



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

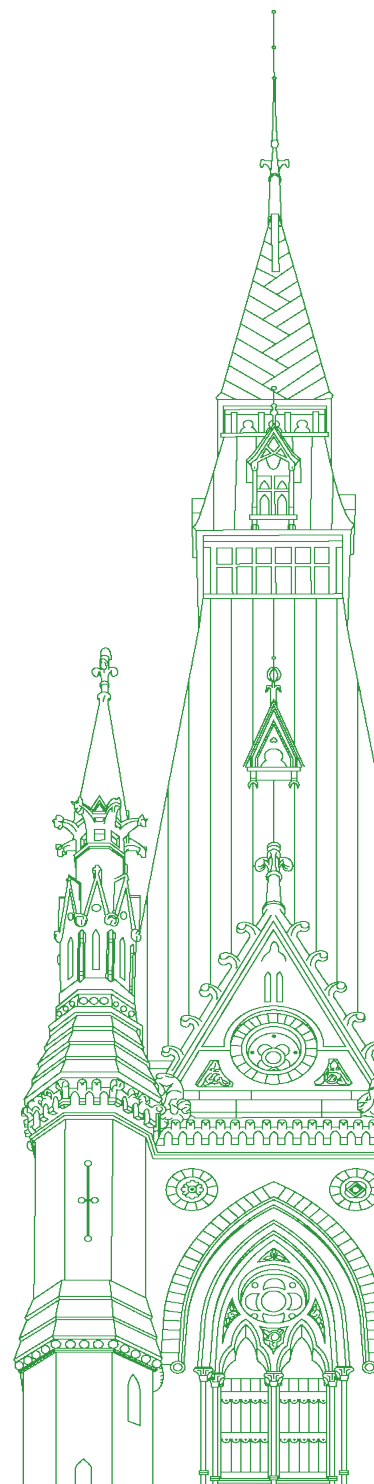
45th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

House of Commons Debates

Official Report
(Hansard)

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Thursday, September 24, 2026

Speaker: The Honourable Francis Scarpaleggia



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, September 24, 2026

The House met at 10:00 a.m.

[English]

Prayer

PETITIONS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

• (1000)

[Translation]

AUDITOR GENERAL OF CANADA

The Speaker: It is my duty to lay before the House, pursuant to subsection 94(2) of the Access to Information Act and subsection 72(2) of the Privacy Act, the reports of the Auditor General of Canada on the administration of these acts for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026. Pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(h), these reports are deemed to have been permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics.

* * *

[English]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Chris Bittle (St. Catharines, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Orders 104 and 114, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 33rd report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs regarding membership of committees of the House.

If the House gives its consent, I move that the 33rd report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs presented in the House earlier this day be concurred in.

[Translation]

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

There being no dissenting voice, it is agreed.

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

(Motion agreed to)

Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise very proudly today to present a petition, which is critical in upholding the ongoing project of reconciliation, put forward by residential school survivors, many of whom are joining us in Ottawa today. They are very concerned that the federal government is not upholding its duty of care for survivors, families and communities on the path of reconciliation. I would like to thank the survivors, along with the petition's initiator, Eva Wilson-Fontaine, who helped get so many signatures.

This petition calls on the Government of Canada to renew the residential schools missing children community support fund, which the government is currently planning to phase out this year. It also urges the government to advance survivor supports, which are the healing and cultural services we know are vital to address the trauma endured during the genocidal period perpetrated in the Indian residential schools. The petitioners note that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission calls to action 72 through 76, on missing children and burial records, and calls to action 21 and 22, on indigenous healing, remain unfulfilled.

As we approach the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, it is critical that the Government of Canada fulfill its moral and legal obligations to uphold the well-being of indigenous peoples and protect the truth of the residential school system that is being shared by survivors against denialist hate. From the bottom of my heart, I thank the petitioners, including those who have travelled to be with us today.

There is no reconciliation without truth. There is no reconciliation if we do not protect and honour survivors.

Routine Proceedings

● (1005)

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Tamara Jansen (Cloverdale—Langley City, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of Canadians calling on the government to address IRCC processing backlogs. Petitioners note that prolonged delays leave applicants, employers and communities in uncertainty. They call for action to end the dysfunction that wastes government resources and to restore confidence in the immigration system.

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING

Tamara Jansen (Cloverdale—Langley City, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have another petition in support of Bill C-218, the right to recover act. Petitioners are concerned with the planned expansion of medical assistance in dying to those whose sole underlying medical condition is mental illness. They note that mental illness can be treatable, that recovery is possible and that many Canadians still face barriers to accessing timely mental health care. Petitioners are concerned that vulnerable Canadians could seek MAID before receiving the treatment they so badly need. They therefore call on the government to pass Bill C-218 and permanently exclude mental illness alone for MAID eligibility.

● (1010)

[Translation]

SOCIAL MEDIA

Jacques Ramsay (La Prairie—Atateken, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition signed by people from La Prairie—Atateken and across the country who are concerned about the impact that social media is having on our children.

This petition is part of a national initiative, AgeStandard, that has collected over 17,600 signatures online from parents, some of whom work in the tech industry themselves. This petition reminds us of the documented effects that social media is having on the mental health of our children, whose rates of anxiety and depression have doubled since the creation of these platforms.

I would like to remind the House that these platforms filter and tailor their content using algorithmic recommendations and promote violent and sensationalistic content. Users' feeds are constantly being adjusted based on their interactions and set to autoplay to encourage endless scrolling.

The petition therefore calls on the government to pass legislation that would prevent children under the age of 16 from creating social media accounts. The petitioners want users to have to do more than simply check a box. They want certified third parties that are independent from the platforms to be responsible for verifying users' age based on a common technical standard that respects privacy.

In the spring, our government introduced its own response to this issue. However, I believe that AgeStandard's proposal is in keeping with that discussion and should inform our debates on Bill C-34.

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Sukhman Gill (Abbotsford—South Langley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to be back for the fall session representing

the great community of Abbotsford—South Langley, but today I come with many concerns.

I present eight petitions, including hundreds of signatures, on behalf of concerned Canadians regarding the rise in organized crime, extortion, shootings and violence in the Lower Mainland and across the nation. These petitions call on the Government of Canada to reinforce both public reporting and coordination between all levels of government so that Canadians can have the confidence that actions are being taken to combat violence and organized crime.

TRANS-CANADA HIGHWAY

Gaétan Malette (Kapuskasing—Timmins—Mushkegowuk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise to present petitions on behalf of the residents of Kirkland Lake, Ontario, who have added their voices to this growing call for action.

Across northern Ontario, communities are asking the federal government to recognize the need to improve the Trans-Canada Highway 11 by designating it as a project of national interest. The people of Kirkland Lake are making it clear that northern Ontario deserves safer roads and stronger infrastructure.

People are working together. The Province of Ontario is taking steps to improve truck driver training and highway safety. Now we need all levels of government to sit together at the table.

[Translation]

BILINGUALISM IN THE CANADIAN FORCES

Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise in the House today to table a petition on behalf of Éric Sauv . It has been signed by 3,451 Canadians from across the country. They are calling on the Minister of National Defence to withdraw a directive that is undermining bilingualism in the Canadian Forces, particularly for francophones.

I am tabling this petition and await the minister's response.

[English]

CANADA STUDENT GRANT

Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition concerning Canada student grant eligibility for registered massage therapy students in British Columbia.

The petitioners are concerned that restricting eligibility would make it more difficult for students to access training for an in-demand health care profession. At a time when British Columbians need more RMTs, the petitioners do not want new financial barriers to be put in the way of students pursuing this regulated health care profession.

The petitioners are calling on the government to maintain Canada student grant eligibility for provincially regulated RMT programs in British Columbia.

OVER-THE-HORIZON RADAR SYSTEM

Terry Dowdall (Simcoe—Grey, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise once again to present another petition. Members are probably hearing this one over and over again. The petition is from the great people of Simcoe—Grey.

The petitioners are opposed to the over-the-horizon radar system. They are opposed not the actual system itself, but the location. The Department of National Defence purchased 700 acres, but it may need another 2,600 to 3,000 acres, which would be expropriated. The individuals in the riding are extremely concerned, and they do not think the government has exhausted every opportunity at other locations for this particular over-the-horizon radar system. As well, it is right beside the Minesing Wetlands. It is prime farm agriculture land, and it would totally change the face of Clearview Township as it stands today.

The petitioners are asking the government to stop the building of the over-the-horizon radar site on the property that was already purchased, which was roughly 700 acres from one farmer, and prevent the future acquisition of prime farmland and the building of the over-the-horizon radar system in the prime farmland of Clearview Township.

There is always a struggle between food security and national security. However, we can never forget how important it is, and we will never get this farmland back.

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING

Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition from dozens of Canadians in support of Bill C-218, which is commonly referred to as the right to recover act.

The petitioners recognize that the Canadian government intends to expand medical assistance in dying to individuals whose sole medical condition is mental illness. They also recognize that mental illness is treatable and curable. The experts have acknowledged that there is no way to determine when mental illness is irremediable.

The petitioners are asking the government to not proceed with its intention to make mental illness a sole underlying condition for the expansion of MAID. They would like all parliamentarians to support Bill C-218, which would permanently remove that possibility from being considered.

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, petition e-7341 was initiated by a constituent in the riding of Waterloo. With almost 45 online signatures, the petitioners are raising concerns regarding the prolonged security screen delays of applicants residing in Canada with valid immigration status.

I have spoken with many of these constituents and have heard a range of perspectives. Constituents agree that we cannot compromise the security and safety of Canadians, which is why the petitioners are asking the House of Commons to request the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security to study immigration security screening delays to review whether existing re-

Routine Proceedings

sources are sufficient, examine the accountability mechanisms for timely security screenings, evaluate the use of a risk-based triage system and consider independent oversight or audits from officers who report Parliament.

The petitioners have shared with numerous MPs their personal experiences, and they are reiterating those through my presenting this petition on their behalf.

OFFICIAL RESIDENCES

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise today in the House to present an e-petition that was originated by someone concerned that Canada is the only G7 country that provides a fully funded home for the leader of the official opposition. I am presenting this, obviously, without any thought to any particular person.

Given the rules around petitions, I do not take a position on the petition. I would just say that this e-petition has attracted over 20,000 signatures of Canadians who would like the House to examine whether we should continue to provide a fully funded home for the leader of the official opposition.

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING

Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will begin by presenting a number of petitions on the real horror that the so-called medical assistance in dying regime in this country has become. We have seen how this is really a matter of national shame. In debates in parliaments around the world, Canada has been identified as a cautionary tale of what can happen when things go wrong in the health care system as a result of an out-of-control, poorly managed and poorly regulated system of so-called medically facilitated death.

I am thinking in the context of this petition on MAID coercion, particularly the story of Brigitte Stegemann, an 83-year-old woman who was killed under very suspicious circumstances. The Belleville police are investigating. This story has not been covered in any mainstream media in Canada. People have to go to British newspapers to read about it. This is the horror that the system has become, and it is not being discussed nearly enough in this country, but I am pleased to be able to bring the voice of petitioners to the House on this issue through a number of petitions that draw attention to this problem.

The first petition highlights, in particular, the situation of the disability community in this country and how choosing so-called MAID due to a lack of available services or treatments is not a real choice, that allowing facilitated death for those with disabilities or chronic illnesses who are not dying devalues their lives and tacitly endorses the notion that life with disability is optional. Petitioners call on the government to make incremental reforms to this regime to protect all Canadians whose natural death is not reasonably foreseeable by prohibiting medical assistance in dying for those whose prognosis for a natural death is more than six months.

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We have also, incredibly, heard proposals even in the House to extend facilitated death to children. I have a second petition that calls on the government to not ever legalize the killing of children within our medical system.

There was a proposal made by Louis Roy of the Quebec College of Physicians, incredibly, to legalize the killing of infants with so-called severe deformities and very serious syndromes. With these kinds of proposals, it is no wonder that the British Parliament, on all sides, has called Canada a cautionary tale—

• (1015)

The Speaker: I would remind the hon. member that the object is to summarize petitions succinctly.

Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, to summarize, this petition calls on the Government of Canada to block any attempt to allow the killing of children.

FALUN GONG

Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the next petition I am tabling highlights the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners in the People's Republic of China at the hands of the CCP. It notes that the CCP has been engaged in a multidecades' long campaign to promote the eradication of this peaceful spiritual movement, a movement that is simply focused on truthfulness, compassion and forbearance.

At a time of so-called strategic partnership between Canada and the government of China, petitioners want to see the government publicly call on the Chinese regime to end its persecution of Falun Gong practitioners, to impose sanctions on and pursue accountability for CCP officials and proxies responsible for these human rights violations, and to take stronger measures to protect the community from foreign interference.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all questions be allowed to stand at this time.

The Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

BUILDING CANADA STRONG ACT

The House resumed from September 23 consideration of the motion that Bill C-39, An Act respecting certain measures to strengthen the economy, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Hon. Kody Blois (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is great to be back. I hope you had a

great summer with your constituents in the Montreal area. I had the opportunity to engage with the people I have the privilege of representing, and it is great to bring their voices to Parliament. I hope all of my colleagues had an opportunity to do the same throughout the summer months.

I will be splitting my time this morning with the hon. member for Davenport.

Today, we are here to talk about the building Canada strong act, but I would be remiss if I did not take 30 seconds, given the fact that I was in my constituency this summer, to recognize some tremendous young athletes from my community. I am a former fast pitch softball player. I do not know if any members in the House have played fast pitch softball. It is a sport played mostly in smaller and rural communities across the country.

I want to put into the Hansard that Nova Scotia had four medals on the men's side in four different categories. At the under-17 level, the Brookfield Elks, with a number of athletes from my riding, won the Canadian championship. At the under-20 level, the Brookfield Elks won a bronze medal. At the under-23 level, the Nova Scotia team, again, composed of many athletes from Kings—Hants, won a silver medal, and at the top level of senior men's softball, East Hants won a bronze medal. I want to make sure that is on the record. We are proud of our athletes and certainly proud of the work they are doing at the national level.

On to more important things, we were elected as a government to focus on building a more resilient economy. We know there are headwinds and challenges globally. We are facing tariffs from the U.S. administration, which is changing its trade policy, but the focus of the Prime Minister and the government has been to focus on controlling what we can control as a country. The Prime Minister and the Minister of Transport have made very clear that the building Canada strong act is the most important piece of economic legislation the government has introduced to date to really focus on driving projects that matter in the national interest of the country, such as the modernization of key trade corridors, including ports, across this country, and to also look at our supply chains and the way our labour context works in this country.

Generally, collective bargaining has worked very well, but in some key strategic areas, we want to ensure there are additional measures and initiatives that can ensure that both the employer and the union representing workers can get to a deal that is fair for parties. We feel it is incumbent on the government to actually establish the initiatives and supports to help make that happen. Those are the three pillars of this very important piece of legislation.

I will take us through why that matters, and I am going to start on the regulatory permitting piece. Many members of the House would agree with me that Canada has what the world needs. We are an agricultural superpower in our ability to help feed the world. We have a major potash industry that is, in fact, the largest in the world. It is global in nature. We need to get that supply to the world. We have the energy the world needs. We have the ability to fuel the world. Again, whether that is in pipeline access or the ability to get energy to world markets, we have to have the supply chain to make that happen. We have to be willing, particularly at this moment when Canada is being called upon by countries around the world, to be even more of a secure energy supplier. We have to work on the major projects that help drive our economy forward.

We can talk about critical minerals, whether from the perspective of a military application or of clean energy. As one of the younger members of the House, I think about the future that I would like to leave for my future family, our constituents and people around the world. Critical minerals are going to be a really important part to our clean energy future. However, Canada has an outsized role globally to make sure those critical minerals are available to our allies and that we have alternative supply chains. That requires us, as parliamentarians, and certainly as a government, to make sure the regulatory conditions are in place so we can drive that process forward. What the government is proposing is essentially one window, one regulator and a one-year review once the proponent has submitted all the necessary information to the federal regulator.

Members of Parliament will remember that our government introduced Bill C-5 for this type of principle on major national projects. There have been 17 major projects that have been referred to the MPO. While I am on my feet, I would like to recognize the work of Dawn Farrell, someone who has great experience in the private sector and who is doing very important work to lead that agency and help ensure that we can advance projects that are in the national interest. Some members of Parliament have rightly asked if that is a good principle for major national projects. They have asked about how we take those principles and how we could ensure that perhaps mid-sized projects and projects of more local or regional interest could also have the same principles applied regarding the rigour in which we are trying to move processes forward quickly without shortcuts.

I think it is important for Canadians at home to understand the values that underpin not only how we want to ensure environmental safety and participation with indigenous groups in this country, but also the desire to make sure we can create certainty for businesses to invest in this country.

● (1020)

We are trying to reconcile all that and to do so on a more expedited timeline, and that is exactly what we are proposing today. What that looks like is that as opposed to having multiple line departments, such as Transport Canada, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, perhaps ECCC or, of course, indigenous engagement through Crown-Indigenous Relations, we should find a way to have it under one federal project review. While there could be a multitude of federal departments that would perhaps under current legislation have a role and responsibility, and we do not want to take away that expertise or that understanding of why those elements are

Government Orders

important for projects, we have to be able to find the way to make it under one federal project review, not multiple ones, which is just challenging for the proponents trying to advance them.

It is also challenging for indigenous communities. I have the privilege of representing three of them. One piece of feedback I have had in the seven years I have been involved in Parliament is that if we have ongoing consultation through multiple line departments, this does create a capacity challenge to ensure that indigenous communities are actively participating and have the resources to make sure they can share their perspective, as per our constitutional requirements in this country.

Therefore, one thing this legislation proposes is a Crown consultation hub. This is the idea that in consultation, the multitude of federal departments that may have a say on a federal permitting decision could actually go through one body to engage with the nation in question to be able to provide the multitude of different perspectives we may need, as opposed to a series, a multitude, of departments playing that out over time. This is what we would, I guess, refer to as common sense. We think this is something that would reconcile the interests of ensuring that indigenous communities are engaged and we are meeting our constitutional requirements, with, at the same time, providing the proponent and a federal regulator with the ability to make that happen.

Instead of a multitude of departments, it would be the Canada Energy Regulator, the Canada Nuclear Safety Commission or the Impact Assessment Agency. One of those three agencies would have the purview to make all the federal decisions, with engagement from federal departments, with the goal of having a one-year decision once all applicable information is submitted. That is incumbent. We as parliamentarians across the House, I hope, can recognize that is important. It is something we have to be able to push forward.

On supply chain certainty, we have heard, and I have heard, commentary outside the House that the bill is trying to limit the ability to strike in this country. Let me say that this is simply not the case. What the bill is proposing is to put additional measures in terms of mediation support, such as a special mediator when there are complex cases between an employer and labour.

I go back to the point I made, which is that we have what the world needs, we have an obligation and we are in a critical moment for this country. We as a government feel it is absolutely incumbent to ensure that we are putting all the resources possible to be able to get to a resolution between the employer and the union. We understand the importance of labour in this country.

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At the same time, we are putting critical provisions around the utilization of section 107, which is held by the Minister of Jobs. We feel that is an appropriate balance to make sure we are protecting the constitutional rights of workers and at the same time trying to ensure we are putting the resources to get the best deal at the table.

When we look at the legislation and the proposals from the government, we see there is actually a proposal to put 100 additional resources, this being full-time equivalents, to the Canadian Industrial Review Board. Again, this is a mechanism where, if parties get to an impasse, we could be trying to provide assistance to ensure that there is good-faith bargaining and that we could get to an outcome that matters for employers and also matters, most importantly, for the workers and the people who drive our economy across this country.

There is a lot in the bill, and I wish I had more than 10 minutes, but last is a modernization around port governance. Ports play an extremely important role in our country, and the provisions in the bill would allow for additional discretion for port boards in their capacity to make regulatory decisions, which we think is streamlined and the right way to go.

At the end of the day, the bill is about building Canada. I look forward to taking questions from my colleagues.

• (1025)

Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is an important debate. Members are studying a very lengthy piece of legislation.

I want to ask the member about the messages the government is sending now, relative to messages the government has sent in the past. Under the Liberal government, there was the passage of Bill C-69 and C-48, which are government bills that really obstructed the development of anything in this country, certainly the export of natural resources. Now we hear the government at least saying some good things. It is saying that we should be selling our resources to the world and that we should be developing and building things.

I wonder if the member will acknowledge there is some change. Is there some recognition that big mistakes were made in the last 10 years in this regard?

• (1030)

Hon. Kody Blois: Mr. Speaker, we have a new government under a new Prime Minister, and it is a government that is deeply focused on economic growth across the country. I would remind the hon. member that the oil and gas sector did grow under the last 10 years of the Liberal government, at the same time as we also reduced emissions in the country. The last government certainly sought the balance between economic growth and environmental protection. The current government will endeavour to do the same.

The last government built a pipeline to the Pacific coast. The current government, through the work of the Prime Minister and certainly by engaging Premier Smith, is open to another west coast pipeline, because it knows that being able to move the product to Asian markets is extremely important. Our ability to move liquefied natural gas off the B.C. coast to ensure that countries in the Pacific do not have to burn more coal in their energy grid is actually part of

a global emissions reduction strategy. We are proud of the work we are doing here, and I know that members of the member's home province are proud of the current government as well.

[*Translation*]

Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, democracy is a daily challenge involving a delicate balance between the executive and legislative branches. However, Bill C-5 and especially Bill C-39 represent a step backwards not only for the environment and workers' rights, but also for democracy. The tariff war is being exploited to quietly push through permanent rollbacks that will have no effect for the remainder of Donald Trump's term of office. The cornerstone of democracy is the legislative branch, namely, the people's representatives, and we are part of that branch.

Is the member aware that, despite his good intentions, there are sometimes changes in government and that we are setting a historical precedent by granting extraordinary powers to the executive branch?

[*English*]

Hon. Kody Blois: Mr. Speaker, certainly in our system, there is cabinet, which is made up of members of Parliament who sit in the House. The member, in his remarks, his intervention, talked about tariffs. I do not know if there was a substantive piece where he disagrees with the policy that the government has introduced of countervailing duties to protect Canadian industry, to protect Quebec businesses, to protect Quebec workers, I should say. The member has the privilege and honour, as a member of Parliament representing his constituents, to stand in this place and to be able to take a position if he disagrees with the elected government and its utilization of our policy to protect Canadian workers.

Let us be very clear that we do this reluctantly. We believe in free and open trade. We recognize the importance of the commercial relationship we have had with the United States, but the executive stands behind the decisions it has made to protect Canadian workers at a time when, if we do not respond, we will be hurting Quebec businesses as well.

Braedon Clark (Sackville—Bedford—Preston, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary secretary and I have adjoining ridings, so of course we have a lot of overlapping interests. At the end of his speech, the parliamentary secretary touched on ports a little bit. The port of Halifax is one of the major ports in our country, with direct access to the U.S. northeast, Europe and the rest of the world.

I wonder if the member could elaborate a bit more on how the bill would aid our ports, not just in Halifax but across the country, to make sure we get our goods to market all around the world.

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Hon. Kody Blois: Mr. Speaker, my colleague and I have the opportunity to work together, and I know we share an interest in the port of Halifax. If Parliament is to bring this forward, the bill itself would allow for additional governance for the port of Halifax or other ports across the country, which would centre around regulatory decisions, trade corridors and the ability to work together on how best we get to the outcomes around both importation and exportation of products across the country. This is what the ports were calling for. This would give additional flexibility for governance in that area.

Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as always, it is a true honour for me to rise in the House on behalf of the residents of my constituency of Davenport to speak to Bill C-39, the building Canada strong act.

Let me start by talking a little about the moment we are living in. I think it is really important for us to understand the context in which the bill is introduced. As we often say these days, the world has changed. The Prime Minister has called it a “rupture”. Our relationship with the United States, our largest trading partner, is not what it was. We face unjustified tariffs on Canadian workers and industries, and we face talk about our sovereignty that no Canadian ever expected to hear from an American president.

Last week, before the European Parliament, the Prime Minister described what we were up against: trade being weaponized, tariffs used as pressure, and supply chains turned into vulnerabilities. His answer was not to retreat; it was to build our strength at home and to work with trusted, like-minded partners who share our belief in democracy and the rule of law.

We are seeking alliances that are strong enough so that no one can dictate our choices here in Canada. That is exactly what Canadians have asked of us. They have given the government a clear mandate to protect our economy, our prosperity and our sovereignty. We are doing that by diversifying our trade with reliable partners and by building right here at home. The world is responding. Just over a week ago, at Canada's first-ever investment summit, investors from nearly 30 countries, managing more than \$100 trillion in assets, came to Toronto to look at more than 160 Canadian projects.

The summit closed with nearly half a trillion dollars in new investment commitments. However, interest is not the same as shovels in the ground. Investors told us what communities have told us for years: Our approvals have taken too long. Projects have often waited more than five years for federal decisions, with separate reviews and separate consultations for each permit.

That is why our government has introduced Bill C-39, which is before the House today. It would create the conditions for investment in projects that support good jobs and growth and for the safe and efficient movement of goods across our country, while protecting the environment and upholding the rights of indigenous peoples.

I know we have heard this multiple times, but it is important for me to state as well that the bill has three key parts.

The first part, “Build Canada Now”, would modernize our regulatory and permitting system to eliminate duplication with lengthy

timelines. Our standard is simple: one project, one review and one year. Canada will always be a country of high standards, but high standards do not mean that the decisions have to be slow. The second part is “Keep Canada Moving”. We would be modernizing our transportation systems. This would reduce bottlenecks and better connect our trade corridors and ports so goods move faster and costs come down. The third part, “Canada Strong For All”, would modernize the Canada Labour Code and strengthen protections for workers.

I have heard some questions from my constituents. They have been asking me why the bill is so large. The answer is that getting a project built never depends on just one thing. It depends on assessments, on energy regulation and on fisheries, waterways, ports, rails and the workers who build them. It depends on many things. If we fix only one of those aspects, the project is still stuck. To actually get things built, we have to fix a number of laws together, ideally all at once.

Why do we have to move quickly? It is because investment decisions being made now will shape our economy for decades. The capital that does not come here will go elsewhere. However, urgency cannot mean skipping scrutiny. The bill deserves the debate we are having now in the House. It deserves careful study at committee. I know that we are open to making it even better.

I want to spend a little bit more time on the labour aspects of the bill, which are in part 3, because there is a lot of misinformation out there and because I know that my constituents care about labour deeply. My riding of Davenport was built by working people, many of them newcomers to Canada. Let me be very clear: There is no provision in the bill that would take away the right to strike. That right is protected by the charter, and the current government will always protect it. What the bill would do is give workers and employers more tools, more time and more assets to reach a deal at the table, where the best agreements are made.

● (1035)

About 95% of federally regulated disputes are already resolved without a work stoppage. This bill focuses on the few relationships that break down again and again.

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Let me highlight just a few of those measures. First, where the last round ended in a strike, a lockout or imposed arbitration, bargaining must start six months early with federal mediators at the table. Second, the bill would extend the conciliation period from 60 days to 90 days, giving both parties time to reach a deal before any strike or a lockout. Third, a new special mediator would work intensively with both sides, and if there were no deal, the mediator's report would become public. That report would set out where each side stands and why talks broke down so members, employers and Canadians could see it all. Fourth, newly unionized workers, new unions, would get support from our government to reach a first contract. Fifth, the bill would enable penalties for bargaining in bad faith. Those measures are only part of it. Alongside these changes come stronger protections for workers on the job, from safer workplaces to a real crackdown on wage theft.

Let me turn to section 107 because I know there has been a lot of discussion about it in the media and in this House. This is not a new provision. It has been in the Canada Labour Code since 1984. Unions have told us that it has been used without enough transparency, so we listened and have proposed some changes. Bill C-39 would put guardrails around it. Before a minister can even consider using it, a special mediator would need to have completed their work and a public report would need to have been considered. Then the minister would need to conclude that a work stoppage would have a significant adverse national impact in an assessment that must weigh the right to strike. There must be a balance of items that are weighed in that decision.

As the Minister of Jobs and Families has said, the minister would have to show their work, clearly laying out the reasons why intervention was necessary in the national interest. I know that many labour leaders see this differently. I very much respect that and we will be listening very closely to them at the committee. However, it is important to remember that, at its heart, this bill would help parties address issues earlier, reach negotiated agreements and resolve disputes, while fully protecting the right to strike. Extraordinary intervention should always be a last resort. When negotiations go well, everyone wins.

Davenport constituents have also written to me, worried that we are dismantling environmental protections. This bill would not remove impact assessments that examine environmental, health and social effects, nor would it remove permitting or consultation. It would change who leads the review and how departments work together, not the standards that apply. One year does not mean cutting corners. The clock only starts once a complete application and all studies are in.

There have been extensive consultations on this bill because consultations matter. Over the summer, Canadians sent in more than 26,000 submissions. The government had proposed letting cabinet exempt some projects from the jeopardy test in the Species at Risk Act. We heard directly from Canadians that they did not like this. They pushed back very strongly and the proposal is not in this bill.

Finally, I want to spend a minute on the impact on indigenous communities. This bill would not change the duty to consult, our modern treaty obligations or commitments under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act. It would change the burden. Instead of a separate consultation for every de-

partment and every permit, there would be one coordinated process per community, per project, through a new Crown consultation hub that would identify concerns early with the aim of securing free, prior and informed consent. Timelines, though, could be extended or suspended to complete consultation.

The Prime Minister often says we can give ourselves far more than anyone can take away. This bill is how we are doing that. We are building faster. We are protecting workers. We are protecting nature and building in partnership with indigenous peoples. I urge all members to support Bill C-39 and work with us to make it even stronger at committee.

• (1040)

Jeremy Patzer (Swift Current—Grasslands—Kindersley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member spoke a lot about the labour portion of this bill, which is part 3. We have seen, over the last couple of years, a lot of strikes at the port of Vancouver, as well as the rail companies.

In the member's opinion, how would this bill have handled or interacted with those strikes and those labour situations at the port of Vancouver and the rail strikes?

Julie Dzerowicz: Mr. Speaker, it is directly because of those experiences over the last 10 years that I think we learned a lot as a government.

I also want to say that both our Minister of Labour and our Minister of Employment and Jobs spent the summer talking to labour leaders right across our country about section 107, building Canada strong, and how is it we can actually support them better with respect to reaching a deal at the table, because we know that the best deals are when both sides agree. They are the ones that are sustained and strong. A lot of the things we heard were put into our bill so we can strengthen it and make sure we do not have those strikes ongoing.

• (1045)

[Translation]

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Bill C-39 represents another major step backward on environmental issues as well as on workers' rights.

The government would have people believe that the bill will not result in environmental rollbacks. It says environmental assessments will not be weakened.

Leading environmental organizations and environmental law groups are unanimous. Ecojustice, West Coast Environmental Law, the Centre québécois du droit de l'environnement and Equiterre have all stated explicitly and unequivocally that the bill will result in major rollbacks.

The government is not only introducing major rollbacks, it is also using the tariff crisis to implement permanent measures that would allow it to circumvent legislation.

These discretionary powers were unacceptable to begin with, but they were subject to a five-year limit. Can someone explain to me why the government wants to remove that provision so it can make those powers permanent and permanently circumvent the law?

[English]

Julie Dzerowicz: Mr. Speaker, there are two key questions there. On the first one, with respect to any type of weakening or dismantling of environmental protections, that is completely not the case. We are not removing in any way any of the impact assessments that examine the environmental effects. What it does do is change who leads the review and how the departments work together, not the standards that apply. Therefore, we are expediting it, but not in any way eliminating any of those standards. If there are suggestions about how we can make that clear or improve that, I am happy to hear about them at committee.

With respect to why we have removed the five-year clause around building Canada strong, a lot of these projects take more than five years to build. Our investors need certainty, which is the reason that clause was taken away.

Karim Bardeesy (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very engaged in this debate and my colleague's speech. We share adjoining ridings. Therefore, some of the concerns and questions that my colleague is hearing are also being asked in Taiaiko'n—Parkdale—High Park. I want to ask her, given her experience in this Parliament, to speak about the continuity pieces around the environmental regulations here.

Also, would she not agree that it is important for people on the many sides of the environmental and resources extraction debate to agree that a quick decision is better than a slow decision, no matter which side of the debate they are on?

Julie Dzerowicz: Mr. Speaker, I think for us five years was too long for a decision to be made by our government. The world has so completely changed that we needed to put a completely new process into place. We needed to create a process that would eliminate any type of overlap or duplication. We wanted to create certainty and an easy way for businesses and projects to be able to go ahead. Therefore, while I would say we wanted to have one decision, one project, and one year, I believe we will be able to do the proper amount of assessment and study within that year to be able to make good decisions that are long-standing and good for this country.

[Translation]

Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is with great joy and pleasure that I rise to take part

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in today's debate on Bill C-39, introduced by the government. I am also very pleased to inform you that I will be sharing my time with the Conservative member for Tobique—Mactaquac.

As Conservatives, we have one primary objective here in the House, and that is to save Canadians money. There are ways the government can do just that. For example, it could cut taxes or even eliminate them. What we have been proposing for months is to eliminate taxes on natural resources, such as oil, to speed up the process of getting projects built. That would leave Canadians with more money in their pockets. That is the quickest way of getting this done. Unfortunately, the Liberals are only partially implementing this idea.

Another thing the government could do is get out of the way and let entrepreneurs and Canadians develop our natural resources to their full potential and create wealth in the process. Canada is the envy of the world because our country has every natural resource and every kind of energy. For the past 10 years, however, we have seen successive Liberal governments stop at nothing to keep Canada's incredible natural resource and energy potential from being fully realized.

No discussion of natural resources and energy can be considered complete unless it encompasses both sides. We cannot rely purely on traditional energy sources like fossil fuels or purely on green energy. We need a combination of both. Achieving that will take will- ingness, openness and most of all, an end to the contempt that Canadians have witnessed and experienced over the past 10 years. Successive Liberal governments have treated certain so-called “tra- ditional” natural resources, such as gasoline and so on, with con- tempt.

Let us not forget that a new government was elected in 2015. Prime Minister Trudeau said loud and proud that “Canada is back”. Some will recall that he was very proud to say that in Davos, and everyone applauded him. He was the new global star. That reminds me of certain things that are happening right now. The people in Davos were delighted to hear Prime Minister Trudeau say that the Canadian economy, and I am paraphrasing here, would no longer rely solely on what is beneath our feet, but also on what is between our ears. That was so disrespectful to Canadians, as if there had been nothing between people's ears since Confederation, or even long before that. That was the essence of Mr. Trudeau's Liberal pol- icy: contempt for what lies beneath our feet, namely our energy re- sources and all the potential they represent.

As we saw, regulations and laws were enacted that were truly in- tended to hinder economic development and undermine the poten- tial of our natural resources. Examples include Bill C-48 and Bill C-69. I will come back to that a little later, because, unfortunately, nothing has changed.

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Some would have us believe that a new tone has been set in the past 18 months with the arrival of the new Prime Minister. We must tread lightly here. The current government deserves a global award for all their announcements, summits, ceremonies, statements and ribbon-cutting ceremonies. That is truly impressive, but where are the concrete results? During the election campaign, the Liberals were going on about Build Canada Homes. We had a good laugh at the time. Let me just say that the French title “bâtir Maisons Canada” sounded a bit like something out of the movie *E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial*.

Where are these houses? Where were they built? What concrete results have Liberal policies produced over the past 18 months? There are none.

I would remind members that one of the first bills the government tabled was Bill C-5, whose objective—yes, I said “objective”—was to speed up the process of integrating practices. We, the Conservatives, did not oppose that approach. We even voted in favour of a closure motion so we could move forward. However, 18 months later, where are the concrete results? That is the issue. The Liberals put on a big show and make nice announcements, but there are no concrete results.

• (1050)

The proof is that, at this very moment, the Prime Minister has a pile of documents on his desk. Some 500 projects are ready to move forward, and those projects are currently being held up. If the government truly intends to advance Canada's economic development, it should green-light those 500 projects.

While 500 projects await action on the Prime Minister's desk, his government has created 14 new government agencies. Bill C-69 and Bill C-48 remain in effect.

Our leader said something yesterday that is worth repeating because it goes to the heart of the matter. He quoted Bill C-69 and said that anyone seeking to proceed with a project must still provide an analysis of “the intersection of sex and gender with other identity factors”, as if that had anything to do with mines, pipelines and seaports. We thought the Trudeau era was behind us, but it is still alive and well. These are left-wing policies. The Liberals go on and on about their lofty principles. Woke policies remain in place because of Bill C-69 and Bill C-48. That applies to something else, too. As mentioned yesterday, proponents must still consider “any other matter relevant to the impact assessment that the responsible authority requires to be taken into account”.

The government wants to do it, wants to move forward, or at least that is what it is saying, but everything is open to all sorts of analyses. That is fine. We understand that. However, if we are talking about taking real action to reach our full potential, that is not what the government is doing.

We have been debating the government's Bill C-39 for the past two days. If we understood the government correctly, this bill seeks to do what the government has not done for 18 months, despite Bill C-5. That is basically what this is.

I have to say that it is rather ridiculous how these people were boasting about how Bill C-5 was a new approach. Now, here we

are, 18 months later, and they are introducing another bill that takes a very similar approach, when we have yet to see any results. That is proof that the Liberals did not do their job properly on this.

We are talking about an omnibus bill that is nearly 250 pages long and contains hundreds and hundreds of provisions that we need to examine. Of course, as with all parliamentary work, the devil is in the details. We understand that there is a time limit. Earlier, I heard my colleague say that projects can begin after a one-year review period, but that is not the case because the government is giving itself the power to suspend that time limit at any time.

Imagine a foreign investor who sees Canada's immense potential and decides to take the plunge, thinking everything will work out. I wonder what will happen when that investor realizes that one very important detail will change once Bill C-39 is passed: The government will get the power to suspend this one-year time limit. That is not a good thing.

Obviously, a good way to reduce delays is to require only one environmental assessment per project. Two years ago, on behalf of the official opposition party, I was extremely proud to introduce Bill C-375, which sought to do exactly that: have just one environmental assessment, not two, per project. We worked with the provinces to move the bill along. I even managed to get the Bloc Québécois members to support the principle and vote with us at second reading. Unfortunately, the Liberals and the NDP voted against the bill, so it died. It is no stretch of the imagination to assume that, if we had passed that bill two years ago, our actions would have worked proactively in Canada's favour.

In the Speech from the Throne given 18 months ago, the King himself repeated what I had said in the House, that one project requires just one assessment. The King said so himself in the Speech from the Throne, which is no small thing, yet 18 months later, things are still not moving, and the “one project, one review” principle has still not been implemented across Canada from coast to coast.

Our message to the government is that it should take some inspiration from what the Harper government did during the economic crisis we had to grapple with in 2008 and 2009. The process was streamlined. Every project had to be analyzed on a single page rather than pages and pages. It worked, because 23,500 projects were put forward under the Harper government.

As Conservatives, we value efficiency. We want the government to be efficient and to take inspiration from what we did back then, not from the inaction of the past 18 months.

Unfortunately, the government is slow to deliver any real results.

• (1055)

[English]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I welcome my friend back to the chamber. The member and the Conservative Party need to take a broader look at what is happening here. The Prime Minister just came back from a highly successful investment summit: half a trillion dollars, which is completely unheard of in Canadian history. This bill is part of building a stronger and healthier economy.

Whether it is what took place in Toronto earlier this month, in attracting billions of dollars of investment, or ensuring that we can build projects, would the member not agree that we are on the right track to providing good-quality jobs and a stronger economy for the future of Canada?

• (1100)

Gérard Deltell: Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to see my colleague here in the House. Does the member remember where he was two years ago when he voted against my private member's bill, Bill C-375, for one project, one evaluation? He voted against it, and that is on the record.

We lost two years on that issue, and we lost more than 10 years because of the Liberal administration. Government after government was opposed to any development of our natural resources. Now we want to fast-track everything, for sure, but the reason we have to do that right now is that during the last 10 years, the government failed to achieve great things.

