



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

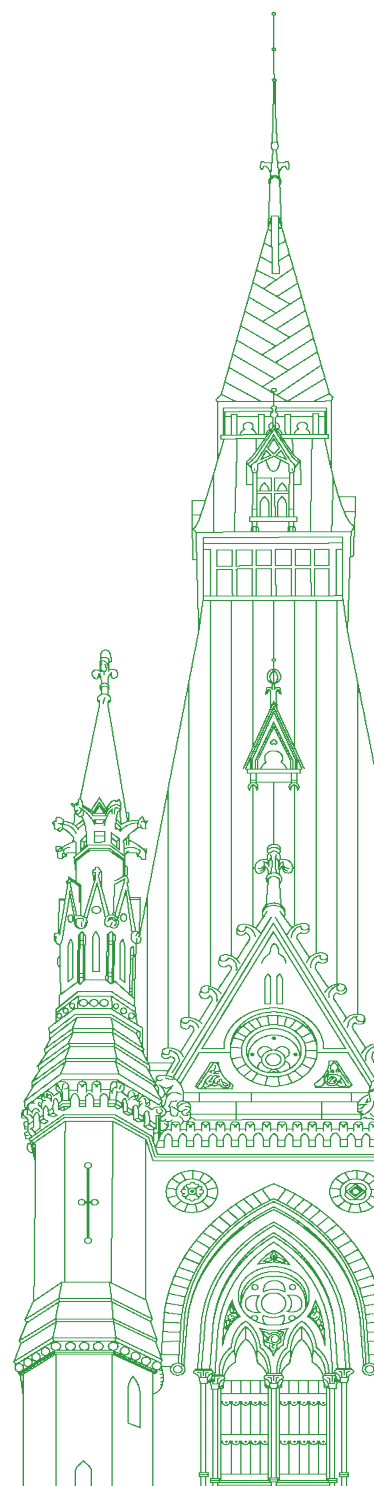
45th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

# House of Commons Debates

Official Report  
(Hansard)

**Volume 152 No. 148**  
Thursday, October 8, 2026

Speaker: The Honourable Francis Scarpaleggia



## **CONTENTS**

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

# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, October 8, 2026

The House met at 10 a.m.

---

*Prayer*

---

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

● (1000)

[*Translation*]

### COMMISSIONER OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

**The Speaker:** It is my duty to lay before the House, pursuant to section 69 of the Official Languages Act, the report of the Commissioner of Official Languages for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026.

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(f), this report is deemed permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Official Languages.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

### INFORMATION COMMISSIONER

**The Speaker:** It is my duty to lay before the House, pursuant to subsection 94(2) of the Access to Information Act and to subsection 72(2) of the Privacy Act, the reports of the Information Commissioner of Canada on the administration of these acts for the fiscal year ended March 31.

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.

\* \* \*

### CRIMINAL CODE

**Anna Roberts (King—Vaughan, CPC)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-292, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (victim protection).

She said: Mr. Speaker, I am please to rise to introduce my bill focused on strengthening protection for survivors of human trafficking and on addressing serious gaps in our justice system. The statistics are troubling, but behind every number is a person overlooked, a person whose experiences did not fit neatly within the protections of our existing laws. We have a responsibility to ensure that our

laws respond to the realities too many of our most vulnerable people continue to face.

The legislation would strengthen Canada's response by holding traffickers accountable, removing barriers to justice and ensuring that traffickers' offences carry meaningful consequences. It would protect vulnerable witnesses, close gaps in our courts and give survivors a greater opportunity to have their voices heard. At its core, the bill is about ensuring that people who are targeted, exploited and silenced are seen, heard and protected.

(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed)

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

## PETITIONS

### NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA

**Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, it is always an enormous honour to rise in this place that is so important to Canada's true democracy, but that is especially true today.

[*English*]

My constituents started this petition. Its subject is a specific human being, an extraordinary Canadian and one of my constituents, the renowned and much-loved artist Robert Bateman. It is e-petition 7456, and it has received over 9,000 names, close to 10,000.

The petitioners point out that the mandate of the National Gallery of Canada is to showcase artists who contribute significantly to Canadian culture and identity. Most Canadians, I think, could close their eyes and immediately visualize a Robert Bateman painting. Maybe they have a favourite one of a polar bear or one of his wonderful paintings from his experiences travelling across Africa with another constituent of mine, Bristol Foster.

The point of the petition, why some of the petitioners who spoke to me personally are incensed and concerned, is that the National Gallery of Canada has never once exhibited the works of Robert Bateman. The petitioners call upon the Government of Canada to urge the National Gallery to organize an exhibition of the works of Robert Bateman.

*Business of Supply*

• (1005)

## WEATHER AND CLIMATE MONITORING

**Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to table two petitions.

First, I am pleased to table e-petition 7465, signed by over 700 Canadians who are concerned about cuts to Environment and Climate Change Canada's weather and climate services. The petitioners remind us that reliable forecasting, weather observation and public warning systems are essential to public safety, particularly in rural, remote and indigenous communities. This impacts lighthouse keepers and how they do their job.

Petitioners call on the government to reverse cuts affecting weather forecasting and climate science, restore and maintain weather radio, protect weather observation stations, ensure adequate staffing and long-term funding, and recognize weather forecasting and climate monitoring as essential public safety infrastructure.

## THE ENVIRONMENT

**Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Madam Speaker, it is also my privilege to table e-petition 7134, sponsored by former MP Peter Julian, who is a champion of protecting coastal B.C.

The petition is on behalf of Canadians concerned about proposals for a new pipeline and crude oil tanker route to British Columbia's northern coast. The petitioners point to the long-standing opposition of coastal communities and coastal first nations to crude oil tanker traffic and the importance of protecting the region's environment and conservation-based economy.

Finally, they call on the government to cancel the Canada-Alberta memorandum, uphold the Oil Tanker Moratorium Act and work with coastal communities and first nations to grow a sustainable and diverse economy and ensure their full participation in future coastal project negotiations.

## FIREARMS

**Mel Arnold (Kamloops—Shuswap—Central Rockies, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I rise today to present a petition. Lawful firearms owners in Canada continue to be under attack by the Liberal government. At the same time, the Liberal government lets criminals and gangs run free in our streets.

The petition is presented on behalf of residents across Kamloops—Shuswap—Central Rockies. Petitioners call on the Government of Canada to end its assault on law-abiding firearms owners by scrapping the massively expensive and ineffective firearms confiscation program and to focus its attention and resources toward criminals and illegal firearms smuggling.

\* \* \*

## QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès):** Is it agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

## BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

## OPPOSITION MOTION—AFFORDABILITY CRISIS

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC)** moved:

That the House officially recognize that:

- (a) the Liberals have been in power for 11 years; and
- (b) Canada is in an affordability crisis.

He said: Madam Speaker, he just got here. Yesterday, in the House of Commons, I asked the Prime Minister why Canada has the highest number of people who believe they will never be able to buy a home. Of the 22 countries surveyed by Habitat for Humanity, why does Canada have the worst record when it comes to home ownership?

The Prime Minister said it is not his fault because he just got here. He has been Prime Minister for 18 months, a year and a half. What is more, he was an economic adviser to the Liberal government for five years. He has been here and has been part of the government for six and a half years, yet he says he just got here.

Apparently, young couples who cannot afford to buy a home and whose rent has doubled over the course of the Liberal reign should not be asking the Prime Minister any questions. It is not his fault; he just got here. Single mothers who now have to choose between paying the mortgage and buying groceries need to stop asking the poor Prime Minister questions, because he just got here.

According to the president and CEO of Habitat for Humanity Canada:

Canada's housing crisis has become an opportunity crisis. When people are sacrificing food, savings, and peace of mind to afford housing, they can never get ahead. They can't build the futures they want for themselves and their children.

These children need to stop asking the Prime Minister questions. He just got here. It is not his fault. It is going to take many years and plenty of lofty promises, while prices keep going up for everyone.

Then there is the price of gas. I have already shown that the housing crisis has nothing to do with the global situation, because homes are built here, on Canadian soil, by Canadian workers, using Canadian materials, so it cannot be a global problem. The problem is here, in Canada, under the Liberal government.

*Business of Supply*

The same goes for diesel. Yes, there are wars going on in Iran, Russia and Ukraine, but that does not explain why the price of diesel and gasoline is about 10% to 15% higher here in Canada than in the United States and other countries. As of October 5, diesel costs about 26¢ more per litre than the U.S. average and 23¢ more than the world average. According to Statistics Canada, in August 2026, the price of gasoline was up 23% year over year, while prices for heating oil and other fuels were up 44%. This latter category refers to heating fuel, not an inflation rate for diesel.

I will be sharing my time with the member for King—Vaughan. She will demonstrate that food affordability is worse than ever as we head into Thanksgiving. Since the Prime Minister took office last year, since he promised to be judged by the cost of a basket of groceries, we have seen a 10% increase in the cost of groceries and a Thanksgiving meal, but we are not supposed to blame him because he just got here.

According to PwC, 69% of Canadians expect to cut back on their Christmas spending. Santa Claus, who happens to be Canadian, will have to spend less because, after a year and a half of this Prime Minister, the groceries he buys for himself and his wife are too expensive. Santa and Mrs. Claus are spending too much on groceries under this Prime Minister, which means fewer gifts for the children.

According to the OECD, Canada has had the highest or second-highest food inflation in the G7 for 10 months straight. We cannot blame the rest of the world. We cannot simply scare people by spreading panic over foreign events when food prices here in Canada are far worse than in other countries.

A new survey released today by Second Harvest found that about one in three of the food banks or shelters in its network are having to turn away people in need due to limited resources.

● (1010)

We were told that food banks that do not have the resources to feed the hungry should stop asking the Prime Minister questions because he just got here.

That is not what leadership and taking responsibility is about. A prime minister needs to keep his promises and take action to lower the cost of living.

Our mission, as Conservatives, is to help people save money and to leave more money in their pockets for groceries and housing so that they can provide for their children and families. We have a plan to reduce government spending and lower the cost of living so that people can save money.

Before we can solve a problem, we have to recognize that it exists. That is why, today, the Conservatives are asking the Prime Minister to acknowledge that Canada is in an affordability crisis that is affecting all Canadians. He can either vote in favour of this motion and thus recognize that we are in an affordability crisis after 18 months under his leadership or he can show that he is completely out of touch with what Canadians are dealing with.

We, the Conservatives, will continue to fight to help people save money in Canada. That is our mission. We are going to restore the promise of Canada that anybody who works hard can aspire to a good life.

● (1015)

[English]

The Prime Minister just got here. That is what he told us yesterday when I asked him why Habitat for Humanity found that more Canadians have given up on home ownership than the people in the 22 countries who were polled by it. In other words, the dream of home ownership is further out of reach in Canada than in any other country of the 22 nations surveyed. I asked him why. He said he knew it was terrible, but he just got here. Habitat for Humanity has said that Canada's housing crisis has become an opportunity crisis. When people are sacrificing food, savings and peace of mind to afford housing, they can never get ahead. However, we must stop blaming the Prime Minister because he just got here. Housing is 100% a domestic sector that is not affected by tariffs, Trump or any other thing he wants to fearmonger over. I know he wants to talk about division and danger, but 100% of the land, 100% of the workers and 90% of the materials that go into homes are right here in Canada. It is Trump-proof, tariff-proof and a 100% homemade problem. That is why he could not use the foreign excuse he usually uses. Instead, he says that he just got here. It has been 18 months since he became the Prime Minister who was promising affordable homes. Most of his front bench cabinet have been here for 11 years, but they doubled housing costs and say that they just got here.

Then there are the gasoline prices. Yes, the world price has gone up, but not as much as it has here in Canada. We are paying 10% a litre more than the U.S. We are paying 26% more per litre than the U.S. when it comes to diesel and 23¢ more than the world average. Only the Prime Minister's beloved Europe is paying more for diesel than Canada. Stats Canada says that gasoline prices have increased 23% year over year. Much of that increase is being passed on in higher grocery prices, which brings me to Thanksgiving.

I wish members a happy Thanksgiving. However, I am afraid that, just like me, they are going to have a very unpleasant trip down the grocery aisle when they look at the prices of serving a beautiful Thanksgiving meal to their family. The cost is up 10% in one year since the member became the Prime Minister, but again, he just got here. It has been a year since he looked Canadians in the eye on his first day on the job and told them to judge him by the prices at the grocery store. The judgment is in and Canadians are cutting back. In fact, one in three food banks is turning people away because it has run out of food. One in four shelters is turning people back out on to the cold streets. Those people who are homeless and hungry and those empty food banks have to stop asking the Prime Minister questions because he just got here after all.

*Business of Supply*

The Prime Minister is out of touch. Canadians are out of money. We are in this to save them money. That is why today we are calling on Parliament to recognize officially that Canada is in an affordability crisis. Will the government join us in that recognition or show that it is completely out of touch? It has to recognize a problem to fix a problem, and that fix is to save people money. Let us make Canada the most affordable country anywhere on earth.

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, this motion is truly amazing, and I will have a chance to talk about it shortly.

The leader of the official opposition needs a reality check. The affordability issue is something the Prime Minister has been commenting on, and delivering on for Canadians since the last federal election.

The Prime Minister was first elected as a member of Parliament just over 500 days ago. Let us contrast that to the 8,000-plus days that the leader of the Conservative Party has been in the House. I have no problem at all doing a comparison between the things that this Prime Minister has done in 500 days and what the Leader of the Opposition has done in over 8,000 days.

Why does the leader of the Conservative Party continue to oppose Liberal Party initiatives on the issue of affordability?

• (1020)

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre:** Mr. Speaker, we oppose them, because they have made everything more expensive. That is a very simple answer to a very foolish question.

Now, as for the Prime Minister, the member is right. He has been Prime Minister for 500 days. He has, in the words of the member, commented about affordability for 500 days. Has he ever commented. He has had five different grocery price affordability announcements. If Canadians could put announcements on their dinner table or fill their grocery cart with comments, then every stomach would be full in Canada.

We need food. We need affordability. That is what we are fighting for.

[Translation]

**Mario Simard (Jonquière—Hébertville—Pays-des-Bleuets, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I have occasionally spoken harshly of the leader of the official opposition in the past, but I am beginning to see him in a new light. I find what he has to say very interesting, and I quite like today's motion.

This government has indeed been in power for 11 years. The cost of living situation is atrocious, and so is access to home ownership, as the leader of the official opposition clearly demonstrated. Rising food prices are an issue.

What has the government done in the past 11 years? For starters, it bought the Trans Mountain pipeline for \$34 billion. Now it wants spend \$44 billion in public money to build another pipeline. The leader of the official opposition hit the nail on the head when he called these big oil companies corporate welfare recipients. That is why I am beginning to see him in a new light. I completely agree with him.

Can he speak to the Liberals' misguided plan to spend \$44 billion on a pipeline when people are struggling to put a roof over their heads and food on the table?

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre:** Madam Speaker, I find it unfortunate that, after 11 years of Liberal government, after all the anti-development laws and taxes the Liberals have created, it takes tax dollars to build anything.

Of course, pipelines and other oil and energy infrastructure are extremely profitable without any help from the government. The problem here in Canada is that there are so many obstacles put in place by the government that the state has to take over control from industry and fund the projects using tax dollars, which is a tragedy. That is the consequence of the Liberals' anti-development policies.

We do not want subsidies. We want a free market with speedy permitting, very low taxes and no corporate welfare for any industry.

[English]

**Harb Gill (Windsor West, CPC):** Madam Speaker, Canadians are a proud people, and they are not looking for another government cheque. Windsorites are asking why their own paycheque will not go far enough.

Could the Leader of the Opposition explain what happened to the basic bargain, that if Canadians work hard, pay their taxes and play by the rules, they should be able to afford a home, feed their family, get ahead and live in a safe neighbourhood? What happened to that bargain?

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre:** Madam Speaker, 11 years of Liberal government happened to that bargain. It is very simple. The Liberals are costing Canadians more. They are all talk and no results.

The Liberal Prime Minister is out of touch and Canadians are out of money. His money is out of the country, in offshore tax havens and in the United States, while Canadians cannot afford to eat, heat or house themselves. However, to fix a crisis, the Liberals have to recognize it exists. To show that they are in touch, they have to vote in this House for this motion that Canada is in an affordability crisis, one that we must act to fix now.

**Anna Roberts (King—Vaughan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is always an honour to rise in this House on behalf of the residents of King—Vaughan. Today, we are discussing something Canadians already understand because they are living it every day. Canada is in an affordability crisis. I hear it constantly in my community: Seniors worry about how long their savings will last; families are spending more on groceries and housing; and young people wonder whether owning a home will ever be possible.

*Business of Supply*

A senior in my riding of King—Vaughan recently shared her story with me. Maria could no longer afford her home, so she had to move. She now rents a basement apartment from another senior who relies on the rental income to help pay her mortgage and household expenses, but the homeowner is struggling too. Even with Maria paying rent, she worries she may no longer be able to afford the house. If that happens, Maria will have to move again. This is the financial reality facing two seniors in my community. One has already been forced out of her home, while the other is worried about losing hers. After working hard, paying taxes and contributing to this country their whole lives, this should not be what retirement looks like.

As shadow minister for seniors, I regularly hear from Canadians living on fixed incomes who are struggling to keep up with the rising costs. We see the consequences at food banks across this country. In King—Vaughan, organizations like the King Township Food Bank and Vaughan Food Bank are doing incredible work supporting those in need. I am grateful for their volunteers, but we should be concerned that so many Canadians now depend on their services. Seniors, working families and Canadians with jobs are turning to food banks because they simply cannot make ends meet.

The affordability crisis is also taking a serious toll on younger Canadians. For many, the question is no longer when they will buy their first home, but whether they will ever be able to afford one. Statistics Canada reports that the average asking rent for a two-bedroom apartment in the Toronto area was \$2,650 a month in the second quarter of this year. That is more than \$31,000 annually before groceries, transportation and other necessities. It is no wonder young adults are staying at home longer and parents are helping their adult children financially. A recent RBC survey found that more than half of Canadian parents with adult children between the ages of 18 and 40 provided financial support over the past year, contributing an average of more than \$6,100. These parents are supporting their children while facing rising costs themselves in preparing for retirement.

For existing homeowners, another challenge comes when their mortgages are up for renewal. This is something I understand from my previous career. Before entering politics, I spent many years in banking as a branch manager and mortgage specialist. I remember working with families in the 1980s, as mortgages came up for renewal and suddenly their payments became much harder to afford. Let us remember who was the prime minister in 1980. We will all remember that it was Mr. Trudeau. These were people who had jobs, made their payments and worked hard to provide for their families; then renewal time came, and they were left wondering whether they could keep the home they had worked so hard to buy. I remember the stress those conversations caused.

Today, I am concerned that history is beginning to repeat itself. Canadians who took up mortgages several years ago are renewing under very different conditions. Even a few hundred dollars more each month can quickly strain a household budget. For some, that means cutting into savings or reducing spending on necessities. For others, it means questioning whether they can afford their home at all. I have seen what that does to families, and I do not want Canada to repeat that experience.

• (1025)

This weekend, Canadians will celebrate Thanksgiving. For many families, that means driving to visit parents, grandchildren, aunts, uncles, friends and relatives, but in the Toronto area, gas is now roughly 50¢ a litre more expensive than at this time last year. For families already struggling with rising costs, another tank of gas is one more expense to consider. Some may decide they simply cannot afford the trip. Canadians should not have to think twice on whether they can afford to spend Thanksgiving with their loved ones.

The Prime Minister gave Canadians a clear standard by which to judge his government. He said Canadians would judge him by the prices they see at the grocery store. Let us apply that standard. Statistics Canada reported that grocery prices are 29% higher than in August 2021. Food Banks Canada recorded 2.2 million visits in March 2025, almost doubling the number in 2019. Nearly one in five food bank users was employed.

By the Prime Minister's own standard, the record is clear. After 11 years of Liberal government, Canadians are paying more for the basics while the Liberals continue spending heavily on bureaucracy, outside consultants, corporate subsidies and foreign aid. Billions of dollars continue to be committed outside of Canada.

I was raised by my wonderful grandparents. They taught me to be compassionate. If someone needed help, we helped them. However, they also taught me that we have to make sure our own house is in order first. Canada is a generous country, and we should be, but there must be a sense of priority. When seniors like Maria are worried about losing their housing, young Canadians cannot afford their first home, and working families rely on food banks, the government must put Canadians first.

Conservatives have reviewed federal spending and identified \$150 billion in potential savings, including from bureaucracies, consultants, corporate welfare, foreign aid and other expenditures. That represents almost \$10,000 per Canadian family. Families must make difficult financial decisions every single day. When household budgets get tight, they examine their spending, determine what is essential and find ways to save. The federal government should be expected to demonstrate that same discipline.

*Business of Supply*

Every dollar the Liberal government spends was earned by a hard-working taxpayer. It could be a construction worker, a farmer, a small business owner, a young Canadian saving for a home or a senior who worked for decades to build a retirement. That money deserves to be treated with respect.

After 11 years of Liberal government, Canadians should not be working hard and making responsible decisions only to wonder whether they can afford groceries, housing or their next mortgage payment. Young people deserve a realistic path to home ownership. Families should be able to afford the basics. Seniors should be able to retire with dignity and security. The people I represent in King—Vaughan are facing the same pressures as Canadians from coast to coast.

The Liberals need to start listening to Conservatives, get spending under control, put Canadians first and focus on making life more affordable here at home. Canadians have done their part. It is time for the government to do its part. That is why I am supporting this motion.

• (1030)

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, as we talk throughout the day about what has taken place since Canadians elected a new prime minister less than 18 months ago, it is important that we look at what the Conservative Party has done as an opposition, at the degree to which it continues to oppose affordability measures that we bring forward and to stand in the way of building a stronger and healthier Canada.

Can the member clearly indicate why the Conservative Party votes against affordability measures while its members talk about the need for affordability measures?

**Anna Roberts:** Madam Speaker, I have to admit that my colleague is out of touch. He is not listening to Canadians in this country. He is not listening to Maria. He is not listening to the seniors who cannot afford to eat three meals a day. They are lucky if they can afford one meal a day.

Where is the affordability that the Liberals have created? They have not. They continue to spend money foolishly, sending it abroad without thinking about the children and the parents who want to feed their families and not have handouts.

**Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Madam Speaker, the motion before us cites that the Liberals have been in power for 11 years and that Canada is in an affordability crisis. Well, of course we support the motion, but the opposition's role is to hold government to account and also to be propositional. Opposition days are precious. They are an opportunity for the opposition to bring forward good proposals and force Parliament to vote on them. Right now, we have a mental health crisis and a housing crisis. We have six million people who are not attached to a doctor. The Conservatives talk about treatment and recovery. We support that, but they have no proposal on how to fix it.

Why are the Conservatives tying up the House all day without bringing forward a propositional solution to solve the problems that they outlined? I appreciate them outlining the problems, but—

• (1035)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès):** The hon. member for King—Vaughan.

**Anna Roberts:** Madam Speaker, I am not sure whether the member was in the House this week, but we were discussing the opportunity to cut the diesel tax. We discussed cutting taxes abroad. We have single seniors who are paying 10 times more in taxes than a couple earning the same amount of money. We expect those taxes to go down, but as long as the Liberal government continues to blow our money, we are never going to be able to afford it.

**Connie Cody (Cambridge, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank the member for her wonderful speech and for her good work with seniors.

Seniors on fixed incomes cannot negotiate a raise when groceries and heating go up. Many seniors spent their lives saving responsibly, only to watch inflation take away those savings. Does the member agree that the government's deficit spending negatively impacts a senior's retirement?

**Anna Roberts:** Madam Speaker, last week I had to sit down with a group of seniors who said to me, "You know, Anna, when we came to this country, we were promised a future. We were promised an opportunity to be able to retire with security and dignity." That is not happening today, and the reason it is not happening is that seniors are expected to live on a budget.

We have to make the difference between spending and understanding how much that budget is going to cost us at the end of the month. Liberals have no idea. They continue to spend hard-working taxpayers' dollars so foolishly that they do not understand the money has to be paid back. Who has to pay it back? It is the hard-working taxpayer.

**Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Madam Speaker, I agree with my colleague from Courtenay—Alberni that there is nothing to vote against in the motion.

I wonder, if we are going to have a day spent debating something foolish, if the member for King—Vaughan would agree with me that since we have more billionaires in Canada than ever, we should hold the world's first trillionaire to account. Elon Musk said yesterday that Alberta, Saskatchewan and Quebec should separate. I wonder if we could get a day's debate, thanks to the Conservatives, that since Elon Musk wants to live on Mars, we pass a resolution that we send him there as soon as possible.

**Anna Roberts:** Madam Speaker, I cannot speak for what Elon Musk wants to do, but I can tell the member one thing. The Conservatives on this side of the House are concerned about Canadians. Every single one of us, in every single one of our ridings, hears about the importance of affordability. Our concern right now is to give them a Thanksgiving and cut the taxes. Let us make it happen for everybody.

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I have quite a bit to say about the motion that the opposition has brought forward. I kind of wish I had more time on it, quite frankly, because there is so much there.

We as a government are very much listening to what Canadians are saying. We are listening and taking action. That is a very important thing to say at the outset, because virtually from day one, we have been bringing forward programs to deal with the affordability issue in Canada. Canada is not alone in dealing with affordability issues. As a government, led by the Prime Minister, we are addressing the issue head-on. I am going to list things we are doing to accommodate that.

Before I get into that, though, I will provide a bit of commentary. I have been around Parliament Hill for a number of years now, much like the leader of the Conservative Party, and never before have I seen this. I do not know how best to describe it. Is it laziness? I do not know what drove the Conservative Party to bring forward this opposition motion. The Green Party leader just indirectly made light of it, but it is true. There really is zero merit to this opposition motion. I like to think that the members of the opposition could be a bit more creative.

Conservatives talk about how long the Liberals have been in government. Let me tell them how long it has been since the Prime Minister was elected on April 28, 2025. That is 500 days. Contrast that to the over 5,000 days that the Leader of the Opposition has been around. If Conservatives want to do a comparison, I will do that. I will provide a detailed comparison so the people following this debate will better understand the degree of silliness and lazy opposition we see across the way and will see that we on the government benches are not only listening to what our constituents are saying but bringing their ideas and thoughts to the House of Commons, and actually acting on issues such as affordability.

I challenge the leader of the Conservative Party on why the Conservatives continue to vote against Liberal initiatives dealing with affordability while at the same time being critical of the government for not taking actions on affordability. The Conservative Party does not make any sense. It really and truly does not. We can stop and think about how Conservatives behave inside the chamber and their voting patterns. On the one hand, they say they are concerned about affordability and are listening to Canadians.

Let me give a good, tangible example. I have raised this one in the past. The Prime Minister and the government made a commitment to the children of Canada, 400,000 children. We are now making the national school nutrition program permanent. That program will provide food for the tummies of 400,000 children across the country. What kind of response have we gotten from the Conservative Party? We have had Conservatives call it a garbage program. We have had them say it is a non-existent program and that children are not being fed, but I can tell the House that it is having a real, tangible impact in every member's constituency.

● (1040)

As I have said before, this is not a new issue. It has been an issue since I was first elected to the Manitoba legislature, back in 1988. We have a Prime Minister who has seen the merit of having this

### *Business of Supply*

and bringing it in as part of affordability, ensuring that children are able to learn with some nutritious food as a part of their diet. There were many situations, even back in the eighties and nineties, when children were going to school on an empty stomach. We are doing two things at the same time, and the Conservatives voted against them.

