electricians, and tradesmen. It’s a very serious thing.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Senator Papatello, I’m sorry, your time has expired. Would you like to ask for a couple of minutes?

**Senator Papatello:** May I have permission to continue?

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Is leave granted, honourable senators?

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

**Senator Papatello:** I hope this is riveting enough for two more minutes.

He didn’t mention that the workers that they are losing daily through ICE raids or the visas they are not renewing from India are creating even more of a problem for them. Even if those affected companies try to move their suppliers to the U.S., which they are, how will they do so and who is going to work there? It takes years to build a plant, even in America, and it takes energy. They don’t have enough energy for their supply today.

How are we going to do this with this type of industrial expansion there? As much as companies want to impress their president, it is extremely difficult to decouple our integrated industries without also killing them, or at least causing them irreparable harm.

This budget includes a number of features to support workers, to retrain them and to extend benefits. It’s crafted with economic uncertainty in mind, and our companies need this support through this document. Despite the headwinds, Louis Jahn from Jahn Engineering, a tooling company, said, “Eventually the floodgates will open . . . .” We need to be ready. He is contemplating the expansion of a building right now so he can be ready. This budget will help him ease into that with a 100% writeoff in the first year of that investment. He has the kind of attitude that we all need right now.

Is the budget everything? Well, it’s a lot. It’s a giant step forward, and it’s determined. It’s going to be as determined as we are to get through this. I look forward to more debate on this consequential document, and thank you so much for the extra time.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Senator, we added five minutes of time. You still have a couple of minutes. Will you take a question?

**Senator Papatello:** Because the budget bill hasn’t been tabled yet, I hope you will understand if I don’t have the answer.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Will you take a question?

**Senator Papatello:** Sure.

**Hon. Michael L. MacDonald:** Thank you, senator. You mentioned your part of Ontario, Windsor, and the auto and auto parts industries are so important. In the budget, the government reduced the taxes on luxury items like planes and boats, but it didn’t reduce any of the taxes on auto production or auto parts production. Have you spoken to the people in the industry in your area? What do they think of not having their taxes reduced so they can compete?

**Senator Papatello:** Thanks so much for the question. The luxury tax is actually on cars, boats and those types of vessels over \$100,000. Fortunately, even the Lexus — which is made in Cambridge, Ontario — is \$95,000 fully loaded. So we’re delighted that there aren’t cars built in Canada that are captured in that luxury tax.

(On motion of Senator LaBoucane-Benson, debate adjourned.)

## NATIONAL FRAMEWORK ON HEART FAILURE BILL

### SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Martin, seconded by the Honourable Senator Batters, for the second reading of Bill S-204, An Act to establish a national framework on heart failure.

**Hon. Mohamed-Iqbal Ravalia:** Honourable senators, I rise today to speak to Bill S-204, An Act to establish a national framework on heart failure. I applaud the advocacy of my respected colleague Senator Martin in bringing this bill forward. Thank you.

Colleagues, heart failure is now recognized as one of the fastest-growing cardiovascular conditions, both in Canada and globally, affecting more than 100,000 Canadians each year. As a clinician, every day brought encounters with patients whose lives are fundamentally altered by this chronic, progressive and all-too-often misunderstood condition.

I always dreaded holidays like Christmas and Thanksgiving, when many of my patients would imbibe in a traditional festive meal that is high in salt and would trigger heart failure. They'd arrive in the emergency room, short of breath, stoic and with a guilty plea of, "Doc, I have done it again. Please get the fluid off my chest."

Despite the advances in understanding and management, heart failure remains one of the top five causes of hospitalization in Canada and represents the second leading cause of death. It is a condition that requires not just urgent attention in moments of crisis, but sustained, multidisciplinary care. Yet the needs of patients with heart failure are unique, encompassing not just medical therapy, but also support for mental health, social stability and often home-based care.

I want to emphasize that heart failure is not the end of the road but a turning point. For many, a timely diagnosis and access to evidence-based care, medication and support networks can restore both quality and quantity of life.

• (1510)

However, these resources are not always available equally to all Canadians. Too many patients still face barriers to accessing the best therapies available, due to cost, geography or just a lack of public awareness. Despite our universal health care ideals, prescription drugs critical for heart failure care are not universally covered, with one in six Canadians with heart disease in 2016 reporting going without necessary medications due to cost barriers. This gap not only results in otherwise preventable hospitalizations and deaths but also places a considerable strain on both families and our health care system. As a clinician, it was frustrating to see patients readmitted to hospital simply because they could not afford their medications that they needed to keep them stable at home.