[Translation]

Mario Simard (Jonquière—Hébertville—Pays-des-Bleuets, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is rare for me to agree with my Conservative colleagues, but I do agree with them on one point. There is appalling ineffectiveness within the government. Allow me give an example.

We have just come through an election campaign in Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, where it was made clear to the government that the funding, the liquidity support it wanted to provide to the forestry sector, is not working. The government was asked to lower the eligibility threshold from \$2 million in annual revenue to \$1 million. I have been checking for the past two weeks to see if anyone in Quebec has accessed this liquidity. No one has. This is appallingly ineffective. Meanwhile, the government is in the process of equipping itself with the tools to circumvent environmental laws. Ultimately, I have my doubts about both the Build Canada Homes strategy, as my colleague pointed out, and the strategy for providing access to liquidity for those in the forestry sector. No one is seeing any results yet.

This is a terrible failure on the part of this government.

Gérard Deltell: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his very relevant comments. What Canadians want is to get more for their money and to have more money in their pockets. They also want the government to be more efficient.

My colleague has just demonstrated very clearly that unfortunately, in a sector that is essential to Quebec's economy and

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Canada's economy, namely the forestry sector, the government is slow to use truly constructive solutions and approaches.

It is never too late to do the right thing. Let us seize this opportunity to hold the government accountable and ensure it answers to us on this issue involving forestry workers.

[English]

Jeremy Patzer (Swift Current—Grasslands—Kindersley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to get something on the record here. The member for Winnipeg North was talking about the government creating jobs. The problem in Canada right now is that it is actually not up to the government to create jobs. It is up to the private sector to create jobs. The government's job is to create a regulatory environment that would allow the private sector to do that.

This is the second bill that the government has tabled claiming to blow the doors off the Canadian economy, yet it has not done anything to substantively address the regulatory problems that are cited by industry regarding getting jobs created. Does my colleague have any thoughts on that?

Gérard Deltell: Mr. Speaker, I deeply appreciate the question and the work done by my colleague.

The member pointed out that the best way to help the economy is for the government to get out of the way. This is what we are asking for as the Conservative opposition to the government, for it to get out of the way and let people develop the full potential we have in natural resources and energy.

Richard Bragdon (Tobique—Mactaquac, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is an absolute honour to rise in the people's House again and speak to this important piece of legislation that the government has brought forth.

I would like to begin by reflecting on an old story that I have referenced before but that certainly applies yet again here in the House. There was a father who had two sons, and he challenged them to go to work in his vineyard. He said, "I need you to go out and work on the farm. I have some big tasks ahead." He commissioned them to go into the field.

The first son rose enthusiastically and made a grand proclamation and a great announcement: "That's a wonderful idea. I'm going to do that right away. You can count on me. I'm going to do that. You don't have to worry one bit." He made the grand proclamation, but he did not end up in the field.

Then there was the second son who was approached, and he said, "I can't go. I'm sorry to disappoint you. I can't go." However, he got to thinking about it and feeling bad, and he said to himself, "I owe this to my dad. I'm going to go out and work in the field like he asked me to do."

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Basically, the conclusion to that story is to ask which son was more pleasing to the father, who had asked them to go out into the vineyard. Well, obviously, it was the second son. Even though his initial response was disappointing and did not rise to the occasion as was expected, the results were outstanding because he went and did what needed to be done and got the job done, whereas the other son made a grand announcement and a tremendous proclamation, got the hopes up of everyone around, sounded like things were going to be wonderful, but the end result was that he did nothing and was a grand disappointment.

I cannot help but see the correlation. Once again, we are having grand proclamations and excellent announcements: "Don't you worry. No matter what problem faces this country, you hang on. There will be another announcement within five minutes, and it will be okay." People will look, and they will ask, "Where is the result?" The answer is, "Oh, don't you worry. We're going to come and make another announcement."

There is another announcement, and yet a few months go by, and Canadians wait for the results and do not see any. "But don't you worry. There's another proclamation on its way." They come, and their hearts are filled with anticipation. Much like cotton candy, the announcement provides an instant sugar high and makes us feel good and warm and fuzzy, but then comes the crash of no results and limited outcomes.

What Canadians are looking for is tangible results and real outcomes, and I could not help but think about that story as I was preparing my remarks today.

Look, these are challenging times, and we all admit that. We want what is best for Canadians, and we want Canada to move forward because Canada is a nation of incredible potential and overwhelmingly abundant blessings that we have both under our feet on our lands and in our people. We need to unleash and unlock that potential so Canada can live up to that potential and our people can enjoy the benefits of all those bountiful blessings that we have been given.

Therefore, I challenge the government today. With this grand announcement, I hope there is a firm commitment to deliver real results for real Canadians. They are tired of announcements and proclamations and grand theatre and great speeches on big stages. What they want to know is, will this deliver the potential for me to find real work, make a decent paycheque, be able to put groceries on my table, help us make the mortgage payment, keep the vehicle payments up, help our kids get through school and have them actually dream of maybe someday owning a home of their own? If we do not deliver that, we are not living up to our promise and to the expectation that has been made of us by Canadians.

● (1105)

I have been reflecting on this and looking at some of the announcements that have been made, and it was not long ago that there was yet another grand announcement: "We are forming a special projects office." That sounds great. I love it. Over 500 announcements have been made and placed under the jurisdiction of the special projects office. However, I have to ask the House, how many have been approved? It is zero. We have had 500 announce-

ments, many designations and grand proclamations and yet again the disappointment of no real deliverables.

The time for deliverables has come. The time for results has come. We have to get to a place where we are doing real things. The good news is that our party has put forward some real, tangible solutions for some of the challenges facing Canada's industry, workers and people. We are calling for projects to be expedited and to be approved within six months. We are calling for the repeal of job-killing laws and antidevelopment laws, like Bill C-69 and Bill C-48, that impede Canada's progress.

We are also calling for a genuine one-project, one-review approach that would give proponents certainty instead of making them go through multiple layers of endless regulation and red tape. It is time to unlock our resources and unleash our potential, move beyond the announcement phase and get to the deliverables and results phase. We do that by streamlining. We do that by making sure that this gets done and does not turn into yet another grand announcement that gets our hopes up but does not deliver what Canadians need in this time of stress.

We are fighting hard on this side of the House to save people and Canadians money, but also to have real projects and real jobs made available and done for Canadians. As we have seen, after a year and a half of announcements, we cannot point to concrete examples of things getting done. Nothing leads to more frustration than unmet expectations. When many expectations arise, when rhetoric soars in the moment and when we do not deliver on what we have promised to Canadians, they grow more suspect, more weary and more frustrated. Then they begin to look with a very jaundiced eye at anything that any parliamentarian or politician ever says. Why is that? It is because we have promised much and delivered little. We have to get to the place where we are delivering real, concrete results for Canadians, because this country has unbelievable, incredible potential.

I want to conclude with one final analogy from an ancient story that came to me as I was preparing for today. It is a story of a lady who was in a desperate situation and did not know where to turn. She sought solutions from various places. She went to doctor after doctor and could find no help. In fact, she just got further diagnosed, with more diagnoses and more prognoses, and spent more of her hard-earned money, ending up with nothing left in her pocket while living with the consequences of false hopes and many broken promises.

The good news is that this story did not end with her in a place of unmet expectation. The good news is that she pressed through the crowds and doubts, and she overcame the obstacles, as many Canadians are doing right now. She sought out a great physician and got her answer. Her answer came when she told her whole story. After she told her story and that great physician heard her story and gave her the answer, she went away whole.

Canadians become whole when those who are elected to represent them take the time to hear their stories, and not just hear their stories, but take direct action to bring real solutions to their problems. It is time to get beyond the diagnoses in this country, get beyond the announcements, proclamations and false hopes, and deliver real results for real Canadians in real time.

• (1110)

Hon. Kody Blois (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member should be encouraging the members in his party. I think he would make a tremendous leader of the official opposition. He mixes important oratory skills with the ability to point to where the government is moving in the right direction, while keeping his obligation to the loyal official opposition to continue to push the government to do more.

I would like to point out to my hon. colleague that this government is an action-focused government. This is not about symbolism; it is about delivering concretely. The bill before Parliament is of the nature of things that I know former prime minister Stephen Harper would support. I know Jason Kenney, who sat on the side of the House that Harper did, is supportive of the work the government is doing.

The Sisson mine, Darlington new nuclear and the Nova Scotia-New Brunswick intertie are projects that are actively under way, creating good jobs. Will the member at least recognize that these projects are happening? Is he going to support this bill?

Richard Bragdon: Mr. Speaker, it is always good to have a debate with fellow Maritimers in the House.

I will say this. Once again, the projects the member just listed are projects that have been announced but have not yet been delivered. We need real results to start kicking into place.

Let us not blame Canadians for being somewhat skeptical when they hear more proclamations from the government. Let us remember that this is the same government that for 10 years called some of our most valuable resources dirty oil and dirty gas and said we should keep it in the ground. It also said that anyone who advocated for those resources and the development of those resources was a planet burner.

I am glad the Liberals have experienced an absolute backflip and inverted suplex on themselves and are now embracing our policies, at least verbally. However, now we need proof of that change and transformation with real action, the real construction of pipelines, and real development.

• (1115)

[Translation]

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague seems to be in full agreement when it comes to the exceptional powers the government is giving itself to get around environmental laws.

I would like to point out that Bill C-39 even allows for the creation of economic zones where projects will be pre-approved. Projects will be approved before they are even assessed. Obviously, we can expect companies to sue the government if, after the assessment, the government decides a project is no good.

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I wonder if my colleague is concerned about that. Does he not think this fits perfectly into a government strategy to deploy an oil arsenal using public funds? His party has stated that oil companies benefit from corporate welfare.

The government is gearing up to invest \$40 billion in a megapipeline project. Is my colleague in favour of giving public funds to oil companies?

Richard Bragdon: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from the beautiful province of Quebec. What we need now is a government that will actually do something.

[English]

We need a government that gets real things done for Canadians. When we rank 38 out of 38 among OECD nations for GDP per capita, that is an indictment of the government's policies, which have failed to deliver real results. Even though the pronouncements are grand, the results have been very much disastrous as it relates to competitiveness for our industries, for our workers and for affordability for Canadians from coast to coast. It is time to get results for them.

Jeremy Patzer (Swift Current—Grasslands—Kindersley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for a tremendous speech. It is always a pleasure to listen to him in this House. He is very factual as well. That is what I really appreciate about what he has to say. He brings so much substance to what he says in the House. We can contrast that with the fact that we are dealing with a bill today that is thicker than most phone books we find in this country now. I really cannot believe it.

This is not the first bill the government has tabled to try to fix 10 years of disastrous governance over there. It already has Bill C-5. This is another admission that that bill does not work. Are we going to be back here again debating another bill to undo more bad Liberal laws from the government? Are Canadians expected to believe that it is going to get things right this time?

Richard Bragdon: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague from Swift Current—Grasslands—Kindersley. What a great representative he is for his people in standing up for hard-working Canadians, farmers and resource workers.

One expression comes to mind. There's a song that has words that say that we need "a little less talk and a lot more action". It is time for action now to get results for Canadians.

Hon. Kody Blois: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. During the debate, the hon. member for Tobique—Mactaquac, which I believe is his riding's title, highlighted the importance of projects being real and proper. Therefore, I am seeking the opportunity to table a picture of the work that is actually happening between Nova Scotia and—

An hon. member: No.

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The Deputy Speaker: I heard a no, so there is no unanimous consent to table any documents.

Resuming debate, the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation.

Taleeb Noormohamed (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Pickering—Brooklin.

I rise today in support of Bill C-39, the building Canada strong act. I want to begin with a word that I think sits at the heart of the debate, or at least should sit at the heart of the debate for all of us, and that is the word “trust”. It is not trust in any one government or trust in a political party, but trust in our institutions, trust that our processes work, trust that when Canadians participate in these processes, their voices matter, and trust that government is capable of making good decisions in a timely fashion.

When I think about the conversations that I have had over the course of the last summer with businesses, workers, indigenous partners, community leaders and families, I find that most people are asking for exactly the same thing. They are asking for predictability. They are asking for stability. They are asking for clarity. Perhaps most importantly, and I think this demonstrates the popularity of our Prime Minister, they are asking for competence.

Canadians are reasonable people. They understand that governing is complicated. It is not something that one does on social media or on Twitter in a hundred and something characters. It is done through hard work. They understand that major projects have consequences. They understand that consultation can and should take the right amount of time. They expect good decisions to be made. They expect these decisions to be fair, and they expect decisions to be made in a reasonable amount of time. That is why this legislation deserves the consideration and support of the House.

At its core, this bill is trying to answer a question that is increasingly important to the future of the country in an incredibly unstable global environment: Can Canada move with the speed and certainty required to build the future we want in a way that respects the urgency of the moment and the need to preserve and protect that which we care about?

The world around us continues to change at a rapid pace. Supply chains are shifting, investment is moving and countries are searching for reliable partners. Workers are looking for security. As new markets are opening and new infrastructure is being built, Canada is being presented with a once-in-a-century opportunity, but opportunities do not become outcomes on their own. They require decisions. They require institutions to have the trust of investors, have the trust of workers and have the trust of Canadians. The reality of that trust is in people understanding how decisions will be made. Workers deserve that confidence. Communities deserve that confidence. Indigenous partners deserve that confidence. Investors deserve that confidence. Government must earn that confidence.

People may not always agree with the outcome; that is the nature of democracy, but they should know that there is a process that can be trusted and relied upon, that their voices will be heard and that they will get answers in a timely fashion. In my view, this is one of

the most compelling arguments underpinning the legislation. We must give people answers, and those answers should demand high standards. High standards should not mean endless uncertainty. A thorough review should not mean permanent delay. It should be very clear that if projects do not meet the standards that Canadians expect, government should have the confidence and capacity to say no.

As the Prime Minister has said, if a project does not meet the standards that Canadians demand of it, government should have the capacity to say no. If the project does meet those standards, government should be able to say yes. To say no quickly and to say yes on time should not be hard. That does not mean we compromise on the things we care about. It does not mean that we compromise on our standards, not one bit.

We must make sure that this conversation does not meet the fate of so many others. We must not look at things as binary, as if there is one right answer and one wrong answer, as if we cannot do two things at once and as if we cannot chew gum and walk at the same time. Canadians expect of governments today the ability to do many things at once, to do them well and to do them properly. That is why this legislation matters for building the country strong. It matters for protecting our workers. It matters for protecting our environment. It matters for protecting the investments people are making in the country. It matters for protecting the things that we need to do in this moment.

We have heard from many of our colleagues that these are challenging times. We all know that the trade war has shifted how we look at things in the country and what we are called upon to do.

● (1120)

As we diversify trade, as we expand new markets, as we do all of the heavy lifting Canadians expect all of us from all parties to do, we have to protect our supply chains. We have to protect our projects. We have to accelerate our projects, but we have to protect safe workplaces for our workers and continue to protect our natural environment.

The thing that seems to be lost in this conversation is the fact that a tremendous amount of consultation has gone into this process, into the refinements and into what we are seeing in this legislation today. Spring and summer were spent listening to stakeholders and responding. Whether it was with unions, employers or indigenous partners, the conversation was about worker supports and the labour relations framework, and those inputs have directly framed how this bill is in front of us today.

We all know that about 95% of disputes in federally regulated workplaces are resolved without a work stoppage. Knowing this, most of the stakeholders we spoke to cautioned against broad structural changes that would undermine a process that works well in most cases. We recognize that it does not work in all cases, and we will come to that, but as Canada works to build a stronger economy to advance major projects and strengthen the infrastructure we all know we need, and that I know the opposition certainly should care about as well, we also need a labour framework that can meet this moment and that protects Canadian workers so they can thrive and prosper.

Bill C-39 proposes to put forward a balanced approach that would add tools and supports to ensure that more parties were able to reach agreements at the table, creating a more transparent process for the few disputes that remain difficult to resolve. These changes underpin Canadians' request to us: get things built, protect workers and do not backtrack on our standards. This is why dispute resolution is important.

In this bill, we are proposing mandatory dispute resolution remediation for parties that have experienced a work stoppage or had a binding method of resolution imposed on them. Doing so within six months of reaching a collective agreement would help mend relationships and reduce the risk of future labour disruptions.

The code does not currently prescribe when parties must begin direct bargaining. It allows parties to start their negotiations as early as four months prior, but the start date is really up to them. This bill now proposes that those conversations must begin six months before the collective agreement expiry, and be supported by federal mediators, increasing the odds of resolving differences before positions become entrenched. There is a provision that discusses conciliation. When there is an impasse at the table, the government may now appoint a federal conciliator to work with them for 60 days. This bill proposes to extend that to 90 days.

Perhaps what is most important is addressing where there is concern, and that is around section 107. One of the misperceptions is that this bill would somehow incentivize the use of section 107, but it is quite the opposite. Section 107, as we know, has been in effect for approximately 50 years in this country. It is used on an exceptional basis. For the first time, this bill would put guardrails on the use of section 107. It would ensure that, for the first time, there would be requirements placed upon the use of this provision, and that is particularly important to workers in this country. It is about making sure that the right to strike is never taken away from workers. It is about ensuring that their rights are protected, but it is also about making sure that we are bringing forward solutions quickly.

What it seeks to do is simply clarify section 107 by adding the two guardrails that are important. The first is the appointment of a special mediator and the subsequent report submitted to the minister. The second is a national impact assessment following the special mediator's engagement and report. Together, these would strengthen workers' rights and strengthen certainty. Ultimately, they would ensure that when we are looking to build big things in this country, how it all comes to pass, what goes into it and what people can expect on the other side would be certain and clear.

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By setting down clear rules, we would be enabling ourselves to build this country strong. We would be protecting workers. We would be protecting the rules and regulations that matter to Canadians, but we would also be making sure Canadians, businesses and workers know that decisions come quickly, they come responsibly, and they come with two things top of mind: building our country and protecting workers. This is what Canadians care about.

• (1125)

John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in his speech, my colleague talked about consultation, predictability and making hard decisions, but this is clearly the same old Liberal government. As part of this bill, for the third time, Liberals would be making extended interswitching just a pilot project. They have not been able to make the hard decisions of doing the right thing or they clearly have not consulted.

Why would they not be making extended interswitching permanent? Why would they be limiting it to just the Prairies, avoiding or excluding critical grain corridors like B.C. and northern Ontario? Why are they not listening to shippers and grain growers and including interswitching as a permanent change to the transportation corridors in Canada?

• (1130)

Taleeb Noormohamed: Mr. Speaker, there are two things the member opposite must remember. First, there will now be an opportunity at committee for him to add these important questions, to put them on the table. This is an important reality of Parliament. There is an opportunity at committee for the member to raise those issues.

I would suggest the member remember that the Premier of Alberta said there has never been a better time to be a Canadian and to work with the government. These are things that the Government of Alberta and governments across this country from coast to coast are recognizing: that our government is working to ensure these problems are solved and that we work with provinces to ensure that it is not just the Prairies but the entire country that benefits from what we are trying to put forward today.

[Translation]

Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, parliamentary democracy is a daily challenge. It involves a delicate balance between the executive and legislative branches. Bill C-39 is a step backwards for democracy. It further centralizes power in favour of the executive branch by reducing the role we play here in Parliament. The Prime Minister is exploiting the tariff crisis to impose permanent rollbacks that will have no impact during Donald Trump's presidency.

Does the member not think that Bill C-39 sets a dangerous precedent?

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Taleeb Noormohamed: Mr. Speaker, the reality is that this is a difficult time for Quebec and Canada. It is a very dangerous time for our country and for Canadians and Quebecers.

Of course, there are things we need to do right now, but Bill C-39 contains measures that protect workers, protect the environment and even protect the rights of Parliament. We believe we must work together to protect the citizens of our country.

To say that this limits or curbs Parliament's powers is inaccurate, and furthermore, it creates uncertainty.

[English]

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Moncton—Dieppe, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Vancouver Granville for the overview that he gave of Bill C-39, which is extremely important legislation for our country and Canadians during this time.

During the member's summary, he talked about the consultation that took place over the summer. I am wondering if he would be able to elaborate for Canadians listening the type of consultation that has taken place to ensure that we got this bill right.

Taleeb Noormohamed: Mr. Speaker, the consultations were widespread, with unions, big and small businesses, indigenous communities and investors, folks who are helping to build this country. Those consultations, whether in small or large groups, were ones that mattered. They are reflected in this bill. That is a really important consideration because as we go through these processes, making sure those voices are heard and the feedback is reflected is a reflection of how this place works and should work.

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, keeping it short, I am sure my hon. friend from Vancouver Granville will agree with me that the lawyers at West Coast Environmental Law based in Vancouver are hard-working and very skilled. They have named this the “bulldoze nature bill”. I agree with them.

Is the member prepared to listen to the advice of expert environmental lawyers who give this bill an F?

Taleeb Noormohamed: Mr. Speaker, I respect my hon. colleague and the organizations working hard to protect our natural environment and to ensure that our natural environment is well protected.

Part of the provisions in this bill do put the guardrails that are required to ensure that ministers would not be using provisions without due consideration. In fact, if we look at the provisions that have been made in British Columbia to protect our natural coast, the tanker ban and other provisions that are being made to protect whales and salmon are provisions that are going to ensure that our natural environment on the west coast that I know she loves, as do I, will continue to be protected.

Juanita Nathan (Pickering—Brooklin, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Bill C-39, the building Canada strong act, is a critical piece of legislation that would make Canada's transportation system work better for Canadians and for our economy. It is about keeping Canada moving by strengthening trade corridors and ports, providing regulatory certainty, achieving red tape reduction and modernizing transportation security clearances.

Canada's prosperity has always depended on our ability to move goods across vast distances and deepen trade relationships with countries near and far. However, the world has changed. The global trading system is being reshaped. Supply chains are being reorganized. Businesses are looking for reliable markets and reliable partners, while competition for investment is intensifying. For decades, Canadians benefited from a stable and increasingly integrated trading relationship with the United States, one built on growing market access and shared understanding of the rules governing our trade. Today, that environment has fundamentally changed and been replaced with a new reality, one where tariffs are being treated as leverage and supply chains are vulnerabilities.

The recent tensions with Canada's largest trading partner have underscored the importance of building greater economic strength and resilience here at home, started by building Canada strong and united as one Canadian economy. Since last year, the government has been working to advance nation-building projects faster and more responsibly, diversifying our industries and trade relationships, and creating high-paying jobs for generations. Bill C-39 would unlock more of Canada's economic potential by strengthening our economy at home and expanding opportunities for Canadian businesses abroad. To achieve this priority is to deliver generational investments in our trade and transportation infrastructure. The proposed measures in Bill C-39 would strengthen our transportation supply chain by modernizing our transportation policy and strengthening our trade corridors and ports to get products to market more efficiently and affordably.

Importantly, the bill also proposes measures to modernize Canada's marine governance structure. Given that 85% of Canada's non-U.S. trade moves through our marine ports, without them there is no trade diversification. The bill would also provide certainty and stability and achieve red tape reduction to get major projects built faster to help Canada's businesses save time and money, and make Canada an attractive place for investments. It would support trade digitalization. Together, the initiatives in Bill C-39 would reduce cost, improve administrative efficiency and improve the security of goods that move across our border by mitigating fraud. They would also strengthen our labour relations framework which would create more reliable supply chains and greater economic resilience.

This bill is also part of a much broader economic plan. In the Speech from the Throne, the government set an overarching goal to build the strongest economy in the G7. The government is committed to removing barriers that hold back trade and investment, getting major projects built faster and strengthening Canada's relationships with reliable trading partners all around the world.

The government has already moved quickly to launch a new \$5-billion trade diversification corridor fund to put investments behind the ambition into action to build our infrastructure, strengthen our supply chains, attract private capital and grow Canada's economy. These are significant investments that would connect Canadian products to domestic and international markets and would support our government's goal of doubling Canada's non-U.S. exports over the next decade. Bill C-39 is the next piece of that work. However, infrastructure investment is only part of the solution.

Measures in Bill C-39 would also address some of the structural issues in the transportation supply chain. The bill would modernize the regulations, policy and governance structures that determine how our transportation supply chain operates and international trade is processed. By strengthening transportation networks, the government would build more reliable supply chains and give investors and trading partners greater certainty that Canada is a stable place to do business and invest.

• (1135)

When there is a bottleneck at a port, a shortage of rail capacity, a shipment held up by administrative or paperwork issues or a disruption anywhere along the way, the costs are ultimately borne by Canadian businesses and workers. Delays are costly for our businesses and for Canada's reputation as a reliable trading partner.

When we strengthen Canada's supply chains, we are not simply moving goods more efficiently within Canada. We are helping a business in Quebec, Vancouver or Toronto reach a customer halfway around the world. That is how Bill C-39 would strengthen trade, investment, jobs and economic growth.

This bill is about much more than modernizing Canada's supply chain. It is economic legislation. It is about strengthening our economy and creating the conditions for Canadian businesses to compete and grow. It is about improving the conditions for investment and growth across Canada and reducing costs by making government work better.

One of the most practical things a government can do to strengthen its economy is to reduce unnecessary regulatory burden. Businesses should be focused on investing, building and creating jobs, not navigating duplicative processes and unclear timelines. That is why Bill C-39 takes practical steps that would streamline federal review and permitting processes and reduce duplication across departments.

We are proposing to allow federal departments and agencies to share international trade information for imports and exports more easily and with less duplication so they can reduce information filing requirements for businesses, saving them time and money.

As I mentioned, this bill supports trade digitalization and would provide opportunities to modernize regulations. Many Canadian ex-

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porters still rely on paper-based systems, which slow movements and increase costs and the time needed to get goods to global markets.

The Commonwealth estimates that trading digitalization could boost Canada's trade volumes by approximately \$100 billion. We would also create a new advisory group on national trade corridors to find problem areas that cause delays, suggest ways to improve the system, improve efficiency and help different players make more coordinated decisions.

This bill would modernize Canada's national transportation policy to give greater recognition to supply chain efficiency. More than 525 billion dollars' worth of goods and services move between our provinces and territories every year. When we look beyond our borders, we see that Canada's transportation corridors support approximately \$1.55 trillion in international merchandise trade. These transactions depend on reliable railways, ports and other infrastructure.

Transportation performance and economic performance are connected, but we also need to ensure that the transportation system remains secure and resilient. Today's transportation system faces more complex and connected threats than in the past. This requires a modern, more responsive approach that can respond to evolving risks while remaining predictable for industry. Updating the Canada Transportation Act to modernize the approach to transportation security clearances would create a broader, more effective framework.

These proposed changes would help partners work together, make better use of information and help us better manage risks related to people who hold trusted roles within the transportation systems.

I want to pause and underline the commitment of the Government of Canada to uphold indigenous rights and collaborate with indigenous partners during the implementation phase of this bill. We undertook engagement. We heard from indigenous people, the transportation industry and Canadians to better understand how we can build more efficient, resilient and reliable supply chains while supporting economic growth and trade. Those conversations helped inform the measures before us today—

• (1140)

The Deputy Speaker: Questions and comments, the hon. member for Red Deer.

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Burton Bailey (Red Deer, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for over a decade, the Liberals blocked, stalled and denied all kinds of projects across Canada that would have made us richer, more sovereign and less dependent on any other country. However, today, we are expected as Canadians to believe that the same people who filled Justin Trudeau's caucus have suddenly turned a leaf and believe the opposite of what they have been saying for a decade.

Will the Liberals admit they do not actually believe in anything and that every decision one Liberal makes is to keep another Liberal in power?

• (1145)

Juanita Nathan: Mr. Speaker, Canada's new government is building Canada strong. From the time we took our seats in 2025, we have been acting with greater speed, certainty and predictability to bring projects and investments into Canada. Since last spring, Canada has signed over 20 new economic and security agreements and has advanced 27 nation-building initiatives that will support more than 337,000 jobs and attract nearly \$200 billion in new investments.

[Translation]

Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Bill C-5 contained a discretionary provision that gave the minister absolute authority to identify and make decisions about projects of national interest.

Bill C-39 renders that discretionary authority permanent, thereby setting a dangerous precedent modelled after the Trump administration's contempt for officials elected by the people.

Someday, when the member is sitting on this side of the House, with the opposition, will she will feel the same enthusiasm at the prospect of having the government use a procedure that gives the executive branch absolute authority over the legislative, the bedrock of parliamentary democracy?

[English]

Juanita Nathan: Mr. Speaker, I understand the concerns the opposition member has about this. That is why this bill has built-in guardrails to safeguard against giving ministers the authority that he is talking about.

Of course, when the bill goes to committee, members will have an opportunity to weigh in and give their suggestions on how to make this bill better, as the bill is still open for suggestions. I would reiterate that there are guardrails in it to prevent that from happening.

[Translation]

Linda Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are hearing comments about the amendments to the Canada Labour Code, primarily with respect to section 107.

Can my colleague share her thoughts on this section? What does she think about it?

[English]

Juanita Nathan: Mr. Speaker, union workers are at the heart of a strong economy. This bill is designed to strengthen good-faith bargaining and achieve better outcomes for everyone. It would

crack down on wage theft and the misclassification of jobs. It would protect workers during business transactions and insolvencies. It would safeguard bargaining rights when contracts change hands. It would speed up grievance arbitration, in addition to always upholding the constitutionally protected right to strike. I just want to reiterate that the right to strike would always be protected under this bill.

The Deputy Speaker: We have time for a very short question.

The hon. member for Foothills.

John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we had the Building Canada Act 18 months ago. Now we have the building Canada strong act. Nothing has been built or done in the interim. I cannot wait for when we have the “building Canada very strong act” 18 months from now.

The key is repeal. Can the member tell me exactly which regulations and legislation this bill would repeal—

The Deputy Speaker: I did say a very short question.

The hon. member for Pickering—Brooklin can respond.

Juanita Nathan: Mr. Speaker, we have been building, and if you were listening to my colleague's speech earlier, they were talking about Darlington, where shovels are in the ground at the moment. It is in my region, so I have seen that myself. This is the second part of Bill C-5 that we need in order to make Canada—

• (1150)

The Deputy Speaker: We are resuming debate.

Before I recognize the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley, this is just a reminder to members using “you” to speak through the Speaker and not directly to other members.

That being said, the hon. member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley.

Ellis Ross (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Sudbury.

We are here talking about Bill C-39. It is another announcement, another 250-page bill to talk about what we already announced last year, basically rewrapped in a more complicated bill. We are trying to talk about building Canada strong when we really should be talking about how to rebuild Canada strong, because we were a country that was growing before 10 years ago, when the Liberal government decided to stall and stifle our economy with Bill C-69 and Bill C-48.

To undo the damage done by these bills and the stifling of the economy, all we are getting now is announcements, whether we are talking about the Major Projects Office or Bill C-39. I was an MLA and was a chief councillor back in the days of LNG development 20 years ago, so this is where I come from. More specifically, I come from the processes of how to get projects approved, whether we are talking about environmental assessments provincially in B.C. or federally in Canada, and the regulations that go underneath them. Parallel to that is the consultation accommodation that must happen with aboriginal peoples.

It is great to see the conversation that we need an economy being so universal. After 10 years, we need an economy, but the government is not admitting that it did not like the economy growing. It did not like LNG development. It did not like LNG exports. In fact, it was the Liberal government that said that there was no business case for LNG development. It was this government that let Germany, when it came knocking on the door of Canada to secure an LNG deal, go away with a hydrogen deal.

I travelled to Ottawa to try to fix the record based on my experience of project development, whether we are talking about forestry, mining or LNG. The government did not take my request for a meeting. A member of the opposition did, and all I was here to say was that they were talking to the wrong people. The federal government has no idea what it is talking about. There is a huge business case for LNG. There is a huge demand, and if someone wants proof, they should come talk to the first nation leaders in B.C. They are the ones who put together the LNG export plan. They are the ones who fought for it and lobbied for it.

In fact, a lot of the leaders who fought for it did so with no praise or recognition, which is a shame. These are people like Elmer Derrick and the people of Nisga'a. The leadership at the time, who were supporting my band in getting LNG off the ground, never got recognition. Now LNG is pursuing its own LNG facility, but all of that was with all the opposition from the provincial government in B.C. and the federal government. I did everything I could to understand environmental assessments, regulations and case law, and the only thing I can say now is that I wish I knew then what I know now in terms of how this place operates. We could have gotten it done quicker.

It is a shame that Canada is in the position it is in now as a weak country, just because of the ideology of saying "no" to LNG development and exports. There were 18 major LNG projects in B.C. at a time when we just got started. All of them left. One major project from my territory, the only one that survived, was LNG Canada, and there are some minor floating LNG projects.

If there had been no opposition to development back then, we would not be here having this conversation. We would not be talking about affordability, jobs or our young people leaving the country. We would not be talking about the need to cut taxes, because the economy would have been keeping up. Unfortunately, the damage that has been done in 10 years has brought us to a place where the most we can do now is try to send signals to the world about announcements: Let us repack what we announced last year into a 250-page bill and call it Bill C-39.

• (1155)

However, I am glad that at a high level, the opinion of the Liberal government seems to be changing. It is a Festivus miracle, but will that translate into something of substance? Right now, it is going to take some time to understand how this 250-page bill fits with the fast-track approval of a project, given that we already had an announcement of a Major Projects Office that was supposed to do the same thing. That buzz over the Major Projects Office is now a fizzle.

Now, partially, Bill C-39 is talking about the existing powers of the Canadian Impact Assessment Agency and how it is going to be

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amended but also how some is going to be transferred over to the energy regulator and some might be fast-tracked to the Major Projects Office. I have just one fundamental question that the government cannot answer. At the end of the day, who signs the environmental assessment certificate? Is it going to be the regulator, the Major Projects Office or the Canadian Impact Assessment Agency? Whoever does it is going to take responsibility for that signature going forward. The government cannot answer that.

How is industry supposed to have the certainty to invest in Canada if the legislation and regulations are all over the map? Corporations, and first nations for that matter, are going to have to hire lawyers and consultants to pore over these new bills to find out exactly what the process is.

By the way, I heard a number of the government members talking about indigenous consultation. There is a contradiction in terms of what they are saying about consultative duties to first nations people affected by major projects. I am talking about that pre-decision, pre-approval, to approve it in one year, but the courts have said it cannot do that. When the Crown is aware of a decision that might affect rights and title, the government has to consult and accommodate first nations before it makes the decision.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Tell that to Pierre Poilievre.

Ellis Ross: Shall I say it again? Before you make the decision, you must consult and accommodate, not after the fact, when you have made the decision. Your own policy says it. Read your policy on the Justice Canada site. It—

The Deputy Speaker: I have to interrupt the member to remind him not to speak directly to the other side but to speak through the Speaker. I will let the member continue.

Ellis Ross: Mr. Speaker, Canada's own policy says that. Even though I am getting heckled by the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader, I am just reciting what Canada's policy says. How is the government going to square that?

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I have seen what has been done in the B.C. treaty process. The government makes the decision and then promises to continue consulting and accommodating. That is not what the court case said. Interestingly enough, though, back in the day, as first nations, we could only dream of planning our future. We had no money and no resources, and we were under the Indian Act. We could not plan a future under the Indian Act. It is a very punitive system for first nations, so it was very hard to plan a future.

There are entities out there now, though, and I think the government should seriously consider this, that could help, not with the process itself of environmental assessments, rights and title, but could help a region, town or first nation plan for the future in light of what might be major project development in Canada. Specifically, I am talking about the Canadian Institute of Planners. I know they are here lobbying the government and members of the opposition.

I can see my past, my history, in what they are talking about. It partly relates to what I wish I knew then as opposed to what I know now. It could have made life a lot easier not only for my first nations people but for the surrounding area. At the end of the day, as a judge said back in the day, "Let's face it, none of us are going anywhere. We're all in this together."

• (1200)

Marcus Powlowski (Thunder Bay—Rainy River, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for his intervention, although I ended up feeling a little confused. He started off talking about Liberal policies stalling and stifling major projects.

In this bill, my understanding is that both the impact assessment and the permitting would be done concurrently and over the course of a year. I would think that would address his problem with our stalling major projects. Then he went on, and it seemed that at the end he was criticizing the one year as not being enough.

Exactly where does the member stand on the one-year timeline to get projects approved?

Ellis Ross: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his confusion because I am confused as well. I know the existing process under the Canadian Impact Assessment Agency, but I do not understand the correlation to the Major Projects Office, and now we have a new bill that talks about a regulator being in charge. As far as I can see, it is a three-ring circus. If people do not understand the process, which should be a clear-cut process for investors, first nations and Canadians, then how are we going to build Canada strong?

I understand your confusion.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I remind the member to address his answer to the Chair.

Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, over the course of the summer, the government consulted with unions and labour organizations. Federal unions have been calling for section 107 of the Canada Labour Code to be removed, after the government has used it to order workers back to work, undermining the collective bargaining process, at least 10 times. Now the government is proposing new language around section 107 and calling these changes "guardrails", but unions are telling us that these changes could potentially weaken workers' bargaining power.

If organized labour did not ask for these changes, who does the member think did request these changes? Would it be the big corporations?

Ellis Ross: Mr. Speaker, that is great question, and it is an important issue. I mean, the labour is what actually builds Canada. It provides the jobs, the contracts and the subcontracts. Those are the people who build the bridges, the buildings and the LNG plants.

Really, this issue is so important that it has to go to committee. It cannot just stay the way it is. That is what committees were built for, and that is what I will be hoping the government does: send this issue to committee.

Dave Epp (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if my colleague from Skeena—Bulkley Valley would agree with the following statement. The presentation in this chamber of Bill C-39 is actually a proof point, in the same manner that Bill C-5 was a proof point.

What do I mean? Well, Bill C-5 is a proof point that 10 or 11 years of Liberal government has basically stifled resource development in this country, so the government needed Bill C-5. We supported it, fast-tracked it through, and now, after 18 months and 500 projects, absolutely zero has been done. Now the government has added a word, calling it "building Canada strong", and here we are with Bill C-39.

Would the member agree that it is a proof point that neither 10 years of previous policy nor the issuance of Bill C-5 has developed this country at all?

Ellis Ross: Mr. Speaker, without a doubt, we should not be here. We should be building on past successes. We should have been building 18 LNG projects out of B.C. We should not be having this discussion about Canada being Canada strong in terms of breaking down the barriers. I mean, after that big announcement of one Canada, one economy, we still cannot sell wine from one province to another province. It has just been announcement after announcement.

I agree that 10 years of damage to our economy trying to be undone by the people who actually did the damage is actually putting us far down the ladder in terms of economics.

[Translation]

Linda Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to know what my colleague thinks about our commitment to ensuring that decisions on projects requiring a federal permit are made within one year.

This would give investors and project proponents the predictability and clarity they need. When it comes to making investments, people need to know what to expect.

• (1205)

[English]

Ellis Ross: Mr. Speaker, without a doubt, yes, I agree with one year, as long as the process is followed and is described clearly and, by the way, as long as the case law is followed that has been laid out by the courts on how to address rights and title. We cannot put an arbitrary time limit on the rights and title of first nations people. That is what I am talking about when I talk about the contradiction in Bill C-39. There is no answer to that.

[Translation]

Linda Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to address Bill C-39, the building Canada strong act. I would also like to take the opportunity to welcome my colleagues to this new parliamentary session. This is the first time I have spoken since we came back. I hope that we will have a good session of constructive work and that we will move quickly on all the bills that we need to move forward and pass.

When we talk about building Canada strong, we often think of major projects. We think of infrastructure. This includes ports, railways and major investments. In my view, a strong Canada starts in our communities. It starts at home.

I proudly represent the riding of Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, which is located in the Lower Laurentians of Quebec and includes the cities of Boisbriand, Rosemère, Deux-Montagnes and Saint-Eustache. I am very proud of these communities. I meet families and workers there, as well as entrepreneurs and small and medium-sized business owners. I meet people from the manufacturing sector who want to continue to produce and create good local jobs. What they want from us is simple. They want stability. They want clear rules. They want to be able to invest. They want to be able to hire as well as grow their businesses.

[English]

They want us to get things done.