Let us look at another initiative to give a break and deal with affordability. There is the program for first-time homebuyers, which got rid of the GST. That is a substantial saving for those individuals looking at purchasing a home for the first time.

It does two things. One is make it more affordable. The other is help build a stronger economy through our construction industry. That means more Canadian lumber and Canadian steel. It means having more engagement with our skilled labour and unionized workers.

I could talk about the dental program and how many seniors on fixed incomes have benefited from that particular program. These are seniors living in every member's riding across the country. That helps in terms of disposable income. It makes life more affordable. As with the school program, the Conservatives continue to vote against programs such as that.

We have the groceries and essentials benefit. It is a program that puts a substantial increase of money into the pockets of individuals who are at the middle and lower-end income levels, more so than the multi-millionaires in our society, to deal with the affordability issue.

Members of the Conservative Party talk about tax breaks. This Prime Minister and this government have delivered on tax breaks. The very first action taken by our Prime Minister was getting rid of the carbon tax. That was the first action by this Prime Minister under a new government following the election results in April last year. If we fast-forward to the spring economic update, there was the excise tax relief on gasoline. There is a great deal of benefit, and it is not only on the issue of affordability.

Canadians have recognized that one of the ways we can support the Canadian economy is by looking and travelling around Canada. Indirectly, it not only helps with the affordability issue but also encourages and promotes interprovincial and provincial travel for vacations and things of that nature.

There are a number of initiatives. I did not mention the income tax break from 15% to 14%, but now I will. There are 22 million Canadians who benefited from that tax break.

Those are initiatives that deal with just affordability, and they are not all of the initiatives, but all of them have taken place since we got a new Prime Minister and a new government for the people of Canada.

*Business of Supply*

• (1045)

A member opposite asked if I just got here. I guess I have a lot of similarities with the leader of the Conservative Party. Both the leader of the Conservative Party and I have been around for a long time. That is why I do not have a problem doing a comparison between the leader of the Conservative Party and the Prime Minister of Canada, who has been around for less than a year and a half. I have no problem at all doing that.

I will now go on to the second stage. I just talked about the issue of affordability. Do members want to talk about what has taken place? With the issue of affordability, we have the short term and the long term. The long term might be, for example, pharmacare or the dental program, or the national food program being made permanent by this Prime Minister.

There is a whole new area with regard to what we are doing to build an economy that works for all Canadians. Again, we have a Prime Minister and a government focused on building a stronger, healthier Canadian economy. Unlike what the Conservative leader says, it is not just words. Just as I illustrated regarding affordability, there are tangible actions putting money into the pockets of Canadians and increasing their disposable income. There are also tangible actions by this government and this Prime Minister that are building a stronger, healthier Canadian economy and society.

This is not by choice. All we have to do is look at the last federal election. If the Conservatives were listening to their constituents, they would have found out what I and every member of the Liberal caucus found out, which is that they are concerned about Donald Trump, tariffs and trade. These are things we should all be concerned about. At the very least, I can assure those who are listening that the government has been focused on them from day one.

I ask members to tell me the last time we saw a prime minister work as collaboratively with the provinces and indigenous leaders collectively, as well as other stakeholders, as we have seen this Prime Minister work over the last 18 months. I have been around, as I said, since 1988, starting in the Manitoba legislature, and there has not been a prime minister who has worked as collaboratively with stakeholders in my time as a parliamentarian. The results are there, and we continue to move forward.

We have been talking about Bill C-39. There has been a great deal of debate on Bill C-39. This bill is a very important aspect of the government's long-term and short-term agenda, because we made a commitment to Canadians that we were going to not only deal with the issue of affordability but build Canada for the future. We are talking about jobs for today and jobs for tomorrow to continue to make Canada the best country in the world to call home.

What have we done? We can take a look at some of the Prime Minister's very first actions. Even before he took his seat in the House physically, he was meeting and talking with premiers and trying to build that sense of collaboration that is necessary to be able to expand trade opportunities beyond the Canada-U.S.A. border.

Let us take a look at the mandate letters. Ministers in our front benches and others, even members of the Liberal caucus in the backbenches, are all on the same page. That page is to look at ways

we can expand and grow Canada's economy and at the same time protect our environment, making sure that we are doing it in the right way, protecting indigenous rights and working collaboratively.

The results are there. They are tangible

• (1050)

We took down the federal barriers. There should be one Canadian economy. The federal barriers have been taken down to facilitate more trade between our provinces and territories. Even today, we continue to work with and encourage the provinces to do likewise and take down those interprovincial trade barriers that they need to. That has been a very high priority for this Prime Minister.

We then passed Bill C-5 to allow major projects to get up and running. If we listen to the Conservatives and the silliness that comes over from them, they say we have not built any major projects, but they built 20,000 projects. What a bunch of garbage. Let us think about it. They say they built 20,000 projects. How many of them were over \$1 billion? What sort of collaboration took place between the provinces, indigenous people and stakeholders to develop major projects over \$1 billion?

When you talk about 20,000 projects, I am working on projects. I want the Seven Oaks General Hospital—

• (1055)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès):** I would remind the hon. member that I am not talking about anything.

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, that was a rookie mistake.

I talk about issues in my own riding. I would like the Tyndall Park Community Centre to get an expansion. I would like to see the Seven Oaks General Hospital get its emergency services restored. I am going to fight to ensure that it does. I am convinced that I will get the federal government to step up, and I want to see the province also step up on that issue.

If we take a look at health care, there are thousands of projects that the federal government is working on that will lead to houses being built, hospital capital investment and infrastructure across the province. What we are talking about in addition to that are the major projects worth multiple billions of dollars, not millions of dollars.

That is what we passed shortly after the last federal election. Over the summer, we created the Major Projects Office, where there are more than a couple of dozen projects. When we take a look at the projects, we are talking about, for example, LNG in the province of British Columbia. We are talking about copper mines in the province of Saskatchewan. We are talking about nuclear energy expansion in the province of Ontario. We are talking about the expansion of ports in Montreal. We are talking about mines in Atlantic Canada. We are talking about infrastructure and transportation expansion in northern Canada. We are talking about infrastructure in every region of the country. Those are major projects getting close to half a trillion dollars.

Speaking of half a trillion dollars, let us think about when the Prime Minister of Canada hosted the world to get investment coming into Canada just last month. We saw premiers, indigenous leaders and many other stakeholders, along with multibillionaires and people who are responsible for billions of dollars of potential investment. It was a historic meeting, where Canada received, through an investment summit chaired by the Prime Minister, half a trillion dollars because of the relationships he has developed and the efforts of our ministers and members of the caucus. That is completely unheard of in Canadian history.

I have not even talked about the issue of international trade. We have passed legislation for Indonesia, Northern Ireland and England. We have other deals in the works with the Philippines and India. We have 20 other trade and security agreements with other nations. This, and a whole lot more, has all been done in the last 500-plus days that Canada has had a new Prime Minister and a new government. This includes all of the initiatives that I talked about.

That is why I say with confidence that I do not have a problem comparing the current Prime Minister to any other prime minister I have had the opportunity to work with in terms of growing a stronger and a healthier Canadian economy.

**Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the speech by my colleague, but obviously I totally disagree. I have to highlight that he put a lot of emphasis on the last 500 days of the Prime Minister. That is fine. We remember when the former prime minister was elected in 2015. Do members remember what the member did 10 years later? He was once supportive of the carbon tax, and now he is proud to say that the new Prime Minister cancelled the carbon tax, the flagship policy of the Liberal government. He has paid respect to that and has said that things are fantastic now that we have Bill C-5 and Bill C-39. It is exactly 180° from what they have done in the last 10 years.

Does the member recognize that the 10 years under Trudeau destroyed the Canadian economy?

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, the simple answer to that is no. I disagree with the member opposite.

Having said that, since he wants to talk about the carbon tax, he should remember a fellow by the name of Erin O'Toole. Erin O'Toole was the leader of the Conservative Party, and Erin O'Toole supported a carbon tax. There was a change in the Conservative leadership, and it is not the first time that the Conservative Party changed its attitude towards the carbon tax.

The Liberal Party selected a new leader. That new leader listened to Canadians and came out with a very strong statement dealing with the carbon tax, making the decision to get rid of it. I would think that the Conservative Party would support that idea. Canadians understand that there is a new Prime Minister and that Prime Minister has an agenda to build a stronger and healthier Canada.

• (1100)

[Translation]

**Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I would like my colleague to explain the government's approach.

### *Business of Supply*

The Liberals have been in power for 11 years. This year, they are projecting another huge deficit, probably close to \$80 billion. The upcoming budget will once again run a deficit. The government likes to talk about the cost of living and the little measures it is putting in place, but the big measure it is proposing in terms of investment is to spend \$43 billion of public funds on a new oil and oil sands pipeline, which will be used to export oil but will do nothing to reduce the price at the pump for Quebeckers who are struggling to get by.

Can my colleague explain to me why the government is not using that money to help Quebeckers phase out fossil fuels and speed up electrification, which is something that has already begun?

I do not understand the government's approach. It is keeping us shackled to oil and making us even more dependent on it.

How can the government justify doing that?

[English]

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, it is important to recognize the Prime Minister and the Liberal government. I disagree when people make reference to the last 11 years. Canadians cannot be fooled. The Prime Minister has been in office for just over 500 days now. Leaders of political parties provide leadership on issues related to policy.

Going forward, the Prime Minister and the government will deal collaboratively with the provinces. We have hydro in the province of Quebec, where there was a major announcement and a historic amount of money invested in hydro development. In the province of British Columbia, we are working collaboratively with a different political party. We also have huge investments in two major projects, the Pacific link project and the LNG phase two expansion. Cumulatively, we are talking a great deal of money, going into the multiple billions of dollars, which is going to create tens of thousands of jobs directly, not to mention many others indirectly.

**Harb Gill (Windsor West, CPC):** Madam Speaker, a family should not need a spreadsheet, three government programs and a prayer to make it through a month. Simply living in Canada has become complicated and expensive.

If a Canadian works full time, pays taxes and still cannot afford a home, groceries and a future, can my colleague, who has spent 38 years in this House, tell that Canadian exactly what he is doing wrong such that he cannot get ahead?

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, I have not been here that long. I have actually been here for less time than the leader of the official opposition.

*Business of Supply*

Having said that, I can assure the member that every member of the Liberal caucus is focused on the importance of a job. Even with what is taking place between Canada and the U.S.A., we have still seen a net increase in job numbers of well over 100,000 in the last 18 months. That is with all the turmoil going on with the Trump tariffs and trade issues. It is important that we stay on an agenda that will see us grow our economy and deal with issues like affordability.

**Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Madam Speaker, the parliamentary secretary keeps mentioning LNG Canada as a great investment. Yes, it is a \$33-billion project, and it is true that the Prime Minister stood side by side with David Eby, Premier of B.C. He has so much in common with the Prime Minister. David Eby inherited a surplus of \$1 billion in 2022 when he took office. He is a miracle worker. In four years, he has converted it to a deficit of \$14 billion. His government has subsidized LNG Canada, and so has the federal government. The federal government deficit went from \$48 billion under the Prime Minister to over \$78 billion. Canada's debt is now over \$1 trillion. At the same time, these two wonderful leaders, who claim to be climate champions, are driving up greenhouse gas emissions.

The only Canadian thing about LNG Canada is its name. It is no surprise that it is buying its steel from China; it is owned by PetroChina. From the get-go, the parts for the LNG plant have been fabricated in China. They are all foreign companies. There is not one Canadian owner of LNG Canada.

• (1105)

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, there are two issues. The first one is in regard to debt. I am very sensitive to deficits. One of the things I look at, because it is something we should all take a look at, is our credit rating. If we look at the G7 countries, the most industrialized countries, we will find that Canada's credit rating is better than virtually all of them. One might be better than ours, but we can manage our finances and build a stronger and healthier Canadian economy and society at the same time.

This is not a time in which we should be cutting back and preventing projects from taking place. The projects we are talking about will provide not only jobs for today but also jobs for tomorrow and all sorts of economic opportunity, not to mention revenue into the future.

**Mel Arnold (Kamloops—Shuswap—Central Rockies, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the parliamentary secretary provides us so much fuel for questions for him that I am going to run out of time even explaining some of them in point form.

He talked about affordability measures, which we opposed simply because those affordability measures added to the unaffordability crisis that we are in right now. He was first elected in 1988, he stated. He has been with the Liberal government for almost 11 years, and we have seen the cost of its ever-increasing deficits. The Liberals' original prime minister, Trudeau, promised a tiny deficit of I think \$15 billion. They have blown through that, year after year after year. Now we have trillions of dollars in debt.

The parliamentary secretary talked about building the economy, but we have seen what the Liberals are doing. They are building an

economy for Liberal and Brookfield friends. Will he agree and admit that Canada is in an affordability crisis?

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, I have a couple of quick points. One is that there seems to be a preoccupation with how long I have been a parliamentarian. I can assure the member, and I will defend the leader of the official opposition, that there is a role for career parliamentarians. What is important is that we serve our constituents first and foremost, something that I take a great sense of pride in. They are my first priority and they always will be my first priority.

In regard to the other issue, the member can look at the seniors' dental program. That is a program that the Conservatives opposed.

**Braedon Clark (Sackville—Bedford—Preston, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his service. He was elected to the Manitoba legislation first in 1988, as he mentioned. It was the year I was born, a lovely year. I thank the member for his lifetime of wisdom.

Could he touch on the importance of trade as it relates to affordability, and our efforts on the trade system in general?

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, Canada is a trading nation. We need to have trade. That is why it is so critically important that the Prime Minister continue to push, along with our Minister of International Trade, our Minister of Agriculture and others, to expand trade opportunities by looking outside of Canada.

[Translation]

**Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette—Manawan, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I would like to inform you that I will be sharing my time with my colleague and friend, the hon. member for Jonquière—Hébertville—Pays-des-Bleuets.

Both inflation and the housing crisis are hitting older Canadians particularly hard. The cost of living continues to climb, yet many seniors are living on fixed incomes so their purchasing power is eroding. A few months ago, Radio-Canada broadcast a report on retirees who were no longer able to pay the rent at their retirement home. It was reported that, since January 2025, Quebec's administrative housing tribunal has ordered the eviction of at least 30 tenants in private retirement homes across the province for unpaid rent. That is just for the first half of the year. Given that 53% of people aged 65 and over live on less than \$35,000 a year and that a third of older people have less than \$25,000 a year at their disposal, it is clear that the ability to pay \$1,680 a month for a room, not including services or meals, is by no means a given. The report also demonstrated that the situation is difficult even for those who are better off. For example, rent for a one-bedroom apartment, with services, can be as much as \$3,900 a month. This is a major social problem.

*Business of Supply*

A Leger poll for Le Journal de Montréal found that a majority of Quebecers aged 50 and up are worried about not having enough money for retirement. As an example of this reality, the article tells the story of a woman who was a personal support worker before she had to care for her father and then her husband while they were ill. The article says that now, at 69, she finds herself in a very financially insecure position. With rent and food prices soaring, the Quebec pension plan, the guaranteed income supplement and old age security no longer provide enough income.

According to the Association québécoise de défense des droits des personnes retraitées et préretraitées, half of those aged 60 and up live below the viable income threshold as defined by the Institut de recherche et d'informations socioéconomiques.

Le Journal de Montréal reports that 24% of households made up of people aged 65 and up live in housing that is considered unacceptable because it fails to meet CMHC's three standards for affordability, suitable size and adequacy. I would remind members that CMHC is the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

At a time when homelessness in general is on the rise throughout Quebec and Canada, homelessness among seniors is a growing issue. The Observatoire québécois des inégalités indicated that, based on the count conducted on the night of October 11 to 12, 2022, it is estimated that 6.5% of people who are experiencing visible homelessness were aged 65 and older and 29% were between the ages of 50 and 64.

La Presse published an article on this sad subject a few weeks ago entitled "Homelessness crisis - On the street for the first time at age 65, 70 and 75". It begins as follows, "Difficult to quantify but impossible to ignore: The Quebec commissioner of health and well-being is concerned about the fact that an increasing number of seniors in Quebec are becoming homeless for the first time in their lives. People on the ground are describing the situation as a humanitarian crisis."

Speaking of homelessness, I would like to remind the House that over 12,000 people in Quebec are homeless. What was once a big city problem has now spread to all regions of Quebec. People are suffering. They are hungry. They are at risk every day and they are dying. As we, unfortunately, learned yesterday, two homeless people have lost their lives. Of course, I want to express my deepest condolences those individuals' loved ones on behalf of my party and all members of the House, I am sure.

Quebec's new government and its new premier are making the fight against homelessness a national priority. I wish the Prime Minister would follow their lead.

Just today, La Presse published an editorial under the headline, "The homelessness crisis: On the street, from the cradle to the grave". The article reads, "Women, children, seniors. Homelessness affects everyone. Across the province, there are 12,077 people experiencing homelessness, a 20% increase in three years." It also reminds us that "the proportion of homeless people aged 50 and over is 35.5%. Of those individuals, 17% were experiencing homelessness for the first time."

Urgent action is therefore needed. This is a national emergency, and we are calling on the government to do so much more.

• (1110)

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, or OECD, Canada ranks among the industrialized countries reporting the sharpest drop in purchasing power in retirement. Its net pension replacement rate is 47.3% of pre-retirement income. In other words, the transition to retirement involves a significant drop, by more than half, in the average standard of living.

In comparison, the OECD average is 65.5%. In other words, when people here reach retirement age, their income is halved, while in other countries, on average, people retain two-thirds of their income. Of the 45 countries studied, Canada ranked 39th on coverage provided by mandatory public and private plans, far behind countries like the Netherlands at 86.6%, Spain at 80.6%, Portugal at 73.8% and Austria at 74.1%. Canada even placed behind the United States, which came in at 50.5%, despite the fact that income inequality is nevertheless very pronounced there, as we know.

We must act now. Seniors need better protection against a decline in their standard of living. In Quebec, nearly four in 10 people aged 65 and older rely on the guaranteed income supplement to meet their needs.

Historically, poverty among seniors declined thanks to government transfers. However, since the 2000s, the situation for seniors has been deteriorating relative to that of other age groups. This trend can be attributed in part to Ottawa's decision to de-index the old age security pension from wage growth. In 1971, OAS represented 20% of the average industrial wage. Today, it is only 12%. It has fallen from 20% to 12%.

To correct this injustice, the Bloc Québécois has been calling for an increase in this benefit for several years. In 2023, Justin Trudeau's government agreed to an increase, but only for people aged 75 and older, leaving out 1.1 million Quebecers aged 65 to 74 and thereby creating two classes of seniors. Since then, the Bloc Québécois has been calling for this increase to be extended to people aged 65 to 74. Before the last election, a motion to that effect had even been passed in the House of Commons during a minority Parliament. The government, however, refused to act on it.

Today, the Bloc Québécois is back on the offensive. My colleague and friend, the member for Vallée-du-Haut-Saint-Laurent, introduced Bill C-261, which seeks to increase old age security by 10% for seniors aged 65 to 74 and to raise the employment income exemption for the calculation of the guaranteed income supplement by \$1,500. This bill is essentially the same as the one introduced by my friend and colleague, the member for Shefford, in the previous Parliament, and which was supported by a majority of members through a motion in the House.

The debate on this bill has just started. The position taken by Liberal MPs, who now hold a majority, will serve as a true test of their credibility regarding their commitment to the dignity of seniors and affordability. Obviously, the response to inflation, the housing shortage, particularly the shortage of affordable and public housing, and the loss of purchasing power among the most vulnerable goes beyond the scope of this bill.

### *Business of Supply*

For now, unfortunately, the government is more interested in shielding multinational corporations that use tax havens from taxation, propping up the fossil fuel industry with tens of billions of dollars in subsidies, and skyrocketing its military spending. U.S. President Donald Trump is scary, but that is no reason to bow down to him, and it should not be used as an excuse to neglect the most vulnerable people, particularly seniors who are hard hit by inflation and, of course, people experiencing homelessness.

Unfortunately, Quebec still depends on decisions made here in Ottawa, where concern for social inequality, homelessness, and the precarious situation of seniors appears far less pronounced. In a context of fiscal imbalance and the concentration of financial resources at the federal level, Quebec's ability to act remains limited, and there is no denying that we are truly not masters in our own house. I hope my colleagues from Quebec will take note of that.

• (1115)

**Eric St-Pierre (Honoré-Mercier, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Joliette—Manawan for his speech. My father lived in Joliette; it is a very nice city.

Yesterday was Energy Efficiency Day. I would like to ask my colleague a question. Can he explain the connection between energy efficiency and affordability and how that benefits Quebecers?

**Gabriel Ste-Marie:** Madam Speaker, there is obviously a lot of work to do when it comes to energy efficiency. The Bloc Québécois believes that energy efficiency relates to the environment and climate change. In Quebec, we are fortunate to have clean electricity, which is basically produced by hydro power. That is a big advantage, and we have a role to play in the economy of tomorrow.

We think it is unfortunate that, here at the federal level, most of the funding to support energy development goes to western Canada's oil and gas industry. There was talk of \$43 billion for a new pipeline. We do not think that is the right way to go when it comes to developing the economy of tomorrow.

There is still a lot of work to be done when it comes to energy efficiency. This includes, for example, better home insulation, more efficient energy use and energy conservation. The federal government used to have programs in place in this area, and we would like those programs to be reinstated. That would be a step in the right direction.

• (1120)

**Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Joliette for another well-researched presentation. His experience as a CEGEP teacher shines through. He may return to teaching one day, but that is for the voters to decide.

On that note, next week, the member for Joliette and I will be celebrating the 11th anniversary of our first election to the House of Commons. He witnessed both the Trudeau years and the famous 500 days that the member for Winnipeg North speaks of with such fervour.

My question for my colleague from Joliette is this: What are his thoughts on the government's present characterization of the Trudeau decade, given that three-quarters of those people were

around when Mr. Trudeau was, regrettably, Prime Minister of Canada?

**Gabriel Ste-Marie:** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague and friend for his question and his speech. It is true, time flies. Where did those 11 years go? There is still a lot of work to be done.

Of those 11 years, 10 were under the Trudeau government, a period marked by significant spending aimed at reducing poverty and improving affordability. Some examples include child benefits and the reinstatement of housing investment. However, I feel that housing affordability has ultimately worsened. In my speech, I spoke about homelessness. Unfortunately, over the course of those 10 years, homelessness has increased dramatically. Housing has become far less affordable. While there was undoubtedly a genuine desire to improve the situation, some of the policies may not have been sufficiently grounded in facts and statistics. Despite relying on expert advice, we have ended up in a situation where people who are struggling to make ends meet have seen their circumstances worsen. That is a problem.

I hope that the current Prime Minister, together with ministers from the previous government, will be able to put forward measures, in the next budget, for example, to address the situation, particularly with regard to homelessness and the housing crisis.

**Karim Bardeesy (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I appreciated my colleague's speech and especially the fact that he focused on homelessness, which he also did yesterday during question period.

In my riding of Taiaiko'n—Parkdale—High Park, we are building housing with health support services. We are also seeing rents continue to come down. Can my colleague describe the situation in Joliette—Manawan with respect to rents and the construction of housing with health support services?

**Gabriel Ste-Marie:** Madam Speaker, I thank the parliamentary secretary. I am fortunate to sit with him on the Standing Committee on Industry.

I applaud the fact that the government is investing in housing, particularly affordable housing and hopefully social housing. We will have to see how the new government in Quebec City will work with Build Canada Homes, the Crown corporation. We will see if that changes the situation. The announced amounts to date come from previous commitments. Some good things have been done, but there have been a number of obstacles. I am thinking in particular about the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, which refused to transfer land to build social housing. As a result, we continue to put—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès):** Resuming debate. The hon. member for Jonquière—Hébertville—Pays-des-Bleuets.

**Mario Simard (Jonquière—Hébertville—Pays-des-Bleuets, BQ):** Madam Speaker, it is always a bit daunting to rise after my colleague from Joliette, not only because he always does his research, but because people often mix us up. Could it be because of the names Joliette and Jonquière? I do not know. Maybe it is the beard. In any case, there is one easy trick for telling us apart: The member for Joliette has long hair and he is a communist, which I am not.

The Conservative opposition day concerns the affordability crisis. As I was looking over the motion this morning, I thought it would be worthwhile to revisit the notion of crisis. As members know, my former passion was philosophy. More specifically, Hannah Arendt's *Crisis in Culture* and Edmund Husserl's *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* come to mind. Both of them came up with a fairly exhaustive definition of the notion of crisis, which I believe could assist our discussion today.

If one wanted to give a very simple definition of the notion of a crisis, one might talk about a decisive moment or a turning point. Anyone who has a heart attack knows full well that that is a decisive moment and a turning point. The same is true in the case of appendicitis, because at least it can lead to a diagnosis. That is often how it is presented in the social sciences and philosophy. It means getting a diagnosis, but it also means discovering all the flaws that exist, whether in a social system, a political system, an economic system, a religious system or a scientific system. That is what the notion of a crisis allows us to do.

If one wanted to diagnose the crisis we are currently experiencing, a fairly straightforward conclusion would appear pretty quickly. What is causing runaway inflation today is a combination of geopolitical conflicts, which are putting pressure on energy prices, as well as the trade dispute with the United States. I think everyone would agree on that diagnosis today. However, let us take a closer look at the federal government's diagnosis.

Take, for example, the tariff crisis, which has had a significant impact on inflation. As we know, two sectors have been particularly hard hit by the tariff crisis: the aluminum and forestry industries, which are facing tariffs of 50% and 45% respectively. These industries have still not received any support. Together with forestry industry representatives, we proposed to the government a program to offset countervailing and anti-dumping duties. Everyone would have been happy if the government had put that program in place, but the government turned a deaf ear. It is the same thing with aluminum.

Until just recently, the forestry industry was asking the government to help forestry companies, which are really struggling. They have yet to see a single penny from the programs that have been put in place. The government agreed to lower the threshold to \$1 million, but these hard-working people have still not seen a penny from the federal government's support program. It is the same thing with the aluminum industry.

What would have helped in these extremely difficult circumstances? Negotiations with the United States. We have made compromises, such as the concessions we made in the area of culture, but we have not gotten anything in return.

### *Business of Supply*

Until very recently, I kept hearing many people in government say that we need to use more Quebec aluminum. I would tell them that it was a great idea, but that we were missing a crucial piece of equipment: a rolling mill. Eventually, the penny dropped and they realized the problem was more complicated than they originally thought. Aluminum ingots cannot be used in their raw form. They must undergo initial processing in a rolling mill. However, Canada does not currently have one. We rely on facilities in the United States. We are at their mercy. The government is starting to look into this.

I find the government's diagnosis of the tariff crisis highly problematic, and I will explain why. What has the government done in response to the tariff crisis? It has rolled out the red carpet for the oil and gas sector. Just look at all the tax breaks announced in recent budgets. There is a lot of talk about projects of national interest. There is the new pipeline that the government wants to promote as a project of national interest. Who does it actually serve? It is important to get the diagnosis right when we are in a crisis.

● (1125)

I want to remind the House that, unlike the aluminum and forestry sectors, the oil industry is one of the few sectors that has not been affected by the tariffs. For a sector with no tariffs in place, the government's diagnosis is that it could use another pipeline. Does the government think that building another pipeline will generate more wealth that will improve housing accessibility, grocery affordability or seniors' benefits? I am not really sure.