The need for action has never been more urgent. Senator Martin's consideration of Bill S-204 — to establish a national framework on heart failure — marks a pivotal step forward. A national framework can define standards of care so that every Canadian receives best-in-class treatment regardless of postal code. It can support comprehensive patient education, foster research into emerging therapies and strengthen the role of patient organizations and caregivers in the management of heart failure.

I commend the Senate for prioritizing this legislation and urge all of you, colleagues, to work swiftly and collaboratively for its passage.

In addition to equitable access to care and drugs, policy must also invest in prevention, early diagnosis and rehabilitation so we do not only treat this disease but also reduce its incidence and negative impact. Addressing heart failure holistically will ultimately save lives and health care dollars alike.

In closing, the stories heard every day — from patients who want to live to see their grandchildren grow to caregivers juggling jobs and home care responsibilities — remind us that behind every policy decision are real people, families and communities. Canada now has an opportunity to lead the way and to commit not only to treating heart failure but to preventing it and helping Canadians live their fullest possible lives. Let us seize this moment, colleagues, to fill the gaps, enhance public awareness and move boldly toward a future in which high-quality, accessible heart failure care is the standard for all Canadians.

Thank you. *Meegwetch.*

(On motion of Senator Osler, debate adjourned.)

[*Translation*]

## CHIGNECTO ISTHMUS DYKELAND SYSTEM BILL

### SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Quinn, seconded by the Honourable Senator Osler, for the second reading of Bill S-216, An Act to declare the Chignecto Isthmus Dykeland System and related works to be for the general advantage of Canada.

**Hon. Réjean Aucoin:** Honourable senators, it is with a deep sense of responsibility to my province, Nova Scotia, that I rise today to support Bill S-216, the Chignecto Isthmus Dykeland System Act.

The subject at hand directly affects the safety, prosperity and resilience of a region that connects my province to the rest of Canada. It is a matter of national interest, interprovincial fairness and respect for our commitments to the communities that have lived there for centuries.

The Chignecto Isthmus is a 21-kilometre strip of land connecting Nova Scotia to New Brunswick. It is the only land link between Nova Scotia and the rest of the country. The Trans-Canada Highway, CN's main railway line, electrical networks and communication lines, such as fibre optics, all go through this narrow corridor.

In other words, if the isthmus were to be flooded, Nova Scotia would be literally cut off from Canada. Interprovincial trade, the supply of essential goods, the movement of citizens and emergency services would all be paralyzed.

This is not a remote possibility. The risk is very real. The network of dykes that protects this area was originally built by the Acadians in the 18th century and later reinforced. Today, this infrastructure is aging. The dykes have been weakened by climate change, rising sea levels and more frequent storms.

A major failure would have untold economic and social consequences, not only for Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, but for all of Atlantic Canada. Protecting the Chignecto Isthmus exceeds the capabilities and responsibilities of a single province. This is clearly an issue of national interest.

The shipment of goods to the ports of Halifax, Saint John and Sydney is vital to Canada's economy. These routes support our international trade, our energy security and our supply chains.

That is why Bill S-216 proposes that the federal government accept responsibility for the network of dykes on the isthmus to ensure a coordinated, sustainable and equitable approach. Federal intervention is nothing new; the Quebec City Bridge and the Champlain Bridge, both of which are examples of infrastructure of national importance, were taken over by the federal government to ensure their safety and longevity.

The same principle applies here. The Parliament of Canada has a duty to act when the safety and security of an entire province and the continuity of national trade are at stake. This bill comes in response to long-standing concerns voiced by local communities in both provinces. The municipalities of Tantramar, Amherst and Sackville have all requested a lasting and coordinated solution. They know that only a federal approach can protect this strategic region over the long term.

The bill also has the support of many Acadian and Indigenous groups, including the Société de l'Acadie du Nouveau-Brunswick, the Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse and the Société nationale de l'Acadie. In 2024, Acadian groups began the process of creating a national park on the Chignecto Isthmus. At its annual meeting on Sunday, November 16, the Société nationale de l'Acadie passed a motion that reads as follows:

That the Société nationale de l'Acadie fully support Bill S-216 and any other bill recognizing the Chignecto Isthmus dykeland system and related works to be for the general advantage of Canada.

These organizations also stressed the importance of preserving the Acadian cultural and heritage sites in the region, which bear witness to a history deeply rooted in our shared identity. The lands, the marshes and the dykes tell the story of the ingenuity and resilience of the Acadian people, while bearing witness to the millennia of Indigenous presence there.

By supporting this bill, we honour this shared memory and ensure that these heritage sites are protected in a consistent, lasting and respectful manner. Some have questioned Parliament's jurisdiction to intervene in this matter. It is worth noting that the Nova Scotia Court ruled on this issue and chose not to supplant the legislature. It left this decision to the sole discretion of the Parliament of Canada.