[Translation]

This issue is even more important today. We live in a world where economic uncertainty has become a daily reality. We see it particularly clearly in our trade relationship with the United States.

Just a few months ago, entrepreneurs in my riding were telling me about plans to expand. They were talking to me about growing their businesses, buying new equipment and hiring more workers. I was told about plans in Saint-Eustache and elsewhere in the Lower Laurentians.

Today, the context has changed. With the uncertainty coming from the United States, some entrepreneurs are being more cautious. Some are re-evaluating their plans, while others prefer to wait before making a major decision. I can understand them. I was an entrepreneur before I got into politics. Expanding a plant, buying equipment and hiring workers are big decisions. A business needs to know where the markets will be. It needs to know what it will be able to get in return for its goods. It also needs to know that it will be able to deliver its products to its customers. It needs predictability.

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We do not control every decision made south of the border, but we can act on what we control here in Canada. We can make our processes more efficient, strengthen our infrastructure, diversify our markets and create a climate where businesses have more confidence to invest within Canada.

A significant portion of Bill C-39 focuses specifically on how we review major projects in Canada. Currently, a proponent may have to work with multiple departments. They may also need to go through a process to get the necessary authorizations. Bill C-39 seeks to better coordinate these efforts. For certain designated projects, a decision should be made within a year once the required studies and information have been provided. A one-year timeline would be fantastic. The bill also calls for better coordination of assessments, federal authorizations and, of course, consultations with indigenous groups.

In my view, the idea is simple. Companies that want to invest in Canada need to know the rules. They need to know what the steps are. They also need to know how quickly a decision can be made. That does not mean that we are setting aside our environmental responsibilities, nor does it mean that we are setting aside consultations with indigenous peoples. We need to do things right, but we also need to be able to do them efficiently.

[English]

We can build faster, and we can build responsibly.

• (1210)

[Translation]

Another aspect of Bill C-39 is particularly important to me. I have been a member of the Standing Committee on International Trade for several years, and I am thinking here of supply chains and trade corridors. At committee, we talk a lot about trade agreements. In fact, we have signed about 20 of them in the past year. We are talking about new markets. We are talking about exporting more Canadian products. However, trade agreements are not enough. We need to be able to deliver the products.

I will give a very concrete example that we heard at the Standing Committee on International Trade. Earlier this year, we heard from Antoine Morin, senior vice-president at Olymel, a company with a strong presence in Quebec's pork production market. We are talking about Canadian exports to Japan, a very important market. Some of that pork is sold fresh, never frozen. It is a very valuable commodity that needs to be delivered in a very specific time frame. Mr. Morin explained that Olymel uses the port of Vancouver as its main gateway to Asia. He also explained what happens when there is a service disruption or a strike. When fresh pork piles up at the port, the company has to make a decision quickly. They may need to freeze a product that has to be sold fresh. They may also need to redirect it to another market. The product is not necessarily lost, but some of its value may be. They also have to pay for storage. There are delays and additional pressure on trading partners.

Government Orders

Olymel explained that roughly 250 containers pass through the port of Vancouver every week. That represents a lot of money and a lot of jobs in Quebec and Canada. When service is disrupted, up to 50 containers a day could be delayed. If a disruption lasts for as long as a week, losses can run into the millions of dollars. That is real money. Getting a container of fresh pork to market requires producers, factory workers, shippers, railways, the port and, at the end of the chain, customers in Asia waiting for their product. When just one link in that supply chain fails, the consequences can be felt everywhere.

[English]

That is why reliability matters.

[Translation]

Our partners need to know that when they buy a Canadian product, we can deliver it on time. We need to be able to deliver on time. It is a matter of trust. It is also a matter of Canada's reputation. That is why Bill C-39 proposes, among other things, the designation of trade corridors. The bill would also allow for the creation of a national trade corridors council. This council would track the movement of goods, analyze significant disruptions and recommend solutions.

The bill also provides for the possibility of establishing a transportation project office. The goal is to better coordinate federal authorizations related to transportation projects. This objective is particularly important for Quebec. Quebec has the St. Lawrence River, ports, and road and rail networks. Quebec has businesses that sell products across Canada and around the world. The Lower Laurentians is part of that network. A business in Boisbriand may depend on a supplier on the other side of the country. A business in Saint-Eustache may have customers in the United States, Europe or Asia. Everything is connected.

[English]

A trade agreement can open the door, but we still have to deliver the goods.

[Translation]

We also need to talk about workers because we cannot have a strong economy without the men and women who keep it running every day. Bill C-39 will not do away with labour disputes, but it does seek to encourage the parties to begin bargaining earlier. It seeks to strengthen the use of mediation and to provide more opportunities for workers and employers to come to an agreement on their own. It is important to note that workers must be able to defend their interests and rights, while employers need stability and predictability. The best solutions are often those that the parties are able to negotiate themselves.

The bill also seeks to strengthen occupational health and safety resources. It provides for additional resources for the Canada Industrial Relations Board. If we look at what happened with Olymel, we see just how closely related labour relations and supply chains are. A disruption can have consequences far beyond the place where it occurs.

I want to come back to my riding of Rivière-des-Mille-Îles. When we debate an important bill here in Ottawa, we always need

to be thinking of the people we are doing this work for. I am thinking of the business owners that I know in my riding. Some of them had plans to expand. Today, they are being more cautious about those plans.

• (1215)

Marc Dalton (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a bit discouraging to be having this debate now in the House of Commons. Why? It is because we already passed a similar bill barely 18 months ago. The Conservatives voted in favour of it because the Prime Minister said that those projects would be fast-tracked at unimaginable speeds. The result is that 500 projects are currently stalled. We are not seeing any progress at all.

Can the member tell me whether we will see another bill like this one 18 months down the line?

Linda Lapointe: Mr. Speaker, my colleague is talking about hypothetical projects. Today, I am here to speak to Bill C-39.

I would like to know what my colleague thinks about the fact that after the studies and the consultations with indigenous peoples are done, it would take only one year to initiate a major project. What does he think about investors knowing that it would only take a year for it to get started?

Mario Simard (Jonquière—Hébertville—Pays-des-Bleuets, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I do not know whether my colleague read the bill carefully. I did. It gives the government the option of launching oil or gas infrastructure projects without completing environmental assessments first.

Here is a very telling example. Back home, the GNL Québec project was turned down. Its proponents had said that they would respect the environmental assessments. However, when their proposal was flatly refused, they turned around and sued the government. I am loathe to think what would happen if an oil and gas project got off the ground, with infrastructure construction under way, only to find out that the project was a no-go and had to be shut down. That would lead to devastating lawsuits for the government.

Is my colleague aware of that?

Linda Lapointe: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague.

Which riding do you represent? Is it Chicoutimi or Lac-Saint-Jean?

An hon. member: Jonquière

Linda Lapointe: Welcome to the Standing Committee on International Trade. I understand you are to be our new member. I very much look forward to working with you on the Standing Committee on International Trade.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to hear that he is going to join our committee.

His question was about consultations. Before a major project is approved and implemented, there is a one-year period for the environmental assessment and consultations with indigenous peoples.

No, we will not cut corners.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I will just remind everyone that members are to speak through the Chair.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands.

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed with Bill C-39.

Unlike the Liberal MPs, I would say that there are no environmental lawyers who believe this bill protects the environment. I would like to ask whether the government and its MPs are open to significant and serious amendments, because this bill is unacceptable.

Linda Lapointe: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my highly esteemed colleague.

Bill C-39 will be studied by a special committee. If amendments are suggested and the parliamentarians on that committee accept them, there is definitely a way to move them forward.

When it comes to the environment, “one project, one year” still involves environmental studies and respect for indigenous peoples' rights and consultations.

• (1220)

[*English*]

Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, an environmental organization has warned that Bill C-39 would create sacrifice zones, where communities are expected to bear the pollution and environmental risks of projects deemed to be in the national interest. Will the government actually guarantee that no communities will be subject to making those sacrifices of health and environment as a result of fast-tracking projects under Bill C-39?

[*Translation*]

Linda Lapointe: Mr. Speaker, I will say the same thing I said to my other colleague earlier: Any suggestions, changes or amendments will have to be proposed in committee.

[*English*]

John-Paul Danko (Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Madawaska—Restigouche.

First, I would like to wish the Westmount Wildcats senior football team a successful season opener. I thank Coach Tom Pain, all the teachers and the coaches for everything they do to provide the young men this wonderful opportunity to compete in the fall football season.

It is an honour to rise on behalf of the residents of Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas in support of the building Canada strong act. Since the 2025 federal election, our government's top priority has been to strengthen the Canadian economy, diversify global trade, invest in Canada, reduce our reliance on the United States, defend our national sovereignty and stand up for Canadians. The building Canada strong act is a critical part of our government's plan to take action with urgency.

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President Trump has chosen to attack Canadian workers and businesses with illegal and unjustified tariffs, tariffs intended to destroy the livelihood of Canadians and, as stated, ultimately make Canada the 51st state. This is a real threat, and everything we do as a government has to be considered within this context. The Trump administration has targeted Canadian steel, aluminum, auto and other industries that support hundreds of thousands of Canadian jobs and Canadian families.

Nowhere is that more real than in my home of Hamilton, Ancaster and Dundas, because Hamilton is Canada's industrial centre and steel city. For generations, Hamilton's industrial economy has been deeply integrated with our friends and allies in the United States, a mutually beneficial agreement that has helped workers and businesses on both sides of the border. Those workers did not cause this trade war, but in large part it is the workers on both sides of the border who are suffering the consequences.

Canada continues to work toward a fair deal with the United States, because we want a strong trading relationship and our two economies are deeply connected, but a fair deal has to be a good deal for Canada. We will not sacrifice Canadian workers, Canadian businesses or Canadian sovereignty just to sign a deal. We cannot pretend that things will go back to normal. As the Prime Minister has stated, “Nostalgia is not a strategy.” We have to be prepared to build our own future, and that means building a stronger Canadian economy, finding new customers for Canadian projects and attracting new investment. Most importantly, it means creating good jobs and greater security for Canadian workers and their families.

Ultimately this is about people, families, workers, and opportunity for the next generation. Fortunately, Canada stands in a position of strength. As the Prime Minister has stated, Canada has what the world needs. We have energy, critical minerals, agriculture, steel, aluminum, lumber, technology, research, education, training, expertise and innovation, and we have some of the best workers and most skilled tradespeople anywhere in the world.

We certainly have something increasingly valuable today in an increasingly divided and dangerous world: certainty. Canada is stable, and Canada is reliable. We have strong regulations and strong labour and environmental standards, and when Canada makes a commitment, our partners know we will honour it. That makes Canada a reliable place to do business.

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It is why we are building closer ties with Europe. We are expanding trade across Asia, including with China, India, Indonesia and other Indo-Pacific countries. We are working to get more Canadian energy to global markets, including the potential for a new pipeline to the Pacific and selling Canadian oil directly to Asian customers, including China. Our partnership with the Ukraine is also creating opportunities for Canadian workers and companies in defence and manufacturing, including with drones and advanced technologies. That is the purpose of the building Canada strong act.

The bill is about three core pillars: building more important projects faster, moving Canadian products to markets and supporting the workers who are at the core of everything we do. The most important thing is getting more projects built faster, because Canada has no shortage of opportunity but does need better ways to turn that opportunity into actual projects, shovels in the ground, jobs and paycheques.

• (1225)

Right now, major projects face overlapping reviews, different levels of governments and years of uncertainty. That uncertainty has consequences. It is certainly something I have observed in my career working as an engineer in the construction industry, because a delayed project means delayed construction, delayed investment and Canadian workers waiting longer for jobs.

The building Canada strong act would create a clearer, more predictable review process with one decision within one year, working with provinces and municipalities to get shovels in the ground at speed. We will maintain environmental protections and respect indigenous rights, but we can do those things while we make decisions in a reasonable amount of time.

Hamilton is a good example of what is possible. Right now, there are 800 acres of shovel-ready industrial land that is ready for development in advanced manufacturing, with the potential for billions of dollars in economic growth and tens of thousands of new local jobs. These are former industrial lands that the council worked proactively to zone. The infrastructure is there. The province has recently recognized this site as a provincial priority for economic investment. That is what “shovel-ready” should mean: do the planning early, get governments working together and resolve the issues before they become roadblocks. Then when there is the opportunity for investment, we need to start from a position of “yes” through the approvals process. The government should be working to get to “yes” instead of starting from “no”.

At the recent Canada investment summit, investors from nearly 30 countries came to Canada with nearly \$500 billion in investment commitments announced because the world wants to invest here. Our job is to turn that investment into projects, jobs and opportunities for Canadians.

The second part is about moving Canadian products to market. If we want to sell more Canadian goods around the world, we need the infrastructure to get them there. That means ports, railways, highways and air corridors. The building Canada strong act would identify important national trade corridors and help move transportation projects through federal approvals faster.

Again, Hamilton is a perfect example of how this can work. We have the busiest freshwater port on the Great Lakes. We have major rail connections, and the busiest overnight cargo airport in Canada. We sit at the centre of Canada's largest manufacturing region. Our new rail container terminal is already helping to get traffic off the highway by putting trade onto rail instead of trucks on the 401.

There is huge potential on the Great Lakes. The St. Lawrence Seaway has significant underutilized capacity, and there is so much opportunity for Canadian steel, grain, minerals and manufactured goods to travel directly to markets throughout Canada and the United States and to global markets from the Great Lakes through the seaway and out to the Atlantic. This means less congestion on local highways for families in the Golden Horseshoe, more reliable supply chains for businesses and better access for new customers and Canadian companies.

The third part of this bill is about the people who actually build this country: Canadian workers. Hamilton has a very proud tradition of organized labour. Our city was built by generations of steelworkers, tradespeople, skilled tradespeople and unionized workers. That is why this legislation is important for strengthening Canada's federal labour framework. It would help unions and employers deal with issues earlier and reach negotiated settlements and agreements before they get to a strike vote. It would add new health and safety officers, increasing capabilities, and would add staff to deal with the backlog of worker complaints. The main purpose of this legislation is to ensure safe workplaces, fair treatment, strong collective bargaining and more stability for workers and their families.

To close, Canada is at an important turning point. The United States has started a trade war that we did not ask for. The global trading system is changing. We do not know what the Trump administration is going to do, but we know what Canada can do. We can build, because Canada has what the world needs. We need to get things built. We need to get our products to market. We need to make sure that the benefits come home to Canadian workers and Canadian families, because together we will build Canada strong.

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• (1230)

Marc Dalton (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am listening to the Liberal member, and the words are great. I can say amen to a lot of what he is saying, but the problem is that the Liberals have been in power for 11 years. He said that Canada has no shortage of opportunities and huge potential. Well, why are things not happening? We have had 500 projects, actually way more than that, bogged down.

The Liberals claim that part 1 of the bill sets a one-year decision timeline, but the fine print reveals that the clock only starts after proponents submit every single study requested. Is this not just a shell game that leaves years of regulatory delays untouched?

John-Paul Danko: Mr. Speaker, maybe this is a bit of a misalignment of ideologies. On this side of the floor, we believe in Canada, we believe in Canadians and we are proud of Canadian businesses. I am amazingly proud of and optimistic about the opportunities we have, especially in Hamilton, being that it is an industrial hub, and the opportunity to realign our economy the way we have to based on the threat we are facing. I know Canadian workers, Canadian businesses and Canadian industry are going to rise to that challenge and be much more economically stable in the future.

Caroline Desrochers (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I know that the city of Hamilton, which my colleague represents, is home to a port that is really pivotal to the commerce of the steel industry, just like the port of Trois-Rivières in my own riding, and is supporting thousands of jobs in his riding. I am wondering if my colleague could tell the House how this bill is going to accelerate the development and expansion of trade corridors in his region, including through the port of Hamilton.

John-Paul Danko: Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to visit the port in Trois-Rivières last winter. There is so much opportunity within Canada to expand and also gain efficiencies in the port system. As I said, one of the things I am the most excited about is getting trade traffic, which right now is putting goods onto transport trucks and clogging up the 400 series highways between Windsor and Montreal, onto rail and onto shipping so that when we are out with our family, we are not hitting that congestion in traffic. It is also much more efficient, getting goods to market with consistency and reliability.

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, “getting products to market” is a repeated phrase, and one thing that shakes my confidence in the government was in the Canada Gazette. On August 1, when it posted about the west coast oil pipeline, it did not accurately describe, in a very short description, the product that will go in the pipeline. Similarly, as the Liberals talk about the product going to China in the pipeline, I will note that the diluted bitumen, which is actually the product used mostly in China, is the tar in the bitumen to pave roads.

I wonder if the member would comment on the level of familiarity of the government benches with the products that are being shipped.

John-Paul Danko: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is obviously a champion for the environment. We very much respect that.

My understanding is that a lot of the Canadian oil and gas being shipped to Asia is being used to make the physical products we use. It is not being burned for energy. Carbon is not being released into the atmosphere.

I do agree that we have so much opportunity beyond just the oil and gas industry. That is why we are focusing on renewables, on the transition to the electric economy and on doubling the transmission and generation of electricity, because those things are where the real opportunities are in the electric future. There is so much opportunity for those industries in Ontario and in Hamilton.

• (1235)

[Translation]

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in April 2025, we were elected with a clear mandate to strengthen, diversify and unite the Canadian economy. Over the past 18 months, our Prime Minister and our government have shown real leadership in advancing these objectives.

Last year, we began by establishing a framework to support major nation-building projects. In budget 2025, we put forward various tax incentives to stimulate investment in Canada. We have invested heavily in our infrastructure and in projects of critical importance to our country. We have signed economic and defence agreements with some 20 countries on five continents. We are in talks to strengthen our ties to the European Union. These are just a few examples of measures that speak to our government's ambition to strengthen the Canadian economy.

The bill before us today, Bill C-39, the building Canada strong act, is the latest in a series of measures. Bill C-39 is important because it provides predictability for those who want to invest in Canada. This is extremely important under the current circumstances, because the eyes of the world are on our country and the investment opportunities presented by projects here.

I have a good example. The first-ever Canada investment summit was held in September. The results speak for themselves. The summit produced nearly \$500 billion in new investment commitments to Canada. This capital will support Canadian workers, businesses, infrastructure, and our country's strategic sectors.

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On the sidelines of the summit, I had the opportunity to attend a reception hosted by the Government of New Brunswick in Toronto, where I was able to speak with four different people who were leading projects for northern New Brunswick. When we talk about projects that will boost the Canadian economy, that also includes the region I come to Ottawa to represent. The feedback I received was very interesting. It helped connect project proponents from northern New Brunswick with various international investors. The feedback I received from the people I spoke with is that the world recognizes Canada's investment potential. They see the wealth of natural resources in our country. They see our government's ambitions and the efforts we are making to build at scale. As a government, we want to seize this opportunity and send a clear message that now is the time to invest in Canada. This will enable us to foster sustainable growth, create opportunities and ensure prosperity for all Canadians. If we want to attract these investments, and if we want them to translate into tangible projects on the ground, we must ensure that a regulatory framework is in place.

With Bill C-39, we are trying to attract more investment to Canada and move forward on projects that are important for our economy and communities by implementing a clearer, more efficient and more modern regulatory framework. A key aspect of Bill C-39 is a commitment to make decisions within a one-year period for projects requiring a federal permit. That will give investors and project proponents the clarity and predictability they need to invest and build in Canada. Right now, this process is taking far too long in many cases. I want to emphasize the fact that acting more quickly does not mean being ineffective or abandoning our high environmental standards. Not all projects will be approved. We can still reject projects that do not meet Canada's environmental standards or Canadians' expectations. However, rather than taking years to say no, we want to be able to say no more quickly. If the project does not meet the government's expectations, people will not have to wait for years before getting a definitive answer. When the answer is positive, we obviously want to let those involved know as soon as possible, while respecting the process in place, particularly when it comes to environmental standards. It is important to avoid delays because when a project is ready to go in the first year but it has to wait for years and years because of administrative delays, that results in millions of dollars of additional costs, and investors may decide to invest in other countries instead. That is not the message we want to send. We want to provide predictability for those who are interested in investing in Canada.

I want to repeat that we do not need to choose between ensuring rigorous environmental protection and streamlining project reviews. We can do both at the same time. That is what we want to do with Bill C-39. We can do those things right now, in fact: maintain strict environmental standards while moving forward at an appropriate pace. I think that the key word for those who want to invest in Canada is "predictability". This is consistent with what we heard at the 2026 Canada investment summit from people who want to invest in projects of national interest in Canada.

• (1240)

The transportation section is another important part of Bill C-39. We want to diversify our economy and develop new markets. We are already seeing that now. We have signed trade and defence

agreements with about 20 countries, and we are in talks with several more. These agreements give Canadian businesses access to new markets. We also want to strengthen Canada's economy by breaking down barriers to interprovincial trade in order to build one Canadian economy. However, if we want goods to get from point A to point B efficiently and if we want to speed up the transportation of Canadian goods, whether to new international merchants or from one province to another, we need to build more efficient and resilient supply chains.

Through Bill C-39, we are proposing a suite of measures to achieve that goal. For instance, we are going to set up a transportation project office that will be responsible for coordinating the granting of federal permits and advancing priority transportation projects. We are going to invest in strengthening our existing trade corridors, but we are also going to try to develop new ones. We are going to modernize the governance of our ports. Indeed, when we look at some of the ports in other advanced economies, it is clear that we could learn a thing or two. Could our ports be more productive and more efficient? I think so. We have made the most of what we could learn by looking at certain ports around the world that are more efficient than ours. We are trying to implement some of those measures here in Canada.

We also want to move forward with new strategies for digitalizing trade. It is 2026, and we have access to technological tools that can help us be more efficient. Some systems are still paper-based, and containers have to be offloaded from ships so that paper documents can be signed. The same results could be achieved more efficiently by other means. For example, for ships at sea, documents could be signed digitally. The goal is to reduce the administrative burden and come up with a clearer, more predictable regulatory framework. Our goal in implementing this suite of legislative, administrative and technological changes is really to make our ports and trade corridors more competitive. This would strengthen our position as a reliable trading partner on the world stage. It would also strengthen the one Canadian economy, supporting our long-term growth.

This will have a ripple effect across the country, including in Madawaska—Restigouche, the riding I represent here in Ottawa. I see this as a very positive thing. If potatoes from the Grand Falls region can reach the Mexican market more quickly, or if the wood chips or maple syrup we produce can reach Europe more quickly, so much the better. I recently visited a business in Restigouche that exports bumpers to Australia. When we talk about moving goods, this also includes goods from Madawaska—Restigouche reaching various markets in Canada and internationally.

In this bill, we are also taking steps to support our workforce. To build a strong Canada, we must start with the workers. To do this, to achieve our goals, we need our workers. Bill C-39 enables us to take meaningful steps to strengthen labour relations by requiring early negotiations in complex cases, giving trade unions and employers more time to identify the issues, access mediation services and reach negotiated settlements before a strike or lockout occurs.

Let me be clear: We will always protect the constitutional right to strike. All we are trying to do is establish a modern framework that prevents labour disputes from happening in the first place. The goal is to create a favourable environment where employers and workers can start negotiating together earlier and can access mediation together earlier to reach a negotiated settlement. A negotiated settlement is always better than a protracted labour dispute. Really, our focus is on helping the parties resolve issues earlier, supporting negotiated outcomes and providing timely assistance when challenges arise. This will benefit our workers, our employers and, I would even say, the country as a whole.

I will end there. I look forward to taking questions from my colleagues.

• (1245)

Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from New Brunswick. I commend him for his passion for his region, as we all have for our own. There is a reason we were elected by the people.

I know that my colleague was elected 18 months ago, and I congratulate him, but two years ago, before his time, his peers on that side of the House voted against Bill C-375, which called for “one project, one environmental assessment”. It was my bill, in fact. We, the Conservatives, had introduced it. Today, however, the government is boasting about wanting to move forward. Even the King said as much in the throne speech.

What does my colleague have to say to his Liberal colleagues who voted against the “one project, one environmental assessment” bill but support that concept today?

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Quebec. I always enjoy debating with him in the House.

When people in my riding ask me what we are doing to strengthen the Canadian economy, I am proud to tell them about our Prime Minister's and our government's leadership and about all of the work that we have done over the past 18 months to make Canada's economy stronger, more unified and more robust. I also tell them about the measures that we have put in place to promote projects of national interest and about the tax incentives that we have implemented to boost investment.

Bill C-39, the bill before us today, provides a clearer regulatory framework and more predictability. These measures are working. Just look at the summit that was held in Toronto, which resulted in \$500 billion in investments for projects across the country, including New Brunswick and Quebec.

Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Bill C-5 contained a discretionary provision that gave the minister absolute power to determine which projects are of national interest. Bill

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C-39 gives even more power to the executive branch by diminishing Parliament's role. That is a subversion of parliamentary democracy.

The Liberals are exploiting the tariff crisis to impose permanent rollbacks that will have no effect during what is left of Donald Trump's term in office. The member is very enthusiastic about this dangerous precedent, but will he be just as enthusiastic and happy about this bill when he winds up on this side of the House facing a new government and that government starts trampling on democracy and our legislative power?

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault: Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased that we, as members of the House of Commons, have several days to discuss Bill C-39. I am pleased that we can exchange ideas here, at the heart of our Canadian democracy. I am also looking forward to following the committee's work on this. Many witnesses will share their points of view. All members, including opposition members, will have an opportunity to comment.

In his question, my colleague talked about enthusiasm. What I am hearing is enthusiasm on the part of people who want to invest in Canada and on the part of workers who are seeing the positive impact of these investments across the country, including in northern New Brunswick, the region I represent. While in Toronto for the summit, I spoke with four proponents championing projects in my region. They were eagerly awaiting measures like this one, measures that encourage investment for the benefit of all Canadians.

Eric St-Pierre (Honoré-Mercier, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Madawaska—Restigouche, who is very involved in his community.

How will the people of Madawaska—Restigouche benefit in concrete ways from Bill C-39, the building Canada strong act?

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault: Mr. Speaker, my riding is home to a number of projects and a great deal of momentum. The bill will provide a clear regulatory framework for people who want to invest in projects in northern New Brunswick. For example, responses about federal permits will be delivered within a year, providing predictability.

When it comes to transport, we want to make our ports more efficient. New Brunswick has the port of Belledune and the port of Saint John. Goods from my riding, Madawaska—Restigouche, sail from those ports to reach various markets around the world.

Modernizing port processes and procedures to make them more efficient will benefit our local businesses, which are already very active in international trade.

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• (1250)

[English]

Pat Kelly (Calgary Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is good to be back in the House of Commons debating legislation. That is what we are elected to do. That is what we are in the House for. It is good to be here and talking about Bill C-39. The Liberals call it the building Canada strong act, which rings similar to a similar bill we dealt with about a year ago. I will maybe have time to come back to that, but I will start by saying that of course we agree, or that I agree, with the stated premise of the bill, which is to enable Canada to build things, to build Canada stronger.

That is certainly something that I not only very deeply believe needs to be done but also that is pretty consistent with what I have spent the last 11 years talking about. At the moment, to be sure, we are confronted with an unprovoked, unjustified, deeply damaging and unnecessary trade war with the United States. We did not choose it. It is not something that Canada chose, but it is the moment we find ourselves in.

However, the issues around this, around the necessity of building major projects and building our country back up again, have very deep roots. We have been talking about this for 11 years. We have spent the last 11 years being unprepared for this moment.

Before I go too much further, I will say that I am going to share my time with the member for Edmonton Southeast.

As I said, we did not choose to be in a trade war with the United States. We did not choose to have our country economically attacked, but for the last 11 years, the government has left us unprepared for the moment.

I was elected in 2015, and that year, the very first thing the government did was cancel the northern gateway pipeline. The Liberals are saying today, "If only we had a west coast pipeline." There was a west coast pipeline approved and already on their desk the minute they took office. The first thing they did, by ministerial order, was cancel it: 525,000 barrels a day. At today's price, that is \$50 million a day in economic activity, \$20 billion a year.

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Pat Kelly: Mr. Speaker, I am being heckled by the member for Winnipeg North, who says that there was something misleading in that statement. There is nothing misleading. That is exactly what happened. There was a conditional approval that the Liberals rescinded by ministerial order, so here we are today without that pipeline. It would have been built years ago.

In 2016, the Liberals introduced the carbon tax. They also spent 2016 failing to champion the Keystone XL pipeline, another one that has not been built. It was cancelled by Biden later on. The government did not champion it and did not see it through to get it built when it had the chance. In 2016, the Liberals chased off TransCanada PipeLines, which wanted to build the energy east pipeline. Not only did it abandon that pipeline because of changing regulatory goalposts, but it also changed its name to TC Energy because "TransCanada PipeLines" did not fit what it was doing. It had to move its business to build pipelines in Mexico and the United

States, where the opportunities were. That is the legacy of the government.

I am up only to 2016. In 2017, the Liberals brought in the clean fuel regulations, which is a misnomer. It is really just a tax on fuel. In 2018, they brought in Bill C-48, which banned shipping traffic on the northwest B.C. coast. Again, we are talking about wishing we could export our products to the Asian market at full global price. The Liberals passed a law banning the shipping traffic to be able to do that.

In 2019, Bill C-69 became law. We all know what Bill C-69 is. It is the "no more pipelines" bill. That was what they passed. There have been no major pipeline applications under that law. They even made changes to the Fisheries Act that made it impossible to get a hydro project approved. We heard about that at the natural resources committee yesterday. The head of WaterPower Canada told the committee that under the 2019 changes to the Fisheries Act, it is impossible to get a hydro project approved in Canada. The Liberals will not even allow hydro projects to go forward under the current government.

• (1255)

In 2022, Prime Minister Trudeau told the world that there was no business case for Canadian LNG to Europe. In a way, he was right, but the reason there was no business case was because of all the red tape and regulation, which the government imposed, that killed the business case. So, yes, we need to build Canada. If only we had spent the last 11 years building Canada, we would not be in such a precarious position today.

We agree with the government that we need to build things. Major projects need to be built, and it is not just oil and gas. I have spent a lot of time talking about pipelines, which is a really important one, but there are terrible deficiencies in our ports. We have among the worst ports in the world for efficiency. We have everything from ports to rail, airports, electrical transmission lines, etc. We have a need for major projects, and so we do support this stated purpose to build Canada.

It is funny that the fanfare with which the bill before us was tabled rings familiar, which is because the Liberals said many of the same things they said about 18 months ago when Parliament first sat following the last election. It was last spring, in June, that they passed Bill C-5. It was a bill that Conservatives supported a little reluctantly, because it granted extraordinary powers to ministers to interfere politically and cherry-pick and decide politically which projects they wanted to exempt from their own laws that they had passed. It was not quite the approach for us. We would rather they stripped away all these bad laws, but we said, “Look, we have to build something. If this is a way to get something done, we will support it”, and we did. Here we are, a year later, no major projects approved and no shovels in the ground. It did not seem to make any difference. Now, we have this latest bill that is more about bureaucratic structures than getting shovels in the ground.

This is a 250-page bill the Liberals dumped on Tuesday afternoon, a little less than 72 hours ago, and so I have not gone through all 250 pages with a fine-tooth comb. We are going to take the time to make sure that we understand the bill fully, but part of what I understand about it is the movement from the Impact Assessment Act to the Canadian Energy Regulator on certain projects, which is probably not a bad idea. The structure of Bill C-69 was there to kill projects.

The idea that the bill before us would give certainty to industry is quite misleading. The bill would give ministers the power, but would not compel them to make a decision within a year. It would give them the latitude to hit the pause button on how long that year takes. It would give them the power to extend the year. It would give the power to say, “No, I’m going to take extra time.” This is not going to give the certainty that industry needs.

We heard yesterday at the natural resources committee about how important it is to have regulatory certainty. Regulatory uncertainty makes the country uninvestable, and we have seen investment flee this country under this government. We do not need new laws. We do not need summits. We do not need announcements. We do not need speeches. We do not need vague MOUs. We do not need photo op signings. We do not need slush funds under political control. We do not need corporate welfare. We simply need to undo the approach that, for 11 years, has prevented major projects from going ahead in Canada.

We need major projects. We need pipelines. We needed pipelines 10 years ago, 11 years ago, and we need them now. We need better roads. We need better ports. We need better infrastructure. We need all these things, and we are still waiting.

• (1300)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first of all, let us make it very clear. Under the 10 years of Stephen Harper, we actually saw zero inches of pipeline built going to the west coast through B.C. In the Trudeau era, the TMX was delivered.

Now having said that, we have a new government and a new Prime Minister elected just last year. Over that year, they have attracted a great deal of investment. One needs to look at Toronto,

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where half a trillion dollars of investment is coming to Canada. This bill is an important aspect of that.

While the member has not agreed, he should get on board, support the legislation and—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The hon. member for Calgary Crowfoot.

Pat Kelly: Mr. Speaker, there is a lot to unpack there. The Liberals never talk about the investment outflows when they talk about inflows. The net has been an outflow of this country under this government.

I am really glad that the member brought up Trans Mountain, because I had meant to and did not quite have enough time. The Trans Mountain pipeline was a pipeline that a private builder would have built. They started under this government, and the regulatory uncertainty chased Kinder Morgan out of Canada. That is what happened.

The government nationalized the project and built it at a 500% overrun of what was projected. That is the Liberals’ approach on building pipelines. The Harper government bequeathed the government a balanced budget. The New York Times described Canada as having the most wealthy middle class in the world and two approved pipelines, and the Liberal government blew it.

[Translation]

Mario Simard (Jonquière—Hébertville—Pays-des-Bleuets, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the reality is not what my colleague claims. The only oil and gas infrastructure projects that have been carried out were only possible because the government agreed to invest public funds in them.

Back home in Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean, as soon as developers started asking for public money for the liquefied natural gas project, the LNG project, the Government of Quebec lost interest. People know full well that over the long term, with the energy transition under way, these very expensive infrastructure projects are not profitable. That is the problem. We are going to end up in a scenario where environmental assessments have been scrapped and people can pretty much do whatever they want with infrastructure projects that are not profitable.

Does my colleague agree?

[English]

Pat Kelly: Mr. Speaker, I agree with much of what the member said. I do not think it is a good thing that the public money has to prop up any private project that would otherwise, in a proper regulatory environment that had clear criteria, make it investable.

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I do not agree with the government's approach. I do not agree that it has had the right approach on infrastructure at all. I could go on. I could talk about the failure of the Infrastructure Bank. The Liberal government has chased private capital out of energy during its 11 years in office.

Burton Bailey (Red Deer, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague just delivered an informative, excellent speech.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Burton Bailey: Mr. Speaker, members can laugh all they want.

The Liberal government's Bill C-5 would create the Building Canada Act, and it was to build at speeds like nothing we have seen before. Bill C-39 adds the word "strong".

I would like to ask my hon. colleague if that word is the only thing that the Liberal government has built in the last 18 months.

Pat Kelly: Mr. Speaker, that is about right.

Sooner or later, the government is going to be confronted with the fact that there is a difference between saying something and doing something. What we have seen from the government is a lot of speeches, announcements, photo ops and words, but not so many shovels in the ground.

• (1305)

Jagsharan Singh Mahal (Edmonton Southeast, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the people of Edmonton Southeast to debate Bill C-39, legislation that the government says would get Canada building. Conservatives will judge this bill by whether it saves Canadians money, protects their jobs and delivers the projects our country needs.

In my previous career as a lawyer, I understood that my clients depended on outcomes. Whether I was advocating for a favourable judgment or negotiating a successful settlement, my responsibility was to advance their interests and deliver a meaningful result. My clients needed more than assurances that I was working on their files. They needed to know what the progress was and what that meant for them. Canadians should expect the same accountability from the government. The government works for its people and they are entitled to judge it by the results.

More than a year ago, the Liberals introduced Bill C-5, promising to accelerate major projects, yet, more than a year later, the Building Canada Act still contains no designated national interest projects. Now, the Liberal government is asking Canadians to place their confidence in a nearly 250-page omnibus bill. Canadians deserve an explanation of why the previous legislation has not delivered the promised designations and why this legislation would produce a different outcome.

In my legal practice, another stack of paperwork would not, on its own, demonstrate progress for a client. It should not be the measure of success in government either. That is why we must look beyond the title of this bill and examine how it would actually change the approval system. Bill C-39 would create a transportation project office, a national trade corridors council and a new framework for regions of national interest. Coordination can be useful, but creating new offices and frameworks would not necessarily eliminate regulatory issues. A faster approval system should clearly identify

who is responsible for a decision, coordinate overlapping federal reviews and provide stakeholders with a predictable path through the process.

The real test would be whether these changes actually reduce red tape and shorten the time it takes to reach a final decision. These delays have consequences beyond the walls of this chamber. A project awaiting a decision represents potential contracts for suppliers, apprenticeship for young workers and income for families. When those opportunities remain uncertain, people must make decisions about their futures. This is especially important for younger Canadians. Statistics Canada routinely reports that thousands of Canadians move abroad each year. In 2021, the majority of Canadians leaving the country were between 20 and 44 years old, many of whom moved down to the United States. People leave for many reasons, and we should respect their freedom to pursue opportunities elsewhere, but as MPs, we should be deeply concerned when Canada cannot offer a competitive future to the people we have educated and trained. An engineering graduate needs a company willing to hire. An apprentice needs a project that will provide steady work. When investment is delayed, the opportunities attached to it are delayed too. For families in Edmonton Southeast, the stakes are personal. Parents want their children to build successful lives without having to move away to find the opportunities they need.

• (1310)

Canada should be a country where ambition has room to grow. That requires a government that understands the connection between investment, employment and the ability to build a free life here.

Conservatives have proposed a clear approach: approve projects within six months, repeal antidevelopment laws brought in through Bill C-69 and Bill C-48, adopt "one project, one review", set clear requirements, coordinate the process and deliver a predictable decision.

Bill C-39 promotes a one-year decision timeline for certain assessments, but that would depend upon the preassessments and determinations, both of which have no clear timelines. For the stakeholders involved in those projects, the preparation and review needed before that point still take time and money, something that this bill would not entirely address. We must examine whether these provisions produce greater certainty across the entire process. Businesses cannot plan their investments around a deadline that tells only part of the story.

The same need for certainty applies to getting Canadian energy to market. This is where the government must address the tanker ban created through Bill C-48. The Oil Tanker Moratorium Act restricts large crude oil shipments through ports along British Columbia's northern coast. For an oil export project that would rely on those ports, faster approval of pipelines would not itself resolve the separate restriction put by the tanker ban on the loading of its product onto ships. The government must explain how it promises faster development when it continues to leave export barriers in place. Investors need confidence that a complete project can operate from production to delivery to the customer.

Bill C-39 would not repeal the tanker ban. Bill C-264, which was put forward by my hon. colleague from Calgary Signal Hill, directly addresses this issue. If the government wants to demonstrate it is serious about opening opportunities for Canadian energy, that is a concrete measure already before Parliament.

For Alberta, access to markets means opportunities for people who build and maintain energy infrastructure and for the businesses that support them. Those opportunities matter in Edmonton Southeast.

In closing, my experience as a lawyer taught me to keep the interests of people I represent at the centre of my work. I bring that same responsibility to the House. Canadians deserve opportunities they can build their lives around and a government that can demonstrate what it has accomplished on their behalf. Conservatives will review this legislation carefully and press for changes that deliver those results. The government has made its promises. Canadians are waiting for it to deliver.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister made a commitment to Canadians in the last election to build Canada strong and deal with issues like affordability and our health care system, not to mention the issue of crime and making our communities safer. However, building Canada strong means securing export markets. That is one of the reasons we now have 20-plus trade and security agreements since the Prime Minister was elected. It is the reason that in Toronto, just a couple of weeks back, the world came to Canada and made half a trillion dollars' worth of investments. That is a historic amount of money because of the leadership of the Prime Minister and the drive from this government.

The legislation before us today is going to help us put that into place. Will the member give a clear indication that he will support the—

• (1315)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The hon. member for Edmonton Southeast.