When we take a closer look, it is clear that this approach makes no sense. It makes no sense because the government's stated rationale for building a new pipeline is to reduce its dependency on the United States and develop new markets. Let me ask a fairly simple question: Where do our energy exports go? Fully 91% of our crude oil exports go to the United States. Last year, 91% of our exports went to the United States.

In committee, I asked representatives from international trade and deputy ministers if there was a plan, if there was any intention to bring that percentage down and if the pipeline would be used to develop new markets in Europe or Asia. They had no idea. Their plan is to build a new pipeline that will primarily serve U.S. interests. When we look at where our exports go, it quickly becomes clear that most of them go to the United States.

*Business of Supply*

The government's response was to say that it will build a pipeline for a tariff-free product to help the Americans while we are in the midst of a tariff crisis. This raises another fairly simple question: Who owns the oil companies? Who stands to profit from this? It turns out that 80% of the major oil companies are foreign-owned and 60% of those are American-owned. In other words, 60% of the big companies that want us to pay for pipeline infrastructure are owned by Americans. They do not want to pay for it themselves. The federal government's response is to build a pipeline that will support American energy security and benefit Americans.

The numbers are alarming. I feel like I am always saying the same thing, but I will say it anyway. From 2021 to 2024, we are talking about \$131 billion in profits for the oil sector. Of that \$131 billion, \$80 billion went to major shareholders in the oil and gas sector as dividends. That amounts to \$12.5 billion leaving Canada every year, with most of it going to the United States.

What is the message here? The government is saying that even in the midst of a tariff crisis, we should help the greedy oil and gas industry. That way, maybe they will be able to make even more money. Let me remind members that the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion project cost \$34 billion, and now they want to build a new pipeline that will cost \$43 billion. It is absolutely outrageous.

What is the smart thing for the federal government to do? In times of crisis, the public interest demands that we support the most vulnerable, not the greedy oil and gas industry, but the most vulnerable. Earlier, my colleague from Joliette—Manawan spoke about seniors. The public interest would require that we invest in the social safety net as well as in health care and education.

The Quebec government's share of health care funding is now 42% of its budget. The federal government would rather invest in the oil and gas sector than transfer money to the provinces to support the health sector. Supporting the health sector also means supporting mental health, which could even help tackle the difficult issue of the homelessness crisis. That is obviously not what the federal government is choosing to do.

What did the federal government decide to do in response to the crisis? It decided to invest in gas and oil. I really want my colleagues to think carefully about this. If all that money were used to invest in transfers to the provinces, to increase old age security, to invest in education and to support our most vulnerable, I think we would be much better off. We would be able to build homes and meet people's needs instead of meeting the needs of the greedy oil and gas sector.

I am out of time, so I cannot even get into the fiscal imbalance. I will sit down before I lose my temper.

• (1130)

[English]

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I understand that Bloc members are really opposed to any sort of oil pipeline development. However, I want to speak about the province of Manitoba, because the member made reference to health care and oil.

Manitoba is a have-not province, meaning that it receives equalization payments. Without receiving those equalization payments, the quality of the health care system in Manitoba would be nowhere near what it is today, unless we were prepared to put in much more of a tax load on the residents of Manitoba. Contrast that to the province of Alberta. Alberta has contributed billions of dollars every year. That helps finance Manitoba's health care.

If we can get things right such that we are protecting the environment and developing our natural resources, all of Canada benefits. Does the member agree with that principle?

• (1135)

[Translation]

**Mario Simard:** Madam Speaker, what good does it do the provinces to spend \$34 billion on a pipeline and now to invest another \$43 billion in a new pipeline? Does it generate such fabulous revenues that the provinces end up swimming in economic benefits? Definitely not.

The people raking in the profits today are the oil and gas companies. Why are they unwilling to pay for their own infrastructure? The one fundamental principle of capitalism is that a capitalist stakes their own money. They are the ones taking the risk. Now, the federal government is taking the risk on behalf of an industry, the oil and gas industry, that is destined to disappear within the next 30 years, using Quebecers' and Canadians' money. Worse still, the biggest unions recently appeared before the Standing Committee on Natural Resources and said they are seeing an increase in production in the oil and gas sector, but a decrease in jobs. The gall of these people, to be willing to invest in automating their processes so they can get by with fewer employees, but unwilling to pay one damn penny for their infrastructure. If the member for Winnipeg North is fine with that, I think we have a serious problem.

**Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC):** Madam Speaker, my colleague said that he was trying not to lose his temper. I would like him to know that anger is never a good adviser. I can share a few things I have learned in my 18 years in politics.

Earlier, my colleague raised a point about what we in the Conservative Party call “corporate welfare”, in other words, government favouritism. Taxpayers' money must be used for the benefit of taxpayers. When there is clearly a profit to be made, it is up to the private sector to step up. That is what our leader said in response to the very pertinent question from the member for Jonquière—Hébertville—Pays-des-Bleuets.

Would he agree that there are so many regulations and so many hoops to jump through that, for this project as for any other, the process ought to be much more efficient?

*Business of Supply*

**Mario Simard:** Madam Speaker, I was actually saying that I am coming around on the Leader of the Opposition. I do not think that the Conservatives are opposed to developing the oil and gas sector; far from it. However, they must be clear-eyed enough to see that it is not right for us, collectively, to take on infrastructure risks when the oil and gas companies are making record profits.

In July, Cenovus posted profits four times higher than in 2025. These people are making record profits, yet our project of national interest is supposed to help them make even more profits at a time when regular folks are struggling to find housing and seniors sometimes have to choose between medication and food. I think that is completely despicable.

**Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette—Manawan, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I congratulate my colleague on his excellent speech and the many points he made.

I would him to tell me more about the forestry industry and the problems it faces. At the northern end of my riding, the St-Michel sawmill has been closed since August, not of this year, but last year. It is currently in court, trying to find a solution.

What can the government do to help the forestry industry?

**Mario Simard:** Madam Speaker, the government is so out of touch. When we look at the number of jobs in each economic sector, the forestry sector ranks first. There are more jobs in Canada's forestry sector than in the energy sector and the auto sector.

What is the government doing to support this sector? Absolutely nothing. Some of the forestry companies in my riding are still waiting for the federal government to provide any assistance at all. That, too, is outrageous.

[English]

**Branden Leslie (Portage—Lisgar, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Toronto—St. Paul's.

Every day, Canadians across the country wake up, work hard and do their best to provide for their families, yet despite all of their efforts, far too many are finding it harder than ever to make ends meet. Whether it is the cost of groceries, housing, fuel or everyday essentials, families and seniors are feeling the pressure in every corner of the country.

I am hearing from constituents daily about the cost of living crisis. One constituent, Tracy, wrote to me recently, saying, “the cost of living has become extremely concerning. The costs of daily necessities leave so little to save, that the once realistic milestone of owning a home feels increasingly out of reach for young working Canadians.” She went on to say, “this is not the Canada I remember growing up in, and it is heartbreaking to watch the country I have always called home struggle in this way.”

Members have heard Conservatives say similar sentiments before, and this is exactly why: We go out and listen to our constituents and echo the things they tell us. There was a time in the country when the Canadian dream felt within reach for everyone who worked hard, when opportunity and the ability to build oneself a better life were not privileges for the few but realities available to all. Today, after a decade of Liberal spending, taxation, and over-

regulation, many Canadians are finding that dream harder and harder to achieve.

Another constituent, Cory, told me that he has a good job but his wages have not been rising fast enough to keep up with inflation, and he has had to make major cuts in his budget just to stay afloat. His grocery budget for the week keeps getting squeezed, as the cart is not as full as it used to be. He told me that items he once bought without a second thought have become occasional luxuries. Fresh meat, healthy snacks for his children and other everyday staples are now carefully weighed against the cost of everything else. He finds himself comparing prices, waiting for sales and putting items back on the shelf simply because the math no longer works. He told me that the stress is mounting for him, and he is not sure what to do.

According to the government's own data, financial challenges are the number one leading source of stress, more than work, personal health and relationships, with nearly half of Canadians surveyed saying they have lost sleep because of financial worries. That statistic should concern every member of the House.

When Canadians are lying awake at night wondering how they will pay the next month's rent, afford groceries or cover an unexpected expense, the consequences extend far beyond the bank account. Financial stress affects mental health, family relationships, workplace productivity and, of course, the overall quality of life. When nearly half of Canadians are losing sleep over money, we are no longer talking about isolated hardships. We are talking about an affordability crisis that is affecting the well-being, security and peace of mind of families and individuals across the country.

I know that there are countless others in my riding and across the country with stories just like Tracy's and Cory's, because they have told me face to face. They do not want government handouts. They want the government to stop making life harder and more expensive and to let them live the Canadian dream that they were once promised. They work hard. They save where they can. They make smart financial decisions just to find themselves unable to get ahead and are even falling behind through no fault of their own.

Young Canadians are delaying major life milestones because home ownership seems unattainable, a dream that can no longer be reached. Parents are struggling to keep up with rising household costs. Seniors living on fixed incomes are being forced to stretch every dollar further just to afford the absolute bare necessities of life.

*Business of Supply*

People are not asking for some sort of special treatment. They are just asking for the fair shot that they rightfully deserve. They want a government that understands their challenges, respects the value of their hard-earned money and creates the conditions for economic growth and opportunity.

We know that we can turn it around, because before the Liberal government, Canada had the wealthiest middle class in the world by median disposable income. However, the lost Liberal decade of poor fiscal responsibility and antidevelopment policies have sent businesses packing, stifled our resources and suppressed our wages. The Prime Minister likes to make lots of speeches and fancy announcements that sound like progress, but the Liberal playbook remains the same: tax, regulate, control, redistribute, borrow and spend and spend. The Liberals spend money they do not have out of the pockets of Canadians with not enough to give, saddling future generations of taxpayers with the burden of paying the interest on the debt that they are accruing today.

● (1140)

My daughter Morgan turns one tomorrow. I do not know if I have the heart to tell her, but she, like every other Canadian, is saddled with over \$30,000 in federal debt that she is responsible for, thanks to the reckless spending of the Liberal government. The only reason I might have the heart to tell her is because she is not going to yet understand, but every Canadian that can should be outraged. After 11 years, the results of these policies are plain to see. Canadians are paying more and getting less. They pay more for groceries, more for housing, more for energy, more for transportation, more in taxes and more for virtually every essential part of daily life.

When governments run up deficits, driving up borrowing and putting obstacles in the way of investment and development, the consequences do not remain confined to this House. In fact, they are very rarely felt by those ultimately responsible. They are felt at kitchen tables across this country. They are felt by families. They are felt by the business owners struggling to keep the lights on, pay staff and not lay people off because they are friends and neighbours. Canadians understand the simple truth. Governments cannot spend their way to prosperity. Wealth must first be created by workers, entrepreneurs, innovators, farmers, tradespeople and resource producers, not by more bureaucracy and more bailouts.

Canada should be the most prosperous country in the world. We are blessed with abundant natural resources, a highly educated workforce, strong institutions and some of the most innovative people anywhere on this planet, yet instead of unleashing our potential, Liberal policies have stood in the way of it. The solution is not more government spending. The solution is economic growth. The solution is creating an environment where businesses can invest and profit, workers can thrive with increasingly good and better wages, and families can keep more of what they earn. Unleash our entrepreneurs and workers and let us watch the wealth that can be created for this country.

That means pursuing responsible fiscal policy and bringing government spending under control. It means lowering the tax burden on hard-working Canadians and job creators. It means removing barriers that prevent housing from being built and ensuring that

homes can be constructed faster and more affordably. It means streamlining approvals for major projects, attracting investment back to Canada and allowing our resource sector to responsibly develop the natural wealth that has long been a source of prosperity for communities right across this country.

We should be building things once again in this country. We should be building homes. We should be building energy infrastructure. We should be building mines, factories, ports, roads and projects that create good, high-paying jobs and generate economic activity. Every stalled project, every delayed approval and every business that leaves Canada represents lost opportunity for Canadian workers and families.

We should also recognize that affordability and productivity go hand in hand. A country cannot sustainably improve living standards if it is not creating wealth. We cannot distribute prosperity that does not first exist. The path to higher wages, stronger communities and better public services begins with a stronger economy. Above all, we should be restoring the principle that if somebody works hard, plays by the rules, contributes to their community and gives back, they should be able to build a good life for themselves and their families.

Canada's best days do not have to be behind us. We can build a country where home ownership is attainable again, where hard work is rewarded, where investment is welcomed and where future generations can look forward to a better quality of life than the generation before them once again. That is the promise of Canada. It is the promise that Tracy, Cory and so many people across my riding and across this country feel is slipping away. I firmly believe that it is not too late to right our course and get back to the strong middle class that we once had. The work starts here. It starts with us.

Let the people who want to build this country up get to work and get government out of the way. It starts by recognizing that we are, in fact, thanks to the Liberal government's reckless spending and awful policies, in an affordability crisis right now. It is time for this place to do better for the Canadians we represent.

● (1145)

**Eric St-Pierre (Honoré-Mercier, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I have had the honour of working with my colleague from Portage—Lisgar for the last year and a half on the environment committee, and we are currently studying affordability and energy efficiency measures. Our government introduced a national electricity strategy, and there is support for up to one million Canadians on energy efficiency measures.

Does the member agree with providing support to Tracy and Cory with energy efficiency measures to save money on their energy bills?

**Branden Leslie:** Madam Speaker, I must admit I am a big fan of my colleague from across the way. I appreciate working with him on the environment committee.

He mentioned yet another big, grand announcement the government has made and that somehow we are supposed to believe it is going to lead to some sort of outcome sometime in the future. However, the reality is that the affordability crisis is striking at the hearts of family homes right now.

Interestingly, from that committee testimony we learned some interesting facts about those home energy retrofits that the government is spending hundreds of millions of dollars on. In fact, they are not leading to homes being retrofitted. Also, the outcomes of those retrofits are a lot less than it had promised.

To ensure Canadians have the money to pay their bills, government needs to get out of the way and not spend more money it does not have.

• (1150)

**Dave Epp (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I understand that my colleague's roots are in the farm fields of Portage—Lisgar, just as mine are from those in Chatham-Kent—Leamington. We both share professional experience in ag organizations prior to our parliamentary life here. Where we diverge, however, is that his daughter is younger than both of my granddaughters, but that is not for debate today.

On Tuesday, we debated our opposition day motion on diesel pricing in the House. I talked to my brother who had been harvesting tomatoes and soybeans yesterday, as well as today. His diesel costs are up 84%.

With my colleague's knowledge of how our food chain value works, could he share how 84% higher diesel prices from a year ago are impacting the lives of his constituents every day?

**Branden Leslie:** Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the kind words.

It is a huge challenge, because people do not understand farming at scale. If we are running a combine right now, and have a particularly late harvest in parts of Manitoba and Saskatchewan, we are running at \$250 an hour in diesel running all day with multiple combines. That is our profit at the end of the year going up in smoke. This is not something that can be eaten, particularly by grain producers. The price is the price and it is stubbornly low. Inputs for fertilizer and every other input throughout the value chain in creating that crop has been very high in the lead-up to that harvest. This is a real dagger in the profitability of our family farms.

We must remember we are a family farming nation. Of all the farms in Canada, 97% are family farms. It turns out that anybody who lives in a rural area knows that when our farmers have a good year our communities have a good year because of the donations and purchases made across our community. That is evident when our farmers are having a good year, and that is why it is so vital.

It is a shame the government did not support our important motion on diesel yesterday to try to lower costs not just for farmers, but for all of the truckers who are transporting that food and every

### *Business of Supply*

other processed good to grocery store shelves for Canadians across this country.

[Translation]

**Mario Simard (Jonquière—Hébertville—Pays-des-Bleuets, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I just listened to my colleague's response. I wonder if he is aware that the Auditor General released a report on the excise tax today. In it, she pointed out what everyone understands: The wealthy benefit the most. I realize, as he correctly pointed out, that we need targeted measures for farmers and truckers. Their livelihoods must not be jeopardized by the rising cost of diesel and gas.

That said, we realize that a one-size-fits-all approach ends up helping the wealthiest while leaving behind those who are genuinely in need.

Should we not find a more coherent approach to reducing fossil fuel taxes?

[English]

**Branden Leslie:** Madam Speaker, I will reject elements of that because I can watch the supply chain work. Let us take a chicken barn producing chickens. It takes diesel to transport them to the processor and the grocery store at very high prices. People are then putting that chicken back on the shelf because they cannot afford it and are trying to make tough decisions about what healthy food to put on their children's plates. It is directly impacting everybody across Canada, at any income level. Those with the lowest incomes who are facing high food prices are making difficult choices for their children.

**Leslie Church (Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretaries of State for Labour, for Seniors, and for Children and Youth, and to the Minister of Jobs and Families (Persons with Disabilities), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise in the House today on a topic that I think is important to so many Canadians and their families, to talk about the plan that this government has brought forward. It is a plan to grow our economy, to strengthen our country and to invest in families and people who help power our nation. In speaking to the House today, I wanted to start by talking a bit about families and our government's plan to support families at a time when we know that there have been challenges. These challenges have stemmed from economic conditions around the world, from global conflict and from a tariff war not of our choosing, one that is unjustified and that we continue to rally against. However, at heart, families are at the core of Canada.

### *Business of Supply*

From day one, this government has invested in the types of supports to make life a little easier. Our very first act on taking office was a tax cut for 22 million Canadians. We followed that up by introducing a new groceries and essentials benefit, a payment that actually puts money back into the pockets of Canadian families, upwards of \$1,800 a year at present.

We have also taken the time to reinvest in early learning and child care. This is a critical support, a new program over the last few years in this country, stretching from coast to coast to coast, that I often describe, when I meet with people in my community, as a triple threat. It is a triple threat, because it is the type of program that gives our kids the very best start in life by offering them access to early learning, but it also helps save costs for families. In Ontario, it has reduced the cost of child care by, on average, over \$10,000 for a family with a child in care. It has also helped our economy by allowing parents, but predominantly women, to move back into the workforce at the time of their choosing. This has been a significant policy, in terms of how it has actually helped families reduce their annual costs, and it has helped over 900,000 children coast to coast get that best start in life.

We also continue to support and grow our dental care program. Over five million Canadians have access to dental care in a way that they did not a few short years ago. I have had seniors in my riding call this program a game-changer and say that they are getting dental care that they have put off for years as a result of the high cost of getting oral health care.

These supports are intended to make a difference in the lives of Canadians in many different ways, but they do not stop there. We are also very much focused on investing in young people and youth. I can turn to something like the national school food program, a new program. Canada was the last G7 country to introduce a national school food program. Just this spring, our government made it permanent. That school food program puts upwards of \$800 back into the pockets of families, who save on groceries that they would be purchasing for their children each day, and it ensures that all kids are going to school with food in their tummies, able and ready to learn. It is a program that makes a difference in every community. Over 80% of public schools across the country now take part in the national school food program. That is an incredible achievement and one that benefits families in their pocket-books but also in ensuring that our kids have the very best and are able to make the most of their time at school.

However, if we go a little farther in life, I think about some of the work that our government has been doing to support young people in their education, and in post-secondary education in particular. We have extended Canada student grants, so that now over 570,000 students across the country have access to grants of \$4,200 per year to support their studies. These are grants that they do not have to repay. At a time when we know that there are governments in this country, provincial governments, that are cutting back on financial assistance for students, we are actually investing in students and investing in the supports that will help them be successful in post-secondary, at a time when we also know that they have high costs associated with taking time to go through that education.

• (1155)

We have also made a generational investment in pathways into the skilled trades. For students looking to build a career of their choice, there are incredible opportunities available right now in the skilled trades. It is why we have set out new supports to help apprentices who are going through training, with an additional \$400 a week to support them while they are in their studies. There is also a \$5,000-completion bonus to help them get through to the end of their program. There are also supports for employers to create incentives to hire first-year apprentices.

We know that these are the opportunities of the future. They are great jobs with benefits and with highly skilled and dynamic careers associated with them. We are really putting our focus on helping young people see the skilled trades in a new light and recognize them for what they are today: highly skilled jobs where they would work on some of the biggest projects and on major infrastructure across the country, and with a requirement of deep technical knowledge and skills. They would have a long future ahead of them in terms of a great career they can build going into the skilled trades.

I also want to touch on an area that is of particular importance to me personally. Our government is working on assisting the many Canadians who have a disability, to ensure that they have access to employment and financial supports in their day-to-day life. We know right now that about 27% of Canadians over the age of 15 identify as having a disability. That is about eight million people. Our government has been active in supporting bringing down barriers for persons with disabilities in every aspect of their daily life, whether it is ensuring that we have more accessible buildings and standards, providing financial supports such as the new Canada disability benefit or bringing down barriers to employment, which we know exist.

Right now, the employment rate for persons with disabilities in Canada is only 67%, versus about 83% for the general Canadian population. That gap between 67% and 83% represents about a million people in Canada today whose potential could be unlocked if we could find ways to reduce barriers to employment. This is a labour force of people who are waiting to be included.

There is work we are doing. We have an annual investment of about \$100 million for the opportunities fund for persons with disabilities, which helps Canadians find and keep jobs by funding community organizations to deliver skills training, wage subsidies and job placement. We also have an enabling accessibility fund, which has supported over 8,000 projects since 2015 to help thousands of Canadians with disabilities gain access to programs, services and employment opportunities.

I have spoken a lot with organizations, such as the Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work, Easter Seals, the CNIB and Spectrum Works. These are community organizations, national organizations in scope, that work with the disability community and work to create employment opportunities. They are very much partners with the work we are trying to achieve as a government to bring down barriers and unlock the potential of persons with disabilities who are seeking to join the workforce.

All the investments we are making constitute an investment in our social fabric and our social infrastructure as a country. They are foundational supports that go hand in hand with building a strong economy. A strong economy depends on people who can be included in the workforce, who have the education and the skills needed to have those jobs of tomorrow and who are going to help us in so many ways to build the projects and build the economy, as we are embarking on right now as we invest in major projects, infrastructure, housing and a building agenda that involves building communities strong from coast to coast to coast.

For that reason, I would urge the members opposite to consider the plan the government has put forward, and I thank them for the opportunity to debate this motion today.

• (1200)

[Translation]

**Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette—Manawan, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I want to commend my colleague on her speech.

I would like to know what the government intends to do to support seniors' purchasing power. Seniors are facing challenges when it comes to affordability. Since the 2000s, the poverty rate among seniors has been rising, mainly because they live on a fixed income that is not sufficiently indexed to inflation. That is particularly true for old age security benefits. The Trudeau government increased the OAS for seniors aged 75 and up, but it failed to do the same for seniors between the ages of 65 and 74, and this created two classes of seniors.

One of my Bloc Québécois colleagues has introduced a bill seeking to index and increase the OAS for younger retirees between the ages of 65 and 74.

What does my colleague think about that?

• (1205)

[English]

**Leslie Church:** Mr. Speaker, as a government, we have supported seniors every step of the way, including, as the member mentioned, by increasing OAS payments for seniors over the age of 75. That is very much a policy that is guided by the evidence we have, that as they age past 75, our oldest senior adults among actually us incur greater costs of care and of health care. That was the motivation behind ensuring that the seniors who face those highest costs have a bit of additional support.

We have also increased the GIS, benefiting over a million seniors, and have expanded the earnings exemption over time. We continue to support seniors every way we can.

**Scot Davidson (York—South Simcoe, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, politicians can talk a glass eye to sleep, but I have a simple question. We like to hear yes-or-no answers. Most of the time, and there are three clocks in here, the Liberals would not even tell us what time it is. However, I have a simple question for the member: Does she believe there is an affordability crisis in Canada, yes or no?

**Leslie Church:** Mr. Speaker, I think the actions of our government over the past year and a half demonstrate that we are very concerned about the costs that are facing Canadians, and we have done many things in our power to reduce those costs.

### *Business of Supply*

I would urge my colleague and friend across the way to get on board and support things such as child care in our home province, which is saving families right now over \$10,000 a year for a child in care.

**Chi Nguyen (Spadina—Harbourfront, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, that was a fantastic speech by my colleague. We are both representatives of the incredible city of Toronto. One of the pain points in Toronto in terms of affordability is around child care. I am wondering if the member could speak to how and what we are doing as a government to ensure that families have access to such important economic infrastructure.

**Leslie Church:** Mr. Speaker, in fact, just last week, the Minister of Jobs and Families, along with her counterpart in Ontario, announced a four-year extension of the early learning and child care program in Ontario. That is going to create stability in terms of the fees for families in the coming months, ensuring that the average cost of daily child care is about \$19. It is also going to help us work towards the creation of additional spaces in Ontario, because we know there are so many families still looking to make sure they have access to a spot.

The demand is there, the need is there and we are there to support this program. We are urging the province to be as active and supportive as it can be as well.

**Harb Gill (Windsor West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the government proudly announces hundred of millions of dollars for affordability, while the family at the kitchen table keeps cutting groceries.

Can the member opposite explain why over two million people line up at food banks every month, and if we include churches, synagogues and temples, that number climbs to three million people? Why are all these people going to food banks if the government's efforts are so great?

**Leslie Church:** Mr. Speaker, I just want to take a moment to point out that, in addition to helping families address the costs they face on an individual basis, we have also introduced Canada's first-ever national food security strategy, because part of our addressing the cost of food in this country involves our ensuring that we actually have a more competitive, more affordable and bigger, broader supply of food in this country. That is why we are putting \$3 billion towards food terminals and local food hubs and are ensuring that things like greenhouses can be built quickly and with immediate expensing incentives in place.

**Grant Jackson (Brandon—Souris, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Rivière-des-Mille-Îles.

Every decade, a new generation of young Canadians has grown up knowing what was expected of it. Over the last 11 years, however, these expectations have gone from standard practice to nearly unattainable or have come with significant strings attached. The deal that Canadians had has been broken. Now, families struggling with home ownership also have to contend with record grocery prices that have sent millions of Canadians to food banks.

### *Business of Supply*

Instead of stepping in to help, the Liberal government has tuned out the concerns of Canadians. It wants them to forget the past and pretend they have never had it so good. Those expectations are reinforced in the news we read, the media we consume and the footsteps of family members and peers around us.

Canadians go to school, get an education and gain work experience, all with the goal of finding a good-paying job so they can support themselves. They may not know exactly what they want to do, but they know the direction they are supposed to go in. After years of working, they buy a home and start a family, and thus the cycle begins again. Not everyone gets the same opportunities or follows the same path, but everyone has the opportunity to work towards this overarching goal, or at least they should.

However, since the election of Justin Trudeau, and of many of the Liberals who still sit on the other side of the aisle, by the way, the promise of home ownership for young Canadians has been pushed farther out of reach. Not only are Canadians farther away from home ownership, but millions are now struggling to afford even the basics. The housing and food affordability crisis has left many young Canadians and families feeling hopeless about their futures. To get out of this mess that the Liberals created, young Canadians need a marked departure from the policy practices of the last 11 years. They need a government that will work for them, not one that will tell them that they have never had it so good.

Young Canadians have every right to be frustrated by the hand the Liberal government has dealt them. A new survey by Remax found that the sacrifices Canadians are willing to make just to afford a home, and the numbers, tell an incredibly disappointing story. Sixty-five per cent of Canadians said they would have to make at least one compromise in order to afford a larger home or one that better suits the needs of their family.

Starting a family often requires more space. This is a simple truth, but the survey from Remax shows that to achieve that level of home ownership, Canadians are having to uproot their life and move away from the community and support structures they are part of, just to have their foot in the door. Others are taking a second job or turning to family for financial help in order to sacrifice savings down the road to get into the home that their family needs to get by.