That means, honourable senators, that the responsibility falls directly on us. It is up to us, as legislators, to decide whether protecting the Chignecto Isthmus is in the national interest. The answer is clearly yes.

• (1520)

When the geographic, economic and human unity of a province depends on a single land link, the federal government not only has the right to act, but a moral duty to act.

Current estimates place the cost of upgrading and reinforcing the dykeland system at about \$650 million. That figure comes from a 2022 joint study carried out by the governments of Canada, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

The cost may seem high, but it would be a strategic investment in Canada's national security and climate resiliency. Considering the human and economic losses that would result from a major flood, estimated at several billions of dollars, this investment isn't only justified, it's urgent.

Although the governments of Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick have managed to come to terms on funding for the work on the Chignecto Isthmus, it is still crucial for Parliament to take action. A mere financial agreement, however important, does not assign jurisdiction or legal responsibility for this vital infrastructure.

Unless the declaratory power is invoked, the dykes will remain under provincial jurisdiction. This means that the provinces would remain responsible for managing and maintaining the dykes and protecting them against climate change, even with the federal government's financial support.

However, the Chignecto Isthmus isn't just a local issue, it's also a national issue and a strategic issue for Canada's economy, security and cohesion.

That's why it is essential that Parliament declare these dykes to be of national interest. Such a declaration would allow the Government of Canada to take full responsibility for this infrastructure, ensure lasting and coordinated management, and guarantee that public investments are protected by rigorous technical and environmental standards.

Beyond the practical aspects, however, this is about a national vision. The Chignecto Isthmus is the lifeline that connects the Atlantic provinces to the rest of Canada. Protecting these dykes is not just about protecting land and infrastructure; it's about preserving our country's integrity and shared future.

By exercising this declaratory power, Parliament will affirm that Canada is acting with foresight, responsibility and unity, and that it is not merely reacting to crises, but giving itself the necessary tools to protect its citizens and its territory in the long term.

The Chignecto Isthmus is not just a border between two provinces. It is a natural bridge between two regions, between our peoples and our history. It is a symbol of cooperation between Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, between the Acadians, the Mi'kmaq and all those who live and work in this region.

Supporting Bill S-216 means choosing prevention over reaction. It means taking action before a disaster forces our hand. It means advocating for a coordinated, responsible federal approach to protect a vital link in Atlantic Canada, one that is unequivocally for the advantage of Canada.

Colleagues, I invite you to support Bill S-216 for the safety of our citizens, for the vitality of our economy and for the preservation of our shared heritage.

Thank you.

(On motion of Senator Clement, debate adjourned.)

[English]

## NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR SOIL HEALTH BILL

### SECOND READING

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Black, seconded by the Honourable Senator Downe, for the second reading of Bill S-230, An Act respecting the development of a national strategy for soil health protection, conservation and enhancement.

**Hon. Salma Ataullahjan:** Honourable senators, I rise today as the friendly critic of Bill S-230, An Act respecting the development of a national strategy for soil health protection, conservation and enhancement.

Let me begin by commending Senator Black for his leadership in bringing this legislation forward. It is, quite simply, long overdue. This bill gives voice to an issue that is both ancient and urgent — the health of the ground beneath our feet.

Many of you might not know this, but I come from an agricultural family. We are landowners in Pakistan, so I grew up hearing about soil health, soil erosion, et cetera, but their significance never registered when I was younger. Time,

however, has a way of teaching quietly, and with it came the realization that the health of our soil is inseparable from the issue that I've been most passionate about — human rights.

When soils degrade, hunger follows, water quality declines and livelihoods vanish. Conflicts over land and resources grow, and the people who suffer first are always the most vulnerable: those who have the least. Thus, in protecting, conserving and enhancing soil health, we protect the most essential of human rights.

Soil is not simply earth and matter. As the Senate's *Critical Ground: Why Soil is Essential to Canada's Economic, Environmental, Human, and Social Health* report reminded us, it is as vital to human existence as air and water. It purifies and stores water, cycles nutrients, captures carbon and produces 95% of the food that sustains us.

In Canada, only 6.7% of our land is suitable for agriculture, a thin, irreplaceable skin upon which our food security and rural economy depend. That precious layer is now at risk. Degradation, contamination, erosion and conversion to non-agricultural use are steadily consuming the foundation of our prosperity.

This in itself is a human rights concern. The right to food, enshrined in international law, cannot exist without fertile soil. The right to health cannot survive in a landscape where toxins make their way into our food chain. And the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment depends on the vitality of the earth beneath us.