Jagsharan Singh Mahal: Mr. Speaker, the contradiction in the member opposite's question lies with there being no results from Bill C-5, which the government passed last year. No project has even been started under Bill C-5. It is right for Conservatives to question parts of the bill so it delivers what it promises to deliver.

Amarjeet Gill (Brampton West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Conservatives have said for years that the government needs to change its di-

rection to help Canadians. We strongly suggest that it accepts the Conservative economic action plan.

After more than a decade of Liberal promises, major projects still face lengthy approvals. Would Bill C-39 actually get projects built faster, or would it create another layer of federal bureaucracy?

Jagsharan Singh Mahal: Mr. Speaker, this bill definitely leaves us with a number of questions. There is increasing bureaucracy, as I said in my speech. This bill would create three new offices that I have read about so far, and there may be more, but increasing offices itself is not going to deliver results. To deliver results, we need to get rid of Liberal laws that are standing in front of the intention of this bill, like the tanker ban and Bill C-69, so that we can build and deliver results.

[Translation]

Mario Simard (Jonquière—Hébertville—Pays-des-Bleuets, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I find this debate rather fascinating. All day, my Conservative colleagues have been arguing that the government is not allowing oil and gas projects to move forward quickly enough. They can hardly say that it is a good idea to get rid of environmental assessments so that oil and gas projects can move forward.

However, there is one thing that I hope we agree on, and I would like my colleague to give me a clear answer. On several occasions, the leader of the official opposition has said that big oil companies that let the public pay for their infrastructure are receiving corporate welfare.

Does my colleague agree with us that it is unacceptable that public money is being used to pay for oil and gas infrastructure?

[English]

Jagsharan Singh Mahal: Mr. Speaker, with regard to my Bloc colleague's comments, the environment is important for sure, but the need at this time is to invest in the energy sector, get jobs for Canadians and get money back into the economy so that people can afford to live again.

Roman Baber (North York, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is for the viewers at home. The Liberal government introduced a 250-page bill. It said that Bill C-39 is just what we need now so Canada can finally start building energy and transportation projects. I thank them for not scrolling for a few minutes. This speech will feature Justin Trudeau, Katy Perry and a special appearance by Doug Ford.

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Time flies when we are having fun. It is hard to believe, but it has been 18 months since the election. I remember my first couple of days in Ottawa. We had the election of the Speaker, I took a shuttle with my commoner friends for the ceremonial tradition of being rejected by the Senate and saw His Majesty's carriage arriving at the Senate.

I also clearly remember the Prime Minister telling Canadians that all we needed to do was pass Bill C-5, the Building Canada Act, in order to start building at unimaginable speeds. He said that Bill C-5 was just what we needed to get Canada building. Conservatives worked with what was then a Liberal minority, and we passed Bill C-5 in five days. I was told Bill C-5 was going to fix all of our problems and eliminate the complex regulatory regime that got in the way of building projects.

Here is a pop quiz. Since the passage of Bill C-5 at the commencement of this 45th Parliament, how many new projects have been built? It is zero. How many new projects, and I emphasize the word "new", were approved? It is zero. It is because the Liberal government is all talk, no results, and all talk, no action. The Prime Minister talks a fancy game, but when it comes to building projects, he is just like Justin. What is Justin Trudeau's new company called? It is called Hope & Hard Work. In this case, in Justin's case, it is all hope.

My Liberal friends accuse me all the time of having Justin live rent-free in my head. He is living rent-free on Katy's yacht. Now, 18 months later, the Prime Minister is back from overseas and has tabled a 250-page bill and said that if we pass Bill C-39, we are going to start building. What changed? It was one word. Bill C-5 was the Building Canada Act; Bill C-39 is the building Canada strong act. To the fancy Liberal marketing consultants, how about some fresh material? Slogans do not build projects. Slogans do not build pipelines, energy corridors or transportation corridors.

We should be the wealthiest country in the world because we are blessed with the greatest natural resources in the world. We have \$30 trillion of proven reserves in natural resources. We have some of the world's highest proven oil reserves. We have natural gas that could satisfy the crazy demand for electricity. We have rare earth minerals that everyone is chasing. We should all be living like a Saudi prince. Instead, Canada imports oil from Saudi Arabia. We import oil from Nigeria.

Why are we shooting ourselves in the foot? Why do we not get out of our own way and start building? Other petroleum producers will not stop, and they pollute the environment. Canada has some of the best environmental practices in the world. Those who are passionate about the environment should support Canadian oil because it is much cleaner and better than Middle Eastern oil. We need to free our natural resources. We do not need this bill. We need the will to build. We need to free Canada's oil and gas; that would mean more money in our pockets.

This bill would not do it because the Liberals will not do it. They do not want to do it. They build nothing but bureaucracy. Since taking office, they built the Build Canada Homes agency and the Major Projects Office, the financial crimes agency is in the works, and there is the defence procurement agency. All they have built is of-

fices inside office towers and then hired their friends. The Prime Minister is all talk, no results.

What else do the Liberals claim they will build in this bill but will not build? It is transportation. For the life of me, I do not understand why we cannot build transportation in this country. Actually, I do understand. We need three levels of government and three levels of approvals, and there is always someone on vacation.

I ran for provincial parliament almost a decade ago because one of my lifetime goals is to connect the Sheppard-Yonge subway station with the Sheppard West subway station. That is four kilometres of rail that would leverage line 1 and line 3, connect the north part of the city from east to west, open up York University to Scarborough students and aid in the construction of housing at Downsview Park. Instead, we have a Rogers Stadium concert venue that disturbs the neighbours. What happened? I thought we were going to build housing at Downsview Park.

● (1320)

Now here come the Liberals saying they want to build a high-speed rail line from Toronto to Quebec City, the Alto, and it is going to cost \$90 billion. Doug Ford's Ontario line is 15 stops and 15 kilometres, granted it is underground. Alto is promised to be 1,000 kilometres. A month ago we found out not only that the 15-kilometre Ontario line is half a decade behind but that the cost of construction is up to \$34 billion. In the best case scenario for Doug, by the time he is done with the Ontario line, it will come in at \$40 billion. It is not even like a traditional subway; it is a hybrid of hard rail and light rail. I do not think anyone told Doug. If the Ontario line from Don Mills and Eglinton to Lakeshore and Bathurst is \$40 billion, is the Alto high-speed rail really going to be \$90 billion? Alto will never be built, never. By the time construction stops, it is going to have cost \$1 trillion.

I am being reminded by my friends that I will be splitting my time with the Bloc member for Repentigny.

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It is so upsetting that we do not have the stomach to build serious transportation projects in this country anymore. The regulatory process, the approvals, the funding arrangements, the environmental issues and the agendas, all of those, are getting in the way of actual building. By the time we have some sort of consensus, there is a new government at one of the levels of government, and it will go in a different direction. I have watched that happen in my beloved city of Toronto time and time again. The Eglinton LRT was a debacle. Metrolinx was stuck at Yonge and Eglinton forever. Now the government has the audacity to tell us that the Alto will cost \$90 billion and all we have to do is pass this 250-page bill. If there is someone who believes that, then please let me sell them the Gordie Howe bridge, or its total income after expenses.

The government should scrap this Alto monstrosity and build energy projects like Canadians depend on it. For goodness' sake, can we stop buying oil from Nigeria? Why can we not supply natural gas all around the world? All day long, I hear about AI. None of this AI data centre revolution happens without electricity, not in the U.S., not in Europe and not in China. This is Canada's opportunity to supply the globe with Canadian natural gas, to supply the electricity to all of these data centres. This is how we can be part of this industrial revolution. That is how we protect our jobs.

We have an option to become a commodity-based economy to power the future. The Liberals passed Bill C-5, and they will pass this bill too. What are we going to build? Nothing. It is all talk and no results, no action. We are not going to build until Conservatives come back to the federal government. What we are asking, and what all Canadians are asking, is for a little less conversation and a little more action, please.

● (1325)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a great deal of discussion has been taking place with the Prime Minister and our premiers. A great deal of discussion is taking place with the Prime Minister and world investors. What we saw just recently in Toronto was the world coming to Canada to meet with our premiers and our Prime Minister. A half-trillion dollars is a historic amount of money.

The member makes reference to AI. He could talk to Premier Moe about how Saskatchewan is moving forward in collaboration with Ottawa on AI development. A historic amount of money is flowing into the province of Saskatchewan to build up the AI data.

Does the member not believe that it takes some collaboration to get things done too?

Roman Baber: Mr. Speaker, the U.A.E. met with the Prime Minister a couple of months ago, and it said it was going to invest \$90 billion in our economy, and the Liberal government was not able to identify one single shovel-ready project for the U.A.E. to invest in.

I heard about that summit in Toronto. It was a fun place. I heard there was a max plate fundraiser the night before for the Liberals. What we do not have is a single investable project ready to go. That is the fault of 11 years of Liberal governments, and the current Liberal Prime Minister is going to have the same legacy.

Kelly DeRidder (Kitchener Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his incredible speech today on the importance of getting projects delivered in Canada. There is \$1 billion here, \$1 billion there, \$1 billion for this person and \$1 billion for that person. I would like the member's thoughts, please. If we could stop announcing \$500 billion across Canada and just approve 500 projects sitting on the Prime Minister's desk, where would Canada be as we move forward?

● (1330)

Roman Baber: Mr. Speaker, 500 projects are available for approval right now that the Prime Minister can get going on. He does not need a 250-page bill. That is two projects that are ready to go for every page in the bill.

At this time, Speaker, I would like to request a brief indulgence.

Surrounded by his loved ones, Glen McFarland passed away last night. Glen McFarland was the financial agent for the York Centre EDA during the 2025 general election and was previously the financial agent for my nomination. Glen was a remarkable man. He is survived by his wife, Lisa, and their three children. He was an extraordinary accountant and a fellow with CPA Ontario. He was a managing partner of the McGovern Hurley accounting firm, which is proud of its more than 100 employees. He was such a gentleman. He passed away last night after a long fight with cancer. His family should know how much he was loved by his friends and his loved ones. He was a remarkable man. May he rest in peace.

Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it was good to see my colleague up on his feet today, although he certainly did not talk positively about Toronto. Given the fact that this member and I both share areas of the city of Toronto, we respect and acknowledge some of the challenges that have happened, but I would suggest that Bill C-39 is exactly the kind of bill that needs to come forward to help cities like Toronto, Vancouver and so on, so that we will be able to move things along faster.

Many of the complaints and comments my colleague made were about that very issue of having to move things forward, whether energy, infrastructure or housing. All of those things are going to be happening much faster now, especially once, with the member's help, we pass Bill C-39.

I would like to have some additional comments on that.

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Roman Baber: Mr. Speaker, I believe the member whose riding is west of mine was not attentive to my presentation. I love the city of Toronto. My first love is the city of Toronto. What I do not love is what we have done to Toronto's transportation. Line 5, which goes from my riding into that member's riding, was not on time or on budget. There is a streetcar on Finch Avenue. What an absurdity. The Eglinton LRT took double the time at double the budget. The St. Clair streetcar is insanity, and the Ontario line is also a debacle.

[Translation]

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, sometimes I wonder whether the government thinks our roads have potholes because of the trade war. Hearing the Liberals talk, one might almost believe that the trade war is responsible for traffic and late buses. The government is blaming the trade war for a lot of things.

Bill C-39 clearly shows that the government has come to the conclusion that it has to trample on workers' rights and our environmental laws to deal with the trade war. It seems to think that it has to adopt a Trump-like approach to deal with President Trump. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has announced that it is launching the largest deregulation action in U.S. history, and the Canadian government seems to find that inspiring.

In a year and a half, the government scrapped carbon pricing. It introduced Bill C-30, which is completely anti-science and puts pesticides that were banned back into circulation. It scrapped the EV mandate. It passed Bill C-5, which has been described as the greatest rollback of environmental law in recent times. That is on top of giving tax breaks to oil and gas companies, announcing the construction and financing of pipelines and liquefied natural gas projects, and planning to triple gas production and double oil sands production. Clearly, the government will not respect the Paris Agreement, its commitments or its greenhouse gas reduction target, which it no longer talks about in the short term. Now it is talking about net zero by 2050. However, as every independent analyst has said, we know that the rollbacks are so serious that Canada cannot possibly meet its commitments.

With Bill C-39, it seems that the government is trying to attract investors by being even more open to air pollution and the destruction of land and water than our neighbour to the south can be. The Bloc Québécois believes that there are other strategies for developing our economy while protecting the environment and without having to circumvent environmental laws.

The government's Bill C-39 is quite literally breaking up the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada. With this new bill, the government is literally compromising the independence of scientists in assessing pipelines and nuclear energy by making the Canada Energy Regulator and the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission responsible for conducting assessments. This is like putting wolves in charge of the sheep. The Canada Energy Regulator is an institution that is known to support pipelines and has nothing to do with protecting the environment. That is not part of its mandate. None of these institutions talk about protecting the environment, even though they will now be responsible for assessing the environmental impact of projects with potentially dire consequences. These are oil and gas megaprojects, likely some of the largest oil and gas megaprojects we have ever seen in Canada. It remains to be seen

whether they get off the ground, because we obviously intend to join others in opposing this type of bill.

I must point out that the House of Commons Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development has already highlighted the issue that the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission is not independent from the Department of Natural Resources. The Canada Energy Regulator, formerly known as the National Energy Board, is an institution that is completely biased toward pipelines. We have seen this in Quebec. Many of its members come from the fossil fuel sector. It is like asking cigarette manufacturers to carry out their own studies on the health consequences of smoking. It is completely biased. No one should take the public for fools, yet that is exactly what the government is doing right now.

Contrary to what the title of Bill C-39 would have us believe, this bill weakens Canada by bowing to the interests of the fossil fuel barons, among others. I would remind the House that the government has already passed the "no laws" law, namely Bill C-5, the Building Canada Act. The Liberals passed it in record time. We were unable to examine it properly. This act specifically allows laws to be circumvented.

• (1335)

Even so, over the past year, not a single project has been designated under this legislation, which the government rushed through as quickly as possible with the support of, among others, the Conservatives. Not a single project has been put on the list in a year. Why was it so urgent?

Now the government is introducing Bill C-39, and it even wants environmental assessments for all projects to take no more than a year despite the fact that the government has not managed to designate a single project under its legislation in a whole year. It seems clear that environmental protection is being used as a scapegoat to mask the current government's failure to get things done. The issue is not environmental protection; it is the government's failure to move multiple files forward in a timely manner.

I can see it already: Assessments for complex projects will inevitably be rushed, if they happen at all, and consultations will be rushed because the government wants to meet a one-year deadline. The very notion of a one-year deadline is completely arbitrary. Projects must be assessed on the basis of their complexity and scale, and the government has to take the time to do it right. The government is literally bulldozing nature.

Let us consider, for example, a new pipeline project, one that the Prime Minister wants to include on the list of projects of national interest. It is a 1,000-kilometre project. How is it possible to conduct proper consultations or assessments in just one year? There is no doubt this will be rushed through, once again to the benefit of companies that will face fewer safeguards and are clearly delighted with the government's legislation.

The Liberals hope that Bill C-39 will not affect environmental protection. I hate to break it to them, but the Prime Minister is not going to grant that wish. It is misleading to tell the public that Bill C-39 does not weaken environmental protections or environmental assessments across the country.

I would remind members of all the laws and regulations that can now be circumvented under Bill C-5. Bill C-39 will make that permanent and will even apply to entire regions.

The Fisheries Act, the International River Improvements Act, the National Capital Act, the Canadian Navigable Waters Act, the Dominion Water Power Act, the Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994, the Canada Transportation Act, the Canada Marine Act, the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999, the Species at Risk Act and the Impact Assessment Act can all be circumvented.

I will now list the regulations. The migratory bird sanctuary regulations, the Dominion water power regulations, the wildlife area regulations, the port authorities operations regulations, the metal and diamond mining effluent regulations and the migratory birds regulations, 2022 can all be circumvented.

Twelve laws and seven regulations can be circumvented to accommodate projects designated to be of national interest by the government.

As I said, entire regions will now be able to use the this process to circumvent legislation, and the Prime Minister, like a king, will decide which are to be sacrificed. These regions will get access to projects pre-approved even before an impact assessment is done. Project pre-approval means that construction will start before projects are even assessed.

Obviously, this is a new government that is promising the next gold rush by opening the territory up to development and fast-tracking projects, never mind what the law says. I would point out, however, that if we learned anything from the Wild West it is that when the law is weakened, outlaws are quick to step in.

I would remind the House that legal action has been brought against the federal government for its Bill C-5 on the grounds that it is unconstitutional. To make matters worse, with Bill C-39, the government is broadening the scope of that legislation and making the exceptional powers enshrined in it permanent. Does the government expect the tariff crisis to be permanent? This tariff crisis is their excuse for everything. This is clearly a pretext for giving cabinet extraordinary powers, enabling it to sell land to foreign interests like a good deal maker.

Liberal members seem to think that if they repeat often enough that Bill C-39 will not affect environmental protections, that will become the reality. I am sorry to burst their bubble, but we were not elected to make things up. We were not elected to bow to the demands of the oil and gas companies. We were elected to make decisions that will be part of history.

The bill explicitly includes serious rollbacks in environmental matters and workers' rights. These are not just words on paper. This will have immediate and serious consequences on the land, on our ecosystems and on people's health. That will be the legacy left to future generations.

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• (1340)

History has a long memory. Our speeches may fade, but decisions of this magnitude will not. One day, we will look back and ask ourselves who was aware of what was happening, who could have taken action and who looked the other way.

The Bloc Québécois will not look the other way.

Jacques Ramsay (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Repentigny for his speech, which has made it very clear where the Bloc Québécois stands on the environmental aspects of Bill C-39.

However, I would now like to ask him to speak to us about another area, namely labour relations and the right to strike, and more specifically the use of section 107. This type of recourse has always been exceptional and should remain that way even more so under Bill C-39. This bill introduces the concept of national interest, which, in my view, makes perfect sense.

I would just like to hear the MP's opinion and perhaps get his response on how this criterion of national interest should be defined.

Patrick Bonin: Mr. Speaker, right now, the national interest is the government's interest, and it is the government that decides what is in the national interest.

Whether the government likes it or not, it is very clear to us that these debates must take place among elected officials, particularly when it comes to the use of arbitrators, restricting the right to strike and restricting workers' rights. It is no wonder that the FTQ, the Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec, is speaking out against this bill.

Not only is this one of the worst rollbacks for the environment, but the bill also includes some extremely worrisome rollbacks in terms of workers' rights. We in the Bloc Québécois are here to stand up for people and for workers, not to defend the interests of oil and gas companies, which, by the way, primarily belong to American interests.

• (1345)

[English]

Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the people of Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, and before I begin, I want to recognize someone from my riding who is getting married. Jodhbir Kang, who served as a school trustee in Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, is marrying Poonam Deol. I want to take this opportunity to wish them the best of luck in their upcoming nuptials, and a long, fruitful life together.

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I listened to my colleague's speech, in which he talked a lot about environmental issues, pipelines and things like that. I always wonder where the Bloc sees fossil fuels fitting into Canada. I have to fly here all the time. I drive an electric car. Where does he see that fitting in?

[Translation]

Patrick Bonin: Mr. Speaker, it is simple. Internationally, there are two classes of countries. There are those who are following President Trump, as the Prime Minister is doing, getting into oil and gas, and then there are those who want to break free from this dependence on foreign companies and so on.

Canada should invest in the transition, plan for it and not fund a new oil sands pipeline project, to the tune of over \$40 billion, that will be aimed at exports and will not change the cost at the pump for people, who will remain dependent on oil and gas. We have everything to gain from electrification, and Quebec is already doing that.

My colleague talks about the fact that he has an electric vehicle. That is wonderful. He could also talk about the economic benefits it brings, both in terms of the fact that we keep our money and use Quebec hydroelectricity, and in terms of people's wallets.

Thinking that getting deeper into oil and gas is part of the solution will only worsen the climate crisis. I think he forgot about this summer's forest fires, as well as the deadly heat waves.

Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my colleague's speech was insightful and well-informed.

Earlier, the Liberal member for Madawaska—Restigouche said he was enthusiastic and pleased that Bill C-39 would, as he put it, allow global investors to flout environmental laws by investing in Canada, to flout workers' rights, and to flout parliamentary democracy.

My colleague was talking about Trumpism. Does he not think that the Prime Minister is exploiting the crisis to push through permanent rollbacks that will not even be in effect during President Trump's term?

Patrick Bonin: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his clear remarks.

We are very clearly dealing with a government that is currently exploiting the tariff crisis. Bill C-39 proposes to make it possible to circumvent environmental laws on a permanent basis. This has nothing to do with the tariff crisis. It shows very clearly that the Liberals want to make this permanent.

We have laws and regulations for a reason. We have spent several decades establishing a system to protect the environment and people's health. Essentially, what Bill C-39 does is allow us, within 24 hours, to throw this entire framework for protecting the environment and people's health into the dustbin of history.

There would be no need to bypass laws and regulations if the projects were sound. Clearly these are bad projects. The Liberal government is using the tariff crisis to literally engage in Trump-style politics, develop oil and gas, set aside the law and rule like a king.

[English]

Branden Leslie (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let me take members back in time a few years. When the Liberals introduced Bill C-69, they told us that the new process would make project reviews more efficient, predictable and timely. Now, eight years later, that sales pitch has not aged well at all.

Now we have Bill C-39, and the government's own explanation says its approval system suffers from lengthy timelines that delay projects and create uncertainty for investors. That is quite an admission. What matters now is whether Bill C-39 would actually fix them. This, of course, is after the Liberals brought in Bill C-5, which was going to bring in sweeping legislative changes to allegedly build at speeds not seen in generations. We now have a Major Projects Office that has issued no new permits, built no new projects and created no new jobs other than government jobs, of course, over the past 18 months.

In terms of Bill C-39, the first thing we should understand is the government's promise of a one-year federal review. That sounds simple, but it is not. The clock would not start when a company first brings forward a project. There could first be up to six months of planning. Then, the company would normally have up to a year to provide the studies and information government requires, and even that period could be extended. Only after government officials are satisfied that they have the information they need would the main review clock start. From there, the assessment report would generally be supposed to be completed within 300 days, followed by up to another 65 days for the final decision.

Therefore, when Canadians hear “one-year approval”, they should not assume that means one year from the day a project enters the federal system to the day it actually gets an answer. A company considering a \$10-billion mine wants to know something simpler: How long will it take from entering the process until it has enough certainty to put billions of dollars on the line?

I will be splitting my time with the member for Fort McMurray—Cold Lake.

What happens if the government misses its own deadline? The project would not be automatically approved and the government could simply keep reviewing it. The only penalty for the government's delaying all this is that the minister would have to explain why the deadline was missed, and publish another proposed timeline. If the purpose of a deadline is certainty, how much certainty would it really provide if missing it simply produces some bureaucratic gobbledygook and yet another deadline further down the road?

The second major change would be what the government calls “one project, one decision”. Today a company could spend years completing an impact assessment and then discover it still needs another round of federal permits before construction can begin. Bill C-39 would allow the environment minister to issue certain permits at the same time as the final impact assessment decision. For a mine that needs Fisheries Act, Canadian Navigable Waters Act or Species at Risk Act approvals, that could remove some back-to-back processes, but it would not initially include every federal permit.

That leaves me with questions. Which permits are actually delaying projects today? How many would be covered properly by the bill? Which important ones would still remain outside it? If a company gets its impact assessment decision but still waits months for another approval, would we have achieved one project, one decision?

The bill also would allow certain construction to start before the final decision where doing so is in the “public interest”. Anyone who has built something in rural Canada understands why that can matter: If they miss a construction season, a project could lose many months. If construction could happen while the rest of the assessment continues, time could be saved, but companies need to know early what qualifies.

The nuclear changes would be more substantial. For nuclear projects, the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission would become the lead assessment body. Environmental review, public participation and indigenous consultation would remain. What would change is who would run that process. Instead of having the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada run one process while the nuclear regulator runs another, Bill C-39 would put the CNSC in the driver's seat, and the minister would no longer be able to send the project into another separate federal review. Instead, the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission would run the assessment, and once the project is approved, the conditions imposed during that review could simply become part of the nuclear licence the company must follow.

In other words, rather than creating one set of conditions through the environmental review and another through the licensing, the bill would try to bring the two processes together. That could reduce duplication, but does the CNSC have enough people and expertise for this new and expanded role? Would projects get decisions faster, or would the bureaucracy simply look cleaner on an organizational charge?

• (1350)

Changes for the Canadian Energy Regulator raise similar questions. Bill C-39 would make the CER the sole assessor for pipelines, designated power lines and offshore renewable energy projects. For pipelines, the bill creates two tracks based on how much entirely new corridor has to be built. If a pipeline requires less than 300 kilometres of new right-of-way, the CER would generally make the final decision itself.

Today, the regulator can spend up to 450 days reviewing a major pipeline and making a recommendation, only for the file to then go to cabinet for a final decision. For projects below the new threshold, that extra cabinet step would generally disappear, but for

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pipelines requiring 300 kilometres or more of new corridor, cabinet would still need to make the final call. The CER would have up to 180 days to complete its review and recommendation, and then cabinet would have another 60 days to decide, followed by another 125 days for the CER to issue the final certificate and conditions.

Those are significant changes, but where did these numbers come from? Why is it 300 kilometres? Why should a pipeline requiring 290 kilometres of new corridor be decided by the CER, while one requiring 310 kilometres still has to go through a cabinet approval process? Is that the threshold based on environmental risk or project complexity, or is it simply where the government just decided to draw the line? The same question applies to the timelines. Why is it 180 days? Why is it 60? Why is it another 125? Has the CER confirmed that applications can realistically be handled within those periods without stopping the clock more often?

The 300-kilometre threshold is also not in reference to the total length of the pipeline. Let us imagine a 500-kilometre pipeline where 350 kilometres follows an existing corridor. If only 150 kilometres requires an entirely new right-of-way, the project would fall below the threshold, even though the pipeline itself is 500 kilometres long. The bill is measuring how much new ground the project must break, not simply how long the pipeline is.

Then we get to the fine print. These clocks, they are not absolute. Parts of the process can still be excluded. Additional time can, and I fear most likely will, be added. If the CER or government misses deadlines, the project is not automatically approved. We need to determine whether these timelines will shorten the approval process or whether the clock will simply stop when the difficult parts begin for government.

Another idea that deserves attention is the creation of the regions of national interest. Cabinet could designate an entire region and identify categories of projects that may qualify within it. This could matter in an area chock full of critical minerals or a major energy corridor. If government has already completed a regional assessment of water, wildlife and cumulative effects, later project reviews should not have to start from zero.

Statements by Members

This would not create an immediate fast track. Before a region can get such special treatment, the government would first have to complete a broader regional assessment. If the bill were to come into force, if it were to pass, the list of regions that qualify would be empty. The faster process would only become available later, after government has done the groundwork and designated a region. Who knows how long that will take, given the Liberal government's track record. Once again, implementation will determine whether this changes anything.

After years of being told that the old system was efficient and predictable, we should not just accept that a new set of promises from the Liberal government is going to be the solution. We need answers because we cannot afford to get this wrong. Our country, our future and our prosperous nation are simply too important.

Bill C-39 should be judged by a simple standard: Can a company with a project get a clear answer in a reasonable amount of time and then get to work? That is the test. Before Parliament passes this bill, we should be sure this legislation will pass that test.

• (1355)

Dan Albas (Okanagan Lake West—South Kelowna, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when the Liberals wanted to say they were going to fix supply chains, they created a supply chain office. When they had issues with building homes, they suddenly built Build Canada Homes, which is a very original name. When they had issues with major projects, they built the Major Projects Office. In this bill, Bill C-39, they want to deal with a national trade corridor, so they are going to create an office to deal with that.

Does the member see a pattern, and does he think any of these things are helping on any of the issues I have mentioned?

Branden Leslie: Mr. Speaker, the government is correctly identifying the problems after we point them out. They are self-imposed problems, but the problem with the government is that all it ever sees is a nail to hit, and it always seems to hit it with a new bureaucracy. As my colleague outlined, whether it be housing, energy or anything else, all the government tries to do is build new government bureaucracies.

It turns out, given that housing starts are down and that our oil and gas sector is struggling under this regime, it is time for a change. It is time for a Conservative economic agenda to get this country going.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

• (1400)

[English]

RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Orange Shirt Day is a day to honour residential school survivors and children, our relatives who never made it home and the parents who were left in deafening silence every September, which was when our children were kidnapped and taken off to residential schools. It was a violent plan to get us out of the way in the name of nation building. That is why, in 2022, the House recognized residential

schools as a genocide, but we cannot honour survivors without protecting truth.

I again implore the Liberal government to take on my bill to criminalize residential school denialism as an incitement of hate. We must protect survivors. Reconciliation is built on their stories, truth and the suffering they endured. We owe them the protection from any and all forms of hate.

On behalf of the NDP, I honour all survivors, parents, families and communities. I lift them up today, not only on Orange Shirt Day, but every day, with all our love.

* * *

RESPONSE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Shannon Miedema (Halifax, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this summer was difficult for many communities who experienced extreme weather events from coast to coast to coast.

Wildfires, flooding and heat waves are now staples of Canadian summers and not anomalies. That is why I am pleased our government funded its third national conference on climate adaptation. I was pleased to open the conference on Tuesday, where I spoke about the economic and social benefits of investing in preparedness and resiliency.

I especially want to thank my constituent Quinn MacAskill, a Dalhousie University student, who spoke so passionately about hope in the face of the climate crisis at the conference opening. I want to congratulate her for winning the 2025 National Youth Climate Activism Award.

As we return to Parliament, let us be mindful to govern with a climate lens to ensure we are making good decisions that advance our national priorities while supporting the safety of people, communities and ecosystems against climate impacts.

* * *

PROPERTY RIGHTS

Tako Van Popta (Langley Township—Fraser Heights, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this summer, as chair of the Conservative task force on property rights, I travelled B.C., meeting with homeowners, farmers, business owners and industry leaders. Their message was clear. They are worried that the private property security they once took for granted is being eroded.

Property rights are a cornerstone of a free and prosperous society. They give families the confidence to build a future and businesses the certainty to invest, grow and create jobs. However, through a series of misguided decisions, David Eby's NDP government and the Liberals here in Ottawa have created uncertainty where there should be security, and anxiety where there should be confidence.

Only Conservatives are speaking clearly for the principle that what Canadians earn, invest in and own deserves the full protection of the law, because protecting property rights means protecting both prosperity and freedom.

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MID-AUTUMN FESTIVAL

Hon. Ali Ehsassi (Willowdale, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my diverse riding of Willowdale, I would like to wish all those marking the mid-autumn festival a joyous and bountiful celebration.

Known as the moon festival, or *Chuseok* in Korea, *Tsukimi* in Japan or *Tet Trung Thu* in Vietnam, it is a cherished festival that brings family, friends and communities together. The full moon at the heart of this celebration has long been a symbol of reunion, harmony and hope, while it strengthens the bonds connecting us to one another.

To the many celebrating in Willowdale, in Canada and around the world, may the full moon bring them and their loved ones good health, peace and prosperity, and may their homes be filled with laughter and light. After all, beneath the gentle glow of the mid-autumn moon, we are reminded that, no matter how far we may travel, the same moonlight connects us all.

I wish a happy mid-autumn festival to all.

* * *

[Translation]

EUDORE FORTIN

Gabriel Hardy (Montmorency—Charlevoix, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Eudore Fortin's story began in Saint-Urbain in the 1930s.

In his teens, Mr. Fortin worked as a lookout atop a fire tower. As a log driver and a lumberman, he came to know our forests and mountains exceptionally well, one step at a time.

His greatest ambition was to share these wonderful places with others. In the late 1970s, with vision and determination, he founded the Traversée de Charlevoix trail. He devoted decades to clearing and developing nearly 105 kilometres of trails, giving countless hikers a chance to experience the beauty of our forests.

Thanks to him, thousands of people took to the trails. Thanks to him, thousands of people went further than they thought possible. Thanks to him, thousands of people fell in love with Charlevoix.

His perseverance is also a great inspiration to the Quebec nation. His work leaves a legacy for the generations that will follow in our footsteps.

Statements by Members

Mr. Fortin blazed a trail through our mountains and left a lasting mark on our history.

* * *

● (1405)

[English]

HONORÉ-MERCIER

Eric St-Pierre (Honoré-Mercier, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the world is facing major headwinds, geopolitical, economic and trade pressures, headwinds that Canada must face as united people. External threats pose a challenge for Canada. We know what we are doing here in Canada is the best way to respond because when we seek unity, Canada thrives.

[Translation]

In a rapidly changing world, it is more important than ever that we stay united. I noticed that this summer in Rivière-des-Prairies—Pointe-aux-Trembles and in Anjou. My constituents have been very direct with me: We are stronger together.

[English]

What I continue to hear from Canadians is an overwhelming desire for national unity. Let us keep Canada strong. Let us keep Canada united. Through partnership, we will all come out stronger together.

* * *

EXPOSURE TO PORNOGRAPHY

Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, 10 years ago, I rose in this chamber to move a motion that would require Parliament to investigate the public health impacts of sexually explicit material on kids and adults. Thanks to the support of my colleagues, this motion passed unanimously. The following health committee study revealed what experts had been saying, that exposure to pornography is harming our youth. Exposure was increasing the risk of victimization, harming emotional and mental health, rewiring the brain and increasing support for rape culture. The number one recommendation that came out of that committee was to require porn companies to enact meaningful age verification.

Today, this House will begin debate on Bill S-209, a bill that would help ensure kids are protected from exposure to sexually explicit material and predatory porn companies. I want to thank my colleague from Battlefords—Lloydminster—Meadow Lake and Senator Miville-Dechêne for their work on this bill. This bill passed the Senate three times. I call on my colleagues to help pass Bill S-209 once and for all.

Kids deserve a childhood free from sexual exploitation.

*Statements by Members***MID-AUTUMN FESTIVAL**

Jean Yip (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, September is a season of new beginnings, new classes, new teachers and new opportunities. For many families in Scarborough—Agincourt, it is also a time to come together and celebrate the Mid-Autumn Festival. Celebrated by Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Japanese and other Asian communities around the world, the festival is a time for family, friendship and reunion. Here in Scarborough—Agincourt, families will gather to share mooncakes, admire colourful lanterns and enjoy time together under the full moon.

As students begin a new school year, I wish them every success in the year ahead. To everyone celebrating, I wish them and their families a joyful and peaceful Mid-Autumn Festival.

[Member spoke in Cantonese and Mandarin]

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Sukhman Gill (Abbotsford—South Langley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a man who saw his neighbour in danger did what any good neighbour would do. He jumped in to help. In responding to the break and enter, he was shot in both legs. A few weeks ago, a community member brought this heartbreaking case to my office. According to the information shared with us, the accused is a repeat offender facing 32 alleged charges, many involving weapons and violence spanning over two decades. Now the victim and the family are the ones left to pay the price. The victim faces a long and painful recovery while still trying to provide for his family and four foster children.

Families in our communities deserve to feel safe in their own homes. They deserve to know that repeat violent defenders will face serious consequences. That is why my Conservative colleagues and I are fighting to end Liberal bail, house arrest and catch-and-release policies and to keep Canadians safe, because no innocent family should ever have to pay for anyone committing those crimes.

[Translation]

VAGUE DE CIRQUE

Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about a local success story that is crossing borders and making us very proud.

Vague de Cirque is a company based in Val-David that has been imagining and creating shows for 15 years now. Its show *Là haut* premiered in my riding at the Sentier des cimes in Mont-Blanc, and it was so successful that the German owners of Sentier des cimes decided to import that Quebec know-how across the Atlantic Ocean. This summer, the Vague de Cirque team flew to Usedom to put on a production specially designed around the island's 33-metre observation tower, offering a unique view of the Baltic Sea.

We have talent, creativity and audacity in spades. When a creation born in the Laurentians becomes a model that is exported all

the way to Germany, all of Quebec's cultural know-how is on display.

Congratulations to the entire Vague de Cirque team. We are proud of them.

• (1410)

OLIVER JONES

Abdelhaq Sari (Bourassa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on July 22, Montreal North, Montreal, Quebec and Canada lost a leading light of the musical and arts communities when Canadian jazz legend Oliver Jones passed away at the age of 91.

As a friend of Oscar Peterson and an officer of the Order of Canada, he brought Montreal jazz to the world's biggest stages without ever losing his deep sense of humility. To us, Oliver Jones was first and foremost a neighbour and a friend. He lived in Montreal North for many years. Our performance hall is named after him. To honour the borough's 100th anniversary, he created a new arrangement of music written by students from the borough of Montreal North.

That was the kind of person he was: a prominent artist who never forgot where he came from and never stopped giving back to his community.

On behalf of his neighbours and all Canadians, I offer my deepest condolences to his family.

I am sure that everyone will agree when I say that Oliver Jones' music will live on. It truly is part of us.

[English]

CONSERVATIVE PARTY OF CANADA

Ellis Ross (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Conservatives are back in Ottawa with a plan to save Canadians money and make life more affordable. We have identified more than \$150 billion in savings by cutting wasteful bureaucracy, unnecessary consultants, foreign aid, handouts to fraudulent asylum claimants, corporate welfare and money-losing boondoggles like Alto rail.

These savings would bring down debt, taxes and inflation and put more money back in the pockets of Canadians. We would save Canadians money on housing by scrapping taxes on home construction and pressing local governments to speed up permits, free up land and reduce fees.

Conservatives would save us money on fuel and groceries by scrapping all taxes on gas until at least Canada Day and save people money on vehicles while supporting the auto workers by removing the GST on vehicles made in Canada.

I know families across Skeena—Bulkley Valley are hurting right now. That is why my Conservative colleagues and I are fighting hard to cut wasteful spending, lower costs and make life more affordable for Canadians.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Zoe Royer (Port Moody—Coquitlam, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Anmore and Belcarra sit at the very edge of metropolitan Vancouver. On one side are hundreds of acres of remote forest and on the other side, over three million people. These two villages are a critical first line of defence against wildfire reaching B.C.'s urban Lower Mainland.

On August 5, that risk became real when a fire broke out in Anmore. The Sasamat volunteer fire department, Port Moody Fire Rescue, metro Vancouver and the BC Wildfire Service responded quickly to contain it.

I am working very closely with Anmore, Belcarra, metro Vancouver and my federal colleagues to advance the fire infrastructure these communities desperately need, because we are only as strong as our weakest link and in an emergency, seconds save lives.

I thank the first responders across Canada who protect our communities from wildfire. Their service and commitment are deeply appreciated.

* * *

CONSERVATIVE PARTY OF CANADA

Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after a decade of Liberal policies and taxes, Canadians are falling further and further behind.

Recently, I heard from Jeff, who wrote to say, “The taxes I pay are completely out of hand. Canadians now pay more in taxes than we do in housing and groceries. I have never worked so much overtime and had so little money. I am spending less time with my family and keep working more and more just trying to keep bills paid.”

Conservatives have a plan. We have identified savings of over \$150 billion. That is nearly \$10,000 per Canadian family. These savings would cut wasteful bureaucracy, handouts to fake asylum claimants and corporate welfare. Our plan would also scrap all taxes on gas until at least Canada Day of next year, saving Canadians money on gas and groceries. Our Conservative plan would save money for Canadians.

* * *

● (1415)

[Translation]

FIGHTING FOOD INSECURITY

Claude Guay (LaSalle—Émard—Verdun, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to highlight the remarkable work done by Garde-manger pour tous, La Cantine pour tous, Toujours ensemble and the Breakfast Club in the fight against food insecurity in LaSalle—Émard—Verdun.

[English]

Thanks to their engagement, thousands of children have access to nutritious meals and snacks every day.

[Translation]

In my riding, more than 44,500 meals were served in just one year across four schools, thanks to Garde-manger pour tous. Too

Statements by Members

many families are experiencing food insecurity. No child should have to go to school on an empty stomach. A nutritious meal means a better chance to learn, thrive and succeed.

[English]

I am proud that our government has made the national school food program permanent, allowing 400,000 children across the country to benefit.

[Translation]

Food security also matters at school.