These are difficult choices, and at a time when Canadians are forced to make these types of sacrifices, the Liberals continue to run massive inflationary deficits, piling onto our national debt and the billions of dollars spent every year going to bondholders to service it. This is not just abstract policy. It has consequences for the government's financial and fiscal ability to address the challenges that Canadians are facing.

While Canadians' picture of buying a home has gone from bad to worse, more and more are turning to their parents just to make ends meet. In a September survey by RBC, more than half of parents with adult children said that they had provided financial support to their kids in the last year. Among those providing support, more than half helped with groceries, while nearly a quarter helped with rent. Almost one-third of parents said that their adult children are not financially independent.

• (1210)

The vice-president of client segments at RBC, Lucianna Adragna, pointed to the rising cost of living and the affordability crisis as part of why we are seeing this trend. Her remarks sum up the situation perfectly: "Financial independence used to feel like a finish line where you graduate, get a job, move out and start paying your own bills. For many families, that path is no longer as linear."

This is the reality that faces young Canadians. Even after finding employment, many are unable to afford a place to live. Those who do move out are increasingly coming back to their aging parents to help cover their bills. These are not people who are not working. These are people who are working one and sometimes two jobs, and they still cannot get ahead.

What is the Liberals' solution? They claimed they would build housing at speeds and scales not seen in generations, but over the last 18 months, what have they actually done? They have built another housing bureaucracy, which is step one in any Liberal problem-solving plan, and then they have recycled announcements that they were using going all the way back to Justin Trudeau's first term.

The Liberals claim to have 19,000 homes under way through this new agency, but the minister recently admitted that only 2,000 are actually under construction.

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

**Grant Jackson:** Mr. Speaker, I am not done, as the member for Winnipeg North is heckling me. I am not sure there are any started in Winnipeg, by the way, but just 2,000 have shovels in the ground getting started after 18 months of the minister and his failed new bureaucracy.

Even CMHC data shows that housing starts are projected to fall to 203,000 by 2028. That level is less than half of what we need to restore housing affordability to the levels and prices we had in 2019, despite millions and millions of dollars, press conferences and sod-turning ceremonies for projects that never actually go anywhere. This is the cost of Liberal inaction and broken promises: Canadians fall further and further behind.

Sadly, the affordability crisis does not end at housing. Families are struggling to put food on the table. The cost of everyday necessities is forcing Canadians to change how they spend. Parents are helping their adult children pay for groceries. Young families who should be saving for their first home are watching more of their paycheques disappear at the grocery store. In fact, a recent Telus Health survey found that almost 40% of working Canadians described themselves as food-insecure.

*Business of Supply*

Ahead of Thanksgiving, the outlook from Dalhousie University's Agri-Food Analytics Lab is not encouraging. The cost of a family's Thanksgiving dinner is going up. A turkey dinner is \$35 and a ham dinner is \$36.

Rising diesel prices are now adding another cost to the food Canadians rely on. In southwestern Manitoba, farmers are facing an especially difficult harvest. Wet weather has made an already challenging season harder, and rising diesel prices are adding costs that they cannot control. Fuel and fertilizer are not luxuries in agriculture; they are essential inputs. Farmers cannot control the weather or the price at the pump, but the federal government does control how much it taxes the industries that create these products. We put forward a plan to remove these costs, and yesterday the Liberals voted it down.

When it comes to housing, Conservatives have answers. When it comes to affordable food, Conservatives have solutions. For the last 11 years, we have served in opposition, but we have also put forward measures designed to help struggling Canadians.

We proposed removing the GST on new homes up to \$1.3 million, saving homebuyers \$65,000. When it comes to putting food on the table, Conservatives have proposed practical measures to provide relief from rising diesel costs and strengthen Canadian domestic production. These are measures aimed at reducing costs for Canadians and making life easier for young families.

Families want to put food on the table, and they want to know that the work they put in today will allow them to build a better future tomorrow. These should not be unreasonable expectations in a country like Canada. The next generation deserves the same opportunity to build the life that previous generations worked toward.

It is time for a government that understands that responsibility and is prepared to act. It starts with the Liberals admitting that there is a crisis that they created. It is happening today. They need to get on board, vote in favour of this motion and then work to fix the problems they started.

• (1215)

[Translation]

**Linda Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to my colleague's speech.

I know that he is aware that it costs a lot to raise a family. I agree with him. I have children and grandchildren. It is very challenging. What does my colleague think about our measure to eliminate the GST on the purchase of new homes worth up to \$1 million?

I do not understand why the Conservatives voted against the Canada child benefit, which is a big help for families across the country. They also voted against \$10-a-day child care. Quebec has had a program like that for over 30 years, and we know that it increases women's labour force participation. The Conservatives also voted against that. There is also the national school food program. The Conservatives voted against that too.

How can our colleague claim to be concerned about affordability?

• (1220)

[English]

**Grant Jackson:** Mr. Speaker, there is a lot to unpack in that question, but the main point is that none of those initiatives go far enough, because there are still 2.5 million Canadians at food banks every month. The Liberals are wandering around with a “mission accomplished” banner, saying that everything is great, while we have families and children lined up at food banks. What does the member have to say to that? Obviously, what they have done is not enough. Why are they waving the “mission accomplished” banner? They need to get to work, solve the affordability crisis, put food back on the table in homes, not just in schools, and get people out of food bank lines.

[Translation]

**Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like my colleague to look at things from a slightly broader perspective because, clearly, one of the biggest factors affecting the price of groceries right now is the high cost of oil, of course, but more importantly, it is our dependence on oil. Building another pipeline will not bring down the cost of oil in Quebec. One way to reduce transport costs in Quebec would be to invest in the electrification of transportation.

For an individual, it is about eight times cheaper to charge an electric vehicle than to fill up with gas. If we also look at the rising cost of groceries, which is clearly due to droughts and floods, why would my colleague not propose helping people electrify their vehicles and their homes, as the Quebec government wants to do?

[English]

**Grant Jackson:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the technical nature of the member's question. To be quite honest with him, though, most people are not driving diesel vehicles. The cost of diesel prices going up is impacting farmers, whose equipment runs on diesel, and the truckers who ship the food.

There are examples of semi-tractor-trailers that are running on batteries, but the range is limited. I have yet to see a combine or tractor in the field running on batteries. When the technology gets there, that will be great. Maybe someday that will happen, but in the meantime, tractors and combines have to run on diesel fuel. We need to bring the cost of diesel fuel down so that food costs less at the grocery store in the member's constituency and everybody else's constituencies.

**Scot Davidson (York—South Simcoe, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I asked the member for Toronto—St. Paul's a simple question, and she really struggled to answer it, so I will also ask it of the member for Brandon—Souris. Does he believe there is an affordability crisis in Canada, yes or no?

*Business of Supply*

**Grant Jackson:** Mr. Speaker, yes.

**Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Moncton—Dieppe, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague on the opposite side indicated a “mission accomplished” banner. On this side of the House, we have never said such a thing, because we always want to put forward more measures to support Canadians.

I am wondering why the member opposite's party is always voting against the affordability measures that this government has brought forward.

**Grant Jackson:** Mr. Speaker, I think the member needs to check with her colleague, who listed all of the things she believes have solved the affordability crisis in her previous question. I will let the two of them on that side sort that out. They can check Hansard and figure it out.

The reason we vote against the Liberals' budgets is that they are massively overspending in areas that do not matter and are not providing real relief to Canadians. In fact, because of the inflationary nature of them, they are actually causing the affordability crisis to get worse. If the member and her government are capable of bringing forward a balanced budget that makes targeted investments to bring the cost of food, diesel and other items down, we would consider voting in favour of it, but until they get their spending under control, they are making the problem worse, not better.

[Translation]

**Linda Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise and speak today.

I am going to talk about measures that directly affect families, workers and seniors in my riding of Rivière-des-Mille-Îles. As a reminder, my riding covers Saint-Eustache, Deux-Montagnes, Boisbriand and Rosemère, in the Lower Laurentians, north of Montreal.

When I am in my riding, people talk to me about very practical issues. They talk to me about the cost of groceries, the price of gas, their mortgage or their rent. Parents talk to me about the cost of buying clothes at the beginning of the school year, about sports and packed lunches. Workers tell me that they are watching every dollar they spend.

I want to start by making one thing clear: I know that many families are finding things difficult at the moment, and I would never suggest otherwise. Our job, as a government, is to listen to them and help ease some of the pressure. That is what we are doing.

Let us talk about groceries. As members are aware, groceries are getting more and more expensive. A family with two or three children sees this right away when they get to the cash register. That is why our government created the Canada groceries and essentials benefit. The people who are entitled to it received a payment this week. This benefit is now helping more than 12 million Canadians. Twelve million Canadians is a lot. This year, an eligible family of four can receive up to \$1,900. A single person is entitled to receive up to \$950. In July, the regular benefits increased by 25%. In practical terms, a family in Saint-Eustache or Deux-Montagnes can use this money to buy milk, fruit, vegetables or meat. It is up to them. It can also be used to pay for household essentials. It can make it possible to buy groceries without constantly having to take things out of the cart. I used to own a grocery store. Seeing people having to

put items back when they get to the register because they cannot afford them is heartbreaking.

It will not fix everything, but we will keep going. It will help. When a family is counting every penny at the end of the month, this support really makes a difference.

There is another measure, the Canada child benefit. I want to mention it because it is likely one of the most important measures that our government put in place in 2016. This tax-free payment is deposited into the parents' bank account every month. Right now, an eligible family can receive up to \$1,800 per year for a child under the age of six. For children aged six to 17, the maximum is \$6,900. Believe me, this measure makes a big difference for families in Rivière-des-Mille-Îles.

In Quebec alone, nearly 892 families are receiving the Canada child benefit. Think about what that means in everyday life. It helps parents buy shoes when children grow too quickly. It helps them buy winter clothes. Winter is just around the corner. It helps pay for activities, fill the fridge or cover back-to-school expenses. It also helps the families who need it most.

Since the Canada child benefit was introduced, we have seen a significant decline in child poverty. Between 2015 and 2021 alone, at least 650,000 children were living below the poverty line. This is important because behind these numbers are children and families. There is a parent who might be sleeping a little better at night because they know they will be able to buy what their children need. To me, that is exactly what a government should do.

We also need to talk about children arriving at school in the morning. A child who is hungry will not be able to pay attention to what the teacher is trying to explain. It is as simple as that.

We have also implemented another measure, and it is a big one. It is the \$10 child care program. I am from Quebec, and I was fortunate enough to take advantage of child care services there. Back then, they cost \$5, but today they cost \$10. Now they are available across the country, and we continue to invest in them. This has a significant impact on women's labour force participation and makes everything much easier.

There is a big difference between Quebec and the rest of Canada when it comes to child care services right now, but we are working to make it available to everyone.

• (1225)

There is also the national school food program. We signed an agreement with the Quebec government to ensure that funds are paid directly to schools in order to guarantee that children in Quebec can have breakfast. The program is delivered through the Breakfast Club. We are investing \$65 million over three years so that Quebec schools can provide breakfast.

In Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, organizations such as the Breakfast Club are already doing fantastic work. Getting up early in the morning to pack the kids' lunches can be a real struggle. Parents have to get ready for work, drop some kids off at school and take some to day care. If we want children to start the day off right, we need to make sure their bellies are full. This is also an affordability measure.

Now I would like to talk about workers, because affordability is not just about providing support for children. It also means making sure that going to work is always worthwhile. The Canada workers benefit is a measure that provides additional support to workers who earn a more modest income. Every job is important in our society, which is why it is so important to ensure that people living on lower incomes can make ends meet. This year, an eligible individual can receive up to \$1,665. For an eligible family, it can be as much as \$2,870.

The measures that I have been talking about all add up. This assistance is not just paid out after an eligible recipient files a tax return. Part of it is paid out in advance during the year. This measure will help people like retail workers at a store in Boisbriand, restaurant employees in Saint-Eustache, or single mothers who work full time. People work hard; they get up, pay their bills and contribute to our economy. If they earn a lower income, it makes sense for our tax system to lend them a hand.

We have also reduced income tax. The lowest federal income tax rate was cut from 15% to 14%. Twenty-two million Canadians are benefiting from this tax cut. For a two-income household, this can mean up to \$840 in savings a year. Again, that \$840 is on top of everything else I listed earlier. This could pay for several months of electricity bills. Sometimes the car needs repairs. Vehicles can break down out of nowhere. Then there are expenses like grocery bills spread out over several weeks or a child's sports registration fees. Families know all about these expenses.

We have also taken action on gas prices. I think this is particularly important for the people of Rivière-des-Mille-Îles. People would love to be able to take public transit everywhere all the time, but the fact is that many residents of the Lower Laurentians need their cars to get to work, pick up the kids, drive a parent to an appointment and go grocery shopping. It is hard for folks who live in the suburbs to get by without a car.

We have also temporarily suspended the excise tax on gasoline, reducing the price by 10¢ per litre until January 31 of next year. After that, the tax will be 50% of the regular rate until the end of March. For people who have to fill up their tank every week, that makes a real difference.

I am thinking of seniors. Lots of seniors in Boisbriand, Rosemère and Saint-Eustache have worked their entire lives and want to live

### *Business of Supply*

with dignity. We continue to support low-income seniors through the guaranteed income supplement.

We have introduced another measure that is making a real difference in people's lives, and that is the Canadian dental care plan. Older Canadians in particular have benefited significantly from it. Dental care is very expensive. No one in Canada should have to live with a toothache simply because they cannot afford to see a dentist. Today, millions of Canadians have access to this coverage. That means hundreds of dollars staying in the pockets of hundreds of Canadians.

I would like to move on to housing and support for first-time homebuyers. We have also proposed measures to lower banking fees, and we have eliminated the GST on the purchase of a new home.

• (1230)

[English]

We are delivering.

[Translation]

To conclude my speech, in the long term, the best way to improve Canadians' standard of living is to have a strong economy and good jobs. However, families need support now while we work to build that economy. Our government is stepping up.

I will always be proud to champion measures that make a real difference in the lives of my constituents. At the end of the day, they are the reason I am here. They are the ones I represent.

We will continue to work for the people of Rivière-des-Mille-Îles.

[English]

**Marc Dalton (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the number one concern among Canadians, from British Columbia to Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland, is the cost of living. That is the reason why the Conservative Party has brought in this motion about the affordability crisis.

I was just appointed to the indigenous and northern affairs committee, which is hearing testimony from businesses, NGOs and others about the cost of living and the struggles they are having. It is getting very difficult. We asked if things are getting better and they said no. Things are getting worse. I appreciate all the programs the Liberals say they are bringing in, but they are putting Canada in a worse position.

Will the member not recognize that and take responsibility for plunging Canada into this situation?

*Business of Supply*

• (1235)

[Translation]

**Linda Lapointe:** Mr. Speaker, my colleague talked about the north. This summer, I had the opportunity to go to Nunavut. The people there are indeed facing difficult challenges that we must address.

However, as we know, the world is changing rapidly. What is happening with the tariffs in the United States and the conflicts in Europe and the Middle East is not helping. It is driving global inflation. We, on the government side, believe that the stronger our country and our economy are, the better off all Canadians will be.

**Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to hear my colleague's thoughts on the fact that the government has money for all sorts of things, including a \$43-billion oil pipeline, but has decided not to extend the federal incentives for medium- and heavy-duty zero-emission vehicles, a program aimed at electrifying those vehicles.

Since March 31, there has been no more money to help reduce the use of diesel in the vehicles on our roads. Companies like Pac-car manufacture electric heavy-duty vehicles right in Quebec, but there is no longer any support for those companies.

How is it that the government has money to invest in a pipeline that will benefit western Canada and the oil companies, but it has no money left to electrify transportation and support Quebec companies?

**Linda Lapointe:** Mr. Speaker, let us talk about pipelines. We currently export oil at a discount to the United States. That is the only avenue for our oil, a natural resource. That is why it is important to find new markets and make sure we do so in the best possible way. We also need to make Canada's economy as strong as possible.

We know that the Americans are not helping us right now with the tariffs they are imposing on us. That does not help us at all. If we can export our goods, diversify our markets and get more money, I think, like everyone else, that we will make Canada even stronger and our economy will be even better. All Canadians will benefit. As for the measure my colleague was talking about, it definitely still exists for cars.

[English]

**Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I wonder if my colleague, who also sits on the trade committee, would like to tell the House a little more about some of the successful issues with diversification that we know the department and the minister have been working very actively on, and what those countries are.

Would she like to elaborate?

[Translation]

**Linda Lapointe:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague, who chairs the Standing Committee on International Trade. It is a very interesting committee. As we seek to diversify our export markets, we are negotiating agreements with other countries. It is working. We have traditionally maintained very close ties

with the United States, but we are diversifying our economy and it is working.

We are currently looking to Mercosur, which includes Paraguay, Uruguay, Argentina and Brazil. There are opportunities to forge new ties, sell our products and share Canadian expertise in those markets. Beyond that, there is the whole of Asia, including countries such as the Philippines, India, China and Japan. We are working hard there. We are also continuing to work closely with our European partners and allies. I can assure members that these efforts are paying off. We have increased our exports to non-U.S. markets.

[English]

**Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise today on behalf of the good people of Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford.

I had some remarks prepared, but I have to respond to the previous member, who talked about diversification, pivoting and innovating. Many of these terms are referenced in the briefing members of Parliament received from Pacific Economic Development Canada last month. It talked about the regional tariff response initiative, the strategic response fund and the need for Canadian businesses, with support from the government, to diversify, pivot and innovate. We are not seeing that action, though.

Let me give members an example. Just a week or two ago, the Prime Minister went to British Columbia and talked about expanding the LNG terminal in northern B.C. It is a major investment. We learned that the Liberals will be using Chinese steel to build it. The Government of Canada said this is a major investment for our country and it is going to help us be better and more economically competitive. In response to the U.S. tariffs, the government set up all of these new funds I just mentioned, the regional tariff response initiative, the strategic response fund and the Canada diversification fund, and it was all to help Canadian businesses buy Canadian. There are specific funds for steel and aluminum to help them innovate, pivot to new businesses and do business in Canada, yet on the biggest announcement the government has made since the last election 18 months ago, the government is buying China.

This is the same government that is in cahoots with socialist extremist Premier David Eby and thought it was in the interests of British Columbia and Canada to build our ferries in China. BC Ferries is a cornerstone of our national transportation infrastructure network, and the ferries will be built in China. We have shipyards in Canada. I would much rather have them built in north Vancouver or at the Davie shipyard in Quebec, but no. The government chose China.

On the one hand, the Government of Canada is spending billions of dollars to supposedly support the forestry sector and the steel and aluminum sectors, but when it has a big, beautiful, massive project right in front of it, it goes to China. I believe that if the government wanted to help steel and aluminum companies pivot, like it said it did in the information members of Parliament received, and it wanted to help them innovate, it should have said it knows it does not have the capacity right now, but in the strategic interests of Canada, it will help those companies innovate and meet the demands of Canada's energy infrastructure. It had that opportunity, but it did not pivot. It cowered in the face of adversity at the expense of Canadian workers.

I want Canadian workers building LNG to the fullest possible capacity, but the Liberals decided to stick with their old processes, which do not uplift Canadian workers and do not stand up for Canada.

I said in this House earlier this week that the government needs to work with the Conservatives to stand up for Canada and bring in the structural reforms to our economy that will make us stronger in the long term. In fact, the government's tariff response initiative talks about that very point. We need to stand up for Canada and we need to help Canadian businesses do more work here, yet the government is not willing to do that.

● (1240)

Earlier today, I met with members of the community of Kingston who talked about capital gains rollovers on major investments in Canada. There is another major policy change that the government could be making in our taxation system to help Canadian businesses invest right here in Canada. Again, I encourage the member of Parliament for Kingston to hear the pleas of businesses in his own riding that are saying we need to bring in a structural taxation reform to do things better.

Now, let us go back to the steel and aluminum tariff program. Make no mistake, Canadian businesses are suffering. I met with probably over 100 businesses over the last four months when Parliament was not sitting, and they are scared. I am not saying everything the Government of Canada is doing is not working, but what was most alarming is that Naina Sloan, President of PacifiCan, acknowledged to members of Parliament that the government is not meeting its own timelines. There were announcements made in August on the tariff response initiative, many of those applications were made nine months earlier and the government has been slow in its response.

We want Canada to be more affordable, and the government and the ministers responsible need to work with Canadians to stand up for Canada, give us better responses, and demand better operational processes to ensure that programs are working effectively, because right now they are not.

My encouragement to the Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Industry is to come forward and give this House an update, today, on how the tariff response initiative is going. The president of PacifiCan said that they are not meeting their own standards. It takes a lot of courage for a senior public servant to admit that, but she made those remarks because she is a true leader. She knows

### *Business of Supply*

that we need to stand by our businesses right now. However, she is not getting that oversight from the minister responsible, and that is not okay.

I am aware of companies in the Fraser Valley that, because the government has not reached a deal with the United States, are still looking at moving their operations because they are stuck between a rock and a hard place. These are long-standing employers in aerospace and advanced manufacturing that are hit on both sides, by the American tariffs, the unjustified American tax increases through those tariffs and Canada's tariff responses. Some of these companies, although they have major global impact, are not very large. They kind of fall in the middle. They do not feel the government has been quick enough to help them and to work alongside them. Again, I would encourage the Government of Canada to work with those medium-sized enterprises that make up such an important part of our economy and to hear from them about how those tariffs are impacting them.

In conclusion, affordability is getting much worse. It is getting really bad, and no other statistic outlines that better than our birthrate stats. In 2015, Canada's fertility rate dropped from 1.6 to 1.26. In B.C., it has dropped to 1.04. People are not having kids in Canada anymore because it is too expensive. So many young families come to me to relay the lack of child care, the broken promises of the government and the cost of housing in British Columbia, and they say it just does not work. Kids costs a lot of money. People want to have more children, but our economy is not set up in a way that allows for that.

Just before I finish up, I will be splitting my time with a member from Oshawa.

My encouragement to the government today is to come clean about the tariff response initiative, to come clean about the true cost of living crisis that we are facing, to come clean about the deals it is doing with China at the expense of Canadian workers and businesses, and to pivot, just like the government documents say, to provide resiliency for Canadian companies and to provide new opportunities for steel and aluminum manufacturers to build LNG Canada phase two. We can do it. I believe in our economy. I believe that the government wants to do the right thing, but it needs to step up, grow up and do what is required to use Canadian steel on a Canadian project.

● (1245)

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the reality is the member who just spoke would ensure that LNG does not take off. Quite frankly, I am disappointed in his comments and him not being able to acknowledge the modules and the reason that steel is coming from China. Shame on him for not being more transparent on that issue.

*Business of Supply*

My question to the member is related specifically to the motion we have before us. The Conservatives talk about affordability, but when they have the chance, for example, to provide dental assistance to seniors who are on fixed incomes, they vote no. In fact, they are telling those seniors that they are going to get rid of the program.

Does the member not see any inconsistency when the Conservatives talk about affordability, but they say they are not going to increase the disposable income of seniors on fixed incomes?

• (1250)

**Brad Vis:** Mr. Speaker, on the very first point, 15 years ago, Canada did not have the capacity to build naval warships, but it built that capacity. I believe we have the most educated workforce in the world. We have all the talent right here and the technology to do what is required to build LNG phase two with Canadian steel.

The government talks about diversifying, pivoting and innovating. This is the chance to innovate. This is the chance to stand up for Canadian workers and, by extension, stand up for our country at a critical juncture. It is not going to be easy, but exporting that work to China is not the answer. The government needs to do better on that front, and I believe Canada can.

[Translation]

**Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to know my colleague's thoughts about the fact that oil, gas and LNG projects in this country are often majority foreign-owned. For example, LNG Canada phase 2 is 100% owned by foreign companies, including Shell from the U.K., Petronas from Malaysia and PetroChina from China, along with Mitsubishi and KOGAS. Another LNG project in Quebec is owned by Marininvest, a European company.

The government created tax superdeductions for these projects in the last budget. They will probably also receive substantial government investment.

Does my colleague support the government's decision to encourage foreign ownership of projects here in Canada and in Quebec?

[English]

**Brad Vis:** Mr. Speaker, the member raises a good point about the role of foreign capital in the Canadian economy. I believe in free trade, and I believe that if companies invest responsibly in Canada, that is a good thing for Canada. Others might disagree with me, but I ultimately believe that, as a free market society, we need to encourage investment in a regulated environment that makes sure that it is a win-win deal for Canada.

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, the member did not refer to the second question I asked. The core of the motion today is the issue of affordability.

The federal government has initiated, under the Prime Minister's leadership, numerous affordability programs, one of which is supporting our seniors, particularly seniors on fixed incomes, with dental support. However, the Conservatives voted against it. Not only did they vote against it, but they are saying they are going to take the program away. That would have an impact on seniors on fixed incomes.

Will the Conservatives reverse that policy?

**Brad Vis:** Mr. Speaker, in the history of Canada, there has been one government that has had to make policy decisions to feed Canadians. That is the current Liberal government. The government is extending many benefits to Canadians because it made so many horrible errors over the last 10 years that put dental care and affordable, healthy groceries out of reach for so many in our communities. I believe that we can get our country back to where Canadians can afford those goods and services with a good job and a strong pension in retirement. However, the government, through the extremist socialist policies of Justin Trudeau, took away the ability of Canadians to do those things.

**Rhonda Kirkland (Oshawa, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise today on behalf of my constituents in Oshawa in support of our Conservative motion, which asks the House something simple: to recognize these facts. The Liberals have been in power for 11 years and Canada is in an affordability crisis, yet in March of this year the Prime Minister stood in this very House and claimed, "Affordability is the best it has been in...a decade." I would invite the Prime Minister to come to Oshawa and tell that to my neighbours, where Canada's affordability crisis is their everyday reality. It is the young Canadian working full time who cannot afford to move out of their parents' home, the mother putting groceries back on the shelf because she cannot afford everything in her cart, the senior choosing between rent and medication and the auto worker wondering whether their job will still be there tomorrow.

When hard-working Canadians cannot afford life's basics, the Liberal government is completely disconnected from reality. A generation of Canadians are doing everything right and still cannot afford the opportunities their parents and grandparents enjoyed. After 11 years, the government must answer for that reality.

Remember, just last spring, the Prime Minister stood up in the House and said, "Affordability is the best it has been in...a decade." Tell that to the food banks in Oshawa. I recently heard from Tiffany Kift at Simcoe Hall Settlement House, an extraordinary organization serving vulnerable families in Oshawa. What she shared with me was heartbreaking. Simcoe Hall is now serving more than 3,600 people every month and they have been forced to cap food bank visits to 70 households per day, not because fewer people need help but because they simply do not have the resources to help everyone who does.

Every day they sadly have to turn people away. Who is walking through their doors? Seniors, young adults, parents and even families with two incomes are walking through their doors.

Tiffany described a growing group of Canadians as the working poor. These are Canadians who get up every morning, work hard, earn a paycheque and still cannot afford groceries. Imagine both parents working, doing everything they can to provide for their children and still having to visit a food bank. When two incomes are no longer enough to put food on the table, the Liberal government is out of touch with the struggles of working Canadians.

What Tiffany told me about children in Oshawa was even more heartbreaking. Simcoe Hall staff are sending children home with food because, for some, it may be the only food they eat that day. Feeding children dinner is not even a mandatory part of their after-school programming, but staff do it as much as they can anyway because those children need to eat. The Liberal government would promote its national school food program, yet frontline workers at Simcoe Hall report that some of Oshawa's most vulnerable children are still not consistently receiving completely nutritious meals at school or at home.