Soil that has lost its ability to sustain crops or retain water harms more than just farmers. Every loaf of bread, every fruit and every harvest begins in the soil. Depleted or contaminated soil, therefore, leads to lower yields and unsafe crops, threatening both food security and nutrition.

To add to this, soil acts as a natural filter that purifies water as it moves through the ground. When soil structure breaks down or becomes polluted, that filter fails, leading to contaminated water sources that deny communities their right to clean and safe water.

Depleted soil health also threatens many people's right to a livelihood. Farmers, agricultural workers and rural populations rely on healthy soil for income, stability and survival. In Canada, over 2.3 million people work in the agriculture and agri-food system, contributing almost \$150 billion to our GDP, thus making soil health the bedrock of our prosperity, our health and our future.

Soil health is also fundamentally linked to our environmental rights. When soil health suffers, it sets off a chain reaction that upsets the planet's equilibrium. The air grows harsher, the waters run foul and biodiversity declines. In that collapse, the environmental balance that sustains human life begins to unravel.

Clearly, soil health is not just a side issue; it is a cornerstone of survival and justice. Healthy soil connects every part of our economy and our ecosystem. It's Canada's first line of defence against climate extremes. When we lose it, we don't just lose farmland; we lose biodiversity, community vitality and economic stability.

That is why a national strategy is so critical. It sets the stage for a whole-of-Canada effort, a unifying framework that empowers farmers, foresters, scientists, Indigenous communities and citizens alike. It fosters cooperation by aligning what is already working, filling the gaps and giving the issue national profile.

• (1530)

The need for this kind of leadership has never been clearer. Around the world, nations are acting. From the European Union's soil monitoring and resilience directive to Australia's National Soil Strategy and the United States' Soil Conservation Act and Conservation Stewardship Program, we see examples of how governments seek to confront the growing crisis of soil degradation. Canada should be among these leaders. We have the science, the innovation and the agricultural expertise. What we lack is the coordination and the political will.

Across this country, many are already doing remarkable work. Farmers have adopted regenerative practices like no-till farming, rotational grazing and cover cropping. Municipal councils in Amaranth and Wellington North have passed resolutions supporting the *Critical Ground* recommendations. Youth in 4-H debates are discussing soil preservation as a matter of civic responsibility.

Indigenous communities, too, bring irreplaceable wisdom to this effort. Their traditional knowledge teaches us that soil is not a commodity but a living trust, something to be honoured and renewed for the generations to come. Bill S-230 acknowledges this truth by mandating the inclusion of Indigenous governments and knowledge systems in the national strategy. That is not only respectful; it is essential to our success.

The message from every corner of this country is the same: Soil health must be a national priority.

Colleagues, ambition is not enough without implementation. It is Canada's time to act. The soil crisis is silent and slow, but its consequences are profound. It does not make the nightly news, yet it shapes the future of every community in this country. Passing this bill is a tangible way for the Senate to lead and to turn study into action and concern into commitment.

I urge you to support this bill at second reading and send it to committee for further study.

Thank you.

[ Senator Ataullahjan ]

**The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore:** Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to and bill read second time.)

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

**The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore:** Honourable senators, when shall this bill be read the third time?

(On motion of Senator Patterson, for Senator Black, bill referred to the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry.)

## THE SENATE

MOTION THAT ALL COMMITTEES CONSIDER THE  
INFLUENCES AND IMPACTS OF TECHNOLOGY IN ANY  
STUDIES FOR THE REMAINDER OF CURRENT SESSION—  
DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Deacon (*Nova Scotia*), seconded by the Honourable Senator Downe:

That, for the remainder of the current session, all committees consider the influences and impacts of technology in any study, including the consideration of bills, the subject matter of bills, estimates and special studies, authorized by the Senate, including any such work already authorized but not yet completed.

(On motion of Senator Martin, debate adjourned.)

## BANKING, COMMERCE AND THE ECONOMY

COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO STUDY ACCESS TO CREDIT  
AND CAPITAL MARKETS FOR SMALL- AND MEDIUM-SIZED  
ENTERPRISES

**Hon. Daryl Fridhandler,** for Senator Gignac, pursuant to notice of November 18, 2025, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Commerce and the Economy be authorized to examine and report on access to credit and capital markets for small- and medium-sized enterprises as the basis for growth and improved productivity in the Canadian economy;

That the committee be permitted, notwithstanding usual practices, to deposit reports on this study with the Clerk of the Senate, if the Senate is not then sitting, and that the reports be deemed to have been tabled in the Senate; and

That the committee submit its final report to the Senate no later than June 30, 2026, and that the committee retain all powers necessary to publicize its findings until 180 days after the tabling of the final report.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

*(At 3:36 p.m., the Senate was continued until Tuesday, November 25, 2025, at 2 p.m.)*

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