* * *

[English]

CONSERVATIVE PARTY OF CANADA

Lianne Rood (Middlesex—London, CPC): Mr. Speaker, harvest is here and families in London and across rural Middlesex are being squeezed. Diesel is nearly double what it was last year. Combines use hundreds of litres a day. Farmers say the year looks bleak. One in three households in Middlesex—London is food-insecure. Grocery prices keep climbing because fuel, fertilizer and trucking costs get passed down the line. After years of Liberal taxes, carbon taxes and anti-development laws, work pays less and life costs more. Manufacturers, truckers and farm families pay first.

Conservatives would scrap the industrial carbon tax on fertilizer and fuel, repeal the laws that block Canadian energy and housing, and deliver the fastest permits and lowest taxes, so that we can grow food, build homes and create jobs here at home. Conservatives would save Canadians money. Our economic action plan would put paycheques and affordability first. Canadians in London and rural Canada deserve a country where they can actually afford to live.

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PSA DETECT AND PROTECT

Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East—Cooksville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding work of the University Health Network and the Walnut Foundation, which are bringing their important PSA Detect and Protect program to Ottawa. They are making free PSA testing more accessible in the community and helping raise awareness about prostate cancer, particularly among Black men over the age of 40.

Oral Questions

Too often, men put off getting tested. This community-based approach is helping overcome barriers to screening, encouraging men to take an active role in their health. I want to recognize Dr. Neil Fleshner and the entire UHN team, and Anthony Henry, president of the Walnut Foundation, along with the volunteers and community partners who make these clinics possible.

Their message is one we should all remember. Early detection can save lives. I thank the Walnut Foundation and UHN for bringing this life-saving work directly into our communities.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

CONDOLENCES

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there are times in Canada's national life when families experience terrible tragedies. The Prime Minister has just brought one of those tragedies to my attention. He would like to speak on behalf of all Canadians to offer his condolences to a treasured member of the public service who tragically lost her life. I would invite him to stand in his place and share his love, affection and prayers with the family.

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to first thank the Leader of the Opposition for this opportunity.

[Translation]

On behalf of the Government of Canada and, I believe, all members of the House, I want to begin by expressing our deepest condolences to the family, loved ones and colleagues of Ms. Ben Salem.

Ms. Ben Salem was a valued member of the Canada Revenue Agency. She was dedicated to serving Canadians, which is what she was doing at the time of the attack.

The Government of Canada and all members of the House will do everything we can to support our police forces to ensure that the perpetrator of this despicable crime is brought to justice.

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● (1420)

TAXATION

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we Conservatives also offer our condolences to the family of Ms. Ben Salem.

We are fighting to save Canadians money. The Liberals are costing Canadians more. Canada is facing a serious diesel price crisis. The national average price is now \$2.74 a litre, which is going to drive up the cost of everything. One farmer in Bruce County had to spend \$3,000 on one day's fuel. We are now paying 30¢ a litre more here in Canada than in the United States.

Will the Prime Minister remove his taxes and other government costs to lower the cost of diesel now?

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is a difficult situation for Canadians. This difficult situation is caused by the war in Iran and the war in Ukraine.

The government is doing two things. First, it is extending the suspension of the federal fuel excise tax, and second, it is providing \$20,000 for a family of four as an affordability measure.

[English]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Conservatives are here to save Canadians money while Liberals are costing Canadians more. It is not an exaggeration to say that we are now facing a full-scale diesel price crisis. Right now, diesel prices are around \$2.76 a litre, an all-time high. One farmer in Bruce County had to spend \$3,000 on one day's fuel.

The Prime Minister loves to blame foreign factors, but Canadians are paying 32¢ a litre more than are Americans. If it is really a global issue, why are we paying so much north of the border?

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a global issue that is causing higher fuel prices, including higher diesel prices. The government is acting, including by extending the reduction in the fuel excise tax on diesel and on regular gasoline. As well, the Minister of Natural Resources is working with refiners to maximize the availability of diesel in Canada.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is all talk, no results, and more excuses after broken promises. Let us convert diesel prices around the world, in the U.S. and here in Canada into Canadian dollars. Diesel prices in the U.S. are \$2.44 a litre. The global average diesel price is \$2.33 a litre. Here in Canada, it is \$2.76 a litre. Canadians are paying 41¢ more than the world and 32¢ more than the U.S.

With the fourth biggest supply of oil on earth, why do we not have the lowest prices anywhere in the world?

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would draw the attention of the Leader of the Opposition and this whole House to the fact that there are things in Canada called provinces. The provinces put taxes on diesel. The provinces put taxes on gasoline. The biggest difference between Canada and the United States is the provincial taxes on those carbons.

Also, I will draw attention to the building Canada strong act, which will allow this country to build new refineries and keep diesel prices lower.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, how totally out of touch. He blames the provinces for inflation under his leadership. He highlights a bill that has been in place for a year and a half and has not built a single project. He did not answer the question.

There are three reasons why Canadians are paying more for diesel in the world. One, the Prime Minister has given us a weak dollar despite high oil prices. Two, by his very admission in this House, we do not have the refining capacity because his government will not get out of the way and let Canadians build. Three, he continues to tax fuel with the GST and the fuel standard tax.

Will the Prime Minister stop pretending to be so powerless and get prices down for Canadians?

● (1425)

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Leader of the Opposition on his 20th anniversary in the House of Commons. I have been here for a little more than a year. We passed the Building Canada Act for major projects, and we are putting in front of this House the building Canada strong act so that all projects in this country are “one project, one review, one year”.

We will build Canada strong. They will have an opportunity to join us, and he will have an opportunity to do something for the first time in two decades.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, he is literally bragging about promises that he has made and broken. Now the U.S. President is blustering ridiculously about a diesel export plan. Even if that bluster is meaningless, we should not have to rely on the Americans to give us diesel that comes out of our own ground.

That is why Conservatives are acting today. We are calling for an emergency diesel price relief plan to, one, eliminate all diesel taxes until at least Canada Day and, two, have emergency pre-permitting and tax relief for the construction of diesel transportation and refining.

Will he take up our plan to lower prices for Canadians?

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this House will have an opportunity to pass Bill C-38, which will lower the tax on diesel. This House will have an opportunity to vote on the building Canada strong act, which will move this country forward.

Let me make sure Hansard is correct. The government passed the act last year, and Contrecoeur, the Mackenzie Valley pipeline, Dartington, the north coast transmission line and the Matawinie mine are all major projects now being built thanks to this government.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Again, he is talking about projects that were approved long before he got here, Mr. Speaker.

[Translation]

To protect us from President Trump's threats, make Canada affordable and independent and save money, the Conservatives are calling for a diesel price relief plan that involves eliminating all diesel taxes until July 1, 2027, and having emergency pre-permitting and tax relief to accelerate investment in diesel refining and transportation.

Will the Prime Minister take our plan to lower prices and make Canada more independent?

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the House will have the chance to extend the reduction in the excise tax on fuels, including diesel. However, it is not the federal government's job to remove provincial taxes. What we need to do is build major projects with the build Canada strong bill: one project, one review, one year.

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INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, first, there were projects of national interest. Then there were corridors of national interest. Now there are regions of national interest.

The Bloc Québécois, experts and media outlets know that, with Bill C-39, the federal government is permanently taking over jurisdiction from Quebec and the provinces, particularly regarding the environment, and suspending its own laws based on the judgment of a single minister.

Can the Prime Minister confirm that this interpretation is accurate?

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Bill C-39 is about efficiency, not about how high the standards are. That is the first thing. It should only take one year to get a decision on environmental standards, co-operation with indigenous peoples and all other aspects of a project.

That is the idea behind the bill: to take action.

● (1430)

Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, that is not evident.

Asking for something to be clarified is not synonymous with opposing it.

Will the Prime Minister commit to fixing or amending Bill C-39 to state that the existing areas of jurisdiction of Quebec and the provinces will remain intact, that despite Bill C-39, or even with Bill C-39, the application will not be permanent, and that nothing that is done in Quebec will be done without Quebec's express consent?

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Bill C-39 involves federal decisions. Yes, it is true that we have co-operation agreements with six provinces. In those cases, we are using the provinces' skills, expertise and so on. However, this bill only involves the federal government and decisions made by the federal government.

Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this is not an idle question. We are talking about permanently suspending the rule of law and possibly the Constitution to benefit foreign multinationals.

Some people are even talking about putting parts of Quebec and the provinces under federal control.

Oral Questions

Does the Prime Minister recognize that Bill C-39 will result in Ottawa taking control of parts of Quebec and the provinces?

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what is the opposition member talking about? There is nothing like that in the bill. It is about efficiency. It is about taking action. It is about creating good jobs in Quebec and across Canada. It is about growth.

It is about independence, resilience and prosperity for a strong Canada.

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[English]

TAXATION

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the other day, the Prime Minister said that his fuel standard tax added zero cost at the pump. Today he claimed that there were no federal taxes. Again, this is the Liberal tradition of telling Canadians that Liberal taxes will make them richer.

I have here a study from his own environment department that has the impact of the clean fuel standard on gasoline and diesel prices. It shows that this year it is seven cents, and next year it will be eight cents, then 10¢, then 13¢ and then 17¢ a litre.

Why did the Prime Minister mislead the House? Was it to cover up the cost of his tax or because he did not do his homework?

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the clean fuel standard implications at the end of this decade are lower than all the numbers the member opposite just quoted.

One thing that the clean fuel standard does do, though, is it raises the price of canola. If I were a farmer in Battle River—Crowfoot or in Red Deer County, I would like my bushel of canola to get 10% more, which is what the clean fuel standard does. Come join us in support.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am sure if he were a farmer, he would be out standing in his field, scratching his head about why he is forced to pay \$5,000 a day for diesel costs, diesel costs that are made worse by the Prime Minister's additional taxes.

Earlier this week, he said that the clean fuel standard would cost nothing. I quoted documents from his own department showing that it will rise to as much as 17¢ a litre. Should the farmers who are actually out in the field believe the Prime Minister, or should they believe his own department documents, which show that his tax will cost them more?

• (1435)

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are still enthusiastic about Bill C-38, which is a good thing, because in fact, farmers know that we stand with them. The government, under the Prime Minister, has suspended the fuel excise tax, which will reduce the tax on diesel. These are facts. This is not a parallel reality. This is going to help our farmers. This is going to help logistics across the country. This is going to reduce the pressure on food prices across the nation.

I am happy to see the Conservatives so enthusiastic to support Bill C-38.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is not used to taking tough questions. He barely shows up to Parliament. When he is around the world—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: The hon. member was elected the same year I was and he knows that is crossing a line.

I will ask him to start over without making that comment.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister cannot stand and answer a question once his statements collide with the facts from his own government. He claimed that his tax would cost nothing. Then he claimed hilariously, as Liberals often do, that taxes would make people even better off. When I confronted him with the facts, showing that the tax he has imposed is seven cents a litre now, rising to 17¢ a litre in just over three years, he would not even stand and take accountability.

If the Prime Minister is so proud of his latest tax increase and if it is so good for farmers, why can he not stand up and defend the tax that he is making them pay?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition is an experienced member of the House. He should know better.

Canadians know that if there is one person who is working hard for Canadians every day, it is the Prime Minister of Canada. He has been making Canadians proud domestically and on the international stage. We can look at the investment summit and look at what we did in Strasbourg. The Prime Minister is working for all Canadians. Farmers and Canadians who are working in all industries in this country, they know that we will do one thing. We are going to build this country strong. We are going to diversify and have the strongest economy in the—

The Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

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THE ECONOMY

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister told the House on March 25 of this year that “Affordability is the best it has been in over a decade.” Markita might disagree. She wrote me a letter recently saying that she is on chemotherapy, but she is going to have to stop her cancer treatments so that she can go back to work because she cannot afford to pay her bills. She cannot afford her rent and her groceries.

Will the Prime Minister look into the camera now and tell Markita that affordability is the best it has been for her in over a decade?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if Markita knew that for every single measure we have put forward for people just like her, the Leader of the Opposition has voted against them, I think she would be deeply disappointed.

Every step that we take, whether it is to feed kids, support building trades, make sure that people have access to dental care or provide lower costs for child care, we have been working diligently to ensure that Canadians have what they need to make it through these times. All we get from the opposition members is them voting down those very measures that Canadians tell us they need.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when Conservatives hear stories of suffering Canadians, we stand up, and the Prime Minister sits down. He cannot answer to Markita, who cannot pay her bills a year and a half after he promised to make life affordable, but maybe he can answer to Robin. She measures affordability by whether she can afford the three-dollar snack that her children ask for, or whether she has to tell them that this week is rent week. All the spending and promises and programs in the world have not helped her.

Will the Prime Minister stand up now, look her in the eye and tell her that affordability is the best it has been in a decade?

Hon. Anna Gainey (Secretary of State (Children and Youth), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think this is a good opportunity to remind members of the House that those across from me voted against the national school food program, which represents a savings of \$900 for families with two children in the program. We have reached 80% of public schools across Canada, in partnership with the provinces and with organizations that are there every day working with kids and working with schools to ensure kids have a healthy start in life. It would be great if they would get on board with the national school food program.

• (1440)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, another program that feeds bureaucracy rather than feeding kids. That is why the number of kids relying on food banks has doubled since that program came into place—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: The Leader of the Opposition can start over.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, if the Prime Minister does not want to answer to Robin or Markita, maybe he will answer to Mike, who is working as a small businessman and a firefighter, on top of his wife's job. They had to pay \$879,000 for a home. They wrote to say they are barely keeping their heads above water as homebuilding declines and housing costs become more out of reach for Canadians.

Will the Prime Minister look Mike in the eye and make his ridiculous claim that affordability has never been better in the last decade?

Hon. Adam van Koeverden (Secretary of State (Sport), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let the record show that the Leader of the Opposition, the former member for Carleton, the member for Battle River—Crowfoot, just said that the more than 9.8 million meals served to

over 130,000 kids in schools in Ontario is just bureaucracy. How about the 58,000 kids from Alberta who received school food? Is that just bureaucracy?

He claims that he was raised by teachers, yet he does not want to accept that a school food program is helping kids. After 22 years in this place, one would think he would know that he works for Canadians. Canadian kids are included in that.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if only the government did not inflate food costs and deprive kids of the ability to eat, if only a record number of kids were not lined up at food banks, maybe Liberal promises and bureaucracy would mean something.

I think of Jennifer. Jennifer says she has to make up recipes at the end of the month because she is living on her four final dollars to get through to her final paycheck. The Prime Minister is out of touch and Jennifer is out of money. Instead of sitting there and doing nothing, will he stand up and tell Jennifer how she is going to pay the bills?

Hon. Wayne Long (Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there are wild in the House today. The Leader of the Opposition is in his third decade in the House, but he has produced nothing: three caucus revolts and three image reboots.

On this side of the House, our economy is growing at an annualized rate of 3.3%. We are three times more competitive than the United States for investment. By the way, we just added three new caucus members. We have a winning hand. It is time for them to reshuffle the deck.

* * *

[Translation]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister just returned from the United Nations, where Secretary-General Guterres once again implored countries to phase out fossil fuels. Meanwhile, Canada introduced Bill C-39, which gets rid of impact assessments for pipeline projects and makes it possible to permanently circumvent environmental laws. Greenpeace and Environmental Defence called it the “Bulldoze Nature” bill. Ecojustice called the bill catastrophic. No other bill in Canadian history has been worse for the environment.

How can the Liberals sleep at night after defending such a bill?

Oral Questions

Hon. Julie Dabrusin (Minister of the Environment, Climate Change and Nature, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are not getting rid of anything. We are continuing to fight climate change. To do so, we need to build the largest clean energy project in the country. We need to double the capacity of our electricity grid. That is how we are going to speed up the electrification of the economy and get to net zero. We are doing the work, and I hope that the Bloc Québécois is ready to pitch in.

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would remind the House that, using Bill C-5, the Prime Minister gave himself the power to suspend environmental laws for his oil projects. Luckily, the Bloc Québécois managed to limit that abuse to five years. According to the Liberals, it was all in a bid to combat Donald Trump. Bill C-39 removes this five-year limit and allows the application of environmental laws to be suspended indefinitely.

Why are the Liberals using the tariff war as a pretext to exacerbate the climate crisis and line the pockets of the oil companies?

• (1445)

Hon. Julie Dabrusin (Minister of the Environment, Climate Change and Nature, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to repeat this, because I believe it is very important.

We are not rolling back anything when it comes to how effective our environmental regulations are. We are carrying out the work required to continue doubling our clean electricity grid. That, in fact, is what Hydro-Québec is asking of us. We need clean electricity across the country to achieve a carbon-neutral economy.

That is what we want to do, and I hope the Bloc Québécois will support it.

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PUBLIC SAFETY

Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the violent robbery committed on September 21, 2026, at the Ricci jewellery store in Place Rosemère shows just how unchecked crime has become in Quebec as a result of Liberal policies. In just 80 seconds, a group armed with axes and pepper spray terrorized the helpless employees before fleeing. Our business owners live in constant fear of this senseless violence, while the government refuses to act. When it comes to crime, the Liberals are out of touch with reality. The Conservative action plan will keep Canadians safe by strengthening the Criminal Code.

Will they finally listen to us and follow our plan?

[English]

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, since Canada's new government came into place last year, it has put in an unprecedented level of criminal justice reform across the system. It starts with ensuring we have stronger sentencing as well as bail reform with Bill C-14. We are protecting the rights of victims with Bill C-16. We are also ensuring that those who are combatting hate are supported with the tools they need. We will continue to invest in law enforcement and ensure the safety and security of all Canadians.

[Translation]

Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the previous Liberal government undid everything that had been done to advance the fight against crime. Over the past year and a half, the new government has not fixed anything. It would be easy to restore what was in place before. I myself introduced a bill last year that could have easily been passed to repeal the laws enacted by Justin Trudeau and the same team that is still in power. On Monday, a street gang member once again opened fire on people in Montreal. Such criminals could not care less about the law because laws to prevent this type of crime no longer exist.

Will the minister stop talking nonsense and act fast? Will he take up the Conservative bills to fight crime in this country?

Anthony Housefather (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Emergency Management and Community Resilience, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government has taken action. Since taking office, we have passed three very important laws to fight crime. We have passed laws despite Conservative obstruction. In fact, the latest statistics show that crime is down across Canada, which is a testament to the efforts of law enforcement officers from coast to coast to coast who work hard every day to keep our communities safe.

We will continue to work with police services to keep Canadians across the country safe.

[English]

Jonathan Rowe (The Eastern Peninsulas, CPC): Mr. Speaker, repeat offenders are causing chaos in Newfoundland and Labrador and rural Canada. Residents in communities such as Carmanville are holding emergency meetings and signing petitions to have their voices heard. I know that they know this crime increase is not just because it is a sign of the times, but rather a direct result of the Liberals' soft-on-crime policies, like the principle of restraint, which has been encouraging courts to let criminals out on bail.

Will the Liberals finally listen to our communities and repeal the loose Liberal bail?

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I recognize that it is hard to oppose the comprehensive set of criminal justice reforms our government has brought forward and then pretend we need to make more laws. What the member opposite is suggesting is that we have done nothing on this. We have moved forward with the most comprehensive set of legislation, including the reform of bail and sentencing, ensuring the rights of victims are protected and protecting our vulnerable communities. We will continue to ensure the safety and security of all Canadians.

Jonathan Rowe (The Eastern Peninsulas, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is all talk, but no results. It is not just Liberal laws that are leaving our communities vulnerable. The RCMP has identified it needs to train close to 3,000 officers a year to maintain operations. The Liberals promised to train over 1,000. They broke their promise and never delivered. It is all talk, with no results.

Are these Liberals going to blame the hard-working members of the RCMP, or are they going to stand up and finally give the police forces the tools they need?

Hon. Joanne Thompson (Minister of Fisheries, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome everyone back to the House after the summer.

I want to reply to the hon. member from Newfoundland and Labrador. We are moving forward with legislation across the entire sector, but it is very difficult to stand and push back when the Conservatives vote against every single measure the government brings forward. I am sorry, but there is a level of hypocrisy here that is very difficult to listen to.

• (1450)

Sukhman Gill (Abbotsford—South Langley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, just this past weekend, Amanda, from Abbotsford, experienced what she describes as a reoccurring incident. A homeless man broke into her building and stole nearly a thousand dollars' worth of her personal belongings. After reporting the incident to authorities, she was told that the offender would likely be back out later that day. Amanda says that they have subsequently seen the same individual return and commit further offences.

When will the Liberals stand up for law-abiding Canadians and repeal their reckless, soft-on-crime policies?

Hon. Ruby Sahota (Secretary of State (Combating Crime), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have strengthened our Criminal Code of Canada over the last year. We made over 80 different changes with the Bail and Sentencing Reform Act and over 90 different changes with the Protecting Victims Act.

We are seeing results across the country. Crime stats are coming down, and there has been the biggest drop in homicides since 1986. We are result-focused, and we are seeing the results.

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INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Lori Idlout (Nunavut, Lib.): *Uqaqtittiji*, residential school denialism is on the rise, which harms survivors and their families and communities. Denialism allows systemic racism to persist. It tries to hide that indigenous children were killed and buried at residential schools. The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation helps keep this truth at the forefront.

Would the Minister of Crown and Indigenous Relations say what our government is doing to ensure that Canadians understand the continued impacts of trauma inflicted on indigenous people?

Hon. Rebecca Alty (Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, efforts to deny, distort or minimize the truth about residential schools is deeply harmful and will always be condemned. Denialism is a cruel rejection of well-established facts, and it undermines the truth that is essential to reconciliation with

indigenous people. That is why our government is moving forward with a \$5-million investment in education and public awareness so that Canadians can continue to learn from survivors, their families and communities and better understand the painful legacy of residential schools.

We will confront denialism with the truth and ensure that it is never erased or forgotten.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Shelby Kramp-Neuman (Hastings—Lennox and Addington—Tyendinaga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are being crushed by the cost of living. Many families cannot afford rent, groceries or child care. I spoke with a woman last night who shared that she is being evicted from her home, and with a gentleman who lost his home and is on a wait-list for low-income housing. Canadians are falling deeper into debt and being forced to put their future plans on hold. They do not need more announcements from a government that says affordability is the best it has been in a decade. They need relief.

Will the government pass our Conservative action plan to save Canadians money and help Canadians get back on track?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the real question is when the Conservative Party is going to get on board with the rest of Canadians, who have said, "Let's band together. Let's support each other. Let's support Canadian businesses. Let's support each other in our communities. Let's make sure kids have food when they go to school. Let's make sure that every person who wants to be a skilled tradesperson can become that person in their own province or territory." Every one of those things I mentioned, whether it is a hand-up or a bridge to tomorrow, Conservative members have voted against.

My question is this: What are the Conservatives looking for? I know what Canadians are saying.

Shelby Kramp-Neuman (Hastings—Lennox and Addington—Tyendinaga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, under the current government, people are being evicted from their home. In many cases, their credit cards are maxed. Something needs to give.

The government often claims that the opposition only criticizes, so here is part of our plan: Instead of wasting billions of dollars on Alto high-speed rail, let us put that in the pockets of hard-working Canadians who are barely surviving from paycheque to paycheque.

Oral Questions

The Liberals are so out of touch with Canadians' priorities, and Canadians are out of money, so my question is simple: Will the government support our Conservative economic action plan, yes or no?

• (1455)

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in the member's province alone, parents are saving up to \$10,400 per child per year with early learning and child care. The national school food program in Ontario has already served 130,000 meals, and for indigenous communities alone, 9.8 million meals have been served. Through the work-sharing program with which we have supported provinces, including Ontario, we have managed to prevent over 3,100 layoffs.

That is the work Canadians expect: that when things are difficult, we band together. Canadians are doing that every day. They are stepping up to buy Canadian—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Fort McMurray—Cold Lake.

Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC): Mr. Speaker, all summer, my team and I travelled across our riding and heard stories from people right across Fort McMurray—Cold Lake struggling to make ends meet due to a decade of bad Liberal policies and ever-rising inflation. I heard from people such as Wendy, an educational assistant married to an injured veteran, who took a summer layoff but did not qualify for EI. She is now hoping she is going to make her first full pay in October.

Will the Liberals adopt our Conservative economic action plan so Wendy can afford her groceries?

Hon. Eleanor Olszewski (Minister of Emergency Management and Community Resilience and Minister responsible for Prairies Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, affordability is a top priority of the current government. That is why we have taken concrete action to help Canadians, including cutting middle-class taxes for more than 22 million Canadians, eliminating taxes for first-time homebuyers, delivering the groceries and essentials benefit to support 12 million Canadians, launching a national food strategy to tackle the root causes of higher food prices, and extending the pause on the federal fuel excise tax, which will put \$5.3 billion back into Canadians' pockets. We are working for Canadians every single—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Fort McMurray—Cold Lake.

Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are all talk, no results. Canadians want the cost of living to come down so they can afford to just live their life. Despite the Prime Minister's claiming that affordability is the best it has been in a decade, single mothers such as Heather know this just is not true. Heather is struggling to pay her bills and put food on the table, and she is fearing homelessness for her and her two kids.

Our Conservative plan would save money for Canadians by lowering debt, taxes and inflation. The question is simple: Will the Liberals adopt our Conservative action plan so Heather can pay her rent and care for her kids?

Hon. Eleanor Olszewski (Minister of Emergency Management and Community Resilience and Minister responsible for Prairies Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, next month, 12 million Canadians will receive their second quarterly payment through the groceries and essentials benefit. It will deliver hundreds of dollars to 1.3 million Albertans, including more than 44,000 people in my riding of Edmonton Centre. We know that Canadians need some help today as we implement our plan to build a better tomorrow. That is what standing up for Canadians looks like, and that is what we will continue to do.

Connie Cody (Cambridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a family stopped by my office to share their story. Twenty-five years ago, they came to Canada to build a new home and a better future for their children. Their son graduated as an engineer, and their daughter is about to graduate. Both are struggling to find a good job that pays the bills. Now, they are planning to leave Canada. They worked hard, followed the rules and loved this country. That used to be enough.

The Liberals have broken every promise of having an affordable life. Will the Liberals adopt our Conservative economic action plan so Canadians can find jobs and have hope that tomorrow will be better?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have a plan to deliver affordable housing. We are seeing it work, with 23 consecutive months of average rents going down across Canada, so families like the member opposite mentioned are saving money on their rent. They are also able to save money on the purchase of a new home. In Ontario alone, up to \$200,000 can be saved on the purchase of a new home. Whether it is renting or buying, we are putting options on the table. These options have been opposed by the Conservatives. We are moving forward.

Connie Cody (Cambridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, with all the Liberal talk, where are the results? According to Liberals, Canadians never had it so good. Families came to Canada believing that hard work would allow their children to build a future here. For the family I mentioned, that promise is broken. Liberal inaction should not mean watching your children leave because they cannot find a job or build a life close to home.

Our Conservative economic action plan is about saving Canadians money, cutting wasteful spending and lowering taxes, so again I ask this question: Will the Liberals adopt our plan so our future generations such as this family can afford to build their future here at home?

• (1500)

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the actions are clear. We are seeing the results. We have been seeing rents go down for 23 straight months. That does not happen by accident. That does not happen based on a plan that nobody has seen, nobody believes in and nobody voted for.

We have an opportunity to build affordable housing on an unprecedented scale. We need every member of the House on board with that. We need to scale up and build Canada homes and affordable housing. We need to continue to see rents go down and see affordability for Canadians. That is what we are delivering.

[Translation]

Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have lost touch with reality. Quebecers' pockets are empty. In Bellechasse, a young mother without child care services is forced to stay home, living on a fraction of her income, and leaving her partner to pay all the bills. Paying \$1,200 in rent along with groceries, gas and baby care essentials is becoming a major headache for them.

Will the Liberals adopt our Conservative economic action plan so that this young mother can finally afford to meet her family's needs?

Hon. Anna Gainey (Secretary of State (Children and Youth), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government is investing in families and family supports. That includes the Canada child benefit, which represents more than \$8,000 annually for children six years of age and under and \$6,800 for children up to age 17.

Investments in dental care now provide 6.5 million Canadians with access to dental care. That number includes over 800,000 children, and represents a \$900 savings.

Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Sadly, Mr. Speaker, that is not working.

Families are stretched to the limit. Parents are now skipping meals so their kids can eat. This all because of the government's taxes and out-of-control spending, which are driving up the cost of living. We have identified \$150 billion that could be saved by cutting red tape. This could give nearly \$10,000 back to every family.

Once again, will the Liberals adopt our Conservative economic action plan so that these parents can finally afford to put food on the table for their families?

Hon. Anna Gainey (Secretary of State (Children and Youth), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let us talk about food security. Thanks to funding from the Canadian government for the national school food program, Moisson Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean will now deliver 200 meals a day to students in the region, and up to 1,000 meals a day by 2029.

Oral Questions

That is one of the concrete measures we have taken to make life more affordable for Canadians, and the members opposite voted against it. That is shameful.

Joël Godin (Saint-Augustin—Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what is unfortunate is that the Liberals are accusing us of voting against programs that they put in place. They put them in place anyway because they have a majority. However, the fact is that it is not working. Sophie, a mother of three in my community, is desperate for food assistance and rental assistance. She is thinking of declaring bankruptcy. My colleagues heard that right: She is thinking of declaring bankruptcy. This is serious.

Will the Liberals adopt our proposals so that Canadians like Sophie can keep more money in their pockets?

Hon. Anna Gainey (Secretary of State (Children and Youth), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I also want to highlight the Canada groceries and essentials benefit that we created this year, which will help 12 million Canadians, giving a family of four more than \$1,900 to help with the cost of living.

We will continue to be there for families across Canada, including those in my colleague's riding.

* * *

[English]

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Doug Eyolfson (Winnipeg West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, September 30 marks the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

Can the Minister of Indigenous Services update the House on what our government is doing to advance reconciliation and renew the relationship with indigenous people across this country?

Hon. Mandy Gull-Masty (Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, reconciliation means working in full partnership with indigenous communities. We are doing that work by advancing child and family services reform and working on clean drinking water, health care and education. This includes supporting Canada's first Inuit-led university and also doing the critical work on tuberculosis elimination and strengthening food security for children and families across this country. This is our enduring commitment to reconciliation and the calls to action. This is what we recognize on September 30 and every day after that.

Oral Questions

● (1505)

TAXATION

Shuvaloy Majumdar (Calgary Heritage, CPC): Mr. Speaker, harvest is here, and the cost of diesel is crushing farmers, truckers and groceries. A U.S. restriction on diesel would hammer Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia.

Will Liberals eliminate all taxes on diesel until at least next Canada Day and, second, approve emergency pre-permitting and tax relief for fuel refining and transportation infrastructure? Will they accept the Conservative diesel price relief action plan today?

Hon. Julie Dabrusin (Minister of the Environment, Climate Change and Nature, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am not sure why the Conservatives are so stuck on the idea of working against canola farmers, including in the riding of the Leader of the Opposition. First of all, he has the second-largest canola-producing riding, but it also has Canada's largest renewable diesel facility, the Imperial Strathcona facility. It actually purchases up to 50% of the canola produced in Alberta. That is good for Alberta farmers. I would hope that the Conservatives would be standing with those farmers as we provide those important opportunities.

John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will tell the minister about real life for an Alberta farmer. Roy is having a tough day today. He is having a family meeting trying to figure out how they are going to pay this year's fuel bill. They usually budget about \$50,000 for harvest. Last year, it skyrocketed to \$130,000. This year, he is telling me it is going to be devastating, as diesel prices have doubled yet again to more than two dollars a litre.

The out-of-touch Liberals have blocked east-west pipelines, leaving our food production exposed to a U.S. diesel export ban. Will the Liberals accept the Conservative diesel price relief action plan today so farmers have access to the fuel they need to keep affordable food on the table?

Hon. Heath MacDonald (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it has been talked about in the House what is causing diesel prices to rise: the geopolitical situations we find ourselves in. It is hard, but farmers are resilient. We are starting to see some real progress in farming across this country and growth.

Growing market access to Indonesia, Mexico and China is really important. We are investing \$75 million in AgriMarketing and \$27 million in the youth employment and skills program to help farmers hire young people. We have created the productivity superdeduction, which is extremely important to farmers in this country.

We are standing alongside farmers and—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Long Range Mountains.

Carol Anstey (Long Range Mountains, CPC): Mr. Speaker, winter is coming, and the people of Newfoundland and Labrador have to heat their homes. Tom from St. John's reached out to me because he cannot afford to drive, and seniors like Tom are already making impossible decisions between heating and eating.

After 11 years of Liberal antidevelopment laws, Canada does not have access to affordable, reliable Canadian energy, and now the U.S. is considering restrictions on diesel exports. What is the Prime Minister's plan? Will he adopt our diesel price relief action plan and

eliminate all taxes on diesel until at least Canada Day so my neighbours can afford to heat their homes?

Hon. Joanne Thompson (Minister of Fisheries, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is a series of things we are currently doing to improve the lives of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians and Canadians. Recently, we had the investment in Churchill Falls, a \$70-billion investment, and \$10 billion of that money is federal funds. This is transformative for our province.

I want to remind the member of projects we can do locally. In my riding, in the last two weeks, I announced 114 deeply affordable housing units. The member is able to do this as well, but she has to put the work in.

* * *

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Jake Sawatzky (New Westminster—Burnaby—Maillardville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, AI has become part of everyday life in schools, and teachers are still figuring out what good use of it looks like. What they have asked for is straightforward: a common starting point and something they can trust.

This week, free bilingual AI literacy training becomes available to students and educators across the country. Can the Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation tell the House how this will help teachers and young Canadians?

● (1510)

Hon. Evan Solomon (Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his advocacy and his great work.

Our AI for all strategy is based on three pillars: trust, opportunity and sovereign control. To trust, young Canadians need to know how to use AI, and they need to create the opportunities to use it safely. That is why I am so happy to announce that we have launched Canada's AI essentials national literacy program for students and educators, a free bilingual program for students across the country. I urge students and teachers to use it. We are building strong, building right and building Canadian.

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Clifford Small (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, CPC): Mr. Speaker, President Macron of France has announced a 1,500-metric-ton quota of snow crab, to be caught on Canada's continental shelf. He released this shortly after his meeting with the Liberal Prime Minister a few days ago. According to French media, this Canadian crab will be caught by a French vessel and landed in Saint-Pierre and Miquelon.

Why is the Liberal Prime Minister selling out our fishery to France, which has not even ratified CETA?

Hon. Joanne Thompson (Minister of Fisheries, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the member back after the summer and certainly look forward to working with him and the fisheries committee.

I want to remind the member that we make decisions locally based on science, consultation with harvesters and economic opportunities. We make decisions in the international space with other departments that are part of broader negotiations. I was in Saint-Pierre and Miquelon this summer, and I met with harvesters. I spent three days in the community, and we have agreed to work collaboratively going forward.

* * *

TRANSPORTATION

Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are clear that Canada is not for sale. The Liberals claim they are not selling off Canada's assets, but the doublespeak is deafening. The Prime Minister says he is not privatizing airports, yet he is inviting private investors to take over their operations, collect massive profits and make travel more expensive. In other words, it is privatization. The minister says ports will not be privatized, but in reality, they are opening the door to every aspect of port operations to private investors.

Will the minister just admit that terms like “financial flexibility” and “modernization” are just code for privatization?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the member knows, she lives in a community that hosts Canada's largest port by far, and we want to thank the hard-working men and women at the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority and everyone who works in the port of Vancouver ecosystem.

Port lands are just that. They are federally owned lands run by port authorities that report, obviously, through the Minister of Transport to Parliament, and they lease that land to private operators. It has been that way since everyone can remember and will continue to work that way.

* * *

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it has been two years since I tabled my bill to add to the Criminal Code residential school denialism as a form of inciting hate. Residential school survivors, their families and their communities have a right to safety, security and dignity. I have spoken to ministers. Survivors want this criminalized.

Business of the House

If the government is committed to protecting survivors, will it listen to survivors, take on my bill as a government bill and criminalize residential school denialism once and for all, yes or no?

[Translation]

Hon. Rebecca Alty (Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, efforts to deny, distort or minimize the truth about residential schools are deeply harmful and will always be condemned. Denialism is a cruel rejection of well-established facts, and it undermines the truth that is essential to reconciliation with indigenous people. That is why our government is moving forward with a \$5-million investment in education and public awareness so that Canadians can continue to learn from survivors, their—

[English]

The Speaker: That closes Thursday's question period.

The opposition House Leader has an important question for the government House leader.

* * *

• (1515)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the long summertime drought of Thursday questions finally comes to an end. I know much relief is felt not just in the parliamentary precinct but across the land.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the government House leader back after what I am sure was a very busy summer for us all as we were out in our constituencies meeting with Canadians, hearing directly about their concerns and now bringing their issues back here to Parliament.

I would like to ask the government House leader if during his travels this summer, he heard from Canadians who want to move past the rhetoric to results and who want the government to actually save them money. We know the government has conceded that gas taxes hurt the economy and hurt affordability.

In order to save Canadians money, will he finally agree to the Conservative plan and not just have a temporary reprieve of the gas tax until January, as we saw with Bill C-38? Are there any plans for the government to make that last longer, all the way to Canada Day? Now that the government has conceded the principle that gas taxes hurt the economy, will it abandon the fuel standard tax and bring in legislation to repeal it?

Government Orders

Finally, after all the photo ops, rhetoric and bluster, will there be a single new project that has gone through the Major Projects Office or benefited from the unprecedented powers of Bill C-5? Will we finally get to see things built, or was this summer of press conferences and MOUs just a bunch of political theatre?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to extend my own welcome back to Parliament to my colleague across the floor. I know that this particular slot in the week keeps people on the edge of their seats rapt, as we do the Thursday question at this time every week.

This is season two, episode one, and we do have to leave some cliffhangers, in the best TV tradition. I have taken careful note of the requests of my friend, the opposition House leader. He can be sure that we will continue to find ways to make life more affordable for Canadians, and prolonging the excise tax relief is an important step. As for the war in Iran, any increase in revenue that the government may have derived from it, we are returning to Canadians.

With respect to major projects, that is where we will leave the cliffhanger. As we return for the next episode, the opposition House Leader may have a different question to ask.

This afternoon and tomorrow, we will continue with the second reading debate of Bill C-39, the building Canada strong act.

[Translation]

When we return after spending a week in our ridings, we will resume consideration of that bill on Monday and Wednesday.

I would also like to inform the House that Tuesday, October 6, and Thursday, October 8, shall be allotted days.

Finally, Friday will be devoted to the second reading debate of Bill C-37, the first nations clean water act.

Thank you and welcome back, Mr. Speaker. It is good to see you again, too.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1520)

[English]

BUILDING CANADA STRONG ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-39, An Act respecting certain measures to strengthen the economy, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is no secret that I am a fan of building. My office is filled with model haul trucks, excavators and dozers, not just as a nod to my hometown and the industry that drives it but to serve as a reminder of where I came from and my roots in heavy construction and mining.

I am proud to represent Canadian oil sands workers here in Parliament. Many years ago, like my dad and my grandfather, I laced up my own steel-toed boots and reported to work in health and safety in the oil sands. I understand how hard the people who work

in Canada's energy sector work, with long hours, rotating shifts and harsh weather, yet thousands of workers show up every single day to ensure that our houses stay warm in the winter and cool in the summer and that the lights are always on when we need them.

Through my experience, I have had the opportunity to see many major projects move from dream to design to construction and operation. This was the reality in the oil sands region for a long time. Then, just over 10 years ago, a new government came into power here in Ottawa, led by Justin Trudeau. He then made it his mission to demonize the industry that fuelled our economy, stigmatized the workers in this industry and created overbearing regulatory systems to shut down any new major project. He recruited eco-activists like Steven Guilbeault and then promoted them into his cabinet.

While the current iteration of the Liberal Party claims to support the energy industry and the energy workers, and claims that it wants to build at unimaginable speeds, it has chosen to keep all the Trudeau-era anti-energy, antidevelopment laws and legislation in place. For years, Conservatives have been telling the Liberals to get out of the way by approving projects in rapid order, in six months; repealing anti-energy and antidevelopment laws Bill C-69 and Bill C-48; and adopting a one-project, one-review system. Canada has everything we need to be an affordable, strong, self-reliant country, but we can only live up to our full potential if the Liberal government gets out of the way.