When school closes for the summer, demand for food assistance grows even greater. Where do they get their lunches then? When children are going hungry while the government announces one program or another intended to feed them, there is a serious disconnect between the Liberal promises and what families are experiencing.

Last spring, the Prime Minister said, "Affordability is the best it has been in...a decade." Our seniors are also struggling. Tell them that. Recently, my office heard from Clifford, a senior in Oshawa who is living on a fixed income, of course. Clifford is struggling to pay his rent, afford his groceries and, most concerning of all, purchase the medication he needs.

Tiffany tells me that Simcoe Hall has even introduced a program called Dinner for One to provide prepared meals for seniors who are struggling to feed themselves. A lifetime of hard work should not end with a trip to the food bank. When seniors cannot afford groceries or medication, the Liberal government is out of touch with the struggles that Canadians face in everyday life. While demand for food assistance continues to grow, donations are declining. Simcoe Hall's financial donations are down approximately 33% this year, while community food drives are bringing in only a third of what they would normally expect. More people need help while fewer people can afford to give it.

Canadians should not have to depend on food banks or government grocery rebates simply to put dinner on the table. They should be able to afford groceries with the money they earn. I want to thank Tiffany and everyone at Simcoe Hall for their extraordinary service to Oshawa.

• (1255)

I will remind members that the Prime Minister said affordability is the best it has been in a decade. I encourage Canadians not to believe the gaslighting coming from the Liberal government.

Nowhere is the connection between jobs and affordability clearer than in Oshawa's automotive industry. For generations, our auto workers have helped build Canada's economy, but Oshawa has faced some of the highest unemployment rates among Canada's ma-

jor urban centres. Whenever I meet with local auto workers and their families, I hear the same message: protect our jobs.

### *Business of Supply*

I think about Todd, an Oshawa auto worker. Todd worked for an automotive supplier supporting GM's Oshawa assembly plant, and when job cuts were looming, he faced the possibility of leaving the city where he was born and raised and where his children and grandchildren live. When Canadian auto workers fear losing their livelihoods, they need a government focused on protecting their jobs, not simply managing the consequences of losing them. The Liberal government has spent so much attention on working to manage decline with supports and programs that are simply not working.

The Prime Minister campaigned on his ability to negotiate with the United States, and auto workers were promised a trade deal by July 2025. That deadline came and went without the promised deal. There is that old saying, "underpromise and over-deliver", but the government consistently does the opposite, making ambitious promises, creating illusions, missing deadlines and asking Canadians to keep waiting.

Recently, I asked the Liberal member for Whitby about Clifford's affordability struggles. In his response to this senior's struggle, he spoke about opportunities for workers who may need to transition away from our auto plants. I found that deeply concerning on two levels. One, the question was about seniors, and two, while Oshawa auto workers are asking the government to protect their jobs, a Liberal member from the Durham region is talking about opportunities to leave those jobs behind. Is that the government's plan for Oshawa? Our auto workers are not asking the government to find them another career. They are asking the government to fight for the careers they already have.

The Prime Minister campaigned on his economic credentials and his ability to deliver change, promising to move at unimaginable speeds and telling Canadians it is time to build now. Well, Canadians are entitled to ask what those promises have delivered. Where are the affordable homes for young Canadians that they can actually move into? Where are the completed projects? Where are the results families can see in their own lives? An announcement is not a completed home. A press conference is not a paycheque, and a promise does not automatically mean results. For the government, it means an illusion and more gaslighting.

*Business of Supply*

• (1300)

Just yesterday, the Prime Minister said in the House, “I just got here.” He did not just get here. He has been the Prime Minister for 19 months. We are coming close to two years now, and before becoming Prime Minister, he was advising Justin Trudeau and the Liberals for five years, yet he refuses to be held accountable.

Of course, international trade disputes and global economic pressures are real, but those challenges do not erase the responsibility of successive Liberal governments for decisions made here at home. The Prime Minister cannot ask Canadians to judge him by his experience when he campaigns but disregard that experience when they question his record. I invite him to come to Oshawa and speak with Clifford, Todd, the families visiting Simcoe Hall, our small business owners and the auto workers worried about their jobs and ask them one simple question: Are they better off today than they were 10 years ago? We know the answer is no. That is the question that matters. It is not how many announcements the government has made, but whether Canadians can afford the necessities of life.

Conservatives have put forward solutions to address these challenges. We believe responsible spending, lower costs and good-paying jobs are essential for restoring affordability, because Canadians deserve more than announcements and promises; they deserve results. They deserve to keep more of what they earn, afford the necessities of life and have the opportunity to build a better future for themselves and their families.

That is why I will be voting, of course, in favour of our Conservative opposition day motion to recognize what Canadians across Oshawa and the country are experiencing. After 11 years of Liberal government, Canada is in an affordability crisis, and it is not the most affordable it has been over the last 10 years.

• (1305)

**Hon. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to the member's intervention, and the member spoke about children needing food, but I will reflect on the fact that she voted against the national school food program. I know that in Kingston, the national school food program funds the Food Sharing Project, which gives food to children in school. In Oshawa, it is Durham's Child Nutrition Project that does the same work.

Why did she vote against that? Before she goes to the default Conservative argument that if we had not created the situation, they would not need it, she should be reminded of the fact that Canada was the last of the G7 countries to adopt a national school food program. Even the United States of America has a national school food program.

I am wondering if she can explain why she voted against it when this project was before the House, given her great concern for children getting access to food.

**Rhonda Kirkland:** Mr. Speaker, the member knows well that when that was voted on, I was not elected as a member of the House. It is so interesting that he stands here and says that I voted against it.

On this, I want to be clear. I voted against the last budget because it was inflationary and was going to make things worse. They know it. We know it. Canadians need to understand that as well. The oth-

er thing is this. When I spoke with folks at Simcoe Hall about the school lunch program, they said that it sounded good in theory, but clearly it is not working because we have children who are starving. They could not even identify one school in my area that has that program.

**Marc Dalton (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, parents want the ability to provide for their families. Yes, it is great to have school lunch programs, but the real issue is having good jobs. It is becoming more and more difficult to have a good job. Beyond that, having any job is difficult.

I talk to young people, and they are having challenges getting work, even in fast food industries. Last week, I talked to one young lady in her early twenties. McDonald's and other places used to be the place for young people to get experience and get a job, but they cannot find one because of temporary foreign workers in places where there are many people looking for jobs.

I wonder if the member could comment on that.

**Rhonda Kirkland:** Mr. Speaker, this is true in Oshawa as well. Young people are having a harder and harder time finding work. They want the promise that they were promised. They want to work hard, earn an income, own a home and start a family, but 11 years of failures from the Liberal government and the Prime Minister, who for the last seven years was an adviser before he became Prime Minister 19 months ago, are resulting in Canadians and young people suffering. It is about time the Liberal government admitted it, because we all know the truth. If we want to fix a problem, the first step to doing that is admitting we have one, and I have yet to see the government do that.

**Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Moncton—Dieppe, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I was listening attentively to my colleague's statement in the House today, and I could not help but think that when I am in my riding of Moncton—Dieppe, I receive an awful lot of phone calls from seniors who are very pleased with respect to the dental care program that our government put in place. I hear from hundreds of seniors who say that this program has made a real difference.

The member may not have been in the House when we voted on the program, but when she mentions Clifford, how does she explain to Clifford that the party she belongs to voted against a dental care program that is making a huge difference in the lives of seniors?

**Rhonda Kirkland:** Mr. Speaker, the answer is very plain and simple. I have had phone calls at my office about the dental program, and I can tell the House with full confidence that the majority of those phone calls are negative about the dental program. There are seniors who cannot get access to it who should have access to it. It is a mess of a problem in terms of the logistics and administration of it. Dental offices are struggling. This program is meant to manage the decline of affordability in this country, and once again, it is a failed program that is not working for seniors in the way the government tries to gaslight Canadians into thinking it does.

[Translation]

**Anju Dhillon (Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my colleague from Edmonton Strathcona.

I am pleased to rise in the House today to speak to the important issue of the cost of living. It is of course a major concern to many Canadians across the country. They are having a tough time budget-wise, and our government is well aware of this unfortunate reality. We know that fuel, groceries and housing cost more.

Clearly, times are hard for many households. Our government understands this reality. That is why we have already brought in countless measures to help Canadians make ends meet. For example, our government is bringing in measures to encourage competition in the private sector in hopes of lowering prices for certain services. It is important to understand that competition is essential to productivity and innovation. What is more, it makes the cost of living more affordable. The lack of competition in some sectors leads to unacceptably high prices, and we are doing something about that.

In budget 2025, our government announced concrete measures to increase competition in the telecommunications sector, with a view to lowering the cost of services for Canadians. This includes measures to reduce the regulatory burden associated with the development of telecommunications infrastructure. These measures will make it easier to renew or switch between home Internet, home phone and cellphone plans, providing consumers with greater choice.

We are also implementing measures to increase competition in Canada's financial sector. This includes helping smaller financial institutions invest, expand and compete. Naturally, this would benefit Canadian consumers. We are also moving forward with measures to make the economy stronger and more productive. We want to attract more investment to Canada so that our businesses can produce, innovate and grow right here at home. Of course, consumers will benefit from this.

One way of achieving this is by making Canada the most competitive country in the G7 for new business investment. It is important to understand that a favourable tax environment also acts as a catalyst for economic growth.

In the 2025 budget, we announced the productivity superdeduction, which provided immediate expensing to about 15% of investment in capital assets. In September, we announced the productivity mega deduction, which permanently extends immediate expensing to a broader range of assets and expenses. This will encourage

### *Business of Supply*

Canadian businesses to invest more in their future growth and prosperity.

It is clear that Canada is a safe bet.

We recently welcomed investors from around the world to the first-ever Canada investment summit. That summit resulted in \$500 billion in investment commitments for new funding and capital from pension funds, banks and other major institutional investors. The message is clear: Canada is an attractive destination for investment, and that is something all Canadians can be proud of.

I would like to emphasize that our government fully understands the importance of fiscal discipline in protecting Canadians from inflation.

● (1310)

The government is on track to balance the operating budget in 2027-28, a year ahead of schedule.

We are continuing our efforts to rigorously implement the efficiency measures set out in budget 2025. This includes the comprehensive expenditure review, which, combined with other measures in budget 2025, will deliver \$60 billion in savings and revenue over five years. The comprehensive expenditure review is also enabling us to reduce the size of the public service to a more sustainable level through early retirement incentives, workforce adjustments and natural attrition. With implementation well under way, the focus is now turning towards targeted, ongoing horizontal reviews, beginning with efforts to rein in spending on external management and other consulting services. These challenging but necessary actions will continue to support the government's objective of spending less to invest more in Canada and Canadians. In doing so, we will help maintain economic stability and protect Canadians' purchasing power.

In closing, I want to note that Canada's economy remains strong and resilient. For more than a year, the global economy has been going through a period of profound upheaval. Economic security, industrial policy and geopolitical competition have taken on new significance in guiding decisions around investment, trade and finance around the world. The conflict in the Middle East has disrupted key shipping routes, damaged critical energy infrastructure and driven up energy prices. Taken all together, these events underscore the fragility of global supply chains and add to an unfortunately already high level of uncertainty.

*Business of Supply*

• (1315)

Canada is not immune to these challenges, nor is any other trading nation. As all Canadians fully understand, we have been dealing with global uncertainty and trade tensions for over a year now. Although these challenges persist, Canadians and Canadian businesses have continued to adapt with remarkable resilience. Canada's economic growth bounced back in the second quarter. Real gross domestic product grew by 3.3%. Business investment increased at an annualized rate of 8.9%, making it clear that Canadian businesses are investing, expanding and planning for future growth.

It is also interesting to note that the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development is predicting that Canada will have the second-fastest growing economy in the G7 in 2027. Our economy is doing comparatively well, despite our strained relationship with our largest trading partner and closest neighbour. Although our economy is doing well, we understand that many Canadians are struggling to make ends meet. As Canadians continue feel the effects of a global context marked by uncertainty, our government is taking action to help them. We are acting responsibly to protect families' purchasing power, support businesses and enhance our prosperity as a country. We will continue to act responsibly to support Canadians and build a stronger, more resilient economy.

[English]

**Scot Davidson (York—South Simcoe, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have just a simple question for my colleague. It frustrates Canadians when they cannot get a simple answer, so I am going to give my colleague an opportunity. The member for Toronto—St. Paul's struggled with answering the question, so I have a simple one: Is there an affordability crisis in Canada, yes or no?

• (1320)

**Anju Dhillon:** Mr. Speaker, the cost of living is at the forefront of every conversation at every kitchen table, among our colleagues and when people approach our offices, the offices of members of Parliament. We are struggling as a society, and as I explained in my speech, it is very much due to external factors as well. We cannot ignore these, so we are presenting programs over and over that the Conservatives keep voting against. Maybe if they started voting with us to help Canadians, that would help affordability issues.

[Translation]

**Eric St-Pierre (Honoré-Mercier, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, an hour ago, the Prime Minister was in the Eastern Townships, where he made a very important announcement about affordability. He announced \$2 billion to improve energy efficiency for 820,000 Canadian households, in the form of \$10,000 subsidies for heat pumps.

Are you excited about this announcement on energy efficiency? Can you comment on how that relates to affordability?

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** I would remind the member that questions must be addressed through the Chair.

The member for Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle.

**Anju Dhillon:** Mr. Speaker, of course, if we work together to support the economy, then we are helping Canadians. Today's announcement will really help us in terms of affordability, and it will increase our opportunities to grow our economy even further and

keep us strong and resilient in the face of everything that is happening in the world.

**Marc Dalton (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the cost of living is a concern for Canadians. That is clear. Canada ranks at the bottom of the list of the 38 OECD countries.

Does my colleague agree that a strong economy is a major factor for affordability and jobs? Does she realize that having an economy as weak as ours is right now lowers the value of the Canadian dollar, which increases the price of imports?

Does she agree that the feeble efforts to promote resource development have lowered Canadians' quality of life?

She can choose which question she would like to answer.

**Anju Dhillon:** Mr. Speaker, my colleague raised a number of questions, and unfortunately my time is limited. If we want to address issues like quality of life and affordability, it is clear to me that attracting investment from our allies will help us build an economy that can support Canadians.

During these difficult times, this will really help us to build a stronger country.

[English]

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my friend really tries to set an example in terms of the types of things the government is actually doing.

There does seem to be a contradiction coming from the Conservatives. On the one hand, they talk about affordability issues, but on the other hand, when the government provides policies to support Canadians on affordability, they vote against them. I would like get the member's thoughts on the issue of consistency in supporting good affordability programs.

**Anju Dhillon:** Mr. Speaker, I would just like to point out that every time we have brought a program, such as the national school food program, it has been called garbage by Conservatives. It is horrific to hear this. The school food program has helped over 400,000 children each year. I would love for some of my Conservative colleagues to speak up, vote for the programs we are putting up and work together for all Canadians.

*Business of Supply*

**Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am very happy that I have an opportunity today to talk about the opposition day motion on affordability. I want to bring up the point that affordability is not just about prices or lowering the cost of living. It is also about whether people have enough income security and bargaining power to afford a decent life. Right now, Canadians cannot afford life. They cannot afford their life when wages and income are not keeping up with the cost of living. The reality is that people in my community of Edmonton Strathcona and across this country are struggling with the cost of groceries, rent, mortgage, utilities and transportation, those basic necessities that all Canadians need in order to survive.

We often talk about making this or that cheaper. These are important discussions that parliamentarians should be having, but for me, the bigger impact is the discrepancy between the cost of living and wages, as well as the support that workers have been getting from both the current government and previous administrations. The National Advisory Council on Poverty heard directly from Canadians that wages and government benefits have not kept pace with inflation and that people working full-time are still struggling to meet their basic needs.

Let us talk a bit today about wages. Let us talk about whether a person who works hard can afford a home, raise a family, retire with dignity and weather an emergency if that happens in their life. This is why affordability policy has to also be about good, strong union jobs, with workers having the power to negotiate better wages. Affordability is not just about what things cost. It is also about whether or not working people can afford to purchase them.

Good union jobs is an affordability policy. It is one of the most effective affordability measures we can put in place. The difference between people simply having a job and having a job they can build a life around is important to recognize. Permanent union jobs with good wages, pension, benefits and collective bargaining give workers economic security. Unions provide those benefits not just for workers in their unions. Unions also allow for those benefits to be across the entire sectors so working conditions across the economy improve and working wages improve.

Therefore, it is vital that governments do more to support the right to organize. We have been speaking a lot in the House about Bill C-39, which would take away the ability of workers to strike. It would hurt the ability of workers to have collective bargaining.

I am bringing forward a private member's bill for a vote very shortly, Bill C-259, the fair representation act, which would make sure that unions represent only the workers they are supposed to represent, not corporations, business or other interests. We need to make it easier to join a union. We need to stop employers from using precarious work to undermine wages. We need to protect Canadian industrial capacity. We need to use investment to create not just jobs but good jobs. If we want to make life more affordable, we need to make good jobs more available. I am going to bring up an example of this.

Stelco is the perfect example of what happens when we allow good Canadian jobs and industrial capacity to be treated as disposable. Cleveland-Cliffs announced the indefinite idling of Stelco's Hamilton steel plant, which will affect 350 members of United

Steelworkers, with another 40 layoffs expected at Lake Erie Works in Nanticoke. It is appalling that these workers are going to lose their jobs and that the company is blaming trade disruptions, weak demands and tariffs.

However, here is the contradiction: Cleveland-Cliff's CEO has publicly supported U.S. tariffs on Canadian steel. USW has pointed out that the company cannot champion those tariffs and then use the resulting trade environment as a justification for walking away from Canadian workers. Marty Warren, the national director of United Steelworkers, said, "Cleveland-Cliffs cannot champion those tariffs and then invoke them to walk away from commitments to Canadian workers".

● (1325)

What is in the Investment Canada Act agreement? Why are we not defending that? This is not an abstract economic debate either. We throw things around in this place, but these are people. These are people with mortgages and families, people with pensions, and they have invested decades into their communities.

I was happy to see the Minister of Industry write to Stelco steel, but it was too late. It was too late. Those layoff notices went out today. Those workers are getting laid off this week. We needed the minister to advocate for those workers. Canada approved the Cleveland-Cliffs acquisition of Stelco in 2024 under the Investment Canada Act, and the approval came with commitments around maintaining unionized employment. Now that workers are already being laid off, now the minister is threatening legal action. It is too late. Once people are laid off, it is so much harder.

We needed a government that was standing up sooner. Workers should not have to lose their jobs before the government decides to enforce the conditions attached to a foreign takeover. The government should be asking why the Investment Canada Act commitments were not enforced earlier, what penalties Cleveland-Cliffs will face, how the government will ensure that production stays in Canada and what immediate supports will keep workers attached to their jobs.

*Business of Supply*

USW is explicitly calling for emergency worker retention and wage supports and for stronger protection of Canada's steel market. Again, I will go back to the premise of this speech. We cannot have affordability or affordable communities without a productive economy that provides well-paid jobs. Steel is not just one plant. It feeds automotive, machinery, construction, appliance and other manufacturing. Experts have warned about the domino effects of tariffs through supply chains, with impacts extending well beyond the directly affected steelworkers.

USW has argued that this crisis reflects decades of trade policy that has left Canadian producers vulnerable to unfair trade excesses. Canadian jobs should always come with conditions attached. If the government wants public support, there should be strings attached so jobs are protected. Those jobs should be protected throughout, not once the layoffs have started and people have already been let go.

We need to also have domestic capacity. We need to develop a national steel strategy. Affordability and industrial policy are connected. That is important.

I am going to talk very quickly about another issue that is important when we talk about affordability in our communities, and this has been raised in the House this afternoon. Seniors in our communities are dealing with a cost of living crisis as well. Seniors who have spent their lives working should not be forced to choose between groceries, rent, medication and keeping the heat on.

• (1330)

The national advisory council on poverty reports that unattached seniors had a poverty rate of 11.5% in 2023. The amount that seniors receive in OAS has not been changed to reflect inflation. The GIS has not been changed to reflect the increase in the cost of living. Seniors in our communities are struggling.

For too long, affordability has been treated by the government as a communication problem, but it is not. It is an economic problem. It is a wage problem. It is a housing problem. It is a retirement security problem. It is a disability income problem. It is a workers' rights problem.

Liberals like to talk about affordability, while workers lose good union jobs, companies receive approvals and make commitments, and workers are left behind.

As we sit in the House and talk about affordability today, I would really like us to remember the other side of that, which is the protection of workers' rights and workers' wages.

• (1335)

**Eric St-Pierre (Honoré-Mercier, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member's comments on affordability. About an hour ago, the Prime Minister made an announcement on energy efficiency in my home province of Quebec, announcing \$2 billion to retrofit 820,000 homes, with low-income Canadians getting up to \$10,000 for heat pumps. This is going to be a reduction in emissions of 25 megatonnes, and it is going to increase the comfort in homes.

I am curious. Does the member for Edmonton Strathcona think heat pump subsidies are good for Canadians and good for her constituents in Edmonton?

**Heather McPherson:** Mr. Speaker, we installed a heat pump in my home in Edmonton just this summer, and I am absolutely delighted with it. We also have solar panels.

However, let us be realistic. I have a very good job where I can actually afford to pay for these things and to install them. We need to do everything we can to provide supports to those folks who cannot afford to retrofit their homes. Any part we can take in making sure that Canadians can retrofit their homes, and the buildings in our communities, helps. It is insufficient, though, if it is not done in a way that Canadians can access.

I have not had an opportunity to look at the Prime Minister's announcement that he made an hour ago. Of course, as always, I would prefer that the Prime Minister share his thoughts with parliamentarians in the House. That does not seem to be his priority, but certainly, I will pay attention and will read it after I am done in the House today.

**Scot Davidson (York—South Simcoe, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have a simple question for the member for Edmonton Strathcona. Does she believe there is an affordability crisis in Canada today?

**Heather McPherson:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, there is an affordability crisis. There is a crisis with wages not keeping up to the rate of inflation. There is a crisis with seniors and people living with disabilities. There is a crisis of people being unable to afford their lives while the ultrawealthy are getting wealthier on the backs of everyday Canadian workers.

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on the issue of affordability, over the last 18 months the government has taken a number of initiatives, many of them to address some of the concerns the member has raised.

We have heard a great deal about our seniors, for example, and the dental care program. Every so often we hear about the national school nutrition program, which helps 400,000 children. There are other initiatives that we may not have heard much about, such as the groceries and essentials benefit program or the tax cut, all of which were designed to help with affordability.

Does the NDP support the initiatives the government has taken to date on the issue of affordability?

**Heather McPherson:** Mr. Speaker, I do not even know which of those things to address, so I am going to stick with the health care components that the member spoke about.

First of all, I am extraordinarily proud to be in the same caucus as the member for Vancouver Kingsway, who worked so incredibly hard to get the pharmacare program that was brought forward. This was something the NDP pushed for and has pushed for for decades. The problem is, the government is now failing to live up to its obligations to provide pharmacare to people across this country.

On the dental care program, again, the government is failing to ensure that people across this country can access that program. It is not working for every Canadian. If New Democrats had developed that program, it would work for all Canadians instead of what we are seeing from the government.

Let us talk a bit about our public health care system. Right now, in my province of Alberta, Danielle Smith is using legislation to break the Canada Health Act, and yet the government refuses to stand up and hold Danielle Smith and the UCP government responsible for breaking one of the most cherished institutions of our country.

\* \* \*

### PRIVILEGE

#### ALLEGED PREMATURE DISCLOSURE OF BILL C-40

**Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am rising to add my voice in support of the question of privilege raised by the hon. House leader from the official opposition on Tuesday evening.

As members know, it is a well-established principle of this place that while government has the right, the ability and, in many cases, the obligation to speak to the public and to consult on potential legislation before it is introduced, once a bill is placed on the Order Paper it becomes a matter for Parliament. That is why Speakers have consistently ruled that premature disclosure of a bill on notice can constitute a breach of the collective rights and privileges of the House and its members, specifically our fundamental right to be informed first about government legislation. Various Speakers have ruled on this matter, finding that disclosure of even partial elements of legislation can constitute a violation and ultimately is a *prima facie* breach of privilege.

We heard on Tuesday evening a very compelling argument from the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle that there were details about Bill C-40 published in media reports, based on unnamed sources, that were neither known prior to the bill being placed on notice nor related to the title of the bill, as found on the Order Paper.

Unfortunately, we are seeing a concerning pattern from the Liberal government. Over the last year, there have been repeated leaks from so-called unauthorized sources to journalists in a clear attempt to shape public discourse. This is sharp practice, somewhat devious but, arguably, not prohibited. However, when this happens after a bill has been placed on the Order Paper but before parliamentarians have had the opportunity to look at it, this becomes an objectionable attempt to breach the privileges of members and avoid the proper oversight Canadians expect from this House.

This is a concerning pattern that, we respectfully submit, must be stopped. It demonstrates a disrespect for our democratic institution, and we believe a clear message must be sent to the government that

### *Business of Supply*

end-running Parliament in this manner is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. We submit that it is vitally important that members of Parliament assert our fundamental rights to receive details about legislation prior to members of the media.

Respectfully, Mr. Speaker, we ask that you uphold this fundamental parliamentary privilege.

● (1340)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** I thank the hon. member for Vancouver Kingsway for contributing to this question of privilege. The Chair will take it under advisement and return to the House with a ruling.

\* \* \*

### BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

#### OPPOSITION MOTION—AFFORDABILITY CRISIS

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

**Sandra Cobena (Newmarket—Aurora, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Montmorency—Charlevoix.

The Liberals have been in power for 11 years. Canadians are living through an affordability crisis and they deserve a government that acknowledges it. Whenever we stand up for Canadians who cannot afford their groceries or rent, the Liberals respond with a laundry list of programs. They tell us how much money they have announced, how many benefits they have created and how many Canadians are receiving this government assistance, but we have to stop and think. When the government will stop measuring success by how many Canadians need government assistance and start measuring it by how many no longer do?

Canadians want to get ahead. They want their hard work to mean something. They want to pay their bills and have something left to build a future. In Newmarket—Aurora, I hear from people who work hard and manage their money carefully. They budget, but they still cannot make ends meet. These Canadians are doing their part and asking why, after 11 years, the Liberal government is not doing its part.

I take particular pride in hearing from my constituents, not only at the doors, but through their responses to mailers, in emails, phone calls and text messages, and even when they stop me at events. I would like to take a moment to share their stories and concerns here today.

Patricia from Newmarket wrote to me and said Canadian salaries do not rise to meet the cost of living. She rarely buys beef and eats as economically as possible. She is already shopping carefully and choosing less food and less expensive food. How much more is she supposed to cut?

*Business of Supply*

In the same light, Canadians have told me they pay taxes at every turn. They pay tax when they earn a paycheque, own something, buy something, fill the tank in their car and buy a drink, and they may even pay tax when they die, yet the Liberal government still cannot balance the budget. How much more does the government want from them? They are living within their means and do not understand why the Liberal government cannot live within its means.

I have another story that I would like to share. Mary Jane from Newmarket wrote to say she and her family are struggling with rent costs and the price of food. The most recent statistic is that the bottom quartile of Canadians are spending 110% of their income on just shelter and basic necessities. These Canadians will not be able to get ahead. This short message from Mary Jane tells this House everything it needs to know. This is a family struggling with the costs of shelter and food. These are the basics. They are the things a household needs before it can even think about anything else.

That is why our opposition motion today asks this House to recognize exactly what Canadians are living. It is quite simple. It says:

- (a) the Liberals have been in power for 11 years; and
- (b) Canada is in an affordability crisis.

There are two lines and two simple facts.

Members do not have to agree on every policy to acknowledge that Canadians are struggling and that families cannot afford the essentials, but if the Liberal government cannot even acknowledge the problem, how can we expect it to fix it? The government must stop gaslighting Canadians and listen to them instead. These are their cries. There are endless stories of what Canadians are living through, and they must be at the heart of the decisions the Liberal government makes.

● (1345)

Joanna from Newmarket wrote to say she and her partner are struggling to stay afloat with their son in university, their mortgage and working overtime. They are both in their late fifties now and these are bad times. Two Canadians are working overtime and struggling to pay their mortgage because they are helping their child through university. Why has it become so difficult to stay afloat? These are people who have spent years working and contributing. They should be able to look ahead with some confidence. Instead, they are working more just to keep up.

A line I hear time and time again from Canadians is, "We are the working poor." When a family works overtime and still cannot get ahead, the Liberal government should be asking some questions. What is making their life so expensive? How can we change that? What costs can we remove? What barriers can we reduce? What can we do to help their paycheques go further? Instead, we get another spending announcement with very little implementation and another laundry list of government programs.

Canadians keep making sacrifices. How much more can they really sacrifice when families are already struggling to cover rent and groceries? That is not normal. The Liberal government is asking them to be impressed by more announcements and more spending, but announcements do not pay Joanna's mortgage, for example. Their talking points do not put groceries in Mary Jane's kitchen.

We should judge the results by what Canadians can actually afford. Can they pay their rent? The answer is no. Can they buy groceries? They are cutting back. Can they save for an emergency? They cannot when the basics take 110% of what they make. Can they finish the month without taking on more debt? No.

An MNP report this week confirmed that 44% of Canadians are just \$200 away from insolvency. Newmarket Today reported that York region food pantries have seen a rise of 57% since 2020 and that one in three who attend are children. There is a whole generation of children who are now watching their parents not have the dignity to provide for them. That is a failure.

Today, every member in this House has an opportunity to acknowledge what Canadians are telling us every day. Recognize that the Liberals have been in power for 11 years and recognize that Canada is in an affordability crisis. Canadians already know it because they are living it.

Let us listen to these families. Canadians are doing their part. It is time for the government to do its part so that a hard-earned paycheque can once again pay the bills.

● (1350)

**Hon. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I find it interesting that the member was talking about the government questioning what it can do and how it can support Canadians. In her own riding, over \$11 million was sent out to 22,901 recipients for the groceries and essentials benefit.

We can talk about a two-line motion that produces nothing, really, other than perhaps some social media opportunities for the Conservatives, or we can talk about something we could vote on that would actually improve the lives of her constituents.

When she had the opportunity to support the 22,901 recipients in her riding, she voted against it. Could she explain why?

**Sandra Cobena:** Mr. Speaker, I think the member is missing the point. I wish the Liberals would listen.

The member, again, is saying to these families they should be happy they have this government program to depend on. He is not saying the government wants them to provide for themselves, it wants their hard work to mean something and it wants them to get back on their own two feet. He and the Liberals are telling them to be happy they depend on the government and to be happy the Liberals are there to fix a problem that they themselves created.

Canadians want the dignity to provide for themselves.

**Jeremy Patzer (Swift Current—Grasslands—Kindersley, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, one of the things we are trying to do here today is give the government an opportunity to admit that there is an affordability crisis. It is actually pretty simple. We cannot fix something if we are not willing to admit that there is a problem, so we are giving the government a chance to show some humility and understand and admit that there is an affordability problem.

The chief whip for the government got up and was talking about this bill that was passed, which is supposedly their big affordability measure, yet the government has actually done nothing to improve affordability for Canadians. Canadians do not want food stamps and cheques from the government. They want the ability for their own cheques to go further.

I was wondering whether my colleague shares those same thoughts and concerns.

**Sandra Cobena:** Mr. Speaker, yes, I share those thoughts.

We are talking about an affordability crisis. The funny thing is that the country is in a massive deficit, but the Prime Minister has changed accounting definitions so that he can take a marker, cross off those expenses and label them as investments. Canadians do not have that luxury. Unfortunately, under the Liberal government, that luxury is reserved for the Liberal government only. Meanwhile, Canadians have real bills to pay and they cannot make them disappear.

This is an affordability crisis, and the Liberal government is refusing to recognize that.

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to put this as simply as I can. At the end of the day, we have a motion about affordability. Consistently, over the last 18 months, since Canadians went to the polls and elected a new government with a new Prime Minister, we have witnessed Conservative after Conservative stand up and vote against affordability measures to support our children, support our seniors and cut taxes. These are the types of things the Conservatives have been voting against.

They talk about affordability, but when it comes down to voting for good programs, they vote no. Why?

• (1355)

**Sandra Cobena:** Mr. Speaker, there have been two questions from the Liberal benches and not once have the Liberals recognized that there is an affordability crisis, which is at the heart of the problem today.

The Liberals can get up and list all of the government programs, but what Canadians are saying, which the Liberals refuse to listen

### *Business of Supply*

to after sharing hundreds of stories from Canadians, is they want to be able to provide for themselves. They want the government to get out of the way and stop the overspending so that they can provide for themselves and get ahead, and the Liberals are refusing to recognize that.

[Translation]

**Gabriel Hardy (Montmorency—Charlevoix, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I ran a poll on social media a few months ago, asking people how things were going in their lives. I wanted to find out how they felt about the government's decisions and I asked them how they were doing, basically.

I have received 14,798 responses and 11,000 comments so far. Seven out of 10 comments talk about the cost of living and about how badly they are struggling. Eleven thousand people took the time to tell me about their concerns, their struggles and what they want to change.

This is not a scientific survey, but I still think it is important. These are people's real-life experiences. They shared their personal stories. One of them really stuck with me. A nursing assistant in Charlevoix wrote to me saying that she was at the end of her rope, that she has been working and taking care of others for 38 years. She explained to me that, these days, she can no longer even think about retiring. Her rent, groceries and gas account for three-quarters of her wages. This woman spent her life taking care of others. She has always worked and paid her taxes. She has contributed to our society. All she is asking for now is to be able to retire one day. After 38 years of service, she is not asking for luxuries. She just wants to be able to live, simply to live.

Unfortunately, her story is by no means the only one.

A couple told me that they have full-time jobs and work very hard, but still have to skip meals some days so that their children can eat.

A 22-year-old man wrote that he is working two full-time jobs. He wants to start his own business, but he had to drop out of school because he could not afford to pay rent and go to school at the same time. Think about that. Here is a young person who wants to work, wants to go to school and wants to become an entrepreneur. That is exactly what we need, but today's economic reality is forcing him to choose between building a future for himself and surviving in the present. The problem is not a lack of ambition; it is a lack of opportunity.

These people are not numbers on a spreadsheet. What I am sharing today is facts. These are ordinary people. They are neighbours, parents and young people. We hear the same thing whenever we meet them and everywhere we go, at businesses, on farms, around Montmorency—Charlevoix and across Quebec. They tell us one simple thing: Hard work no longer guarantees success. What we are seeing today is serious.

### *Statements by Members*

According to Statistics Canada, the consumer price index rose another 3% in August. The Liberals tell us not to worry because the inflation rate itself is falling. Unfortunately, that does not mean that food prices are going down or that people's income enables them to pay more. When families are already paying too much for groceries, knowing that prices are going up more slowly here than elsewhere in the world does not change the total bill or their ability to pay.

Our farmers are also feeling the pinch. When the price of diesel goes up, when machinery gets more expensive and when transportation costs more, farmers are not the only ones who pay. Transporters, processors and, ultimately, Canadian families all pay more.

Conservatives are proposing quick, concrete solutions that are within our control, but it seems that supporting families and farmers is not a priority for everyone in the House.

I will pause there.

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

● (1400)  
[English]

### RON SCHLEGEL

**Tim Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Ron Schlegel, whose passing leaves a profound loss for the Waterloo region and for communities across Canada.

Driven by a deep Mennonite faith and a commitment to helping others, Ron devoted his life to building stronger, more caring communities. Through Schlegel Villages, the Research Institute for Aging and the elder wisdom program, he transformed the way we care for seniors and improved countless lives, while also making lasting contributions to mental health, research, and community development.

Ron helped establish the University of Waterloo's School of Public Health Sciences and was awarded the Order of Canada, the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal and honorary doctorates from several Canadian universities. However, those who knew Ron remember not the awards, but his humility, kindness and genuine interest in people. He always focused on improving the lives of others.

On behalf of the people of Kitchener—Conestoga, I extend my sincere condolences to his family and loved ones. Ron's legacy of service, compassion and community building will endure for generations. He will be missed.

\*\*\*

### EMPLOYMENT

**Burton Bailey (Red Deer, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, 52 Albertans fear for their jobs because the Liberal government is failing Canadian businesses thanks to rising costs they are struggling to absorb. Technalogix is a 37-year-old Red Deer manufacturer of broadcasting and radar technology. It is getting squeezed by policies that hurt Canadian businesses. Added costs of up to 60% are already making Canadian-built equipment far less competitive. Technalogix is pay-

ing more for everything. It wrote to the finance minister about this and has not heard anything yet.

Families are already dealing with an affordability crisis. When local employers are forced to cut jobs, that hardship lands directly on household budgets. The government must act now and end policies that raise the price of Canadian production. Skilled Red Deer jobs and other Canadian-owned businesses are at risk. They need a level playing field and a fair chance to keep their jobs.

\*\*\*

### NORWOOD FALL FAIR

**Emma Harrison (Peterborough, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this Thanksgiving weekend, I am proud to recognize the Norwood Fall Fair, a cherished tradition that has brought our community together since 1868.

For generations, the fair has celebrated the hard work, talents and community spirit at the heart of rural Ontario. Through its agriculture exhibits, livestock competitions, homecraft displays, local entertainment and parade, it offers a warm reminder of all that makes our region so special.

This beloved tradition continues because of the dedication and generosity of the volunteers, organizers, exhibitors, sponsors and families who give their time and care throughout the year. To everyone who helps make the fair possible, I thank them for the unwavering commitment, pride and kindness they bring to our community.

I warmly invite everyone to join us this weekend in Norwood. May it become a time to reconnect with neighbours, honour our agricultural heritage and create lasting memories together. I wish everyone a happy Thanksgiving and a wonderful Norwood Fall Fair.

\*\*\*

### PROPOSED TORONTO HOMELESS SHELTER

**Roman Baber (North York, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Toronto is building a shelter that will act as an injection site at Keele and Wilson. It will be located between the St. Theresa's Day Care Centre and the Pierre Laporte Middle School. The shelter will hand out needles and have a safe room where anyone can inject.

We already have the Toronto plaza shelter one intersection west. It turned Jane and Wilson into a hub for drugs, crime and chaos. Now Toronto wants to turn Keele and Wilson into Jane and Wilson, but we do not want a drug den between our two schools.

It is a good thing the Province of Ontario can end this madness with an order or a slight expansion of the Safer Streets, Stronger Communities Act. It prohibits consumption sites within 200 metres of schools. The premier already blocked construction of a similar shelter in St. Catharines, and the site did not even have any schools nearby.

Today, I call on MPP Kerzner and Premier Doug Ford to stand up for Downsview. I ask them to save our children from the needles on their school playgrounds, and block the construction of the shelter at 1220 Wilson Avenue.

\* \* \*

#### LATIN AMERICAN AND HISPANIC DAY ON THE HILL

**Peter Schiefke (Vaudreuil, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker,

*[Member spoke in Spanish]*

*[English]*

For the 10th consecutive year, we are celebrating the contributions of the 1.7 million Spanish-speaking Canadians who enrich and help build our community from coast to coast to coast. In the presence of hundreds of Canadians of Latin American descent who have travelled to Ottawa to join us in Parliament, today is a wonderful opportunity to discover the richness of Latin American and Hispanic cultures and strengthen the bonds that bring us together. Of course, it is also a chance to enjoy incredible music, performances and delicious food.

● (1405)

*[Translation]*

I would like to thank His Excellency Carlos Arturo Morales López, Ambassador of the Republic of Colombia, and His Excellency Alfredo Martínez Serrano, Ambassador of Spain, for their contributions to this event.

I invite my colleagues and friends to join us in celebrating this day and making the most of this wonderful occasion. I hope everyone enjoys the celebration.

\* \* \*

*[English]*

#### NEW TRAVEL ROUTES IN LONDON

**Kurt Holman (London—Fanshawe, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this week brought some very exciting news for London and southwestern Ontario. Porter Airlines announced five new year-round routes from London International Airport, connecting our community directly to Vancouver, Edmonton, Ottawa, Montreal and Halifax beginning next spring. For Londoners, that means more choices, better opportunities and better connections across our country. These new routes will make it easier for families to stay connected, for businesses to reach new markets and for visitors from across Canada to come and experience everything our region has to offer. London is a major Canadian city, and our region deserves the kind of connectivity that reflects that.

On behalf of the people of southwestern Ontario, I thank the teams at Porter and London International Airport who helped make

#### Statements by Members

this expansion possible. This is great news for London, and I look forward to seeing these new routes take flight.

\* \* \*

*[Translation]*

#### PARTICIPACTION COMMUNITY CHALLENGE

**Steeve Lavoie (Beauport—Limoilou, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, last June, municipalities, schools and organizations from across the country came together to take part in the ParticipACTION community challenge to encourage Canadians to be more physically active and to make sport more accessible and inclusive.

This year, Quebec City stood out and won the title of Canada's most active community. This recognition speaks to the incredible commitment of our volunteers and citizens, who help make physical activity an integral part of life in Quebec City. In addition, this victory means that the community will receive \$100,000 to support local sports and physical activity initiatives.

On behalf of all members of the House from the greater Quebec City area, I want to congratulate everyone who played a part in this great achievement, of which we can all be very proud.

\* \* \*

*[English]*

#### KEN KRAWETZ

**Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart. Ken Krawetz, one of the Saskatchewan Party's founding members, passed away, and his life is being celebrated in Yorkton today.

Born and raised in the Invermay area, he was first elected to the provincial legislature in 1995. Krawetz would later be an integral piece in forming the new Saskatchewan Party and changing the political landscape in Saskatchewan forever. In 2007, Ken served as deputy premier under Brad Wall and held the portfolios of education and finance.

As much as Ken loved his province, he loved his family that much more. To his wife Gail, son Bryce, daughter Lindsay, and the two loves of his life, his granddaughters Willow and Scarlett, I thank them so much for sharing Ken with us. He was a man of character and integrity and led with his whole heart.

Ken and I served together with former premier Brad Wall. Brad always said that the goal of politicians should be to leave things better than they found them. Ken took these words to heart. Saskatchewan is a better place to live now because of the service of Ken Krawetz.

*Wieczna pamięć.*

*Statements by Members*

[Translation]

**ANNE-CLAIRE POIRIER**

**Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, can cinema help advance society? Can art be a real driver of social progress and collective development?

Anne-Claire Poirier, who passed away recently, is unequivocal proof that the answer to these questions is “yes”. Her work is irrefutable proof of the impact cinema has on social progress. She was a pioneer of feminist filmmaking, and her films forced us to confront head-on issues that have transformed Quebec society. These include the erasure of women from history, the challenges of pregnancy, abortion, rape, prostitution, addiction and homosexuality. Her films included titles like *Mourir à tue-tête* and *Tu as crié LET ME GO*. Her unflinching films sent a shockwave through Quebec and sparked real debates that helped move our nation forward. We owe her an extraordinary debt of gratitude, and her legacy continues to shape who we are today.

I offer my deepest condolences to her family and loved ones.

To this incredible woman, I say, “Thank you. The Quebec nation is grateful.”

\* \* \*

[English]

**LATIN AMERICAN AND HISPANIC DAY ON THE HILL**

**Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today I am proud to join my colleagues, ambassadors, community leaders and friends in celebrating the 10th Annual Latin American and Hispanic Day on the Hill. This special occasion recognizes the extraordinary contributions of more than 1.7 million Spanish-speaking Canadians, many of Latin American and Hispanic heritage, who help to strengthen our communities and our country every day.

This year's theme is community, and I can think of no better way to describe the spirit of this event. For 10 years, it has brought Canadians together to celebrate culture, foster connections and build understanding.

I wish everyone celebrating today a wonderful Latin American Heritage Month.

\* \* \*

• (1410)

**ALBERTA REFERENDUM**

**David McKenzie (Calgary Signal Hill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, on October 19, the citizens of Alberta will vote on the question of Alberta pursuing separation from Canada. Unequivocally, I urge Albertans to reject separation as the path forward for our province.

Without question, the Liberal government in Ottawa has worked against our province over the last 10 years, and those actions have led some to believe that separation is the only answer. I disagree. I urge Albertans to put their energies and their votes into making our Confederation work in the way that it was designed to work. The federal government must respect the division of powers in our Con-

stitution and ensure that provinces are unfettered in their areas of authority.

To my fellow Albertans, yes, Canada is imperfect, but our shared history, our culture, our hopes and our dreams are worth working on and fighting for together. On October 19, I will be voting to ensure a stronger Alberta and a united Canada. Please join me.

\* \* \*

**FIREFIGHTERS' NATIONAL MEMORIAL DAY**

**Maggie Chi (Don Valley North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Firefighters' National Memorial Day, which falls yearly on the second Sunday of September. Across Canada, more than 1,000 firefighters have died in the line of duty, including 367 Toronto firefighters. They shall not be forgotten.

Last week, I had the honour of attending the annual memorial ceremony hosted by Toronto Fire Services and the Toronto Professional Fire Fighters Association, honouring the 14 fallen firefighters whose names were added to the memorial honour roll.

I want to take this occasion to acknowledge the dedicated women and men in the fire stations across Don Valley North, who I had the pleasure of partnering with throughout the summer. I thank them and firefighters across Canada for their professionalism and their commitment to keeping us safe. Every day, they stand ready to run into danger to save lives and livelihoods. We owe firefighters and their families an enduring debt of gratitude. We thank them for their service and unwavering dedication to safeguarding Canadians across the country.

\* \* \*

**ALBERTA REFERENDUM**

**Billy Morin (Edmonton Northwest, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canada is a family. Families share, support and succeed with each other. Families also have conflict and fight. Families often fail because one member of the family does not feel heard. Too many Albertans are frustrated, not with the country of Canada but with the federal government, an important distinction.

As a person who lives under too much government control via the Indian Act, I empathize with this. One hundred and fifty years ago, before Alberta became a province, Treaty 6 promised Canadians and first peoples a timeless agreement to respectfully walk alongside each other, to share land and resources, and to thrive together. Canada's own Constitution is based on the principle that power should reside closest to the people.

Governments should respect individuals, communities and provinces' autonomy. It is time to remember and lead with first principles, when our ancestors locked arms to sign a treaty to make a Constitution and create a country. On October 19, it is time for all first peoples and Albertans to vote for a stronger Alberta and a united Canada.

[Translation]

### MOUVEMENT D'IMPLICATION FRANCOPHONE À ORLÉANS

**Marie-France Lalonde (Orléans, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, last Friday, I had the pleasure of visiting the new facilities of the Mouvement d'implication francophone à Orléans, or MIFO, which will open its doors in the fall of 2027. This visit gave me an opportunity to see the scope and potential of this major project, which will become the largest francophone cultural centre in eastern Ontario. MIFO will house a gymnasium, a performance venue, an art gallery and a whole host of spaces for gathering, creating and celebrating.

Our government is proud to support this project with a \$36-million investment that will benefit the francophone and francophile community of Orléans. Today, I am also pleased to welcome to Parliament a delegation from the Orléans Wichita New Orleans association, along with the Société franco-ontarienne du patrimoine et de l'histoire d'Orléans. Their mission is simple: to bring the two Orleans closer together across the Atlantic and celebrate everything that unites us.

I welcome our dear cousins to Ottawa.

\* \* \*

● (1415)

[English]

### ALBERTA REFERENDUM

**Dane Lloyd (Parkland, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, on October 19, my fellow Albertans will vote on whether Alberta should remain united with our great country or go down the uncertain path of separation. Our country has challenges, but I would choose our country over any other, any time. Former prime minister Harper once said, "Canada is, and always has been, our country."

We want Canada to be a true north that is as strong and as free as it can be in every way that matters, the best country in the world. My fellow Conservatives and I believe in this vision. That is why we serve. That is why Conservatives are fighting for a stronger Alberta within a united Canada, an Alberta that can reach its full potential without being held back by Ottawa. I urge my fellow Albertans to heed this call.

Let us be a true north that is as strong and as free as it can be. May God bless our country. Long live Canada.

\* \* \*

### LATIN AMERICAN AND HISPANIC DAY ON THE HILL

**Will Greaves (Victoria, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today, on the 10th annual Latin American and Hispanic Day on the Hill, I rise to recognize the millions of Canadians of Latin American and Hispanic heritage from coast to coast to coast. From music and the arts to public service to professional sports, Latin American Canadians make vital contributions to our communities every single day. As co-chair of the Canada-Dominican Republic parliamentary friendship group, I wish to specifically recognize the long-standing relationship between our two countries.

### Oral Questions

As the second most populous country in the Caribbean, the Dominican Republic has been a key regional partner for Canada for more than 70 years on issues including trade, tourism, investment and a shared commitment to democracy and open markets. That is why later this month, we will have the privilege to welcome to Ottawa His Excellency, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic. This visit promises to further strengthen the partnership between our two countries.

This October, I wish the Dominican Canadian community and all Latin American Canadians a meaningful and happy Latin American—

**The Speaker:** There was a problem with the visual for an earlier S. O. 31.

The hon. member for Kitchener—Conestoga.

**Tim Louis:** Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to Ron Schlegel, whose passing leaves a profound loss for the Waterloo region and for communities across Canada.

Driven by a deep Mennonite faith and a commitment to helping others, Ron devoted his life to building stronger, more caring communities. Through Schlegel Villages, the Research Institute for Aging and the elder wisdom program, he transformed the way we care for seniors and improved countless lives, while also making lasting contributions to mental health, research and community development.

Ron helped establish the University of Waterloo's School of Public Health Sciences and was awarded the Order of Canada, the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal and honorary doctorates from multiple Canadian universities. Those who knew Ron remember not the awards, but his humility, kindness and genuine interest in people. He always focused on improving the lives of others.

On behalf of the people of Kitchener—Conestoga, I extend my sincere condolences to the family and loved ones of Ron. His legacy of service, compassion and community building will endure for generations. Ron will be missed.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

### FINANCE

**John Brassard (Barrie South—Innisfil, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in another convenient example of public policy aligning with Brookfield's strategy of tax dollars being used to limit private risk and profit, the Prime Minister announced a \$2-billion heat pump rebate program today.

Let us play a game. Trane, which is owned by Brookfield, finances and installs heat pumps. Enercare is owned by Brookfield, and it finances and installs heat pumps. The conflict of interest is so blatantly obvious, but what is surprising is the Prime Minister is not even hiding it anymore.

How much do the Prime Minister and Brookfield stand to make off the backs of taxpayers?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I know we will get to these matters further in question period today, but I do want to join with, I am sure, all of my colleagues around the House in congratulating Anne—

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

**The Speaker:** We must keep the noise to an acceptable level in the interest of the interpreters, who can damage their hearing if there is too much ambient noise.

I will ask the government House leader to start from the top.

• (1420)

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon:** Mr. Speaker, I know we will get to many questions today, but I do want to extend the greetings and the congratulations of the entire House. It does not happen every day that Canada welcomes a brand new Nobel laureate, this time in literature.

We congratulate Anne Carson of Toronto, a proud graduate of the University of Toronto, author of over 20 books, a 2005 member of the Order of Canada and a collaborator with the Rheostatics.

[Translation]

I want to congratulate Anne Carson, winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature.

[English]

**John Brassard (Barrie South—Innisfil, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is not surprising that he does not want to answer these questions, but maybe he will answer this one.

The Prime Minister knows exactly what is in his portfolio. Trane heat pumps and Enercare are owned by Brookfield. He stands to make millions in deferred stock units, stock options and carried interest. Today's \$2-billion taxpayer-funded announcement increases the value of his personal assets and Brookfield's.

I ask again, how much do the Prime Minister and Brookfield stand to make off the backs of taxpayers with today's announcement? Maybe he will answer this question: How is that not corrupt?

**Hon. Nathalie Provost (Secretary of State (Nature), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government is focused on addressing affordability for Canadians. That is right. Today, the Prime Minister announced that we will provide \$2 billion for the national heat pump rebate, which will deliver one million home retrofits across Canada. This will save families up to \$1,400 per year. We will continue to put forward measures that address the affordability challenges Canadians are facing, while lowering emissions at the same time—

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

[Translation]

**Marie-Hélène Gaudreau:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I find it appalling that I cannot hear what my colleague is saying. It is inaudible. It is far too noisy.

**The Speaker:** Noted.

The hon. member for Calgary East.

[English]

**THE ECONOMY**

**Jasraj Hallan (Calgary East, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, everyone remembers when the finance minister put on a grand show three years ago. He said that he would haul in all the grocery store CEOs, give them a piece of his mind and stabilize grocery prices by Thanksgiving. He just forgot to mention which Thanksgiving. Four Thanksgivings later, the cost of turkey is up 10%, with record food bank usage.

He proved that Liberals are all talk and no results. Will the guy who said that he just got here stand up and admit that, after 11 years of his incompetent Liberal government, they have plunged Canada into an affordability crisis?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as we know, affordability is top of mind for this government and Canadians, and I have good news, if the Conservatives want to listen.

Today, the Prime Minister just announced a landmark investment to retrofit one million homes, which will cut energy costs and emissions in this country. We should all applaud. This is a great measure.

This is on top of our measures for housing, on top of our measures for food and on top of the measures we have taken to stabilize the prices in this country. We will continue to fight for Canadians. Every day is a good day to fight for Canadians.

**Jasraj Hallan (Calgary East, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, not a single one of the things that he listed is going to take a single person out of the food bank lineups that are at record usage. Food bank lineups are getting longer. In fact, since 2019, under these guys, food bank lineups have doubled. Now we find out that one in three food banks is actually turning people away because they do not have food or resources to keep up with the demand.

That is the Liberal record. Today, Conservatives have put forward a motion in this House for the incompetent Liberal government to finally admit that, after 11 years of its failed policies, Canada is in an affordability crisis.

Will the Liberals vote in favour of it, yes or no?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let me list what is Canada's record and the government's record. The Canada child benefit is our record. The national school food program is our record. The Canada disability benefit is our record. The Canada groceries and essentials benefit is our record. The early learning and child care system is our record. The Canada workers benefit is our record.

At every step of the way, we have fought for Canadian families and Canadian workers, but the Conservatives have voted against every single measure. We are going to fight for Canadian families.

• (1425)

[Translation]

**Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, next week, families will gather to celebrate Thanksgiving. However, according to studies, the cost of that traditional meal will be 10% higher than it was last year. For far too many Canadians, simply gathering around the table with family is becoming a luxury. That is why our party has brought forward a motion, which is being debated today, to recognize the reality that these families face every time they go to the grocery store.

Does the government acknowledge that, after 11 years of Liberal rule, Canada is officially in the midst of a cost-of-living crisis?