Liberals claimed a year and a half ago that Bill C-5 would allow them to move at speeds not seen in generations, yet no new projects have been approved by their Major Projects Office. Conservatives took the Liberals at their word, and we fast-tracked that bill through Parliament. Now, 18 months later, the only thing that has moved at unimaginable speeds was that piece of legislation.

They are once again coming back to this chamber claiming that this latest piece of legislation will be the difference maker. As always with the Liberals, it is all talk and no results. It is the lack of results, the lack of action, that has left well over 500 projects waiting on some bureaucrat's desk for approval. For businesses considering whether to invest in Canada or not, announcements are not enough. For workers wondering whether there will be a project to work on, speeches are not enough. For communities in Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, promises of future action are not enough.

It is worth noting that serious changes are being proposed to the Labour Code in part 3 that clearly require extensive committee study. We need to review the proposed legislation. We have many questions, and we must ensure that all aspects of this bill are thoroughly examined. The question I have for the government is, why are sweeping labour changes being made in a giant 250-page omnibus bill? I think that is the same question I have heard from a number of my constituents.

Conservatives have a clear objective. We are fighting for policies that will save Canadians money and save Canadian jobs. It is as simple as that. For generations, Fort McMurray—Cold Lake and its oil industry offered a beacon of hope to people from right across Canada and the world. People who were willing to work hard and work long hours, and who had a dream, could make it big. My family has called Fort McMurray home for over 50 years. My dad and grandparents moved up to Fort McMurray in the 1970s in search of a better life, and they got a better life. They worked hard to provide opportunities for their family and give back to their community.

Fort McMurray Wood Buffalo is home to the third-largest proven oil sands deposit in the world; 97% of Canada's oil comes from the oil sands, with 96% of the oil sands oil coming from the Fort McMurray region. When I say I know oil, I grew up around it; I know oil. I know a thing or two about it at the very minimum. Canada's oil sands production averages 3.1 million barrels a day.

• (1525)

Canada's energy sector currently employs nearly one million people, with 150,000 direct jobs, 300,000 indirect jobs and 450,000 induced jobs, providing strong paycheques and life-changing opportunities for families and communities right across the country. The oil and natural gas industries are among the largest employers of indigenous people in Canada. As I fly back and forth from Ottawa, I regularly meet oil sands workers coming from every corner of the country. In 2022, oil and gas contributed \$45 billion in revenue to Canadian governments. That meant funds for our hospitals, our schools, our roads and so many other important public services.

When my dad was in the prime of his working years, there was no doubt that there was a future in Fort McMurray, but after 10 years of Liberals, doubt has become all too much of a reality. The energy industry 10 years ago was still growing. Families were building their lives, businesses were investing, and skilled tradespeople could look forward to the next generation with confidence and know that opportunities were waiting for them. Today, that has been replaced by a lot of questions.

After a decade of anti-energy legislation, people in communities like mine are asking very basic questions. What does the future of our industry actually look like? What does the future of our community look like? What happens if the Liberals go back to their active attacks on the energy industry? These are not some pie-in-the-sky questions. These are existential questions that people in my community have. They have a hard time taking the government at its word after the Liberals' record of a decade of a constant barrage of attacks and the talking down of the very hard-working people of Fort McMurray—Cold Lake.

This is not an abstract policy debate either. The ability to work on energy projects is not simply a line on a government spreadsheet. This is people's jobs, their mortgages, their businesses, their families and their communities. It is an apprentice hoping to become a journeyman. It is an electrician building a career, a heavy equipment operator working long shifts to provide for his family, the engineer designing the next big project, the small business owner whose customers depend on a healthy energy sector.

I stand here today fighting for Canada's energy industry and, more importantly, fighting for all of the spectacular workers in

Government Orders

Canada's energy industry, for those hundreds of thousands of hard-working Canadians from coast to coast to coast who have a job, in great part, due to my community and the resources we have developed over the years. I stand here for the future of my community.

When we talk about Canada's energy sector, we are also talking about Canada's ability to create good-paying jobs, attract investment, build infrastructure, generate government revenues and compete in the global economy. We are talking about whether Canadian workers can have the opportunity to build Canadian projects or whether those opportunities will continue to be built elsewhere. The reality is that for the last decade, we have seen those projects go elsewhere. We have seen those jobs go elsewhere. We have seen that opportunity flee.

It is no surprise that Conservatives support building. We have been on that train for many decades, and we will continue being on it, whether it is popular for the Liberals or not. The reality is that we need to make sure that what we are building is sustainable for the long-term health of our economy. Canada has the resources, the expertise, the workers and the know-how. What we need is a government that can get out of the way. What we need is a government that will repeal the anti-energy and antidevelopment legislation, which the current government has chosen to keep on the books, that has kept a foot on the throat of the industry, preventing it from being able to expand.

I will continue to stand up for Fort McMurray—Cold Lake and for Canada's energy sector and the skilled workers who make our economy stronger. Conservatives will continue to push the Liberal government to cut the red tape and regulations, to get the projects actually built and to get shovels in the ground faster in Canada. We will continue to fight for the projects that we need to build to deliver an affordable, safe, independent country and to secure our energy future, not just for Canada but for our allies across the world. This is not just a question. This is something we will do and will continue fighting for.

• (1530)

[*Translation*]

Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Madam Speaker, since this is the first time I have had the opportunity to speak to you today, I would like to take the opportunity to say hello and welcome you back to Parliament.

Listening to the speech by my colleague from Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, I realize how far apart the Conservatives and the Bloc are on these issues. I thought that Bill C-39 went beyond everything the Conservatives have wanted for years, but no, it seems that it still falls short, that it still does not go far enough. According to Bill C-39, assessments will be more flexible, particularly for oil and gas projects, which will no longer be subject to the Impact Assessment Act. It seems to me that the Conservatives should be patting themselves on the back and celebrating, but what I have been hearing all day is the complete opposite.

Government Orders

In our opinion, the bill goes so far as to be outrageous. In my colleague's opinion, what is missing from the bill that would make it acceptable to the Conservatives?

Laila Goodridge: Madam Speaker, we do not trust the Liberals. We are not sure they are actually going to do what they say they are going to do. We voted in favour of Bill C-5 because they said it was absolutely essential for moving projects forward. However, we have not seen that. No projects have been started under the Major Projects Office. We want to ensure that this will have a real impact and lead to actual construction projects in our country.

Abdelhaq Sari (Bourassa, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would simply like to emphasize once again that, just like other bills, this one will be referred to committee.

We know that many of her colleagues across the way are very supportive of the idea that it will take a year to review projects and decide whether they can go ahead. Will we be able to count on their work to improve the bill when it is studied in committee?

Laila Goodridge: Madam Speaker, I am lucky to have studied in French, because I am now able to answer technical questions about oil sands in French. It has been a long time since I tried to use certain words in French.

The Conservatives will certainly work in committee to improve this bill, just as they did during the study of Bill C-5. However, we have concerns, because we were told that Bill C-5 would be the solution. Now, 18 months later, nothing has been built, but the Liberals are telling us that there is another bill and that this one will be the solution. That is why we have concerns.

[English]

Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Madam Speaker, we have seen the Liberals are privatizing, or are talking about privatizing, four of Canada's largest airports, which produce a half a billion dollars in revenue. They are talking about modernizing Canadian ports, which we know basically means they are going to privatize them. They are even privatizing and putting out to tender the contract that the Commissionaires, which hires veterans, gets. Now the Liberals are undermining workers' rights.

We hear a lot of people say that the Liberals have taken on the Conservative agenda, but I will ask my colleague, is this the Conservative agenda? Would the Conservatives have even gone this far, when it comes to privatizing Canadian public services?

Laila Goodridge: Madam Speaker, as I stated in my speech, Conservatives are fans of getting things built. We took the Liberals at their word, a year and a half ago when they put forward Bill C-5, that it was the solution to make things move at unimaginable speeds. We helped it get sped through Parliament. We worked and created amendments so that it was the best piece of legislation possible. Here we are, 18 months later, and we see no projects being built and nothing approved by the Major Projects Office. We know there are at least 500 projects sitting on some bureaucrat's desk somewhere that are waiting for approval from Ottawa to be able to go forward.

What we are saying from the Conservative perspective is that we are going to study this bill at committee to make sure it is actually

going to work to get projects built, because we desperately need to have construction in this country.

• (1535)

[Translation]

Abdelhaq Sari (Bourassa, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to begin by saying that I will be sharing my time with the member for Eglinton—Lawrence.

Sometimes a country has to choose between watching history unfold or making history itself. Canada is at a point right now where we have to choose to be the master of our own destiny.

All around us, the world is changing and shifting gears. Technology is completely transforming industries. Supply chains are being redrawn and geopolitical uncertainty weighs on every investment decision. Meanwhile, capital waits for no one. It goes where people know how to build. It goes where the rules are clear and decisions are actually made.

Bill C-39 asks a simple question: Will Canada be that country?

We have everything we need to succeed. We have an abundance of natural resources, one of the most skilled workforces in the world, enterprising companies and strong institutions that inspire confidence well beyond our borders.

However, nothing is built on potential alone. It is like a mighty river without a power plant. Its immense power does not produce light until we learn how to harness it. A resource creates value only if we can develop it responsibly. Technology will transform the economy only if we can build the necessary infrastructure to properly support that technology. A product creates wealth only once it reaches the customer.

[English]

This country was not built by waiting. It was built by people who laid rail across impossible distances, who opened ports or rugged coastal lines, who believed that connecting a nation was worth the effort. They did not have certainty. They had conviction.

Today, our nation-building projects look different because we have critical minerals, clean energy, advanced manufacturing, modern port transmission lines and digital networks.

The question is this: Do we still have the resolve to build?

[Translation]

The question we must ask ourselves is the one our ancestors also asked. Do we still have the determination to build? Across the country, we are hearing the same message from workers, communities, indigenous partners and investors. Our federal approval processes are too long and too complex. The requirements—

Government Orders

Martin Champoux: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

I am sorry to intervene. I simply want to tell my colleague to pay particular attention to the microphones. When he puts down his papers, it can be very unpleasant for the interpreters. I know that is not really his intent.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): I thank the hon. member for the reminder. Indeed, members should be very careful when leafing through documents near the microphones.

The hon. member may continue his speech.

Abdelhaq Sari: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for that comment. I certainly do not want to jeopardize the health of our interpreters, who do an excellent job.

As I said earlier, our federal approval processes are too long and too complex. Requirements pile up, reviews overlap and the process drags on for years. Imagine a family wanting to renovate their home and being instructed to submit the same file to five different offices without ever being told when they can expect a decision. Eventually, they will give up. That is exactly what is happening with investments. When investors have to wait forever, capital goes elsewhere, taking jobs with it.

That is why the government must modernize federal project review processes. Our goal is clear: to make federal decisions on major projects within one year while maintaining rigorous environmental standards and respecting the rights of indigenous peoples. To be clear, this is not about lowering the bar. It is about making sure projects do not get lost in a maze. Efficiency need not come at the expense of rigour. A predictable timeline does not determine the decision. It simply guarantees that there will be one, be it positive or negative.

Collaboration with indigenous peoples lies at the heart of this approach. Indigenous communities must be part and parcel of the decisions affecting their lands, their rights and their social and economic future. A clearer process does not diminish their participation; it makes it more meaningful, more consistent and, above all, more frequent. We reject the idea that we must choose between economic development, environmental protection and reconciliation. A mature country knows how to make progress on all three fronts while also remaining aligned with all three at the same time.

Canada is a trading nation. Our prosperity travels by rail, road, sea and air. Our ports, highways and railways are the arteries of our economy, and every bottleneck acts as an invisible tax—a tax that stifles investment before it even begins, before it is even triggered. It is paid by the farmer waiting for their grain to be shipped, by the manufacturer whose parts are not arriving and, at the end of the chain, by the family seeing prices rise at the supermarket.

The bill modernizes the governance of the transportation sectors, strengthens our commercial infrastructure and consolidates our supply chains. It also takes account of a new reality. In a more unstable world, the security and resilience of our networks are no longer a luxury. They are a prerequisite for our growth.

• (1540)

[English]

Behind every port, every rail line and every construction site, there are people. More than a million Canadians work in federally regulated sectors, keeping goods moving and communities connected. In most cases, employers and unions reach agreements at their negotiating table, and that speaks to the strength of our system. This bill builds on that strength.

[Translation]

The bill tackles wage theft and the misclassification of workers. It improves workplace safety and supports stable and respectful labour relations.

[English]

That is because an economy that forgets its workers is neither modern nor fair.

[Translation]

I meet people every day in my riding of Bourassa, in Montreal, who are not asking for any special privileges. They are not asking for anything special because all they want is a chance: a stable job, a fair wage and a safe workplace. When we talk about major projects, trade corridors and competitiveness, these are the folks we are talking about. Growth only makes sense if it improves their lives.

This bill is the result of extensive consultations with indigenous peoples, the provinces and territories, businesses, unions and members of the public. While their points of view sometimes differed, there was one common message, namely that Canadians want a more efficient government, environmentally responsible growth, robust infrastructure and good jobs. They want an ambitious Canada that remains true to its values.

In closing, investment decisions are being made now. Major projects are being planned now. Tomorrow's trade partnerships are being developed today.

From northern communities to the Atlantic provinces, from the Prairies to British Columbia, from Ontario to Quebec, Canadians are ready to build. It is up to us to give them a country that is ready too. Let us move forward with confidence, build responsibly and leave future generations with a stronger, fairer Canada that is more ready than ever.

• (1545)

[English]

Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Madam Speaker, the government says it will coordinate consultation through a new Crown consultation hub, which is what they have called it. Ultimately, who gets to decide if and when that consultation is complete?

My colleague talked a lot about first nations. Will indigenous nations have a meaningful say in determining whether their concerns have actually been addressed in that consultation process, or will the government be the one marking its own homework?

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Who will decide when that is complete and what that timeline looks like?

[Translation]

Abdelhaq Sari: Madam Speaker, today, as things stand, I think that this matter needs to be discussed by parliamentarians in committee. I urge all my colleagues, all MPs, to share their opinions and comments and put forward amendments.

Some consultations have been held, and there will be more, but we can talk about that in committee.

[English]

Burton Bailey (Red Deer, CPC): Madam Speaker, the Liberals claim this bill would get projects built, but there are already 500 projects stuck in the federal permitting process.

Why does the government not simply approve these projects instead of continuing to add more bureaucracy, more bills, more offices and more announcements that have not built anything?

[Translation]

Abdelhaq Sari: Madam Speaker, first of all, members need to listen carefully to the speeches given by each of my colleagues on our side of the House. What we are saying is that we want to deliver an answer within a year, whether positive or negative. That is very important. This is no blanket approval process. We are not interested in giving out carte blanche. On the contrary, there will be some negotiation. That is very important.

Now, to speed things up, we simply need to make decisions in committee faster. If people here really want to move faster, the Conservatives will have to co-operate with us so we can make decisions in committee. Once again, Bill C-5, Bill C-39's predecessor, laid a strong foundation. Now, we are setting the stage for all future projects.

Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Madam Speaker, as the Bloc Québécois critic for labour, human resources and skills development, I had the opportunity to speak yesterday and clearly demonstrate how workers' rights are being eroded. The members opposite laughed in my face, but what I read yesterday were comments from organized labour. These were initial reactions. I also talked a lot about setbacks for the environment, but I ended by talking about setbacks for democracy.

What does my colleague think about that?

Yesterday, I did not have time to say that we found out that in Bill C-39, the Liberals are undoing the amendment that one of my colleagues made to Bill C-5, which made the minister's powers subject to a five-year sunset clause. Now there will be no way of reviewing the minister's decisions after the fact.

My colleague talked about collaboration, proposals, amendments and improvements, but this change is unacceptable from a democratic standpoint.

I would like my colleague to talk a bit about that.

Abdelhaq Sari: Madam Speaker, as I understand it, the question was about strikes and unions. I would say that what we are now bringing back in this bill is the complete opposite. Section 107 of the Canada Labour Code has been used to end strikes in recent

years. Its use will be clarified. I would say it will be much better monitored by the department. Today, things are vague. Tomorrow, things will be much less vague.

In fact, a number of unions are starting to warm up to this amendment to section 107.

[English]

Lori Idlout (Nunavut, Lib.): *Uqaqtittiji*, the member's speech was excellent. I really appreciate that he incorporated the relationship with indigenous peoples and what the act would do. I wonder if the member, as part of the government, can explain just how important that relationship is with indigenous peoples and why it is important in this legislation.

[Translation]

Abdelhaq Sari: Madam Speaker, that is a great question.

Building Canada strong means seizing opportunities. For that reason, the changes in this bill are very important. That said, no one should be left behind. That is why it is very important to consult all stakeholders as well as Canadians who are having a tough time every day. Naturally, the stakeholders include indigenous peoples.

• (1550)

[English]

Vince Gasparro (Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State (Combating Crime), Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is always an honour to rise in the House on behalf of the residents of Eglinton—Lawrence.

Canada is going through a period of significant change. We are in a tariff war with our largest trading partner, the Russian invasion of Ukraine continues to put pressure on global food markets and commodity markets, a conflict in the Middle East has disrupted global energy markets and pushed up the cost of oil and gas, and rising global bond yields have raised costs for everyday Canadians through debt instruments such as mortgages and auto loans.

For some Canadians, these events may feel distant, but they have real consequences here at home. I hear it from families that are dealing with higher grocery bills and higher costs at the pump. I hear it from manufacturers dealing with American tariffs and global uncertainty that impacts whether they can afford to invest, hire and expand here in Canada. These are the issues that matter to people in Eglinton—Lawrence and to all Canadians, and they point to a broader question: What can Canada control?

We cannot control decisions made in Washington, and we cannot control conflicts overseas, but we can control how we respond. We can decide whether Canada is a country that waits for the world to change, or whether we build the capacity to succeed in a changing world. Our government has a plan to do that in the short term, the medium term and the long term.

In the short term, we are acting decisively. We are standing up to unjustified American tariffs and are diversifying our trade relationships, 20 in total with more to come. We are putting money directly into Canadians' pockets through the Canada groceries and essentials benefit, which provides up to \$1,890 for a family of four, and we are cutting the federal excise tax on gas and diesel by 10¢ per litre. These measures are important because, in the face of global instability, Canadians need help today.

However, short-term support is exactly that: short-term. We have to address the underlying problem. We need to be more competitive. We need greater private investment, specifically foreign direct investment working in our economy, and we need businesses that can expand, adopt new technology, hire more workers and compete in global markets. That is why our medium-term agenda matters.

We have eliminated the consumer carbon tax and cut taxes for the middle class, and we are introducing productivity-enhancing tax measures that make it more attractive for businesses to invest in Canada. Under these measures, businesses can immediately expense up to 15% of eligible capital investments. The principle is straightforward: When a Canadian business wants to invest in a new machine, modernize a facility, expand production or adopt new technology, we should make that investment easier, because investment drives productivity, productivity drives wages and economic growth, and economic growth gives Canadians more opportunity. This plan is working. Just last week, the Canadian investment summit unleashed nearly \$500 billion of new capital.

Our fiscal policy is only part of the answer. We also need to build and execute. In the long term, we are building the foundation for a more productive, resilient and competitive Canadian economy. That is why I am supporting Bill C-39, the building Canada strong act. For years, one of the challenges facing major projects in Canada has been uncertainty. I saw this first-hand as a banker who financed infrastructure. A business develops a proposal and works to raise capital. If it cannot predict when decisions will be made or if labour will even be available to it, it becomes much harder to make an investment in the first place. As costs rise, the project economics become more uncertain.

The building Canada strong act is intended to change that fundamental dynamic. First, we would provide greater certainty by bringing federal mediation into the labour process earlier. Instead of waiting for a strike to occur, Bill C-39 would expand mediation and dispute resolution tools by establishing a time-limited special mediator to encourage good-faith bargaining before a dispute escalates. This would give workers and employers an additional opportunity to reach a negotiated agreement and avoid a strike or lockout.

• (1555)

Second, the building Canada strong act would enhance the One Canadian Economy Act passed last year by the current government, by creating one coordinated federal process, one lead authority and

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a one-year timeline for federal decisions once a complete application has been submitted.

Let me be clear. The bill would protect the environment and respect indigenous rights. What it would change is that it would improve the timeline for decisions to be made. The building Canada strong act would create a system that is more predictable, coordinated and efficient, because businesses need certainty, and our workers deserve certainty. The objective is simple: Move from an idea to financing, to construction and ultimately to a completed project. The fact is that process is not an outcome; results and execution are.

Our country has done this before. In the 1950s, we built the St. Lawrence Seaway in less than five years, the TransCanada pipeline in two years and the Trans-Canada Highway. These were enormous undertakings that all helped Canada move east-west rather than north-south.

The St. Lawrence Seaway gets raw materials from the interior out to market, the TransCanada pipeline connected the oil sands to refineries in eastern Canada, and the Trans-Canada Highway connected Canadians together. To continue to build a strong, independent country, we need to be more resilient east-west rather than north-south, which is exactly what the building Canada strong act would do. It would allow us to formally designate strategic trade corridors and advance priority projects within one year.

The point is simple: Canada cannot control what happens in Washington or what happens in conflicts around the world, but we can create a more productive and resilient economy, one that provides greater certainty to investors, certainty to workers and certainty for businesses to grow, succeed and invest here in Canada. That is what Bill C-39, the building Canada strong act, would help achieve.

We need to build faster, we need to build with certainty and we need to build for the long term. That is how we create good-paying, long-term jobs, attract private investment, strengthen our economy and make Canada more resilient. That is how we build Canada strong.

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Burton Bailey (Red Deer, CPC): Madam Speaker, according to the bill, project proponents would still have to analyze “the intersection of sex and gender with other identity factors”. I am not sure what any of that has to do with building a pipeline or a mine, but this is the type of woke, bureaucratic language we have come to expect from the Liberals. It means absolutely nothing, and it maintains layers of red tape.

My question is this: If the Liberals are trying to be taken seriously at a time that demands serious action, when will they drop the woke corporate-speak, pick up shovels and get building?

Vince Gasparro: Madam Speaker, the current government has been focused on the economy since day one, and we see that with our legislative agenda, with the pieces of legislation that have been passed and with the projects that we have approved. Churchill Falls, for example, in eastern Canada, is going to produce enough clean power to power Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver combined. That is the type of action the government is taking. That is the type of employment we are looking to create in this great country. We are going to continue to make these decisions, whether the opposition wants to support us or not.

• (1600)

[Translation]

Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Madam Speaker, Bill C-5 allowed the government to circumvent at least 12 environmental laws and seven regulations to make it easier for certain projects, including several oil projects, to move forward. However, there was a five-year limit on that authority. With C-39, the government wants to remove that limit so that it can permanently circumvent environmental legislation.

At a time when climate disasters are becoming more frequent and the cost of public services is rising, the Liberals want to circumvent environmental legislation for the benefit of oil companies whose proceeds often go abroad. What does my colleague think about that?

[English]

Vince Gasparro: Madam Speaker, in my previous answer I spoke about Churchill Falls, the largest clean energy development in North American history, which is being financed by the government. I can tell members that renewable energy, along with the jobs it creates, is incredibly important to the government. It will produce enough power to heat, cool and electrify all of the homes in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. That is something the member and his party should get behind.

Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Madam Speaker, I want to go back in time. The northern gateway pipeline was rejected by the courts in part because the Crown's consultations with the affected first nations were found to be inadequate. The lesson of that should have been clear to the government, and that lesson is that rushing consultation can delay projects rather than get them built.

My question is this: Why is the Liberal government repeating the same mistakes of the Harper Conservatives by prioritizing an arbitrary timeline over getting consultations with indigenous peoples right the first time? The government is repeating the same mistakes,

and this will just end up in the courts again, wasting everybody's time and money.

Vince Gasparro: Madam Speaker, I think this is probably one of the first times I have been accused of being a Harper Conservative.

Indigenous rights and making sure we engage with our partners at the AFN and other organizations are things we have taken incredibly seriously. They really are at the heart of this legislation.

What I will say is this: The crisis we are in, and I said this in my remarks, requires us to act decisively, and we are going to do that with our partners.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I wonder if my colleague can go back to the part of his comments when he talked about the Toronto summit, an investment summit that attracted half a trillion dollars in commitments to invest in Canada, the lead-up that went into that, and how we can put that into the legislation that we are debating today.

The world is looking at Canada, and it wants to invest in Canada. This legislation would help. Could the member provide his thoughts?

Vince Gasparro: Madam Speaker, there was an article today in Bloomberg saying that capital is leaving the United States and coming to Canada, which is an indication of the confidence investors have in the Prime Minister and our new government.

Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let us talk about Bill C-39, the building Canada strong act, not to be confused with the Building Canada Act or whatever act was before that.

Nearly 18 months ago, the Prime Minister promised that we would build “at speeds not seen in generations”. A year and a half later, the situation is dire, and I think most Canadians would agree. Not a single major project has gone from announcement to shovels in the ground. Antidevelopment laws like Bill C-69 and Bill C-48 are still on the books, and they are stifling investment and innovation in this country. The tanker ban and the industrial carbon tax remain, as does the stack of regulations and red tape that makes it next to impossible to build in this country. All of that remains despite Bill C-5.

I know those watching at home are confused by the numbers. The Liberals brought Bill C-5 through this place almost 18 months ago. They said it was revolutionary legislation that was going to have projects built. We passed it through the House in a record five days. They called it a catalyst, one of the Prime Minister's favourite words. They said it would let them do bigger things and do it faster with a brand new Major Projects Office to lead the way. Today, there are zero shovels in the ground, zero new major projects moving forward, and that office has spent more on bureaucracy and hiring people than it has on building a single project. Once again, the words outrun the results.

We have to ask if Bill C-39, the legislation that we are discussing today, which is absolutely needed after the Liberals got the legislation passed that they initially needed, is the solution that members opposite have been claiming it is or if it is another announcement, another press release, another sort of time stamp in the road so they can restart the clock, saying this is the thing that they need to move forward. Before, they said that was the last thing we needed to move forward. I am inclined to believe it is the latter, because past behaviour is the best predictor of future behaviour, and Canadians should not forget that.

Over 10 years, the government has driven investment out of Canada. It threw up roadblocks. It called anyone who wanted to build a pipeline a climate change denier. It discouraged risk-taking in this country with punitive taxes, and they picked winners and losers. The result was \$1 trillion of capital leaving this country and going elsewhere. Our productivity stagnated. Our standard of living declined.

If productivity had kept pace even with the United Nations since 2015, every Canadian would be roughly \$11,000 richer, \$11,000 better off than today. Instead, half of full-time workers are spending their income or more on their living expenses, and half are living paycheque to paycheque. This is in a country that only a few years ago had the richest middle class in the developed world. We do not need to look at the past to suspect that the sizzle of this bill, Bill C-39, is bigger than the steak. We have seen this before.

The present tells the exact same story. The Prime Minister likes to say we should control what we can control, and I agree. Let us look at what he controls. Right now, there are over 500 proposals sitting on his desk, and all they need is a signature. They do not need a new slogan. They do not need a new bill. They do not need a new trade mission. They do not need a new photo op. He just has to sign them. That is his choice. Even the signature is no guarantee because we have seen investment summits, memorandums of understanding, agreements, press conferences and just yesterday, we saw the OECD downgrade Canada's growth outlook while peer countries saw theirs upgraded. The people now promising to fix this are, in many cases, the same ministers and MPs whose high-tax, anti-growth agenda caused this problem in the first place. If we were to look outside this place, we could forgive people for being skeptical. The results keep being pushed down the road with a new piece of legislation, a new MOU or a new announcement, but the results have not arrived.

● (1605)

Nowhere is the gap between promise and delivery wider than it is in resource development here in this country. I want to speak directly to the members of the left flank of the Liberal caucus. For a decade, they told Canadians that resource development was a moral question. To them, it was not about economics or engineering, and it was not about trade-offs. It was truly, in their eyes, a test of character. If we wanted a pipeline, we were deniers. If we wanted a mine, we did not care about our planet or our children's future. If we wanted to sell our energy to other markets, which would buy them from somebody else anyway, we were on the wrong side of history. They enforced that standard relentlessly on everybody who disagreed with them. They enforced it against the opposition,

against premiers and against members of their own party who sometimes asked whether all of that was working.

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Now, members can read Bill C-39. They can read what it would do to the federal review permitting. They can read about the exemption powers. They can read the section on labour. What would they have said if a Conservative government tabled a 246-page piece of omnibus legislation that would do nothing for workers and would build nothing? The bill claims to fast-track the very projects those Liberals once called a moral failure in the House, and that was not that long ago, but it even fails at that. They would have called it a betrayal. They would have used exactly that word.

The question is not whether they have changed their position. We know they did. The question is what that left flank of the Liberal Party got for it. They spent their political capital. They asked their most loyal supporters, people who believed this was about the planet, to accept their reversal, and 18 months in, with a Major Projects Office and legislation on the move, not one of these projects' delivery is under way. They burned all of that political capital passing these pieces of legislation without having a single shovel in the ground. They made the trade. They just did not get anything for it.

If they now believe that the last decade was too rigid and this country needs to build, then they should get up out of their seats to say so plainly, acknowledge that the cost was measured in projects that died and that investment went elsewhere outside of the country. That would at least be honest. However, what we are going to see over and over again is the left flank of the Liberal Party hiding behind rhetoric that just is not true, and they traded it away for nothing. It is the same pattern with big announcements, with there being little to show for them.

After last week's investment summit, the Prime Minister came away promising a half a trillion dollars of investment, and we welcome that. The problem is that people are filling their gas tanks, which were already empty, half full. A trillion dollars of investment left this country. That is why the skepticism runs high. The skepticism runs high when people look at the government and see it acting one way for 11 years. It had 18 months to change everything, but it is yet another piece of legislation, one that has produced no results.

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I am going to end with this: I do not want members to take away that we are going to dismiss the bill before us. Conservatives are not rejecting Bill C-39, but we will study it, press for details, scrutinize it and work to improve it to make sure it actually builds something. That is our job as the official opposition, and that is how we are going to hold the government to account on what it brings before the chamber. However, we will not simply take the government's word and accept all the promises the Liberals have made.

Canada has everything it needs to succeed. We have fields of crops. We are rich in minerals. We have resources, oceans full of fish and the people with the talent to make it all happen. What we need is a government that will get out of the way, and one that will talk about repealing legislation already on the books, but everything we have seen until now tells us that is not this government.

• (1610)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I think it is important that the member recognize, if she wants to reflect on history and talk about Stephen Harper, that we had the largest trade deficit under Stephen Harper. If she wants to talk about the hardest hit in the manufacturing industry in the province of Ontario, again, let us talk about Stephen Harper. Imagine if Stephen Harper, along with her leader, who sat around his cabinet table, did his job. What a difference that would have been.

It is time that the Conservatives stopped thinking about Trudeau all the time and start reflecting on the new government that Canadians elected, with a new Prime Minister and 70 new Liberal MPs, and recognize that things have changed. People are looking at Canada and investing in Canada. Major projects are well under way.

Melissa Lantsman: Madam Speaker, the Liberals can change their leader, they can change their buzzwords and they can change the legislation number from Bill C-5 to Bill C-39, but they cannot change a record. They cannot change the legacy that Stephen Harper left in this country and I am glad to talk about it.

Under Stephen Harper's government, we had the richest middle class in the world. A young person could buy a home. Canada was a well-respected country on the world stage with moral clarity. It was so much so that the Prime Minister invited Stephen Harper to his investment summit to close it out to remind Canadians of a Canada that used to be.

• (1615)

[Translation]

Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Madam Speaker, I actually get the sense that Stephen Harper was more to the left than the current Prime Minister. The more time goes by, the more the measures this Prime Minister is putting in place that make me think that the Conservatives are jealous that he is not on the right side of the House based on his political stripes.

Bill C-39, which we analyzed with our teams, as I am sure the Conservatives did as well, contains things that seek to destroy or circumvent the laws that are there to protect the public, the environment and workers. I do not know what the Conservatives find in

this bill that deserves support, aside from the fact that it goes way too far.

I want to hear my colleague's thoughts on the fact that we have a government that is proposing legislation that, in my opinion, goes beyond even what Conservatives have been calling for for years.

[English]

Melissa Lantsman: Madam Speaker, the member is certainly right that there are concerns with the legislation. A major concern with the legislation is it is not going to deliver what it says it is going to deliver. We saw that in the past. We see that with the Major Projects Office. We saw that with Bill C-5. Now we see it potentially with Bill C-39.

As I said before, we are going to take the time to scrutinize the legislation and look for pieces in the legislation that we can improve. Once it gets to that legislative committee, we are going to propose the amendments necessary to actually get shovels in the ground instead of promises into people's pockets.

Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Madam Speaker, over the summer, the government consulted with labour, unions and different organizations. Federal unions have been calling for section 107 of the Canada Labour Code to be removed after governments, especially the Liberal government, have used it to order workers back to work and undermine their collective bargaining rights.

The government is proposing new language, as we know, around section 107, and calling these changes “guardrails”. However, unions are telling us these changes could actually weaken workers' bargaining power. Organized labour still has no answer on who brought these ideas forward and who asked for these changes.

The Conservatives are saying they are friends with labour. Do they support these changes or do they know who asked for these changes?

Melissa Lantsman: Madam Speaker, it is not about whether we are friends with labour. It is about whether labour supports a party that supports it. In the last election, it certainly came over in droves and the member knows it.

I wish the member would speak this vigorously against the inflation that is driving down the paycheques of every single worker in this country. I wish he would stand up for labour when it comes to the fact that its buying power is not nearly as much because of the government's spending. I wish he would stand up for labour.

Burton Bailey (Red Deer, CPC): Madam Speaker, the Prime Minister has been known for the phrase, “We will build at speeds not seen in generations”. The last time the government promised speeds not seen in generations, it was with Bill C-5. The Major Projects Office, 18 months later, has issued zero permits and zero workers are on the ground.

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What good is this bill if the first one did not get anything built?

Melissa Lantsman: Madam Speaker, if the Liberals' past behaviour is any indication of their future behaviour, I am not sure we have much to look forward to. As an opposition, we are going to fight to get projects built and we are going to fight for every single Canadian to live an affordable life in this country.

Mike Kelloway (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Madam Speaker, Bill C-39, the building Canada strong act, is a crosscutting piece of legislation that would unlock Canada's maritime potential, reduce supply chain restraints at our major international trade gateways and position the Canadian maritime sector to enable our ambitious trade diversification agenda to double Canada's non-U.S. exports within a decade. Our government's trade diversification strategy is working. In 2025 alone, Canada's exports to non-U.S. markets increased by 11.1%, reaching 32.8% of total Canadian exports, the highest share in over four decades.

Canada's ports are the gateways that make things happen, bringing Canadian products to markets around the world and building Canada's economic sovereignty. In order to meet our objectives and double our non-U.S. trade, it is essential that we have reliable, efficient and secure marine transportation systems to connect Canada to the foreign markets that want Canadian grain, Canadian energy or the thousands of other products that we proudly produce in this country.

Let me start by discussing Canada's port authorities. Canada's port authorities are at the heart of global trade for Canada and transport networks serving as critical nodes that connect Canadian businesses, Canadian farmers and Canadian producers to key international markets. Collectively, the 17 Canada port authorities facilitate the movement of containerized bulk and energy products that underpin our economic growth. To ensure that Canada port authorities are positioned to enable trade diversification and have the flexibility to react to changing international trade patterns, the building Canada strong act would give port authorities the tools and financial flexibility to operate within an increasingly complex marine environment, while ensuring greater transparency and accountability for marine terminals, shippers and other port users.

The proposed amendments in this bill would enable Canada port authorities to become commercially oriented and empower them to attract the investment capital necessary to build the next generation of Canadian marine terminals such as Roberts Bank Terminal 2 at the port of Vancouver and Contrecoeur at the port of Montreal. To support these types of generational infrastructure projects, the proposed bill would facilitate corridor-level planning to better situate commodities and ensure that Canada port authorities are working together rather than competing with each other for similar business lines.

The proposed legislation would also enhance the ability of Canada port authorities to act on commercial opportunities and generate revenue by allowing joint ventures with private and public entities as well as enabling increased collaboration between port authorities. Other amendments would support improvements to the borrowing processes for Canada port authorities and reduce regulatory burden to allow for one project, one review, while others would close data and information gaps.

With these proposed tools and financial opportunities, it is more important now than ever to ensure that those in leadership positions at Canada port authorities have the right technical and business-oriented skill sets to set strategic direction and strengthen existing operations. This is why the bill would modernize the governance of our ports through new skill matrices for appointments. Taken together, these proposals would enhance the fiscal and governance tools available to Canada port authorities while ensuring that port authority boards are properly equipped to invest in critical port infrastructure to meet and exceed Canada's export trade goals.

Ensuring that Canada port authorities have the right governance and operational tools is only part of the equation. To remain competitive and meet the growing trade demands, ports must also be able to attract and leverage investments to modernize infrastructure, expand capacity and strengthen supply chain resilience. Given the critical nature of our port facilities, these investments need to bring tangible benefits to the country and serve the best interests of Canada and Canadians.

Currently, under the Canada Transportation Act, the Minister of Transport can review investments, acquisitions and mergers involving transportation undertakings that are at or above \$93 million. Although the threshold captures major investment, it would not capture situations such as when a series of smaller investments cumulatively results in a large foreign investment in specific terminals or marine assets. As such, the government is proposing to broaden the scope of transactions eligible for review by reducing the notification threshold to \$10 million to ensure these investments involve transportation undertakings and are in the interest and at the heart of Canadians.

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• (1620)

We must also ensure that the government is well positioned to respond to emerging threats and risk to marine transportation systems. This is very important. Security events can have a significant impact on port and marine operations, which impact the efficiency and reliability of Canada's supply chains. Concerns over security issues, including a dated regime, can lead to the perception that Canada is a weak link. Such perception could adversely affect Canada's relations with other trading partners and have a significant impact on future opportunities for economic growth and development.

Canada's marine system needs a modern security framework to adapt and respond to increasingly complex challenges. The proposals in this bill would provide the government with a modern suite of authorities and tools to effectively administer Canada's marine security framework and respond to emergency security threats. Information sharing would be enhanced across marine security partners and allow the Minister of Transport to enter into agreements with third parties and other departments to increase enforcement capacity and ensure critical provisions, such as cybersecurity protections, are being effectively met by the operators. Together, this would promote a more effective response to marine security threats and risks.

Through this bill, we would also be seeking to equip the Government of Canada with new tools to support stable and continued operations at the St. Lawrence Seaway. These new tools would give the government needed authorities to safeguard seaway operations in exceptional circumstances to protect operational continuity for this important sector. This includes authorities aimed at reducing disruptions to navigation, such as the authority to appoint an administrator in place of the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation board in certain circumstances, and requirements to terminate the operator agreements, supported by the structure and dispute resolution when needed.

As we modernize and backstop the St. Lawrence Seaway, it is equally important that the Government of Canada have the tools necessary to respond quickly and effectively to emerging challenges across the marine transportation system. The building Canada strong act, therefore, complements the measures for the seaway and Canada port authorities by giving the Minister of Transport the power to respond to situations where there is an immediate, imminent and serious threat to ports, the seaway or supply chains. The ministerial order power would allow the minister to safeguard supply chains during a crisis. This could include, for example, pandemics, trade disputes, global conflicts or natural disasters. An order made under these provisions might require a port or the seaway operator to take any measure, including corrective measures, that the minister considers necessary to prevent or mitigate a threat, but would not be used in the event of a labour action or strike.

These measures directly respond to the needs of Canada port authorities. Ports across the country support this plan. The Association of Canadian Port Authorities has applauded the government for focusing on the transportation system and creating the conditions for investment in the infrastructure Canada needs.