**Hon. Nathalie Provost (Secretary of State (Nature), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this is indeed an extremely important issue for Canadians and for Quebecers. That is why our government is taking action on multiple fronts to make life more affordable for Canadians.

Today, the Prime Minister announced a \$2-billion measure that will benefit one million households across Canada. This will represent savings of up to \$2,000 a year. Not only will this help improve affordability, but it is good for the climate.

That is what building Canada well is all about.

**Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, those are just empty words. The government's plan is not working.

It will take approximately \$150 in groceries to feed eight people, and that is not counting all the extras that people have come to expect, like appetizers and drinks. Unfortunately, many Canadian families will have to settle for a simpler meal because they do not have any money. That is the result of 11 years of Liberal mismanagement. Our motion before the House today makes that very clear.

Will the government admit that, after 11 years of Liberal governance, Canada is officially in the midst of an affordability crisis?

**Hon. Nathalie Provost (Secretary of State (Nature), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, yelling and getting upset is not going to help the affordability crisis. We need to take action and vote in favour of measures that help Canadians.

As I just said, an announcement was made today that will help a million households. In my colleague's riding alone, families will receive \$14.5 million from the Canada groceries and essentials benefit. This measure is achieving real results in her riding, and she voted against it. It is all well and good to yell, but it is far better to take action, and that is what we are doing.

\* \* \*

#### GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

**Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, finally a Liberal has realized that Bill C-39 is a big mistake. The member for West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country criticized the fact that Bill C-39 grants the power to build pipelines while violating environmental laws. He spoke out against the fact that Bill

#### Oral Questions

C-39 would limit the duration of consultations, which could be detrimental and could silence indigenous voices, and he is right about that.

It also looks like the Prime Minister is going too far with his big beautiful bill and rollbacks that will be felt for generations.

Who on the government side will speak out against this bill?

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada, including Quebec, is determined to become a superpower in conventional and renewable energy.

That is why I urge the Bloc Québécois to vote in favour of Bill C-39 to accelerate renewable energy projects and the hydroelectric development in Churchill Falls, where the Government of Canada and the 44 Quebec MPs have advocated for a generational investment in the future of Quebecers.

**Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberal member for West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country is right. Bill C-39 is the biggest environmental setback in recent history, but that is not all. Bill C-39 seeks to circumvent checks and balances for the benefit of American oil companies. Bill C-39 seeks to limit workers' rights.

Most Liberals ran for office precisely to fight this kind of measure. When will they have the courage to speak out against the Prime Minister's big beautiful bill?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am surprised by what my colleague said. There was a time when the Bloc Québécois stood up for a Quebec that builds, a Quebec that thinks big, that takes its place inside the country and around the world. Think of Quebec's great builders, of hydroelectricity, of Mr. Bourassa, of the Contereœur project now in progress.

For once, could we hear the Bloc Québécois talk about a strong Quebec, one that builds and takes its place?

On this side of the House, we, the members from Quebec, will be there to defend the interests of Quebec.

**Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette—Manawan, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, omnibus Bill C-39 is 250 pages historic rollbacks on environmental protection, labour rights, science, intergovernmental relations and reconciliation with indigenous peoples.

The Bloc Québécois is appealing to environmentalists, labour unions, scientists, governments and first nations: We need to mobilize. We also need other Liberals to have the same courage as their colleague from West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country and condemn Bill C-39.

Who in the government is going to stand up against the Prime Minister's big beautiful bill?

*Oral Questions*

● (1430)

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, beyond thinking big, as my colleague so aptly put it, and beyond the next James Bay project, which is at Churchill Falls and Gull Island, beyond all that, there is the high-speed rail project. It will connect four of Quebec's largest cities and will be a game-changer for people across Quebec, whether they are studying, working or visiting one of our municipalities or major urban centres.

I urge the Bloc Québécois to get onboard with the high-speed train. May it think big for Quebec and support the Alto project.

\* \* \*

**PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT**

**Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after 10 years of failures in military procurement, the Liberals found a solution: create even more bureaucracy.

The Defence Investment Agency has yet to deliver any new equipment to our military members, and its chief executive officer reportedly wanted to leave because he was frustrated with the slow pace of the system. However, with Bill C-40, the Liberals want to turn this agency into a Crown corporation. Our military does not need a new agency. It needs equipment.

Why is the Liberals' answer to failure even more bureaucracy?

[English]

**Hon. Stephen Fuhr (Secretary of State (Defence Procurement), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, anyone who is paying attention would know that the Defence Investment Agency, over the last 12 months, has done a lot to deliver for our armed forces. We are in contract award for new aircraft. We are in contract award for armoured vehicles. We are advancing projects such as submarines and AEW&C aircraft. All these things are happening.

Bill C-40 would give our Defence Investment Agency a more commercially minded organization that could do things faster and do much more than just buy things for the military.

[Translation]

**Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, what we are seeing with the Defence Investment Agency is that they are already picking winners. We know that Saab's GlobalEye aircraft was selected as the preferred option, without any real competition and without proper consultation with the Royal Canadian Air Force. Now, with Bill C-40, we run the risk of further reducing parliamentary oversight.

Will the minister guarantee that no contract will be awarded under the table?

[English]

**Hon. Stephen Fuhr (Secretary of State (Defence Procurement), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, part of the question was incoherent, but let me address the part of it that I think I could hear. Bill C-40 would still have all the safeguards for oversight and government accountability that we have in the system we have right now.

With regard to the member's comment about the GlobalEye, we did the necessary analysis to make the choice to download Saab as the preferred supplier. This is great for Canada. These airplanes are built in Canada. They could be militarized in Canada for our own needs and exported to the world. This is good for Canadian jobs, good for Canada and good for our armed forces.

**Jeff Kibble (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister announced a global aircraft project that does not meet operational requirements, to the surprise of the air force. L3Harris Canada and other contenders were not consulted. With no open competition, clearly politics was put ahead of defence. This is not the type of procurement Canada needs.

Bill C-40 would bring an updated DIA Crown corporation with no defined procedures. However, there would be 13 exceptions for sole-source contracting, with no written reasons required.

How would the government bring open competition and enhanced accountability, when Bill C-40's focus is on giving the DIA more power and the government less accountability?

**Hon. Stephen Fuhr (Secretary of State (Defence Procurement), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is always interesting to find out, when people are criticizing what we are up to, what they did when they had the keys to the car. The Conservative Party let NATO defence spending fall below 1%. The Conservatives actually got us out of NATO AWACS. That was a specific, conscious decision by the Stephen Harper government.

Regarding the NATO airplane we are looking at buying, everybody in the world wants it. It is built in Canada. It will be built for Canadians and built for our allies. We are very proud of that.

**Jeff Kibble (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for mansplaining the past. The government has failed to meet even the 2%.

The Prime Minister has made numerous defence announcements that have—

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

● (1435)

**The Speaker:** The hon. member, from the top.

**Jeff Kibble:** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has made numerous defence announcements that have no signed contracts, including the GlobalEye project, which bypassed open competition. Now, Bill C-40 would turn the Defence Investment Agency into a Crown corporation that would give the Liberals unprecedented powers to bypass parliamentary oversight and easily approve sole-source contracting without fair competition.

Will the Liberals commit to releasing the DIA's full procurement procedures and provide written justification to Parliament for all major sole-source military procurement contracts?

**Hon. Stephen Fuhr (Secretary of State (Defence Procurement), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Telesat and MDA is a signed contract. Bombardier is a signed contract. General Dynamics Land Systems—Canada is a signed contract.

May I remind the member that he voted against defence spending in 2024 at the defence committee. We will take no lessons from the Conservatives.

**James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, nobody trusts the Liberals or the secretary of state. After a decade, the Liberals always play political games.

We are now on the third iteration of the Prime Minister's attempt to reinvent the wheel. Nothing changed in the last six months, except that media reported that Doug Guzman wanted to resign after less than a year as CEO of the Defence Investment Agency.

Is Bill C-40 nothing more than an attempt to keep the Prime Minister's BFF from rage quitting because he had to be accountable to taxpayers?

**Sherry Romanado (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is very obvious that the member opposite does not want to talk about his lack of support for the Canadian Armed Forces. Every single time we have brought forward defence spending at committee, the Conservative Party has voted against it.

Mr. Speaker, in budget 2025, we invested more than \$81 billion in defence over the next five years. We have met the NATO target of 2% five years ahead of schedule. I do not understand why the member opposite cannot get on board.

**James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, let us talk about reality. In May, the Liberal solution was turning the brand new DIA into a stand-alone agency. Six months later, the Liberals changed their minds again and are trying to turn the agency into a Crown corporation. In reality, the Liberals are attempting to circumvent Treasury Board rules and give a new associate minister unprecedented power over a Crown corporation that would have to do everything the associate minister would say, do and spend.

Is this a new attempt by the Prime Minister to decrease accountability and increase political interference in defence procurement?

**Sherry Romanado (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Minister of National Defence was in Alberta to talk about the incredible investments we have been making. At CFB Edmonton, we highlighted nearly \$8 billion in defence investment, including nearly \$4 billion

to support future fighter capabilities at CFB Cold Lake. There is \$750 million for a new chemical and biological laboratory at Suffield. There is \$550 million to establish the western operating base for the Royal Canadian Air Force's Husky fleet. There is over \$580 million over the next three years for maintenance and repair work across bases in Alberta.

There are over 12,000 members of the Canadian Armed Forces and DND employees in Alberta, and we support them.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

## THE ECONOMY

**Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, on TVA news, reporter Pierre-Olivier Zappa talked about a study that found that, this year, a traditional Thanksgiving meal will cost 10% more than last year. He even suggested considering an alternative to the traditional meal. That is where we are at after 11 years of Liberal governance. Getting together as a family should never be a luxury. The Liberals want to raise taxes. We want Canadians to have more money in their pockets.

Can the Liberals understand that after 11 years of their rule, we are experiencing an affordability crisis in Canada?

• (1440)

**Caroline Desrochers (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, we are interested in actual facts. Here are the facts: The cost of housing has fallen for 24 consecutive months, and housing construction has increased. We have reached agreements across Canada to lower the cost of housing and build more affordable housing. We created the Canada rental protection fund. Just this morning, we launched a \$2-billion fund for climate-friendly renovations to reduce families' expenses by up to \$1,400 per year. That is meaningful action.

The truth is that members opposite do not have a plan, other than to have the government abdicate all responsibility toward its citizens.

\* \* \*

## CLIMATE CHANGE

**Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are defending Bill C-39, which will push pipeline projects through by scrapping environmental laws. Today, the Canadian Climate Institute revealed that greenhouse gas emissions in Canada did not fall in 2025; instead, they rose to nearly 700 million tonnes. The 2025 increase is equivalent to adding one million vehicles to the roads.

### Oral Questions

The Liberals have forgotten that the aim is to pollute less, not more. Just imagine if, on top of that, they let their Prime Minister push Bill C-39 through and build pipelines.

Do they realize that their silence is setting us on a course for disaster?

**Hon. Nathalie Provost (Secretary of State (Nature), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my esteemed colleague for his question. However, I think it is important to take a broader view of the issue. Overall, methane emissions have declined, and the oil and gas sector has improved its performance, resulting in lower emissions. At the same time, emissions associated with the construction sector have increased. Today's announcement will help address that.

Half of the projects discussed at the investment summit were renewable energy projects. All of Canada's provinces are working hard, together, to reduce emissions—

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

**Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, greenhouse gas emissions in this country are going up instead of down because the Prime Minister eliminated carbon pricing, eliminated the emissions cap for the oil and gas sector and ended up causing the member for Laurier—Sainte-Marie to step down. The rising emissions are only going to get worse, according to the Canadian Climate Institute, because the Liberals are approving pipelines left, right and centre. There are Liberals who have led us to the brink of a climate crisis, but the Prime Minister wants to take it one step further.

Is anyone going to stop him?

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am baffled, because the member will literally be able to look out his window in Repentigny and have a view of one of the best possible ways of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. I am talking about the Alto high-speed train, which will connect four of Quebec's largest cities to Ontario, reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and form the backbone of Quebec's transportation system. This is a generational project that deserves the support of this guy who says he wants to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

\* \* \*

[English]

### HOUSING

**Jacob Mantle (York—Durham, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Habitat for Humanity said this week that Canada is an outlier for all the wrong reasons. Canada is now the place where people who do not own a home have the least hope of ever owning one, as 56% of Canadians who do not own a home say they never will. That is twice the global average and the highest of any country surveyed. Yesterday, the Prime Minister stood here and claimed that housing affordability has improved. We know that is all talk and no action.

If affordability has improved, why is Canada a place where Canadians do not believe they will ever own a home?

**Jennifer McKelvie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to start by thanking Habitat for Humanity for the work it does. I am very excited that this summer in Ajax, with the help of the housing

accelerator fund, we found land for Habitat for Humanity to build upon.

That is just part of our plan for young Canadians across the country from coast to coast. We have introduced the GST rebate for new homebuyers, which is helping our youth in this country to buy a home, but we are not stopping there. We are also investing in housing-enabling infrastructure. We are working with Ontario and B.C. to bring down development charges. That reduces the cost of a home.

**Jacob Mantle (York—Durham, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I too am grateful for the work of Habitat for Humanity. I just wish fewer Canadians needed it. Intentions do not build homes. The Liberals' failure to deliver on housing means that the next generation has no hope of a home. That means their future is on hold, that the ability to buy a house, to start a family, to get the job they want and to stand on their own two feet is on hold. A Liberal government that believes that is affordability is out of touch. It is not good enough. It is not good enough for those Canadians. It is not good enough for our country.

Is it good enough for the minister?

• (1445)

**Jennifer McKelvie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would also like to point out that Habitat for Humanity is building in my neighbouring riding of Whitby. We are so happy it is building housing for young Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

In addition, I would like to point out that we are making record investments in infrastructure across the country. What that is doing is creating jobs for youth, high-paying careers, and building housing, infrastructure and major projects. Not only are we building houses, but we are also providing them jobs, and getting it done.

\* \* \*

### EMPLOYMENT

**Tamara Jansen (Cloverdale—Langley City, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in 1982, the recession under Pierre Trudeau's Liberals forced my father-in-law, a Vancouver electrical contractor, to lay off his son, my husband, to help keep the rest of his crew working. Forty-four years later, it is déjà vu. Under the current Liberal government, B.C. has seen 845 foreclosures in just eight months, surpassing all of last year. That is a 20-year high.

How many more sons have to lose their jobs before the Liberals admit they are all talk and no results?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the member that we live in a very different time. Investment is up in this country. Growth is up in this country. Employment is up in this country. The one thing we see that is down is the Conservative Party in this country.

I can assure the member that with the policies we have put in place to grow the fastest economy in the G7 and tackle affordability when it comes to housing, the price of gas and the price of food, we are on the right track. We will keep building for Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

**Tamara Jansen (Cloverdale—Langley City, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after losing his electrical job, my husband turned to farming. Everyone said farming was recession-proof. Today, under the Liberals, even farmers are struggling, and the construction industry as well. Metro Vancouver condo starts have fallen 40%, and B.C. lost 4,800 construction jobs in August alone. The Liberals keep spending, borrowing and making grand promises while hard-working Canadians pay the price.

How many more livelihoods will be lost before the government changes its costly policies and delivers affordable homes, good jobs and hope for Canadian families?

**Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, maybe that member should come and join us in celebrating the 6,100 jobs at LNG Canada phase two in her province. Maybe she should join us in helping with 4,000 new jobs at the sunrise expansion in her province. Maybe she should get excited about the 2,000 new jobs at Tilbury. Maybe she should be excited about the thousands of new jobs at the port of Vancouver, and she might be excited about the 140,000 jobs coming from Pacific link.

\* \* \*

## HOUSING

**Vincent Ho (Richmond Hill South, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Prime Minister promised to “build, baby, build”, but the Liberal insider he appointed to chair the new housing bureaucracy supposedly tasked with fixing the Liberal housing crisis called the dream of home ownership a “regressive” idea and told Canadians to stop glorifying it.

The latest numbers are out: 47% of Canadians would move an hour away from their community just to afford a home, and 56% of Canadian non-homeowners say they may never own a home.

Why does the Liberal government think the dream of home ownership is regressive, and how much longer do young Canadians have to keep sacrificing before its talk turns into results?

**Jennifer McKelvie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that I very much enjoyed announcing a project in that member's riding in the spring. I am so excited that we are bringing affordable housing to Richmond Hill.

## Oral Questions

I would also like to point out that we are not stopping there. We are making investments in housing-enabling infrastructure across the province, with big announcements happening all around the province, including in Mississauga, Vaughan and the city of Toronto. We have also invested \$76 million to create a state-of-the-art community centre at Humber Polytechnic. We have also invested 1.5 kilometres for a multi-use path in Ajax. We are building all across Ontario. It is creating homes, it is creating jobs, it is creating—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for South Shore—St. Margarets has the floor.

\* \* \*

## AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

**Jessica Fancy (South Shore—St. Margarets, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as chair of the Liberal rural caucus, ensuring that we make life better for our rural Canadians, particularly our farmers, is a top priority for me and my colleagues, and it should be for the Conservatives. From the very beginning, our new government has had a clear and genuine focus on reducing red tape, and yesterday Bill S-7 was tabled, which builds on those existing efforts.

I wonder if the minister could help us in addressing some of the long-standing concerns from our agricultural communities.

● (1450)

**Hon. Heath MacDonald (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question and congratulate her on her new role.

Our government has been focused on making life easier for farmers, ranchers and producers. Farmers want to be farming, not filling out forms and applications. That is exactly what this legislation is all about. We are taking steps to make it easier to streamline assessments for important agriculture products, reduce administrative burdens, transfer farms from one generation to the next and remove long-standing age restrictions. These are practical changes that farmers have been asking for for some time. We are moving forward in the farming and agriculture sectors.

\* \* \*

## PUBLIC SAFETY

**Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—Glengarry, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the public safety minister's statements about the Liberals' failure to catch a Canadian-linked spy at NATO lack any credibility.

### Oral Questions

Three years ago, the Public Service Commission found the spy had committed fraud by applying at CBSA under two different names and emails, failing to clarify why she submitted multiple applications. It was Belgium, not Canada, that caught this spy. How embarrassing. The basic facts of this case show just how incredible it was that this spy was still able to get the necessary Canadian security clearances. The Liberals failed to keep Canadians safe.

Why is the minister covering up for this Liberal incompetence?

**Hon. Gary Anandasangaree (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I share the member opposite's outrage in this regard. Canada's law enforcement and intelligence agencies maintain strong partnerships with their domestic and international counterparts to identify, investigate and respond to threats, including incidents such as the arrest made in Belgium.

This is an active investigation. It would be inappropriate of me and the member opposite to speculate. We will continue to work to protect Canadians and Canadian interests with our partners at home and abroad.

**Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—Glengarry, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the minister has talked about there being gaps. The biggest gap is in the minister's credibility. The more he talks, the worse it gets.

For months, the minister promised to “get to the bottom of what happened”, yet he cannot even answer basic questions. This majorly embarrassing failure compromises Canadian security and, critically, the trust of our allies. The Liberals will not even confirm media and source reports that it was a spy working for the CCP in Beijing.

What are the Liberals hiding? Can they answer the basic question of which country this spy was working for, or are they too worried about upsetting Beijing?

**Hon. Gary Anandasangaree (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is obvious that the member opposite does not understand how due process works. The Belgian officials are currently investigating this matter. We are co-operating in every way we can, including the RCMP and CSIS.

It would be inappropriate for the House to opine and come to conclusions without the full benefit of all the facts that are available.

\* \* \*

### DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

**Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Sturgeon River, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government's foreign influence registry is in shambles. The deadline to register has passed. This week, the commissioner revealed that only 30 persons or entities have registered, despite an estimated 2,400 that are required to do so, according to Public Safety Canada. That is a pathetic 1% compliance rate.

How does the minister explain that?

**Hon. Gary Anandasangaree (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada now has an office dedicated to increasing transparency around foreign influence activities. The office is now

fully operational, with Mr. Boegman being at the helm. This is a major step for Canada.

The registry will be a tool to hold individuals and entities accountable for conduct of influence on behalf of foreign entities. It will provide more transparency for Canadians, and it is a testament to the principles of protecting Canadians, defending our democracy and upholding the rule of law.

**Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Sturgeon River, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, again, the Liberals are all talk and no results. They have had two and a half years to get the registry up and running, and there is a pathetic 1% compliance rate. Canadians deserve to know who is influencing elected officials and other public office-holders on behalf of foreign governments. Compliance is not optional. It is the law.

What exactly is the minister doing to enforce the law?

• (1455)

**Hon. Gary Anandasangaree (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I share the member opposite's assertion that compliance is not optional. It is the law. That is exactly what we have set up. Mr. Boegman is seized with establishing the registry, which is already done. He is in the process of registering and onboarding those who are required to register, and those who do not comply will face the full consequences of the law.

[Translation]

**Gabriel Hardy (Montmorency—Charlevoix, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is travelling around the world. He is going to Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and China. In 2025, China was recognized as a threat to national security because it interfered in our elections. Today, the government is discussing national defence with the Chinese government.

Meanwhile, the foreign influence transparency commissioner reports that there are 2,422 foreign influence agents here in Canada. How many of them have registered? Only 30.

Can the Prime Minister tell us who is taking care of defending and protecting the integrity of Canada's democracy while he is off travelling the globe?

[English]

**Hon. Gary Anandasangaree (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our Prime Minister has been engaging many world leaders and has been ensuring that business investments come into Canada, investments that this country critically needs. It is a testament to his leadership that we have been able to expand them and have a level of investments that we have never seen in Canada before.

With respect to the integrity of our electoral system and the protection of Canadians, the transparency registry is on target. It will continue to register and onboard those who are required to register.

[Translation]

**Gabriel Hardy (Montmorency—Charlevoix, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the independent officers of Parliament are all sounding the alarm, one after the other. The Information Commissioner of Canada recently wrote to the Senate to warn it that the Liberal government is concealing more and more records and shunning transparency. This week, we learned from the foreign influence transparency commissioner that just 1% of foreign agents have registered in the two years since the law was passed.

Yesterday, the Prime Minister asked us to give him a break because he just got here. Are the Liberals not interested in protecting Canada's democracy in a world that has never been so divided and dangerous?

[English]

**Hon. Gary Anandasangaree (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, protecting Canada's democracy is our collective responsibility in this House. I can assure the member opposite that we have a system that is working. We have a commissioner who is engaged and who is working to ensure that those who are required to register will register. If people do not comply, we have laws in place to hold them accountable.

\* \* \*

#### FISHERIES AND OCEANS

**Jonathan Rowe (The Eastern Peninsulas, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, two weeks ago, I got up here and sounded the alarm on the France crab grab, and the Liberals tried to dismiss it as fearmongering. Once they started to realize that this was a \$60-million issue, all the minister did was say that she was disappointed in France's intent.

Newfoundlanders and Labradorians do not want a government that is simply disappointed. Will the Prime Minister stand up for Canadians, stand up for Canadian sovereignty and say no to the France crab grab?

**Hon. Joanne Thompson (Minister of Fisheries, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first of all, I will not play politics with issues as important as this. What I will say is that French officials confirmed that no new snow crab licence was issued.

What I will say to the member is that the residents and constituents in his riding reach out to me regularly to talk about the things that matter: small craft harbours, the Churchill Falls agreement, the work on training our young people for Red Seal certifications, and on and on it goes.

It is enough of the nonsense. We have work to do. Canadians know we need to work together. The member needs to—

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

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame.

**Clifford Small (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, selling out our fishing industry to foreign in-

#### Oral Questions

terests is not nonsense. I would have the member for St. John's East understand that.

The Prime Minister and the President of France two weeks ago announced a 1,500-tonne quota of crab to be caught in waters that are controlled by Canada. The Minister of Fisheries expressed her disappointment. The Canadian fishing industry deserves better.

Will the Prime Minister stand today with our fishing industry and stop this giveaway, or has he already sold it out to foreign interests?

**Hon. Joanne Thompson (Minister of Fisheries, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is nice to hear the member stand in the House again. It has been a long time since we have heard from him. I want to take this opportunity to see if he still believes that our school nutrition program is garbage.

Let me remind him that we are facing a time in our country when we need to come together. Newfoundlanders and Labradorians understand this. The constituents in his riding understand this. It is a shame that he still has to play cheap politics.

● (1500)

**The Speaker:** Let us be careful with some of the insinuations.

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

**Clifford Small:** Calm down.

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

**The Speaker:** Let us speak through the Speaker.

The hon. member for Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame.

**Clifford Small (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, crab fishermen and plant workers back home were not amused with that response from the member for St. John's East. The Minister of Fisheries should at least know that next year's crab quotas will be set next year, which is in opposition to what she said, that the quotas have not been announced. Maybe she is catering her response to the French fishermen she met last summer.

Will the Liberal Prime Minister stand with our fishing industry, or has he already sold it out like he did with our steel producers?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Joanne Thompson (Minister of Fisheries, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind my colleague across the aisle that I work in dialogue and actually have very strong relationships with the fishery sector in Newfoundland and Labrador. I certainly do not need lessons on how to speak with people from the member, but I will remind him that we are doing the work that Canadians have asked us to do. We are meeting this moment with strong strategies and programs that work, and we are meeting it in relationship and in dialogue with the people who need us to work alongside them. This rhetoric is not doing anyone any benefit.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**HEALTH**

**Abdelhaq Sari (Bourassa, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in these difficult, unprecedented times, Canadians' creativity and genius must not be held in check by red tape. Our government was supposed to make that happen, and it did. Earlier this year, we modernized the clinical trials framework, attracted \$3.3 billion in investments in the process, and saved the pharmaceutical industry \$16 million. That is what we were supposed to do.

I have a question for the Minister of Health. What other measures is the government taking to unleash Canadian creativity?

**Hon. Marjorie Michel (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for calling attention to this important work. Indeed, yesterday, we introduced Bill S-7, the cutting red tape for all Canadians act. This bill will help Canadians spend less time on paperwork by making rules and regulations clearer and, most of all, more efficient. By limiting red tape and bureaucracy, we ensure that the government is meeting the expectations of all Canadians more effectively.

\* \* \*

[English]

**THE ECONOMY**

**Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadian families are facing their most expensive Thanksgiving yet, up 10% from last year, which was up 10% from the year before. Far too many Canadians know the feeling of watching the grocery store till tick up faster and faster each time they go and wondering how they are going to make ends meet.

Families are already struggling to put food on the table. Now, even sitting down to a Thanksgiving family dinner is out of reach for too many. Thanksgiving should be a time for families to come together, yet they are wondering how they are going to make this work.

Does the Liberal government even care that families cannot afford a Thanksgiving this year?

**Hon. Adam van Koeverden (Secretary of State (Sport), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the real question is what we are doing collectively in this House, with the abilities we have, to answer those calls for a little bit of help.

The member of Parliament for Fort McMurray—Cold Lake might want to explain to her 20,772 constituents, who received \$7.9

million through the groceries and essentials benefit, that she did not support it. She could also sit down with some of the military members, seeing as Cold Lake is a large military community. She also voted against a pay increase for those military members.

We have a chance in the House to work on affordability. The member could get on board.

**Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadian families are struggling, and what they do not need is another Liberal lecture about how good things are and how they should be grateful for everything they have. Thanksgiving is coming up, and families cannot afford to put food on the table. That should concern every single one of the Liberals, yet here they are defending their record.

Will the government admit that after 11 years of Liberal governments, Canadians are struggling and we are in an affordability crisis?