This bill is a practical and forward-looking piece of legislation that recognizes the critical role Canada's marine transportation system plays in supporting economic growth, trade diversification and national supply chain resilience. By modernizing the governance and financial frameworks of Canada port authorities, strengthening oversight of transportation investments and equipping the Minister of Transport with targeted tools to respond to emerging threats, this legislation would help ensure Canada's marine gateway to remain competent, competitive, secure and efficient.

• (1625)

[Translation]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Regina—Lewvan, The Economy; the hon. member for Riding Mountain, Health; the hon. member for St. Albert—Sturgeon River, Public Services and Procurement.

[English]

Dan Albas (Okanagan Lake West—South Kelowna, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is certainly a pleasure to hear the parliamentary secretary speak on Bill C-39 today. Specifically in part 3, there is a provision in regard to geographic certification.

As I know the parliamentary is well briefed and well versed on all the things that are in this bill, could he please explain to the Canadian public exactly what the significant changes are to geographic certification and whether or not the Minister of Justice will be tabling a charter statement on Bill C-39, particularly section 3, on behalf of the government?

Mike Kelloway: Madam Speaker, it is great to see the member, whom we spend a lot of time with in committee, here today to ask that question.

I will leave it to the justice minister to talk about that, but when it comes to this particular piece of legislation, the very fact that we are looking at regional trade corridors is really important for developing growth and a systemic and integrated plan for supply chains with Canadian jobs and workers for Canadian businesses and all Canadians.

[Translation]

Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech, but despite what my colleagues have been saying for a while, they are trying to downplay the impact on labour rights. We are being told that environmental rights are not being rolled back.

Government Orders

I think that environmental and labour groups will do their job and that, when we measure the scope of all this, we will truly realize that we have a government that is undermining democracy.

In addition to a crushing rollback of workers' democratic rights and environment laws, there is also an encroachment on Quebec's jurisdictions. What is more, the government is not respecting jurisdictions.

The Liberal government is creating a new and umpteenth transportation structure: the national trade corridors council. What does that mean? We in the Bloc Québécois refuse to allow the federal government to subject businesses to rules when, once again, they do not fall under its jurisdiction over transportation.

In the end, we are really going backwards. What does he have to say about this jurisdictional encroachment?

• (1630)

[*English*]

Mike Kelloway: Madam Speaker, one thing that seems to be missing over the last four days is the “why”. Why are we doing this? The Prime Minister spoke to it at Davos when he talked about a rupture in the economy and how the only thing we can control is what we can control as a country. That means working with the provinces, with Canadian businesses and indeed with Canadian workers to ensure that we are evolving our economy and putting the steps in place to make sure that happens. That does not happen without Canadian workers, unionized workers. I come from Cape Breton Island. Cape Breton Island was built on unionized workers; so was Canada and so will Canada.

Kristina Tesser Derksen (Milton East—Halton Hills South, Lib.): Madam Speaker, for me, the underlying sentiment of this bill is about unity. It is about Canadians coming together regardless of political affiliation or background and understanding that it is a pivotal time for our country to have national unity.

Just a few moments ago, the opposition member for Thornhill mentioned the lasting legacy of former prime minister Stephen Harper. Former prime minister Harper delivered closing remarks at the Canada investment summit recently. I would like to ask my colleague, the parliamentary secretary, what he thinks it means to Canadians and what it means to him and the people in his riding that a former Conservative prime minister delivered remarks with such an undercurrent of unity, of coming together for Canada and of support for the investment summit that was held by our Prime Minister?

Mike Kelloway: Madam Speaker, I will go back to Cape Breton for a second to tie this together. My father was in charge of mine rescue for about 35 years. He trained the individuals who went underground to save or recover folks, and he often talked about the idea that crisis reveals character. I see with leadership here in the House and leadership outside of the House, and I will give former prime minister Harper his due, that crisis reveals character.

We are at an inflection point in this country that requires all of us to come together and work together. That does not mean we cannot be questioned, but cynicism never created a business, cynicism never built a house, cynicism never fed a hungry child and cynicism is not what is going to build this country.

Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Madam Speaker, I feel like I have been here before, because we debated a bill that was supposed to get things built about 18 months ago, and not only get things built, but get things built at speeds we had never seen before. Unfortunately, what we saw were things getting built at the exact same speed they have been built for 11 years under the Liberal government. Not a single new project was approved by the so-called Major Projects Office and not a single new shovel was put in the ground.

Here we are again. We are back. We are looking at another Liberal piece of legislation that is supposed to accelerate building in this country, but if we go back to Bill C-5, let us also not forget that it was supposed to be the One Canadian Economy Act. It was supposed to remove interprovincial trade barriers, all of that by July 1, 2025. The last time I checked, we are in September 2026, and all of the interprovincial trade barriers are still there, which brings us to where we are today.

The Liberal government is all talk, no results. I will give the Liberals this. They are very good at the talk part. There are lots of photo ops, lots of announcements and lots of fancy backdrops making it look like they are building something that get taken down a few days later. They are very good at all of that, but when it comes to actually delivering for Canadians, this is where the rubber hits the road and they significantly fail.

What we have seen in this country is an inflationary and cost of living crisis that this country has never seen before. Every single day, Conservative members get up in the House of Commons to ask questions based on conversations they have had with real Canadians, people who are struggling every single day to put food on the table and struggling every single day to pay their rent or mortgage. That is the legacy of the government, not the fancy photo ops and not the fancy words that ministers get up to say in the House of Commons day after day.

What I want to talk about in particular today is part 3 of this gigantic omnibus piece of legislation. I want to start off by saying this. Canada has never seen more labour disruptions in 40 years than it has under the Liberal government. Do members want to know why? A huge part of it is the cost of living crisis created by the Liberal government, with the terrible management of the economy over the last 11 years that has led to workers all across this country, our friends and neighbours, fighting hard for better wages so they can put food on the table. What we saw were labour and unions fighting for better wages, better benefits and things for their members, and fighting hard.

Because of the ham-fisted approach of the Liberal government, labour relations in this country have never been worse. We saw record use of section 107 by the Liberals. I lost count of that. They used it 13 times in 18 months or something like that. They often used it pre-emptively. In fact, they used it pre-emptively on flight attendants who were fighting to get rid of unpaid work. Think about that for a second.

Government Orders

An hon. member: Untrue.

Kyle Seeback: Madam Speaker, the member is saying that is untrue. Let me take a moment to educate the member.

I have met with flight attendants. I have met with flight attendant unions. They have unpaid work, unlike what the minister said in this House and at committee about looking into whether or not flight attendants provide unpaid work. Do members know what the head of the airline union said to that? He asked if they will look into whether water is wet next. This is legitimately where we are on that subject.

The Liberals used section 107 to order flight attendants back to work, using the Canada Industrial Relations Board and their section 107 order before the strike had even happened, therefore effectively sending them back to work unpaid. That is their record. Now they are going to make more changes to section 107. Do members know what I and just about every single union in this country have to say about that? We do not trust them. We do not trust their changes. They are making changes to section 107 at a time when the use of section 107, the constitutionality of it, is being challenged in court. They know this, and they decided to go ahead and make changes anyway.

● (1635)

The changes to the legislation are embedded in a giant omnibus piece of legislation in which one section has nothing to do with the other sections. There are significant changes to the Canada Labour Code. For example, my colleague asked about the changes to geographic certification. The Liberal parliamentary secretary had no idea what geographic certification was and could not comment on the changes to geographic certification.

I can say this. The changes to geographic certification are significant. There used to be a process through the Canada Industrial Relations Board. It was a complicated change. It took time. Two businesses could now petition the Canada Industrial Relations Board to create a geographic certification. What will be the effect of that? We have no idea. Will it cause, in fact, more labour strife as some union locals are combined? Could a union local represented by one union be combined with a union local from another union? I do not know. Perhaps it could. Do the Liberals know? Have they looked into this?

When we look at the omnibus nature of this piece of legislation, we have to ask ourselves why. Why have they decided to put these significant changes to the Canada Labour Code in a gigantic omnibus piece of legislation? I hope it is not because they plan to ram this piece of legislation through committee with their majority, as they have done with other pieces of legislation, so there is no proper study of the changes they are making to the Canada Labour Code. I do not know, but I will go back to what I said when I first started talking about the changes they are making to the Canada Labour Code. I do not trust them.

I forget the number of pages in this piece of legislation, 425 pages or 285 pages, but I suspect that all of that is going to go to one committee. How long will it look at the changes that are being made? Is it one day, two days, maybe a week? Give me a break.

The Liberals are doing this so there can be very little scrutiny of what they are doing. They are doing this so that union members will not have the opportunity to come to committee and make their case for why the changes being made are a problem. They are doing this to make it difficult for opposition parties, and members of the Canadian public when they get in touch with their members of Parliament, to put forward amendments to this piece of legislation.

I do not play the lottery and do not bet on sports, but I will tell members this. I am going to bet on the idea that this piece of legislation will not get the proper study at committee. The Liberals will rush this through committee. They will use their majority in the chamber to make sure that the bill gets out of committee as quickly as possible and that it is not studied in detail.

They think they can pull one over on Canadians. Well, we on the Conservative side are going to fight. We are going to fight to make sure that this legislation gets studied. We are going to fight to make sure that the people who are going to be affected by this legislation get to come to committee and that the Liberals hear what these changes are going to do to them. We will be with those people every step of the way.

● (1640)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):

Madam Speaker, there is no doubt that the bill will ultimately get to committee. We look forward to what the different stakeholders might have to say on the legislation. We look forward to what degree the Conservatives will position themselves on the legislation. I would like to think they would be inclined to support the legislation, or at the very least the principle of the legislation. We will see that at second reading.

At the end of the day, it is all about building a stronger and healthier Canada. What we need to do is take advantage of a lot of the work that the Prime Minister and cabinet have been doing over the last 18 months. Whether it is on trade or investments, we are talking about a significant amount of positive change that is coming to Canada. I wonder if the member could provide his thoughts on that.

Kyle Seeback: Madam Speaker, I know this segment is called questions and comments, and that was mostly a comment. I am not sure what the question is, because as I said, we want to study the legislation. I will turn it into a question for the member: Will the Liberals allow the legislation to be studied? At the member's next opportunity, will he get up today and tell the House that the Liberals are going to allow as much study on the legislation as necessary to make sure it is fully studied and fully understood? Will the Liberals commit to that?

[Translation]

Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my Conservative colleague for his remarks, his comments and his speech.

Since he was elected in 2025, we have seen this Prime Minister acting as if he could not care less about parliamentary procedure. He has his objective, so he is going ahead and trampling on just about every established procedure and tradition, and that is very worrisome.

This bill raises some serious concerns about democracy. My colleagues talked about this earlier. Yes, this bill will end up in committee. Yes, the Conservatives and the Bloc Québécois will make suggestions to improve this bill as much as possible, since it goes much too far in many areas. We have been pointing that out from the beginning. However, this government, with its arrogant attitude and its manufactured majority, will probably adopt the same attitude in committee.

I would like to know whether my colleague agrees with me and whether he shares my concern that the work we will have to do on this very serious bill, with its far-reaching consequences, will ultimately amount to very little progress in committee because of this arrogant government.

• (1645)

[English]

Kyle Seeback: Madam Speaker, I would agree with the member. The Prime Minister has shown remarkable contempt for Parliament. He shows up to answer barely any questions in the chamber. The Liberals ram pieces of legislation through. They use programmatic motions to make sure there is very little debate on them.

We have received no commitment from the Liberals that there will be ample days to study the bill at committee. I would love to get a commitment that says that if we want 25 or 30 witnesses from the union movement to come talk about this piece of legislation, the Liberals will agree that they would all get to give their comments before they rush it through committee. We have heard none of these things, and the silence on that is deafening. I suspect we will once again see that they do not have respect for the parliamentary process. They will rush the bill through to committee and leave it the way it is without amendments.

Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Madam Speaker, Conservatives are winning the argument. When Stephen Harper took office as prime minister of this country, he argued that we needed to diversify our market away from the United States, so he went on a tear to sign 43 free trade agreements around the world. Now we see that the Liberal government has finally come to its senses and has started to adopt the Conservative narrative, at least, on these things. What would the member like to see done?

Kyle Seeback: Madam Speaker, there is no doubt that this is not the same Liberal Party it was a few years ago, which was constantly trying to beat down resource projects. Imagine, if it had actually approved things like energy east, what position we would be in. Imagine if it had built LNG liquefaction facilities across the country. Europe is begging for that. It took it 10 years, but I guess, as we say, a broken clock is right twice a day. We are happy that the government has seen the light on some of these things, and hopefully we will build a better, stronger and more resilient Canada that exports our resources around the world.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):

Government Orders

Madam Speaker, the Conservatives consistently want to go back to the Trudeau era. If they want to go back and do a comparison, they should do a nine-year comparison to Stephen Harper when he was prime minister and the manufacturing sector that lost a quarter of a million jobs in that sector. They can contrast that even to the years that the Conservatives dream of all the time: the Justin Trudeau years. At least there was growth in the manufacturing industry.

If we get over the facts of the past and start focusing on where we are today and what we have been able to accomplish since the last federal election, members opposite will get a better understanding of why this legislation is so critically important to pass. It is because all Canadians in all regions of the country would benefit through the legislation. It is all about the theme going right from the election through to post-election and to this very day, which is to build a stronger, healthier Canada and an economy that works for all Canadians, and to protect our social programs, as the Prime Minister has done with several programs.

The Prime Minister and the cabinet have been aggressively pursuing the issue of expanding Canada's economy beyond the Canada-U.S.A. border. Unlike the Conservatives, we do take the issue very seriously, to the degree that we have a Prime Minister who is committed to appealing to the world. The Minister of International Trade and others, such as the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Industry, continuously are in different countries, and are working within Canada, to attract opportunities for small businesses, and it is paying off in a very significant way.

More than 20 trade and security agreements have been signed in the last 18 months. We have other trading opportunities. The Minister of International Trade is someone for whom I have an immense amount of respect and for whom I have done a lot of lobbying in regard to the Canada-Philippine trade agreement. I want a Canada-Philippine trade agreement. I was glad when we had the opportunity to meet with President Marcos over a lunch with the Prime Minister and those two leaders recognized that maybe 2026 can be the year for trade. The Prime Minister was also having discussions with the leadership in India, saying that we want to achieve that trade agreement, ideally even in the year 2026.

Expanding those trade opportunities beyond the Canada-U.S. border is good for all of Canada. At the end of the day, that is how we are going to be able to protect our sovereignty. That is the way we are going to be able to ensure continual growth, protect important jobs that Canadians have and build upon this.

Government Orders

These are difficult times with the relationship between Canada and the United States. The issue of Trump, tariffs and trade should be on our minds, because it is on the minds of constituents and on the minds of all Canadians, because it does have a real, tangible economic impact. We do not deny that. We recognize that, but we are not going to capitulate. We are still going to fight for the best deal we can with the United States, but we are not going to surrender sovereignty in any way in dealing with a final agreement, and we are going to continue to look at ways that we can not only enhance trade opportunities but also attract investment to Canada.

• (1650)

There has not been a prime minister, I would argue, in the history of this country who has generated as much potential commitment to investment in Canada from outside Canada and has even retained some of the pension funds that have been flowing outside Canada. We are talking about billions of dollars, maybe half a trillion dollars, of investments, all within 18 months. It is more than just the government. I will concede that it has a lot to do with relationships. We have a Prime Minister who has an A++ relationship and background to be able to protect the interests of Canadians and to talk to other world leaders, whether in the political or financial investment areas.

We had a good sense of that just a couple of weeks ago in downtown Toronto. Toronto was open to the world on behalf of Canada, and individuals, investors, premiers and indigenous leaders attended. There was a great deal of input involved in making sure our very first investment summit, which was an invitation to the world, was a success, and it was. We can think of it in terms of half a trillion dollars. Can any member of the House stand up to indicate whether, over an 18-month period of time, any prime minister in Canadian history has attracted that kind of investment commitments?

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, it is commitments to invest. That is an important point; I recognize that.

If we travel outside Canada, as I know many members do, Canada is looked at in a very positive way. People are looking to Canada, in a way they have not in many generations, as a place to invest in, and hopefully we will see that all materialize. That is what I want, that is what this government wants and that is what many of the stakeholders want.

We have seen people take off their partisan hats in order to make sure that this team Canada is going to work. Stephen Harper was a guest speaker at the summit and gave closing remarks. Premiers from different political parties participated. From my home province of Manitoba, Premier Wab Kinew not only participated by trying to get people to invest in the port of Churchill but also provided a tax incentive so investors prepared to invest in the port of Churchill would not have to pay sales tax.

In terms of the port of Churchill, the Arctic Gateway Group is actually leading the charge. It actually comes from OneNorth, the owners. OneNorth is made up of 41 indigenous and northern communities from Manitoba and, I think, maybe one of the territories.

This is something that has brought people together, recognizing that it is going to take a team Canada approach to build Canada strong.

We can think in terms of the Major Projects Office. There are over two dozen major projects. The Major Projects Office opened just last year. I think it was in September 2025. It is already talking about billions of dollars in tangible investments. There are projects that deal with everything from mining to the port of Montreal, which I know, Madam Speaker, you would be happy to hear about, and to nuclear energy.

• (1655)

There are all forms of projects out there. We have all come together and listed them off, and we are going to continue to push for them. We hope to see the Conservative Party onside.

[Translation]

Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Madam Speaker, the government keeps trying to reassure workers, particularly on the issue of labour rights, which, quite frankly, are literally being trampled by Bill C-39. Despite the government's attempts to sugar-coat it, Bill C-39 actually weakens protections for workers' rights, which is a real cause for concern for trade unions across Quebec and Canada.

They are trying to sugar-coat all this by saying there will be a mediator to advise the minister, but the minister will still have the right, under the bill, to disregard the mediator's recommendations. The minister will have the right to stop a strike if he believes it is going too far and is in some way detrimental to the project at hand. Workers who hear this feel that they are losing their bargaining power and their dignity, in a sense. Their rights are truly being trampled by this bill.

Despite the government's attempts to sugar-coat things and its claims that it is putting all kinds of protections in place, at the end of the day, the minister is the one who will have the final say on matters affecting workers during bargaining and strikes.

I would really like to hear my colleague from Winnipeg North do his level best to reassure me about that, but I am not sure he will be able to.

I would also like him to tell the workers, unions and labour representatives watching us that he is truly committed to ensuring that, when the committee studies Bill C-39, solid protections for workers' rights will be added.

As things stand, the bill offers no reassurance at all.

[English]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I think it is important. When we think of union workers, they have a constitutional right to strike. I have always advocated that the best deal is a negotiated deal, and there is no doubt in my mind in regard to that.

I have served in the Manitoba legislature. I can tell the member opposite that all sorts of political entities, whether New Democrats, Conservatives, Progressive Conservatives or Liberals, in provincial and federal governments have at times had a need to legislate workers back to work. Just recently, in the province of Manitoba, health care workers were told to go back to work by the provincial government.

Unfortunately, in certain situations, the government is put in a very difficult position, but we believe that individuals have a right to strike, and the best agreement is a negotiated agreement. I hope that members will be open-minded about what is actually being proposed in this legislation.

• (1700)

Kelly DeRidder (Kitchener Centre, CPC): Madam Speaker, 11 years ago, we had the richest middle class in all of the G7 under the Harper government. After 11 years of failed policy and blocking our economy, we now seem to be turning course.

After many announcements and billions of dollars spent, why does nothing seem to get approved so that we can get back to the amazing Canada we had before the Liberal government took office?

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, that is unfortunate, and a good example would be the Canada Infrastructure Bank. The Canada Infrastructure Bank is constantly criticized by the Conservative Party of Canada. Conservatives have always said that it has done nothing and that we should get rid of it, but anyone can look into that. They should not believe the briefings from the Conservative backroom, because the reality is that the Canada Infrastructure Bank has had over 100 projects. We are talking about over \$40 billion. That is real jobs. That is real investment. It is not all government money. However, the Conservatives will try to give the impression that the bank has not done anything and we should get rid of it.

At the end of the day, we cannot trust the Conservatives to have credible information often.

Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Madam Speaker, the Liberals keep talking about their mandate, but nowhere in their election platform did they talk about privatizing Canada's airports, selling off Canada's ports, building a publicly funded pipeline, outsourcing the Commissionaires' contract that supports veterans or turning a blind eye when the public health care system is being attacked by Alberta and being privatized.

Where in their election platform is any of this? They are outsourcing the—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): The hon. parliamentary secretary has time for a brief answer.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, the member is wrong. At the end of the day, we had a very solid commitment to look at ways in which we can build a stronger and healthier Canada. That has been the objective of this government. We have made many steps toward it, and we will continue to do that. That includes financial and health programs.

[Translation]

Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Madam Speaker, I will start with one of the parliamentary secretary's favourite lines.

Government Orders

At the end of the day, it boggles the mind to hear him tell us that his government believes in the right to strike, but that sometimes decisions have to be made and the right to strike will therefore be taken away. That is what he is saying.

Worse than that, with Bill C-39, the Liberals not only want to undermine the right to strike, but they do not even want to take responsibility for it. The infamous provision that we have denounced repeatedly over the past few months will now be used by the Canada Industrial Relations Board. The next time we rise in the House to ask this government questions, the parliamentary secretary will tell us—since there is about a 98% chance he will be the one who answers us because he is always here—that the Canada Industrial Relations Board is independent and that it is not the government.

That is what the Liberals are doing with Bill C-39. It is not off to a good start. That said, I still think the parliamentary secretary is a nice guy. I even briefly thought I was glad to see him when we shook hands this week. However, what he is telling me brings me back to the harsh reality that we do not often see eye to eye. It is appalling. They claim that Bill C-39 is intended to strengthen the economy, but the measures included in Bill C-39 are not designed to strengthen the economy. They are designed to destroy, weaken or circumvent the laws that protect the public, workers and the environment.

The reason that environmental assessment standards were established over the decades and that laws were implemented to create a framework for labour negotiations is because they were necessary. The government cannot sweep that away in five minutes. However, that is what Bill C-39 does, on the grounds that we are in a crisis, that we need to stand up to President Trump, that we need to be strong and get busy building. The government wants to get things done at lightning speed and flout every law.

Since we returned to the House in 2025, the same things have been said about every bill. With every bill, some minister wins the lottery and gets the right to suspend a bunch of laws. We should come up with some kind of tally system to figure out which minister won the right to get rid of the most laws this Parliament. It is pretty mind-boggling, and “mind-boggling” is an extremely polite word choice in the circumstances, because I could come up with few others.

This bill is not about the national interest. It is about the personal preferences of the Prime Minister and his friends. That is what it is about. The government is going to pick out projects that were included in Bill C-5, so-called projects of national interest, and it is going to say that those projects do not need laws. The government is claiming to have a monopoly on the truth and deciding that such and such a project is essential and important. Too bad for workers, too bad for the environment and too bad for everything else. Worse yet, the government is even going to create energy corridors. That is completely ridiculous. The federal government will decide that it can do whatever it wants on certain land.

Government Orders

When the Liberals rise to ask us questions later, they will say that we separatists are always looking for trouble. Why do they think we are here? We are here to defend Quebecers and fight back against terrible bills like these. Laws are not made to be suspended, abolished or circumvented. They are made to regulate community life and protect the common good.

The purpose of an environmental assessment is to determine whether a project is safe and whether the resulting drawbacks will be offset by the benefits it brings. Are the drawbacks too significant? Sometimes, of course, when the analysis is conducted by independent scientists, we may not like the answer. That is for sure. However, that is what they are there for. We are not all scientists here. We cannot make decisions like these lightly.

• (1705)

This reminds me of how, just before the summer break, the government gave the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food the power to authorize the use of pesticides and herbicides that the agencies responsible had previously declined to approve. What did the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food study in school? How do I find out? Is he qualified to make these decisions? I hope he gets some good advice, because that is extremely frightening. I do not want to be told 10 years, eight years, five years or even six months down the road that this product really should not have been used, that scientists warned against its use but that the minister decided that it was no big deal and said that it could be used anyway.

That is the Canada we are living in. It does not make any sense. That is just one of the many reasons why Quebecers need to leave Canada. It is because of things like this.

I am really looking forward to his response. I hope he will ask me questions because this is not a matter of national interest. What is more, these projects will be exempt from the laws because they are oil and gas projects, energy projects. The next pipeline will sail through the approval process. It will be done within a year at most. We know how these bills work. The government throws hundreds of pages at us and we have just a few hours to analyze them before speaking to them. My understanding of this bill—and this is the icing on the cake—is that the minister even has the power to approve a project before it has been assessed. Not only do they want to fast-track impact assessments and complete them within a year, but they can also turn around and allow construction to begin in the meantime.

Imagine a scenario where a project is launched. It is really exciting. A brand-new pipeline is being built to transport oil. The environmental assessment begins while the project is performing well, but after six months, the conclusion is that there are simply too many impacts on this or that ecosystem and that the project either has to change tack or be redesigned. By then it will be too late. The trench will already be dug. This is backwards logic.

I might seem less calm than usual. I swear I am trying to stay calm, but when I read things like this, I cannot believe they are actually doing this. Is this really flying under the radar?

As for Mr. Trump, everyone says that the Prime Minister is going to save us. It is all well and good to use the tariff crisis as an excuse, but we know what is going on.

I want to reassure all parliamentarians here today and everyone watching us at home that we are not against efficiency, effectiveness or economic development. We simply believe that precautions need to be taken. We think that the Prime Minister is currently giving himself powers that make no sense and granting powers to the executive branch that far exceed the mandates given by the people. This is especially true since, yes, the Liberals did win some by-elections this summer, but their majority was essentially created by floor crossers and backroom deals. I feel a need to remind my colleagues of that from time to time. Some folks will tell me to stop saying that, because everyone knows it. Yes, I will continue because that is more or less what real life is all about.

I heard the Prime Minister say this week that he has a mandate to do what he is doing. I disagree. My NDP colleague asked earlier where it was written in the Liberal platform. He was right to ask. I would like the parliamentary secretary to respond to that, if he would like to chat with me. Where in their platform did it say that they were going to do this? We did not see that anywhere.

I briefly mentioned workers' rights at the start, but what this bill does is crazy. It basically says that workers have the right to strike, but that the strike must not last long or cause any disruptions, that they must not make too much noise—that is specified in the bill—and that the government has the right to decide when it gets to be too much. That means that workers have no rights. If workers go on strike, it is too bad, but that is what the reality of bargaining looks like. First of all, when a strike occurs, it is usually because the employer has acted in bad faith. In any case, typically, though I do not want to generalize, there is no agreement. The parties are at a standstill. Strikes are meant to hurt the employer a little. That is called bargaining power. If there is no power, there will be no gains.

The bill says that people have the right to strike, but that they no longer have any power and that they can be stopped at any time. Actually, it gets worse, because the members of the government will not even take the blame for stopping strikers; the Canada Industrial Relations Board will do it for them while they sit with their feet up by the fire and tell themselves that it is not their fault. That is the kind of government we are dealing with.

• (1710)

Obviously, members will have guessed that the Bloc Québécois will vote against Bill C-39.

Hon. Greg Fergus (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.): Madam Speaker, first of all, I want to commend my esteemed colleague from Berthier—Maskinongé. He is a person I respect so much. Before he became a politician, he was a member of a very noble profession. He taught history, if I recall our conversations correctly.

I have a question for him as a man who is very familiar with history. Would it be possible, in this day and age, to build something like the national railroad in a short period of time, in this country, with all the regulations and timelines we have today? Are we not capable of taking action to do things that are really important for Quebec and for Canada?

• (1715)

Yves Perron: Madam Speaker, I respect my MP too. Whenever I am here for work, I stay in an apartment located in his riding. That makes him my MP. I receive his householders too. They have far too much writing for my taste, since they are in both languages, but that is his choice. I digress.

He brought up the topic of railroads. No one wants to revert to using the labour involved in building that railroad or the conditions of the time. That is what we are discussing today. I was saying that we are not against progress or construction but, over the years, we have adopted standards. We have adopted social standards that must be respected. That is important.

Personally, I think that the Liberal government is triggering a major rollback, but I am counting on the member who represents me when I am on the Hill to protect my interests and make my voice heard in this caucus.

I know that he cannot do that here, but I ask him to do that in his caucus.

Dan Albas (Okanagan Lake West—South Kelowna, CPC): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Bloc member.

Instead of cutting red tape, the first part adds regions of national interest and additional layers of administration.

Why does every Liberal solution involve expanding Ottawa's bureaucracy rather than getting out of the way?

Yves Perron: Madam Speaker, I would like to start by thanking my colleague and congratulating him on his remarkable efforts in French. It is heartwarming. I would really like to see more people doing that. It works both ways.

He mentioned red tape. There is, however, a subtle difference between cutting red tape and scrapping laws and social protections. What the government is doing is scrapping laws and social protections.

We generally agree that red tape is an issue when regulations overlap with other regulations again and again.

I do not understand why the Conservatives are unhappy with what the Liberals are doing. I thought they would be happy: The Liberals are scrapping all the laws to allow for oil infrastructure projects. I thought they would be happy.

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I listen to the debates in the House, and I know that the Bloc Québécois likes to say that there is always one Liberal member who asks questions. There will be several of us today, because I really appreciated that speech.

I think that here in the House, we have the opportunity to work together. It is easy to say that we have support or that we do not,

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but I think that what makes a difference is providing constructive feedback.

I would like the member to tell me how we can work better together and how we can ensure that we represent our constituents better in the House, because that is what my constituents in Waterloo want. I want to find ways to work together, and I think that is also the Prime Minister's approach.

Yves Perron: Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Waterloo. Several members in a row have been practising their French. I am delighted. We can work together.

I was saying to the previous speaker that I know that the Liberals are constrained in what they can say in Parliament. However, I hope that these people, who are smart, who are listening and who seem to understand the arguments we are putting forward, will convey to their caucus that we believe the bill should be amended. I hope that the committee study will give us sufficient latitude to amend certain provisions.

The bill is so significant and harmful that I struggle to envision us supporting it. I am normally very accommodating, but this bill goes pretty far.

• (1720)

Hon. Greg Fergus (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.): Madam Speaker, this is the first time I have risen in the House to give a speech since returning from the summer break. I have put questions to several of my colleagues, but this is the first time I have had the opportunity to rise in the House to present a speech.

I am very pleased to rise during this debate on Bill C-39, an act respecting certain measures to strengthen the economy.

Admittedly, the bill is rather long. I managed to read it last night and this morning. I have to keep referring back to other existing laws to understand the situation better. However, as I was reading the bill, an image came to mind. It was a train. I love trains. If I have to choose between flying or taking a train, I always take the train, to go to Montreal, Toronto, Windsor or Quebec City, for example. That has been my preference since I was a young child. It is the best way to travel and get around our great country.

However, there is something that I never did as a child or a young adult. I never travelled across the country by train. I had the opportunity to do so when I was 49 years old. It was very exciting. My adult children and I took the train from Toronto to Vancouver. It took four days and it was extraordinary. I recommend that all my colleagues take advantage of the opportunity to see the country by train. There is the Canadian train that goes from Toronto to Vancouver, the Ocean train from Halifax to Montreal and between the two, there is the Via Rail fleet that serves the Quebec City-Windsor corridor.

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Throughout my journey across the country, I thought about one thing. Could we build this railroad today? Historians and history teachers know that the Canadian Pacific Railway was basically built in four years, from 1881 to 1885. Yes, construction started a little earlier, but there were issues. The bulk of the construction was done during those four years. Could we do that today?

I readily agree with the member for Berthier—Maskinongé that it is important to have modern standards. We are not about to use slaves or workers who are treated like slaves to build the train, as we did with the Chinese-Canadian population at the time. We have labour standards, thank goodness. In a modern country, we can build in a responsible manner and in a way that ensures worker safety as much as possible. That is very important. However, given these factors, would we be able to do that today? I am not so sure. That is one of the reasons I like the specific provisions in this bill. When a project is proposed and all the information is available, we promise that there will be an assessment and that it will be completed within a year.

● (1725)

To me, that is key. Things need to change. Everything has become too complex. We are complicating things. Is that really necessary?

We do not want to get rid of the standards we have established, including environmental standards or standards related to working conditions. We need to keep those.

That being said, can we get organized and accomplish great things together, within a reasonable time frame? I hope that, through this bill, we are saying that we can.

[English]

I am hoping that with the building Canada strong act, we are able to organize ourselves in a way that allows us to respect all the different elements that we have thought are important as a country, that we have put in our laws, but that we can do so in a reasonable time frame because, and I have to say it and I know we have heard it, we really are living in exceptional times. Never before have I felt that this country has been threatened in the way that we have been. Now it is time for us to put all the elements on our side, to take advantage of all the wealth in people and in natural resources and in our industrial capacity, to build big things.

When I say “to build big things”, I want to make it very clear that I do not expect us to derogate from a lot of the important standards we have put in place. Still, can we do that evaluation quickly? Can we do so in respect of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which we have an obligation and a duty to consult and to work with? I think we can. I think we can get ourselves to that place because, again, from another example in history, another time when Canada felt as serious a challenge was during the Second World War. When we got into the war in 1939, Canada was far from being an industrial powerhouse as a country, but in a very short period of time, Canadians, recognizing the challenges that we had, came together and organized ourselves properly so that we transformed our entire economy to become a wartime economy. We did so quickly, without taking shortcuts or compromising on quality, but just saying to ourselves, “The challenge is great.”

[Translation]

We have to meet this challenge, and we have planned accordingly to be able to do so. This is something I expect from Canada and from all members of the House. I know we will not agree on everything, but I can only control what I can control.

I want to tell all my colleagues that I will listen to their concerns and support suggestions to improve the bill as much as possible. However, I do not want that to be used as an excuse to paralyze everything and not do the work. Personally, I think we are all up to the challenge before us.

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● (1730)

[English]

PROTECTING YOUNG PERSONS FROM EXPOSURE TO PORNOGRAPHY ACT

Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster—Meadow Lake, CPC) moved that Bill S-209, An Act to restrict young persons' online access to pornographic material, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

She said: Madam Speaker, we know that the Internet gives us access to almost anything. With just a few clicks, we can watch a movie, learn a new skill on YouTube, find a new recipe, research any topic or talk to a friend down the street or even on the other side of the world. Within my own lifetime, the Internet has gone from something new to something that is fully integrated into our everyday lives.

The Internet is without a doubt a big part of everyday life for every generation, including our children. They use it to do their homework. They play games. They watch videos. They connect with their friends. However, the Internet also gives children access to things that they are not ready to see, understand or even process.

One thing that is readily available to kids is pornography. Research shows that children can be exposed to pornography online without ever even intending to look for it. They can come across it in an unintended search result. They can click on the wrong link. It can be shared by another child, or it can appear through an advertisement. Once a child sees it, we cannot assume they understand what they are seeing. They do not have the experience or maturity to understand what they are looking at, or what it means for a healthy relationship. Parents may not even know that this has happened.

The Canadian Centre for Child Protection says children as young as eight and nine can easily come across sexually graphic material online. An Alberta study found that one-third of adolescents in this study had first been exposed to pornography by the age of 10. Other research has reported exposure at even younger ages, including children as young as five.

Let us just sit with that for a moment and think about that. At five years old, a child is just beginning school. They are learning to read. They are learning how to make friends. They are learning about the world around them. They should not be exposed to pornography, and they certainly do not have the capacity to understand it.

Children are being exposed to pornography online, sometimes at a very young age. The graphic and often violent content is not appropriate for a child. Their brains are still developing, and they are learning how to understand relationships, emotions, boundaries and the world around them. When a child is exposed to pornography, they do not have the maturity to understand what they are seeing. They may start to believe that what they are watching is healthy, and it can shape their ideas about sex, relationships and how people should treat one another.

There is another concern. What might start as accidental exposure or curiosity can become a habit. A child may return to that content again and again. Over time, repeated use can become compulsive, and for some young people it can develop into an addiction. There is certainly evidence that compulsive consumption is a widespread and growing public health issue. One Canadian survey examined students from grade 7 to 11. Among the grade 8 students surveyed, 88% of boys and 72% of girls reported seeing sexually explicit content, and 35% of boys said they had seen pornography too many times to count.

To be clear, these are children. They are still developing their understanding of sex, relationships and what is healthy, yet some are already being exposed to pornography on a regular basis. This is not something we should ignore, because that repeated exposure is rewiring the brains of the kids who are consuming it. Over time, repeated exposure can shape what a young person comes to see as healthy. It can shape their expectations about sex and relationships, and those ideas do not simply disappear once a child turns 18.

● (1735)

What a young person sees while they are still developing can influence how they understand relationships later in life. We can see examples of this in the way that some harmful sexual behaviours have become normalized among young people. A recent article by sex neuroscientist Debra Soh examined the growing normalization of sexual choking among young people. She makes the case that pornography has played a role in making behaviour that was once clearly understood as dangerous seem normal or even expected in some relationships.

These harms can affect how young people understand sex, relationships and consent, and the consequences can extend beyond a child who is viewing the content. When harmful behaviours are normalized, there can be victims on the other side of those behaviours. Young women and girls can be affected by expectations placed on them by partners who have learned distorted ideas about

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sex and relationships. We need to think about the young people who may be pressured to accept behaviour because they have been told it is normal. We also need to think about those who may experience sexual violence or abuse as a result.

Protecting children from harmful content is not just about what they see on a screen. It is also about the kinds of relationships and expectations we want them to carry into adulthood, yet there are currently no safeguards in place to make sure children cannot easily access this content online. That is a disservice to our children.

Bill S-209 is a response to that lack of a safeguard. I am grateful to Senator Julie Miville-Dechéne for her persistence and dedication in addressing this issue and for her commitment to protecting children online. I share that commitment.

To be clear, the bill is very targeted. It would not ban pornography. What it would do is require commercial pornography websites to take responsible steps to make sure their content is not being viewed by children. If a website makes money by providing pornography, it should have a responsibility to help keep that content away from children. Bill S-209 would require these websites to use effective age verification or age estimation measures. In other words, if the content is intended for adults, there should be a reasonable way to make sure that the person accessing it is actually an adult.

This is about putting in age restrictions where ones should already exist. We have age restrictions for many things in the real world. One has to be a certain age to buy alcohol. One has to be a certain age to gamble. One has to be a certain age to purchase pornography. We expect businesses to follow these rules. Frankly, we should expect the same online. Children deserve that protection. That is what the bill would do, while also taking into account the privacy of Canadians. It is not a matter of protecting children or protecting privacy. We can and we should do both.

Bill S-209 includes safeguards to protect the personal information of Canadians while making sure that children cannot easily access pornography. The bill would put clear requirements in place for any age verification or age estimation method that is prescribed. The method must be highly effective. It must be operated by an independent third party. It must protect the privacy of users and their personal information. It can only collect and use information that is necessary to verify or estimate a person's age. Once the process is complete, that information must be destroyed.

● (1740)

The goal is to confirm that someone is old enough to access adult content. It is not to create a record of what Canadians are looking at online. It is certainly worth noting that Canada's Privacy Commissioner, Philippe Dufresne, has expressed support for Bill S-209 and welcomed the privacy protections included in the legislation.

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When we are talking about children, there is another important part of this conversation that we cannot overlook, and that is parents. Parents have the primary responsibility for raising their children. They teach their children right from wrong. They set boundaries. They talk to their children about what is appropriate and what is not appropriate. Parents do everything they can to keep their children safe.

This legislation in no way undermines the authority of parents. It does not replace the role of parents. It does not tell parents how to raise their children. Instead, it gives parents another tool to help protect their children online, because the reality is that no matter how hard parents try, they cannot monitor everything their children see online. They cannot be there for every search, every click, every message and every video. Parents can use parental controls and other safeguards on their children's devices, and those tools can certainly help, but they cannot protect every child from coming across inappropriate content.

That is where this legislation can help. It would add another layer of protection. It would put responsibility on the companies that profit from providing pornography to make sure that children cannot easily access it. Parents should not have to carry that responsibility alone. They are already doing everything they can. This bill would simply give them another tool to help keep their children safe online.

When I was home in my riding over the summer, I spoke with many parents about this issue. The message I heard was very clear: Parents want to protect their children. They know they cannot monitor everything their children do online, and they see this legislation as a reasonable step that can help them do that.

It is widely understood that early exposure to pornography is harmful to children. After decades of widespread access to online pornography, we have research showing the negative impact that early and repeated exposure can have on young people, and we as legislators have a responsibility to act on what we know. That means putting reasonable safeguards in place, supporting parents and making sure commercial pornography companies have effective age restrictions in place to keep their content away from children.

Bill S-209 would do exactly that. It would create a barrier between children and pornography that does not currently exist. It would help prevent unintended exposure and make it more difficult for children to access this content. It would give parents another tool while recognizing that parents cannot do this alone, and it would do so while respecting the privacy of Canadians. This bill would not ban pornography. It would not replace parents. It would simply recognize that protecting children online is a shared responsibility.

Children deserve reasonable safeguards and guardrails to protect them from online pornography. Parents deserve the tools to help protect them, and Canadians deserve privacy protections. Bill S-209 would bring these priorities together. I hope that all members of this House recognize the urgency of this issue and support the protections that our children deserve.

• (1745)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I hope to speak to the member's bill a little later this afternoon.

I want to ask the member a question regarding the social media component to this. We know, for example, that there is a significant movement to put a limitation on children under 16 such that they cannot have social media accounts. Does the member have an opinion on that particular issue? Obviously, social media accounts often lead to a lot of pornography. I am very curious what her position would be on that.

Rosemarie Falk: Mr. Speaker, we need to recognize what Bill C-34 is encapsulating. Bill C-34 specifically applies to regulated social media services and regulated chatbot services, so that is user-generated content. What Bill S-209 is targeting is pornographic content from online porn companies. They are two different things.

I believe there is a hole in Bill C-34 where this is not covered. Online porn companies are not covered in Bill C-34. Bill S-209 is a targeted piece of legislation that will close that hole.

[*Translation*]

Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague, who is the other vice-chair of the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities.

I have had conversations with the senator, and our understanding is that the Liberals rejected the previous version of this bill, citing privacy and freedom of expression in particular. These were the arguments that led them to vote against it during the previous parliamentary session. Now, she has raised an interesting point regarding the opinion of Mr. Dufresne, Canada's Privacy Commissioner. He confirms that there have been improvements in the bill in terms of privacy protection.

I would like my colleague to reassure us on this point and, above all, to reassure the Liberals opposite that there have indeed been improvements since the last bill, so studying it in committee would be worthwhile.

[*English*]

Rosemarie Falk: Mr. Speaker, we do sit together on HUMA, and I very much appreciate working with the member.

We know the Privacy Commissioner has endorsed this bill. There are specific provisions in section 12(2) that would ensure that whatever method is chosen needs to be highly effective, be operated by a third party organization, and maintain user privacy and protect personal information.

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The fact that the Privacy Commissioner has endorsed this bill says leaps and bounds, because his job is to ensure that the privacy of Canadians is respected. For sure, I think this would be great to go to committee, where we can have a deeper dive on those conversations regarding Bill S-209.

Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the journey of this bill started back in 2015 with Motion No. 47, which came before this Parliament and was unanimously passed. That caused a health committee report that recommended exactly what the bill before us would do. It has been over a decade since that report came out. Canada was kind of a first mover back then, but efforts have kind of stalled.

I wonder if the member could talk about what other countries have done in this regard.

Rosemarie Falk: Mr. Speaker, it has been a very long time. It has been over 10 years that we have known this is an issue.

Not long ago, there was an article in *The Globe and Mail*, which I referred to in my remarks, about sexual strangulation derailing a generation of girls. This is how pornography is affecting children, the next generation. It is a distorted version of what relationships and sex are.

It is time this legislation passes so that we are able to move forward and take it to committee.

• (1750)

Taleeb Noormohamed (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak to Bill S-209 and the government's work to protect young people from online harms as technology evolves in front of us.

I also want to begin by thanking and recognizing Senator Miville-Dechéne for bringing this initiative to Parliament and for her continued work to better protect children online. I remember the previous iteration of this bill in the last Parliament. I enjoyed very much trying to see how we could learn from what she was seeking to put forward in that bill and how that might inform the work that we were doing.

It is very clear that ensuring young people are safe online is a priority we all share in the House. It is an important thing for us to keep top of mind. As the father of two young boys, it is something I certainly think about every day.

Let me say first that the government supports the objectives of Bill S-209. Children should not be able to access content, including pornographic content, that is inappropriate for their age online. Period. At the same time, our government understands that protecting children from pornographic content is not just about separating it from the protection of their personal information. Bill C-34, the safe social media act, and Bill C-36, the protecting privacy and consumer data act, seek to address both of these critical concerns thoughtfully and place them in the hands of a regulator that would be empowered to protect Canadians online. Indeed, much of what was in Bill S-209 previously has inspired some of this work.

[Translation]

Digital platforms play an important role in the lives of many young Canadians, helping them stay connected to family and friends, access educational resources and discover new interests. At the same time, young people are sometimes exposed to online content that is inappropriate for their age. Recognizing both the benefits of digital technologies and the need to better protect children online, the government introduced Bill C-34, the safe social media act, and Bill C-36, an act to enact the protecting privacy and consumer data act, to amend the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act and to make amendments to other acts, in June 2026. Together, these initiatives establish clear rules that promote online safety, strengthen privacy protections and increase accountability and trust across the digital ecosystem.

[English]

Bill C-34 addresses directly the risks when children are exposed to pornographic content online. It would require operators of regulated services to implement age assurance measures to mitigate the risk that children would be exposed to adult content on their service.

Bill C-34 would also put strong protections in place to ensure that children's personal information is safeguarded, that it is destroyed once it is no longer needed and that any age verification or estimation measures do not unreasonably or disproportionately limit users' freedom of expression.

Young people can be harmed not only by the content they encounter online but also when their images are misused to create harmful deepfakes. We all know that generative AI has made this material easier to create and spread without consent. Our government is tackling this emerging threat by strengthening protections for victims and holding those responsible to account.

Our government has already taken strong action to address these issues through Bill C-16, the protecting victims act, which expands the Criminal Code definition of an "intimate image" to include sexualized deepfakes and ensures that those who generate, distribute or threaten to distribute such content are held accountable.

Bill C-34 seeks to build on this work by tackling these issues at their source before they have the chance to spread online. Under this bill, operators of regulated chatbot services would be required to put measures in place to mitigate the risk of a chatbot communicating harmful content, which includes generating non-consensual intimate images and content that sexually victimizes a child or re-victimizes a survivor.

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As technology continues to evolve, online safety and privacy are becoming increasingly interconnected. Protecting young people requires us to address both.

● (1755)

[Translation]

That is why, along with Bill C-34, the government introduced Bill C-36, which represents the most significant modernization of Canada's Privacy Act as it applies to the private sector in over 25 years. Bill C-36 would strengthen individual protections, specifically by recognizing privacy as a fundamental right, strengthening children's privacy and creating a strong right to delete or vanish, to protect the privacy and reputation of Canadians online. These are all challenges that did not exist when the current privacy legislation was enacted.

For children, this matters. Age verification generally relies on the use of personal information. Bill C-34 sets out privacy safeguards that age verification measures must respect. Bill C-36 strengthens protections for children's personal information more broadly.

Together, Bill C-34 and Bill C-36 would also create a permanent digital safety and privacy commission. The commission's mandate would be to promote online safety in Canada while protecting Canadians' personal information in the marketplace.

Bill C-34 and Bill C-36 set out these protections, which are backed by robust enforcement regimes. For example, under the protecting privacy and consumer data act proposed in Bill C-36, the commission would have the authority to issue compliance orders or impose substantial administrative monetary penalties on regulated entities that fail to meet their obligations to protect Canadians' privacy.

The bill also requires the regulatory body to consider the best interests of children in all policy and enforcement decisions. This means stronger protections for children's data, clear rules for organizations that target or serve young users, and an ongoing commitment—

[English]

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Battlefords—Lloydminster—Meadow Lake is rising on a point of order.

Rosemarie Falk: Mr. Speaker, I am a little concerned, because I understand we are to be debating Bill S-209 right now, and I am hearing about bills that are government bills and are being debated, and it is up to the government to call the calendar. We are debating Bill S-209. We are not debating Bill C-34 or Bill C-36.

The Deputy Speaker: As members know, members have a wide latitude during their debate time to go on the subjects that they desire. I am sure the parliamentary secretary is getting back to Bill S-209, so I will let him complete his time.

[Translation]

Taleeb Noormohamed: The fact is that the work done in the context of Bill S-209, as well as the work that was done in the context of Bill S-210 in the previous Parliament, is represented in these bills. If she had read both bills, she would know that, but such is life.

We believe that this model, that is, enforcement regimes grounded in expertise within a common digital regulatory body, provides a more effective way to address complex and cross-cutting issues involving privacy and digital safety, including age verification, the proliferation of synthetic content in digital spaces and the safety of children online, all of which are closely linked to the objectives of Bill S-209.

[English]

The strengths of the government's approach become clear when we consider age assurance. Parliament's consideration of Bill S-209, to my colleague's comment, and its previous iterations has consistently highlighted the real privacy concerns associated with age verification and age estimation measures, especially when children's personal information is involved, which I am certain the member must care about. The Office of the Privacy Commissioner has stated that age assurance can further the goal of creating a safer, more privacy-protective online environment for kids, but that careful attention must be paid to determining the most important appropriate means of verification.

Every age assurance requirement involves trade-offs. The more reliably a measure establishes a user's age, the more sensitive the information is that it tends to collect. Whoever sets and enforces that requirement is making a safety decision and a privacy decision at the same time. Bill S-209 would recognize that and require cabinet to ensure that any age assurance method it prescribes protects users' personal information.

I would submit the member opposite would be very happy to see this in our legislation, but those conditions would be applied by regulation and enforced by an existing federal institution that the bill does not designate, so I am curious how the member opposite would think this would actually be enforced. Under Bill C-34 and Bill C-36, these decisions would sit within a single body. The commission would have oversight of whether an operator is effectively protecting children, while also meeting the strong privacy protection requirements set out in Bill C-36.

Bill S-209, Bill C-34 and Bill C-36 all share a common concern to ensure that children are kept safe online. The government plan includes strong privacy protection and a robust plan for actually carrying these measures out. Bill S-209, while well intended, would leave it to cabinet regulation and an institution yet to be named to iron out all of these details. It is almost as if the opposition wants to put all that trust into cabinet, which is curious given its position on most anything.

Bill C-34 and Bill C-36 together are a strong plan for protecting our kids and their data online, and that has already been laid out.

● (1800)

[Translation]

Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, today I am speaking to Bill S-209.

The Bloc Québécois is in favour of studying this bill in committee. I want to say that from the outset, Bill S-209 incorporates the main provisions of Bill S-210. The Bloc Québécois voted in favour of Senator Julie Miville-Dechéne's Bill S-210 at second reading stage during the last Parliament, so we are being consistent.

The new bill is essentially the same as the old one. The most significant change is that the bill's legal definitions now refer to "pornographic material" rather than "sexually explicit material". This terminology is more in keeping with its intended purpose than the previous version.

I would also like to thank my colleague for sponsoring this bill in the House. This is an issue I follow very closely as my party's critic on this matter, as vice-chair of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women and the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities, and as one of the co-chairs of the All-Party Parliamentary Group to End Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking.

I have been contacted many times with evidence that the pornography industry has a negative impact on young people. That is why I will be speaking about this today, explaining how this bill differs from the previous version, reiterating the negative effects of this industry and discussing another bill that addresses this issue, specifically Bill C-34.

First, with respect to the current bill, pornographic material means:

with the exception of the material referred to in the definition of *child sexual abuse and exploitation material* in paragraph 163.1(1)(a) of the *Criminal Code*, any photographic, film, video or other visual representation, whether or not it was made by electronic or mechanical means, that

(a) shows the genital organs or anal region of a person engaged or depicted as engaged in explicit sexual activity; and

(b) is intended to cause sexual excitement.

In short, the definition is now limited to visual content. Bill S-210, the previous version, also included audio and written material, but that is no longer the case. The current wording requires both explicit sexual activity and the intention to cause sexual excitement, which is narrower than the first reading version.

Otherwise, the bill's underlying principle remains the same: to make it harder for young people to access pornographic material by requiring pornographic websites to make sure only adults are accessing their site by instituting age verification mechanisms, since we know about that pornography can have damaging effects on children's healthy sexual development. We mentioned that we supported studying the bill in committee.

However, we do have a number of reservations, questions or concerns about the bill that we need to mention before sending it to committee.

First, we want to make sure that the age verification technologies protect users' security and privacy, especially since personal data

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may need to be collected for identity verification purposes. We just want to check that in committee. Second, we want to hear from experts about how effective and secure these age verification mechanisms are. Third, we want to hear from experts about the results and consequences of similar policies in other places around the world, such as states like Louisiana or Utah and Germany, where provisions like these have been implemented.

Bill S-209 makes it an offence for organizations to make pornographic material available to young persons on the Internet. Furthermore, it enables a designated enforcement authority to take steps to prevent pornographic material from being made available to young persons on the Internet in Canada. To that end, it makes it an offence for organizations to make such material available to young people on the Internet for commercial purposes. The term "organization" has the same meaning as in section 2 of the Criminal Code, so it means a public body, body corporate, society, company, firm, partnership or association of persons that is created for a common purpose, has an operational structure and holds itself out to the public as an association of persons. This makes it possible to directly target commercial pornography distributors. There are even three defences.

Ultimately, what we are seeing is that the bill is motivated by a desire to better regulate online access to pornographic material through age verification, which is currently limited to a mere declaration. The digital landscape where our young people spend their time from childhood on unfortunately makes it easier to view degrading or even extreme content that normalizes the objectification of women and dominance relationships. This content, in the form of photos or videos, is shared on platforms owned by companies that do not meet any real requirements to verify that the people viewing it are adults.

● (1805)

It would be unrealistic to entrust the companies that distribute pornographic material with verifying the age of the person viewing the material. Instead, the bill would entrust this process to a third party, that is, an intermediary designated in the regulations. In addition, collection is limited to what is strictly necessary. This addition was recommended by the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada during the study of Bill S-210. Notices must therefore contain relevant information about the regime, and the organization's observations must be taken into account in deciding whether there is a violation and in setting the amount. The bill now includes two paths. One is the criminal path with legal action, proof beyond a reasonable doubt and a court-imposed fine. The other is the administrative path, which does not focus on access by a minor but rather on a failure to comply with a notice. It is faster and does not require criminal proceedings.

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The thing is, the legislation merely establishes the framework. Everything else is left to the regulations. The act does not specify who imposes the penalties, review and appeal mechanisms, the limitation period, the recovery method and so on. Now that information technology makes pornographic content easy to distribute and more widely available, the government has a duty to restrict minors' access to such material as much as possible given its obscene nature and its harmful effects on young people's brain development. Self-regulation will not suffice. Bill S-209 lays out broad principles governing age verification to prevent persons under the age of 18 from accessing pornographic content. Once passed, the bill will authorize regulations establishing the specific framework required to achieve that.

This bill also has major consequences for pornographic websites that fail to comply with its provisions, whether those sites are hosted in Canada or elsewhere. The government will be able to block sites that fail to comply with eventual age verification regulations. Everyone is aware that this bill is not a silver bullet. A minor who wants to view pornography illegally could use workarounds to bypass the age verification mechanisms, for example, a VPN. This bill may not be the solution for completely eradicating this scourge, but there is a good chance that it will help to further restrict minors' access to pornography, so the bill will achieve its objective.

I recognize that this is an important health issue, and the Bloc Québécois will always stand in support of measures that seek to protect the public and promote healthy living. Bill S-209 responds to a real concern within our communities. With the increase in femicides and violence against women, our society has a duty to restrict, to the greatest extent possible, access to this explicit content that promotes such violence.

Many civil society organizations and stakeholders, including the Association des pédiatres du Québec, support the initiative in Bill S-209. This proposal transcends party lines, and we hope that all political parties represented in the House of Commons will support it. Let us not forget that the widespread availability of online pornography poses significant risks to minors, that the average age of first exposure to pornography is 12, and that one-third of children are exposed to it before the age of 10. Violent images can foster misconceptions about sex and specifically about consent, so they are a public health and safety concern.

The Standing Committee on the Status of Women has previously studied the trafficking of women, girls and gender-diverse people. While we cannot comment on the committee's subsequent findings, a number of speakers emphasized in their briefs that human trafficking is closely linked to pornography and coercive relationships between pimps and victims. By its very nature, Bill S-209 will serve to mitigate the distribution of pornography on the Internet and protect victims from humiliating exposure to illegal material. Holding organizations accountable and imposing a new offence if they make such content available will give victims an additional tool to regain their dignity and punish their abuser.

Finally, on June 10, 2026, the Carney government introduced Bill C-34, which enacts the—

• (1810)

The Deputy Speaker: I have to interrupt the member. Members cannot use the Prime Minister's name in the House. Indeed, members must use his title.

I will now let the member for Shefford continue her speech.

Andréanne Larouche: Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government introduced Bill C-34. This is a revised and expanded version of the former Bill C-63, which dealt with online harms. Ottawa is requiring social media platforms and major pornography websites to verify each user's age. This is a complete 180, as the Liberals previously voted against the bill. I hope that, following committee consideration, we will be able to work together to avoid any overlap between these two bills and any duplication of effort.

In conclusion, it remains to be seen how we will examine them. I sincerely hope that this bill will go to committee, as it helps to protect minors' mental health and healthy development from the harmful effects of online sexually explicit material.

[English]

Sandra Cobena (Newmarket—Aurora, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there should be some things in this House that rise above politics, and protecting our children is one of them. That is why Bill S-209 has earned support from across party lines and across political traditions. Whether we sit on the government benches or the opposition benches, or whether we are Conservative, Liberal, NDP, Bloc or independent, surely we can agree on something this basic: A child should not be one click away from pornography.

I am pleased to rise today in support of Bill S-209. I would like to thank Senator Julie Miville-Dechéne for bringing this bill forward once again and for the many years of work she has poured into it. This bill would require commercial pornography websites to take meaningful steps to prevent children from accessing their content.

As a mother, I find it deeply troubling that it is 2026, and we still have to debate whether those safeguards should exist. We would never accept a 10-year-old walking into a liquor store and being told, "We trust you to make choices on your own because you're old enough." We would never accept a child walking into a casino without checking their age. However, today, a child can pick up a phone, click a link and enter a commercial pornography website. That makes no sense and parents know it.

As a mother, I think about the moment when our children begin exploring the world on their own. They ask questions. They become curious. They start using a phone or a tablet to look something up, watch a video or talk to a friend. As parents, we want to give them the room to learn and grow, but we also need reasonable safeguards while they do. Right now, a child can encounter pornography without even looking for it. A link can appear in a group chat, a search can land somewhere unexpected or something can appear on the screen before a child can even understand what they are seeing. Once a child sees it, parents cannot make them unsee it. Of course, we all know that once a child has lost their innocence, it cannot be gained back. That alone is a main concern.

However, this issue goes beyond accidental exposure. As children grow, they naturally begin asking questions about themselves, relationships and the world around them. That curiosity is part of growing up. The problem is that today, a commercial pornography website can only be one click away, often without a meaningful check that the person entering is actually an adult. What might a child find there? They may see violence or degradation. They may see women and girls treated as though their wishes do not matter. Without the maturity to understand what they are watching, they may begin to mistake pornography for an education in relationships.

Those are lessons no child should be learning from a pornographic website. Research puts the average age of the first exposure at 12. One-third of children are exposed by the age of 10 years old. At 10, many children are still learning how to understand their own feelings, let alone how to interpret explicit material created for adults.

Research has associated young people's exposure to pornography with harmful beliefs about relationships, including beliefs concerning consent and the treatment of women and girls. The bill recognizes concerns about material depicting violence, reinforcing gender stereotypes and contributing to attitudes favourable to harassment and violence. There are legitimate concerns about children's development and safety, because children are still developing their understanding of relationships, boundaries and behaviour.

Repeated exposure to pornography can shape what a young person begins to see as normal and expected, and that has real consequences for how they understand themselves and others. What does commercial pornography teach children about consent, dignity and respect? Those are questions that matter to parents raising their children, and they matter to the society those children will inherit.

• (1815)

Parents are already doing everything they can to help their children navigate these issues with care and with honesty, but no parent can watch every screen, every search result, every message and every link every minute of the day. Children can use the Internet at home, at school and with their friends, so yes, we should give parents the tool, but we should also expect the companies making money from this content to take responsibility.

The principle behind Bill S-209 is simple: If someone makes money selling adult content, they have a responsibility to make a reasonable effort to ensure that the person accessing it is actually an adult. That should not be controversial. We already accept that prin-

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ciple in the physical world. We place age restrictions on alcohol, cannabis and gambling. We do not tell parents that it is entirely their responsibility; we require the business to check. Why should the online world be any different?

Children deserve better, and we owe them better. They deserve the freedom to be curious and to discover the world without being confronted with explicit material they are simply too young to understand. Protecting childhood is part of our responsibility as adults, as parents and as legislators.

Bill S-209 would give that responsibility practical meaning. It would make it an offence for an organization to make pornographic material available online for commercial purposes to a person under 18 years of age. A company could not simply say that it is assumed that a visitor was an adult. It would have to demonstrate it used an approved method of determining age. The bill would also establish significant fines for companies that fail to take that responsibility seriously.

We know that many of these websites operate outside Canada, but the fact that a company is somewhere else in the world does not make its content any less accessible to a child sitting in a bedroom in Newmarket, Aurora or anywhere else in this country. That is why the bill would provide an enforcement process where, after notice and continued non-compliance, the enforcement authority could seek a federal court order requiring Internet service providers to prevent access to the material in Canada.

Ultimately, a court would make that decision. The principle remains the same, though: Responsibility belongs to the organizations commercially distributing the pornography. If they profit from providing adult content, they must take meaningful steps to keep children from accessing it.

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Some people have raised legitimate concerns about privacy, and those concerns deserve to be taken seriously. Bill S-209 would take them seriously. Approved methods would have to meet privacy requirements, including limiting the collection of personal information, using information for age-assurance purposes and destroying information once the process is complete. Canada's Privacy Commissioner, Philippe Dufresne, has supported the objective of Bill S-209 and has said that privacy-protective age assurance can be an appropriate tool for creating safer online experiences for children. We do not have to choose between protecting privacy and protecting children from pornography. We can and should do both.

No law can guarantee that a child will never encounter pornography online. Children are resourceful, and technology changes, but the fact that we cannot prevent every exposure is no excuse for preventing none. Age restrictions do not prevent every underage person from obtaining alcohol. We still require them, because safeguards matter, accountability matters and making it harder for children to access something intended for adults matters.

For me as a mother, this is where the issue becomes very simple. We cannot keep our children little forever, nor should we. They will grow, and they will ask questions, and part of being a parent is answering those questions honestly and helping our children understand the world they are entering. However, children deserve the opportunity to learn about relationships, consent, dignity and respect from the people who love them and care about the adults they will become. Parents are doing their part every day. Let us give our children the time and space to simply be children.

● (1820)

Robert Morrissey (Egmont, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House this afternoon speaking in support of Bill S-209. I want to begin by looking at the journey of how we arrived here. The bill was introduced in the Senate by Senator Julie Miville-Dechêne. Senator Miville-Dechêne was appointed in 2018. Then, the bill came to the House on two occasions, but because of the calendar, the bill died on the Order Paper.

I am going to focus my comments on the process of how we arrived here and one of two routes this chamber can take for where the bill would go from here. Most would agree we are at a time when Canadians are looking to parliamentarians to come together on certain issues, and this should be one of those issues. All parliamentarians would agree that the House should take steps to prevent very young children from accessing pornography online.

I have been listening to a number of previous speakers. The parliamentary secretary, in his comments, said the government supports the objective of the bill, which is extremely important, and I would expect all members sitting in this chamber do. One of the benefits of Parliament is the diverse basis of opinion that comes to debate in the House and the recognition that each member brings a particular area that they focus on.

When the member for Battlefords—Lloydminster—Meadow Lake approached me this past spring to say that she was going to sponsor this particular Senate bill in the House and ask if I would consider supporting it, I reflected for a moment. I will acknowledge that there are probably numerous topics that the member for Battlefords—Lloydminster—Meadow Lake and I do not agree on, but on

this matter, I will be clear. One thing the member is very passionate about and uncompromising about is the protection of children, family and her children. I see that from time to time because the member brings her children to the committee room from time to time, so I was not surprised that the member would choose in particular a bill like Bill S-209 as her private member's bill.

The bill gives us all sides. We have heard from one other opposition party in the House that is supportive of the bill's getting to committee. The committee is the process for all legislation to get a thorough analysis and a good review. Changes that are required from time to time can be made there, as members are aware. Therefore, I had no hesitation in indicating that I would be supportive of Bill S-209. Again, I doubt that there would be any member in the chamber who would not be supportive of the objectives of Bill S-209.

At the same time, I am well aware that the government has introduced two pieces of legislation, Bill C-34 and Bill C-36. Some will say they are more comprehensive in the area being addressed by this particular private member's bill, but all are aiming in the same direction of putting real consequences on those who choose to make decisions that allow young people access to pornography.

● (1825)

My sense is that there is a very general understanding of and support for the context of this particular private member's bill. I, for one, as I indicated, will be supporting the bill when it comes back to the House for a vote. I look forward to it getting to committee so that witnesses can appear and the committee can do a very thorough analysis of the bill.

As I indicated in my earlier comments, Bill S-209, Bill C-34 and Bill C-36 are leading in a direction that all members of this chamber, I assume, will be supportive of. However, the ability to be supportive of and have a candid debate on all aspects of the legislation is extremely important. Bill S-209, in my opinion, deserves to get to a stage where it gets a more thorough analysis, which would be in the committee format. That is why I will be supporting it. There will be some discussion about the impact on government legislation versus private members' legislation, but to my earlier comments, this is one subject that all members of this House should come together on and support to ensure that this particular bill gets before a committee so that it might have the opportunity to complement government legislation and make it better in some places.

I believe my time is coming to an end, but the bill speaks for itself. I am in agreement with the commentary made by the speakers who spoke to the bill earlier. I am looking forward to hearing more debate.

• (1830)

The Deputy Speaker: The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired, and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

[English]

THE ECONOMY

Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to join in and ask for more with respect to the answer I received back in the previous session on affordability. I know my colleague from Whitby is going to respond to the question I am going to ask him. We have had a lot of good, partisan sparring back and forth over the years, for a long time.

I am going to bring this down to a constituent level because I just received an email from a senior lady in my riding at 2:03 p.m. this afternoon. I am going to read this and talk about the affordability issues people are facing so we can have a conversation, on a real constituent basis, about what is going on in people's daily lives.

It says, "I'm 74. My husband is 75. We get nothing extra from the federal government. When I say 'we', I mean the seniors who have paid income taxes on all the money we've scrimped and saved over our working years while paying for our children's child care and food. This money was to see us through our retirement years. All that hard work so we can enjoy our golden years was for what? We still have to scrimp and save so we can afford food and shelter.

"The Liberals keep going on about how much they've done for everyone, including the seniors, so they can afford to pay for food. This is a lot of poppycock. They say, 'Look at how many are registered for the seniors dental program.' That is all fine and dandy, but how many of those registered actually qualify? This is the number that really matters. My husband and I are registered, but our combined income means we don't qualify. If it was not for investments we saved for over 40 years, we would not be able to afford to retire. To make matters worse, the investment income is all taxable.

"Sorry for the long rant. I just get so frustrated when the Liberals keep saying that they're helping us but everything keeps going up and our income stays the same. Keep up the good work. Janet."

What I am wondering for Janet is—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Warren Steinley: There is heckling from the other side, which is interesting.

Mr. Speaker, she said they do not qualify for the dental program, if the Liberal members would listen to what I say. This is what the Liberals do. They dismiss what everyday Canadians are talking about and the issues they are facing.

Adjournment Proceedings

I want to ask this of my friend from Whitby, who I think is here for the right reasons, though we have different opinions.

Every day in question period, the Liberals get up and say, "Oh, but there's a dental program." For seniors like Janet and her husband, because of their retirement income, they do not qualify, so they do not get anything. They are frustrated seniors who are not really seeing any of the benefit of these programs, but their income is being taxed, and that is going to pay for programs for other people. They are in a really tough situation.

What would Ryan say to Janet right now?

The Deputy Speaker: Before I recognize the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, I will give just a friendly reminder to members not to use the first names of other members in the House.

That being said, the hon. parliamentary secretary has the floor.

Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance and National Revenue and to the Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member for Regina—Lewvan and I have enjoyed some good partisan sparring, which is part of the sport of the House. I know that the member opposite is a good sport in that regard. We have had many disagreements, but we both respect one another at the end of the day, and I appreciate him for that.

Our government understands that we are strongest when we take care of one another and we ensure that everyone has a chance to get ahead. That includes our seniors, but it also includes all of the population, and our government is really working to make life more affordable for all Canadians.

I cite the groceries and essentials benefit that is helping 12 million Canadians with payments. It was the GST rebate, as members will note, but it has been significantly increased. It pays out an average of \$1,890 for a dual-income family, the average family, so that is not insignificant support. It is actually quite significant for many families. The amount to be paid is going to increase 25% over five years, beginning in July, and the top-up is indexed to inflation. This means payments will go out every year to match future increases in the consumer price index. This is just one of many things we have done.

There is also the Canada child benefit, the Canada disability benefit, the guaranteed income supplement and many more. The member opposite mentioned dental care. We also increased OAS by 10% for our seniors in a previous iteration of our party. Those are significant changes that have improved the social safety net in Canada and helped families right across the country.

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Let us talk about tax cuts. The first thing the government did under the current Prime Minister was an income tax cut for 22 million Canadians. We eliminated the consumer carbon tax. We suspended the fuel excise tax over the summer, and just recently we tabled legislation to extend that for another five months until January 2027. I am sure the member opposite can agree that those are tangible, cost-saving measures. I know that his constituents did not send him here to vote against those types of measures and then stand up the next moment and claim that the Liberals are not doing enough for vulnerable people in this country.

Can the member opposite explain to his constituents why he votes against every affordability measure that enhances support for seniors, for families, for single mothers and for all Canadians, with broad-based measures that are cutting taxes for Canadians? It seems to me that tax relief is something the Conservatives have advocated for. We have only eliminated, suspended, cut and reduced taxes under the Prime Minister's leadership. Why would the member opposite oppose tax relief for his constituents?

● (1835)

Warren Steinley: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate some of the member's responses. He and I will debate another day how many times he voted in favour of the consumer carbon tax and how he was one of the main cheerleaders for the consumer carbon tax until he found it not to be beneficial to his election options. He realized that it was very unpopular, so then instead of being for it, he was against it.

I also agree with the cutting of the gas tax. We talked about that for years and years, but last session, the member voted four or five times against cutting the gas tax, when the Conservatives brought a motion forward that resembles Bill C-38, which the Liberals just brought forward, so he also voted against that not so long ago.

The member is the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance. I do like to have this debate back and forth because he did talk about a whole suite of programs. How much would it cost the Liberals to cut taxes so people had more money in their pockets and not have some of those programs?

Ryan Turnbull: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite knows that we are in a trade war. The country is facing significant headwinds, and we have used the fiscal capacity we have responsibly to invest in the Canadian economy, which is growing. There was 3.3% GDP growth in the last quarter, which is significant. The government diversified trade by signing 20 new trade agreements. Jobs have grown at twice the pace they have in the United States, with 217,000 net new jobs in Canada. Wages have outpaced inflation. We have had two consecutive months of real GDP per capita growth.

That is not to mention the \$500 billion in new commitments from Canadian financial institutions and pension funds to deploy their capital here in Canada to help that capital build the infrastructure and grow the economy that all Canadians need so they can have a better standard of living.

HEALTH

Dan Mazier (Riding Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the former CEO of Canada Health Infoway, Michael Green, was fired after the Conservatives exposed his role in the \$300-million PrescribeIT scandal. We have since obtained his termination letter. That termi-

nation letter granted Mr. Green a massive severance package that included a full year of salary and benefits, months of pension contributions, months of car allowance, vacation pay, more performance pay and an additional bonus after he was fired for the \$300-million failure.

The health minister's very own official is on the board of Canada Health Infoway, so my question is simple: Did the health minister's representative vote in favour of this massive severance package for PrescribeIT's CEO, yes or no?

● (1840)

Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance and National Revenue and to the Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Riding Mountain for giving me a chance to reiterate the statement that the Minister of Health made on this topic in June. Since it was the last day before the House rose, he might have missed what she said, so I will repeat it now. She said:

Canada Health Infoway ("Infoway") was established in 2001 with a mandate to break down silos in our healthcare system, modernise health data infrastructure, and improve access, quality and productivity of care for all Canadians.

While many Canadians have benefitted from Infoway's work, important questions have been raised in recent months about accountability and value-for-money.

To ensure Infoway is best positioned to fulfill its mandate effectively and efficiently while delivering value to Canadians, the Minister of Health has directed the launch of a multi-phase review. The review will include an independent, third-party audit, complemented by a comprehensive strategic review of the organisation's governance structures and operations.

Phase one will assess Infoway's compliance with the terms and conditions of its contribution agreement, followed by a wider strategic review that includes but is not limited to examining the organisation's funding model, program delivery, effectiveness, mandate, bylaws, corporate policies, governance framework, executive leadership and compensation practices, and reporting mechanisms.

Stakeholder consultations will also be undertaken to provide insight on Infoway's strengths, opportunities for improvement, and role within Canada's health ecosystem.

As our government works to break down silos in our healthcare system, this review will ensure that Infoway is adopting best practices and that all available steps are taken to build a modern, accountable, health data system that improves care for all Canadians.

The review process will commence immediately and continue over the coming months. Upon completion, the Government of Canada will publish key findings and outline next steps.

Is that enough? I will let the Auditor General respond to that, because just over a week after the minister made that statement, the Auditor General said, "We have been informed by Health Canada that they are planning a review of Canada Health Infoway. I am of the view that conducting a performance audit at this time would be duplicative and therefore of limited added value for Parliamentarians and Canadians."

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Seeing as the member for Riding Mountain was a member of the health committee when it asked the Auditor General to look into the matter, I would hope that the Auditor General's response is enough for the member. There are third party reviews of the program taking place right now. We should allow this important work to take place free of the kind of political interference that the Conservatives are calling for and are known for.

Dan Mazier: Mr. Speaker, the Liberals did not answer my question. He was going on about an auditor trail. He did not answer my question. My question was about a severance package awarded to the CEO who oversaw the \$300-million PrescribeIT failure.

The health minister's very own official is on Canada Health Infoway's board. My question was simple: Did the health minister's representative vote in favour of the massive severance package for the PrescribeIT CEO, yes or no?

Ryan Turnbull: Mr. Speaker, I mentioned that in the review taking place as we speak, there is a review of all the governance structures, the compensation packages, leadership, performance, etc.

The Conservatives wanted the Auditor General to look into this matter. She has stated very clearly that she believes the measures announced by the minister are enough and that it would be duplicative for the Auditor General to do her own review. As the minister has said, the third party review and audit are under way. We look forward to seeing the results.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Sturgeon River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have a question about corruption surrounding the Liberal government's now infamous lease with Maritime Launch Services for a so-called space port. We know that the government entered into this lease, notwithstanding that Maritime Launch Services had no history of launching anything into space. Indeed, Maritime Launch Services had a history of not doing much of anything because Maritime Launch Services was a practically bankrupt company, sustaining a loss of \$47 million and with revenue of just \$15,000 in 2025.

As such, it is no wonder that the share value of Maritime Launch Services was practically worthless, but then the Liberals entered into the so-called space port lease on March 16 of this year, and rather conveniently, the Liberals backdated the lease by one full year to 2025, funnelling \$20 million tax dollars to Maritime Launch Services for no work and no value, effectively bailing out Maritime Launch Services.

What was the consequence of that? Surprise, surprise, the share value of Maritime Launch Services soared, and immediately following that, within three weeks, the chair of the board sold three million previously worthless shares, walking away with \$1.8 million. He became a millionaire overnight.

Do members know what that is called? It is called “pump and dump”. Do members know what else it is called? It is called “corruption”, which the Liberals allowed to happen because they failed to take the most basic of measures to prevent this kind of insider profiteering, such as, for example, insisting upon a lock-up agreement. Why did they not do that? Why did they allow this to happen? Is it because this type of corruption is business as usual with the Liberals?

• (1845)

[Translation]

Sherry Romanado (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is about how we are developing sovereign capabilities that contribute to Canada's defence and security, our economy and our future. One example is sovereign space launch capability, which is clearly set out in Canada's very first defence industrial strategy.

Canada is the only G7 country without sovereign space launch capability. For a country with such a long and successful history in the space sector, this is a strategic shortcoming.

[English]

Space-based systems now underpin essential military, government and civilian services. Having our own launch capability gives Canada greater control over how and when we put critical infrastructure into orbit. Last year, the Department of National Defence looked at available domestic options and considered a range of factors, including regulatory readiness, geographic suitability, operational requirements and the overall ability to support Canada's long-term space objectives. Maritime Launch Services met the necessary environmental and aeronautical safety requirements. The company also demonstrated a level of readiness that aligned with broader defence and economic objectives in the defence industrial strategy.

[Translation]

As with any decision related to government procurement, the Department of National Defence entered into this agreement in accordance with the established rules regarding ethics, conflicts of interest and accountability.

The hon. member also questioned the value of this investment. However, this is about much more than just access to a piece of land. This investment seeks to give Canada the infrastructure necessary to conduct launches from our own soil. It also seeks to reduce our dependence on foreign suppliers and to strengthen our capacity to manage our space capabilities independently.

[English]

After weighing the options, we deemed the use of provincial Crown land as an appropriate and low-risk way to provide secure access to a launch site while at the same time avoiding the additional costs, delays and challenges associated with any federal land acquisition process.

The site near Canso, Nova Scotia, offers some important advantages, such as access to open ocean, which is desirable for space launches. It also offers a full range of launch trajectories for earth observation, communications satellites and future defence activities.

Adjournment Proceedings

The investment also creates economic opportunities. Our agreement with MLS requires that 90% of the project funding be spent in Canada or with Canadian-owned businesses. This will ensure that the vast majority of this \$200-million investment will support Canadian workers and communities.

Canada is seeing record investments in space sector research and development from these companies, and projects like this signal that Canada is laying the foundation to support those investments and ensure future opportunities. This project also provides Canada with the opportunity to offer space launch services both commercially and to our allies.

We can be proud of Canada's legacy in space. From the Canadarm to advanced satellite technologies, generations of Canadians have consistently been at the forefront of innovation and exploration. Building Canada strong means investing in the technologies that will shape the future. Canada's growing space sector is creating good jobs, strengthening sovereignty and ensuring that Canadians remain leaders in innovation for decades to come.

• (1850)

Michael Cooper: Mr. Speaker, my question was about pump and dump. It was about corruption.

Here we have the Liberal government funnelling \$20 million to Maritime Launch Services, bailing out a nearly bankrupt company, upon which the chair of the board immediately sells three million of his shares, walking away with \$1.8 million.

Does the parliamentary secretary consider that to be normal? Is that just business as usual with the Liberals? How can the parliamentary secretary justify this type of corruption?

[Translation]

Sherry Romanado: Let us be clear, Mr. Speaker. Sovereign space launch capabilities are a strategic imperative for Canada. Canada is currently the only G7 country without sovereign space launch capabilities. We are in the process of addressing that strategic gap. Our approach will enable Canada to exercise more control over essential space infrastructure.

[English]

This is about building Canada strong. It is about investing in Canadian industry, unlocking the full potential of our innovation economy and creating high-quality jobs here at home. It is about developing the critical infrastructure and capabilities that strengthen our sovereignty, enhance our security and support a more resilient Canadian economy.

We will build in Canada, we will invest in Canadian workers and Canadian innovation, and we will ensure Canada remains a strong, sovereign and trusted leader in the space domain.

The Deputy Speaker: The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 6:52 p.m.)

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