● (1505)

**Peter Fragiskatos (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member has an opportunity on the floor of the House of Commons to offer constructive ideas. I do not hear that on the opposite side, not from the member and not from any Conservative member.

Yes, there are Canadians going through challenges. We should be there for them every step of the way. What do the Conservatives want to do? They want to get rid of the Canada child benefit, day care support and dental support, all these various benefits. However, let us take it out of the political realm and look to the private sector. At the investment summit, \$500 billion of investment and financing was committed. We have seen the record foreign direct investment—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Saskatoon South.

**Kevin Waugh (Saskatoon South, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Thanksgiving weekend is ahead, but unfortunately many Canadians will go without because the traditional Thanksgiving Day meal is 10% more expensive this year than it was last year. Liberal policies are driving up the cost of everything. In August alone, the Saskatoon Food Bank had 26,000 visits, an all-time high.

Will the government admit that after 11 years of Liberals, Canada is officially in an affordability crisis?

**Hon. Buckley Belanger (Secretary of State (Rural Development), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our visionary yet humble House leader on this side of the assembly asked me to come up with some new material when describing the performance of the Saskatchewan Conservative caucus. He said we needed to find something else beyond “10 long years”. Here it goes. For 11 long years, we have seen no progress made by the Saskatchewan Conservative caucus. On this side of the House, we have done the groceries and essentials benefit. We have helped thousands of families in Saskatchewan, and we will continue to do so.

\* \* \*

### THE ENVIRONMENT

**Shannon Miedema (Halifax, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in Canada, our culture and economy are built on the water. This is especially true in my riding of Halifax, located in beautiful Nova Scotia, Canada's ocean playground. From climate change to pollution, the health of our oceans is under threat. It is why I am so excited that next year, our government will be hosting the Our Ocean Conference in my riding.

Can the Minister of Fisheries tell the House how our government is addressing these threats and protecting our waters?

**Hon. Joanne Thompson (Minister of Fisheries, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for her passion for ocean protection. She is right. Canada is stepping up as a global leader.

Recently, I joined the Prime Minister as he announced the start of Canada's oceans strategy, with more than \$1.2 billion in new funding to strengthen marine safety, reinforce our fisheries and build a stronger, more sustainable ocean economy. We are not done there. In May, Canada will host the Our Ocean Conference. I look forward to welcoming all of Canada to Halifax.

\* \* \*

### JUSTICE

**Chak Au (Richmond Centre—Marpole, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the B.C. Supreme Court struck down a law that would make drug dealing even more legal across Canada. Canadians need protection from traffickers flooding our communities with deadly drugs. Our Conservative plan, alongside Bill C-289, would toughen penalties for serious fentanyl traffickers and save lives.

Will the Liberal government appeal the ruling and support the legislation that Canadians need to stop the drug supply in our streets and save lives, yes or no?

**Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, drug trafficking is a very serious offence that can claim the lives of innocent people in this country. The case to which the hon. member refers is currently under the appeal period, during which the independent Public Prosecution Service of Canada has an opportunity to make a decision, separate and apart from the political arm of government, as to whether it is in the interest of justice to further pursue an appeal. I look forward to seeing the independent prosecutor discharge their responsibilities in accordance with the law in order to help protect

communities. They are going to have an opportunity to do that independently, as it should be.

\* \* \*

● (1510)

### HEALTH

**Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, more than six million Canadians do not have a family doctor, yet having one means better health outcomes, earlier treatment and less pressure on emergency rooms and hospitals. Family physicians provide more than half of medical services, but Canada invests just 4% of health spending in primary care, half the OECD average. Investing in primary care is nation building.

Health ministers meet next week, looking for certainty. Will the Prime Minister restore the 6% health transfer escalator and deliver stable, predictable funding for primary care?

[Translation]

**Hon. Marjorie Michel (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague very much for his question. As he is aware, health is a key priority for the Canadian government. I will be meeting with my provincial and territorial counterparts next week, and I will work collaboratively with them, as always. I should also mention that all the provinces and territories have decided to make primary care access one of their priorities. I am working with them.

\* \* \*

[English]

### FISHERIES AND OCEANS

**Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the hon. Minister of Fisheries.

In 2019, the federal government committed to shutting down what are sometimes called open net-pen salmon farms. In my riding, my constituents asked me to call them toxic fish factories, which is what they are. The government promised to shut them down by 2025, but in 2024, it extended that to 2029.

Now the First Nation Wild Salmon Alliance is demanding to know, on behalf of 37 first nations in B.C., the wild salmon fishery organizations, the salmon foundation and the sport fishers, if the government will commit to keeping its promise and shut down these toxic fish factories by 2029.

*Government Orders*

**Hon. Joanne Thompson (Minister of Fisheries, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government understands the importance of salmon to communities on Canada's west coast. The government's interdepartmental task force has conducted over 120 engagements with first nations and stakeholders. The government is reviewing the different perspectives to consider how best to move forward on sustainable aquaculture in British Columbia.

[Translation]

**Christine Normandin:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

I will be brief, because I can already guess what your answer to my question will be.

Mr. Speaker, you have previously stated that you can determine whether a question in the House is relevant, but you cannot do the same with the answer.

In response to a question from the member for Barrie South—Innisfil today, the government responded by sharing the news of Anne Carson winning the Nobel Prize in Literature, which is entirely legitimate. That said, I would suggest that the appropriate time to do that would have been during Statements by Members.

If you accept that it is possible to answer a question with that response, then logically, you should also accept that it is possible to do so for 39 questions, which would give the government 39 more statements.

I would ask you to reflect on that.

**The Speaker:** I thank the hon. member for her remarks.

[English]

The hon. member for Souris—Moose Mountain is rising on a point of order.

**Steven Bonk:** Mr. Speaker, during one of the answers to a question from a colleague of mine, the member for Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River said their government was working, and I do not want him to inadvertently mislead the House. I was wondering if he would withdraw that comment.

**The Speaker:** On the next point of order, I see the hon. member for Provencher.

**Ted Falk:** Mr. Speaker, the member for The Eastern Peninsulas asked a legitimate question of the Minister of Fisheries, who, during her very condescending response, gave the member, or at least somebody on this side, the bird. I would ask that she apologize.

The Minister of Natural Resources could confirm that and so would the tapes.

**The Speaker:** I did not see it.

The hon. Minister of Fisheries has the floor.

**Hon. Joanne Thompson:** Mr. Speaker, I can assure the member that whatever he said I did was just a hand movement, and I find the statement offensive.

**The Speaker:** We will review the tape, and I will get back to the House if necessary.

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[English]

**BUILDING CANADA STRONG ACT**

The House resumed from October 7 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.

**The Speaker:** The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-39.

Call in the members.

● (1525)

[Translation]

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

(Division No. 178)

**YEAS****Members**

|                                                |                                                |
|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Abouitaif                                      | Acan                                           |
| Aitchison                                      | Al Soud                                        |
| Albas                                          | Ali                                            |
| Allison                                        | Alty                                           |
| Anandasangaree                                 | Anderson                                       |
| Anstey                                         | Arnold                                         |
| Au                                             | Auguste                                        |
| Baber                                          | Bailey                                         |
| Bains                                          | Baker                                          |
| Baldinelli                                     | Bardeesy                                       |
| Barlow                                         | Barrett                                        |
| Battiste                                       | Beech                                          |
| Begum                                          | Belanger (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River) |
| Bélanger (Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt) | Bendayan                                       |
| Berthold                                       | Bexte                                          |
| Bezan                                          | Bittle                                         |
| Block                                          | Blois                                          |
| Bonk                                           | Borrelli                                       |
| Bragdon                                        | Brassard                                       |
| Brière                                         | Caley                                          |
| Calkins                                        | Carney                                         |
| Carr                                           | Casey                                          |
| Chagger                                        | Chambers                                       |
| Champagne                                      | Chang                                          |
| Chartrand                                      | Chatel                                         |
| Chenette                                       | Chi                                            |
| Chong                                          | Church                                         |
| Clark                                          | Cobena                                         |
| Cody                                           | Connors                                        |
| Cooper                                         | Cormier                                        |
| Dabrusin                                       | Dalton                                         |
| Dancho                                         | Dandurand                                      |
| Danko                                          | Davidson                                       |
| Davies (Niagara South)                         | Dawson                                         |
| Deltell                                        | d'Entremont                                    |
| DeRidder                                       | Deschênes-Thériault                            |
| Desrochers                                     | Dhaliwal                                       |
| Dhillon                                        | Diab                                           |
| Diotte                                         | Doherty                                        |
| Dowdall                                        | Duclos                                         |
| Duguid                                         | Duncan                                         |
| Dzerowicz                                      | Earle                                          |
| Ehsassi                                        | El-Khoury                                      |
| Epp                                            | Eyolfson                                       |

*Government Orders*

Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster—Meadow Lake)Falk (Provencher)

Fancy Fanjoy  
 Fergus Fisher  
 Fonseca Fortier  
 Fragiskatos Fraser  
 Fuhr Gaheer  
 Gainey Gallant  
 Gasparro Genuis  
 Gerretsen Gill (Calgary Skyview)  
 Gill (Brampton West) Gill (Calgary McKnight)  
 Gill (Windsor West) Gill (Abbotsford—South Langley)  
 Gladu Gobeil  
 Godin Goodridge  
 Gould Gourde  
 Grant Greaves  
 Groleau Guay  
 Guglielmin Gull-Masty  
 Gunn Hajdu  
 Hallan Hanley  
 Hardy Harrison  
 Hepfner Hirtle  
 Ho Hoback  
 Hodgson Hogan  
 Holman Housefather  
 Hussien Iacono  
 Idlout Jackson  
 Jaczek Jansen  
 Jeneroux Joly  
 Joseph Kayabaga  
 Kelloway Kelly  
 Khalid Khanna  
 Kibble Kirkland  
 Klassen Kmiec  
 Konanz Koutrakis  
 Kram Kramp-Neuman  
 Kronis Kuruc  
 Lake Lalonde  
 Lambropoulos Lamoureux  
 Lantsman Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles)  
 Lapointe (Sudbury) Lattanzio  
 Lauzon Lavack  
 Lavoie Lawton  
 LeBlanc Lefebvre  
 Leitão Leslie  
 Lewis (Essex) Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)  
 Lighthouse Lloyd  
 Lobb Long  
 Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga) Ma  
 MacDonald (Malpeque) MacDonald (Cardigan)  
 MacKinnon (Gatineau) Mahal  
 Majumdar Malette (Bay of Quinte)  
 Malette (Kapuskasing—Timmins—Mushkegowuk) Maloney  
 Mantle Martin  
 Mazier McCauley  
 McGuinty McKelvie  
 McKenzie McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)  
 McKnight McLean (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke)  
 Melillo Ménard  
 Mendès Menegakis  
 Michel Miedema  
 Miller Mingarelli  
 Moore Morin  
 Morrison Morrissey  
 Motz Muys  
 Myles Naqvi  
 Nater Nathan  
 Nguyen Noormohamed  
 Ntumba Olzewski  
 O'Rourke Osborne  
 Patzer Paul-Hus  
 Petitpas Taylor Poilievre  
 Powlowski Provost

Ramsay Rana  
 Redekopp Reid  
 Reynolds Richards  
 Roberts Robertson  
 Rochefort Romanado  
 Rood Ross  
 Rowe Royer  
 Ruff Sahota  
 Saini Sari  
 Sawatzky Scheer  
 Schiefke Schmale  
 Seeback Sgro  
 Shahnawaz Sheehan  
 Shipley Sidhu (Brampton East)  
 Sidhu (Brampton South) Small  
 Sodhi Solomon  
 Sousa Steinley  
 Stevenson St-Pierre  
 Strahl Strauss  
 Stubbs Sudds  
 Tesser Derksen Thompson  
 Tochor Tolmie  
 Turnbull Uppal  
 Valdez van Koeverden  
 Van Popta Vandenbeld  
 Vien Viersen  
 Villeneuve Vis  
 Warkentin Watchorn  
 Waugh Weiler  
 Williamson Yip  
 Zahid Zerucelli  
 Zimmer Zuberi — 296

**NAYS**

## Members

Barsalou-Duval Beaulieu  
 Blanchet Blanchette-Joncas  
 Bonin Brunelle-Duceppe  
 Champoux Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)  
 DeBellefeuille Deschênes  
 Fortin Garon  
 Gaudreau Gazan  
 Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan) Johns  
 Kwan Larouche  
 Lemire May  
 McPherson Normandin  
 Perron Simard  
 Ste-Marie Thériault — 26

**PAIRED**

## Members

Anand Coteau  
 Fry Gagnéux  
 Kusie Lawrence  
 McLean (Calgary Centre) Oliphant  
 Rempel Garner Sarai — 10

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

I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to a legislative committee.

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

**The Speaker:** I wish to inform the House that because of the deferred recorded division, Government Orders will be extended by 12 minutes.

*Business of the House**[English]***BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, yes, it is Thursday, the highlight of CPAC's audience's viewing week.

I would like to take this opportunity, before I ask the government House leader the business of the House for the rest of this week and for after we get back, to wish all Canadians a very happy Thanksgiving. We know there are many challenges in the world and in this country, but we are very blessed to live in a wonderful country where, despite some of those challenges, we still have a lot to be thankful for. I would like to wish all the parliamentary staff, the parliamentary community from the pages to translation, and even the member for York—Durham, a happy Thanksgiving.

I will ask the government House leader this: Does he have any good news for those Canadians who are going grocery shopping this weekend? Is there any relief to undo Liberal taxes, such as the industrial carbon tax that drives up all kinds of production costs and transportation costs? Are there any plans to repeal the fuel standards tax that adds up to 17¢ cents a litre to the cost of fuel? All those groceries that have to be trucked in to grocery stores that Canadians will be buying for Thanksgiving meals are made more expensive by that tax. Are there any plans to repeal that tax?

As Canadians think about economic activity and job growth, we know that Canadian energy companies invest billions of dollars outside this country, yet because of the government's policies, now the government has to subsidize energy infrastructure in this country. Are there any plans to repeal those bad Liberal laws, such as Bill C-69 and Bill C-48, that chase investment dollars out of the country and incentivize Canadian companies to build pipelines and energy projects in other countries? Can we see any hope on the horizon that those bad pieces of Liberal legislation will be repealed?

When we come back from the Thanksgiving break, there will be a vote on our opposition motion today. Can the government House leader tell us whether or not Liberals will acknowledge that, after 11 years of Liberals being in power, Canada is in an affordability crisis?

• (1530)

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first of all, we certainly want to acknowledge the very high ratings for this part of the week with the Thursday question.

I also want to celebrate the fact that, while every week is a good week to help Canadians with affordability, this week was a particularly good week, because the groceries and essentials benefit, which is up to \$1,800 or \$1,900 a year, went into the bank accounts of Canadians. The quarterly deposit was made. The Prime Minister announced today measures that will help tens of thousands of Canadians convert their homes to heat pumps, saving them money while helping with the cost of installation. The Parliamentary Budget Officer confirmed that our measures to reduce the gas tax and prolong the reduction will save the average family about \$275 a year. It is a good week for affordability.

Finally, the bill that is so obviously and patently good in terms of moving Canada's strong economy forward that even Conservatives realized it was worthy of their support, Bill C-39, has now passed through second reading and is off to a special legislative committee.

It has indeed been a good week for Canadians.

Tomorrow we will proceed with second reading of Bill C-37, the first nations clean water act. When we return from constituency week, priority will be given to Bill C-40, which aims to strengthen Canada's defence sector; Bill C-38, the Canadian fuel affordability act; and Bill C-34, the safe social media act.

*[Translation]*

Note that Thursday, October 22, shall be an allotted day.

Finally, seconded by the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle, I would like to seek unanimous consent for the following motion:

That, notwithstanding any standing order or usual practice of the House, on Monday, October 19, 2026, the House shall continue to sit until midnight, provided that:

(a) at 6:30 p.m., the Speaker shall interrupt any proceedings then before the House and such proceedings shall be deemed adjourned, and the House shall proceed forthwith to the consideration of Bill C-38, An Act to amend the Excise Tax Act (extension of the federal fuel excise tax relief);

(b) after 6:30 p.m., no quorum calls, dilatory motions or requests for unanimous consent shall be received by the Chair, except for a unanimous consent motion to see the clock.

*[English]*

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** Does the hon. minister have the unanimous consent of the House to move the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** The House has heard the terms of the motion. Does the House agree to pass the motion unanimously?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

● (1535)

[Translation]

## BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

### OPPOSITION MOTION—AFFORDABILITY CRISIS

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

**Gabriel Hardy (Montmorency—Charlevoix, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I will pick up where I left off. While families are counting every dollar, we must ask ourselves a question about public finances: Is the Liberal government holding itself to the same standard it expects of our youth? I would remind the House that the Prime Minister told young people that they should tighten their belts. Let us look at this together. The federal government's spring economic update projects a \$65.3-billion deficit for the 2026-27 fiscal year. That is on top of last year's \$67-billion deficit. We are talking about an average of \$60 billion per year for the next five years, which means we are running a deficit year after year.

I understand that we need to invest and that there is necessary infrastructure, essential services and decisions that cost money. We know that, but the money must be spent for the good of the future. Simple questions should be asked about every investment. How much will it cost? How much will it bring in? Who will foot the bill?

There is a situation that we cannot ignore. This year, the government expects to pay \$58.7 billion in interest on the debt. That is more than the \$57.4 billion in health transfers. I want members to think about that. The government is paying more on the debt than it is transferring to the provinces to help our citizens stay healthy and heal. When we run up deficits, we are obviously also committing part of the following years' revenue. Who is going to have to live with the consequences of these decisions? It is our children and grandchildren, those who have not even started working yet, who have not even gotten their first paycheque, their first apartment or their first home.

I also want to talk about young Canadians. I believe that they are the ones who are going to have to live with the most troubling consequences of the cost of living crisis. For generations, parents worked with a very specific goal in mind: to give their children access to a better future. They made sacrifices to put their kids through school. They saved up money to buy a home. They built businesses and helped our regions and communities grow. They are not asking for their children to be ultrawealthy. They just want them to have the means to build a life for themselves.

Today, as reported by Statistics Canada, the reality is that 40% of young people aged 20 to 34 are still living at home with their parents. Young people do not stay home because they want to, but because they are unable to save enough money. Home ownership feels increasingly out of reach for them. In fact, 40% of renters say they have given up on the idea of ever owning their own home. When a young person has to spend all of their income on housing, food and transportation, there is nothing left to launch a business, start a family or achieve their goals.

When we talk about the cost of living, we are also talking about mental health, confidence and hope. We are talking about young people putting off important milestones in their lives, not because

## *Business of Supply*

they want to, but because they do not see how they can afford their future. I think we need to collectively ask ourselves what this means for the future of our regions, our language, our culture and our country. We need young people who can fully participate in our society, young people who have a hope of achieving this, young people who can start a family and keep the Quebec and Canadian nations alive by having enough children to ensure births outnumber deaths every year. Our young people must not be condemned to wait for economic conditions to improve while decision-makers play politics with the future of our nation. Our young people should not have to put their future on hold.

I would like to take a moment to talk about our entrepreneurs. We cannot build an affordable economy without businesses that can create jobs, innovate and generate wealth here at home. I am thinking of young people aged 18 to 20 who start their own business. They take risks, work 60 hours a week, create jobs and pay their suppliers, all while trying to set aside a little for their future. We need to give them the opportunity to succeed. We also need to consider the role we assign to these Canadian businesses. This week, an analysis by the *Toronto Star* reported that U.S.-controlled companies have received \$7.8 billion in federal contracts over the past 16 months, a 50% increase. All of this is happening at a time when the Prime Minister is telling us that we are in a trade war with the United States, and at a time when the Liberals walked away from the negotiating table without offering a single explanation, neither to the House of Commons nor to the public.

We also need to clarify a few things about some of these companies here in Canada. They employ Canadians, but the problem is that they siphon profits overseas. The Prime Minister tells us that investment in the country has never been higher, but we need to clarify something: About 50% of that investment consists of takeovers of Canadian companies that are being sold to foreign interests. This raises a legitimate question, in my view. When we want to invest public funds, we have to ensure that we are contributing to the sustainable development of our own capacity, our own businesses, and our jobs. We must demand efficiency when it comes to major projects.

● (1540)

Here is an example. The spaceport in Nova Scotia represents a \$200-million investment over 10 years for a lease. We agree that developing our space capacity is a good thing, but we need to be able to explain why this approach was chosen and why it was better than the others. What are we getting for our \$200 million? When we realize that Norway's spaceport, which is similar to ours, costs \$45 million, not \$200 million, and is 90% owned by Norway, we have to wonder.

### *Business of Supply*

I want to circle back to the case of the nurse from Charlevoix. She worked and contributed to the company for 38 years. She honoured her contract and now she worries that she might not be able to retire. The thousands of messages that I have received tell different stories, but one thing keeps coming up all the time. Will all the efforts being made actually get something built? I believe we have a responsibility here, in the House of Commons, the people's House, to take these concerns seriously.

We have a responsibility to make decisions that we can explain and justify and, above all, to preserve for coming generations the opportunity for them to build their own future. A country is not built solely on programs and announcements. It is built by people who work, people who take initiative, people who care for others and people who start families and pass something on to their children, and working hard should still make it possible to achieve that.

**Tim Watchorn (Les Pays-d'en-Haut, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, when I went door-knocking this summer, everyone I talked to told me how much confidence they have in the Prime Minister and how much they appreciate our stance vis-à-vis the United States.

My colleague says that we have not explained things, but I think everything is clear. We need to protect our sovereignty. Just today, we announced \$2 billion for energy efficiency and to help households and young people save money. That \$2 billion will generate \$1 billion in savings every year. Does my colleague think that is a good investment?

**Gabriel Hardy:** Mr. Speaker, clearly we are not knocking on the same doors because, when I meet with constituents, they find the cost of living appalling, and they hate the decisions being made here. Every time the Liberals make announcements and ask people to look at how they are spending money when they launch a program, people understand that the money being spent is money we do not have.

The government is running a deficit year after year. There are no more surpluses. As a result, when the Liberals announce they are sending out cheques or creating programs, they are announcing a debt that will be paid by future generations. That is of concern for parents and families. No, people are not cheering for the government. On the contrary, they are wondering when we are going to make decisions that put citizens at the heart of the equation.

**Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, earlier, my Conservative colleague spoke about people who cannot afford to retire. That does not even take into account all those aged between 65 and 74 who have already retired and are struggling to make ends meet because of affordability issues.

For quite some time now, the Bloc Québécois has been introducing bills calling for OAS to be fully indexed for seniors aged 65 to 74, yet the government continues to refuse to do so. This is not money that would simply be squirrelled away in a savings account. People would use this money to maintain a decent quality of life and cope with the rising cost of living, because their income is not indexed to the current rate of inflation. Could my colleague tell us whether he supports the Bloc's Bill C-261?

**Gabriel Hardy:** Mr. Speaker, that is an excellent question. Indeed, the cost of living is going up, but the income of seniors and retirees is not. Every month, they have to make difficult choices. I

have received many messages from people telling me that they are retired and will be forced to sell their homes because they can no longer make ends meet.

This summer, the Conservatives made an announcement on this very topic. For example, in regions like mine, a portion of the wages earned by someone who chooses to return to the workforce and contribute their time and expertise should be tax-free. This would allow them to keep more money in their pockets to help cope with the cost of living. That money would go directly to them, in recognition of their efforts, their work and the knowledge they share, particularly with younger workers.

**Jim Bélanger (Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the cost of essentials keeps going up, but Canadians' purchasing power remains stagnant. The Canadian dream of becoming a homeowner is disappearing for a generation. That is what I hear back home. I would like to know what my colleague is hearing in his riding.

● (1545)

**Gabriel Hardy:** Mr. Speaker, that is true. As I said at the start of my speech, nearly 14,000 people replied to my survey and nearly 11,000 people commented directly. The message was clear: The cost of living is out of control.

Young people need hope. They need to believe in their future. They need to know that if they work hard, they can succeed. We cannot lead them to believe that the only way to get ahead is to work for the government. Governments do not create wealth; they cost us money. We need entrepreneurs. We need ambitious young people. We need people who are willing to take risks, but who hope for success. That is the reality facing our young people.

Yes, I am hearing exactly the same thing, and it is high time we took meaningful action to help young people believe in their future.

**Hon. Kody Blois (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I was somewhat disappointed by my hon. colleague's comments about the Canso spaceport. Stakeholders in the defence sector consider this investment essential for Canada, a view shared by former Conservative defence minister, Mr. MacKay.

**Gabriel Hardy:** Mr. Speaker, we never said it was not an important thing to do; we said that the money had to be spent logically and effectively.

Norway invested \$45 million in a similar project and owns 90% of it.

Someone needs to explain who signed off on giving \$200 million to Liberal cronies for a project in which Canada has no stake.

## MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** I have the honour to inform the House that a message has been received from the Senate informing the House that the Senate has passed the following bill: Bill C-27, An Act to give effect to the Final Self-Government Agreement for the Tlegohli Got'ine and to make consequential amendments to other Acts.

\* \* \*

## BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

## OPPOSITION MOTION—AFFORDABILITY CRISIS

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

**Madeleine Chenette (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture and Minister responsible for Official Languages and to the Secretary of State (Sport), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my colleague from Kings—Hants.

I think we can all recognize the importance of the issue raised by the motion before us today. Canadians are living through a period of economic uncertainty marked by global instability and the rising cost of living. In this context, our government is focusing on what it can control: building a strong Canadian economy, developing our infrastructure, diversifying our trade partners, ensuring responsible financial management and supporting Canadians who are feeling the pressures of everyday expenses.

In Thérèse-De Blainville, affordability comes down to a very simple question. What is left over in a family's budget once groceries, transportation, health care and housing are paid for? That is what families, seniors and young people have been talking to me about.

Across the country, people are worried about the cost of essentials. In Thérèse-De Blainville, I regularly meet with the outstanding leaders of a wide range of organizations who talk to me about this issue and also propose solutions. I share these practical solutions with our ministers and our Prime Minister to draw inspiration from them. That is why our government understands these concerns and is taking meaningful and responsible measures to ease the burden on households while maintaining economic stability for the long term.

Since 2025, we have done many things to respond to these realities. We reduced the federal tax rate on the first income bracket and expanded access to the Canadian dental care plan for eligible adults aged 18 to 64. This year, we also increased the Canada groceries and essentials benefit. This new benefit, which replaces the GST credit, provides more generous support to more than 12 million Canadians. Since July 2026, benefits have been increased by 25% for a period of five years.

In addition, eligible Canadians received a one-time top-up payment in June. For an eligible family with two adults and two children, with a net income of \$40,000, the increase and the top-up amount to \$805 in additional support. This measure was actually announced in my riding at La Moisson health food store in Sainte-Thérèse. In total, including the one-time top-up, a family of four can receive up to \$1,890 for this benefit year, while a single person

*Business of Supply*

can receive up to \$950. We have also provided temporary relief from the federal excise tax on gas and diesel to support Canadians facing rising transportation costs.

We are also investing in our communities. In Thérèse-De Blainville, our investments in projects like Manoir Blainville II are helping to directly address housing needs. This project will provide 70 social and affordable housing units for independent seniors in Blainville. These are concrete investments that will increase the housing supply in our community. I speak regularly with the five mayors in my riding and surrounding areas to identify new sites and opportunities for affordable housing and new multi-generational housing concepts. I look forward to continuing these discussions with our new MNAs on this matter. By working together, we can act more quickly to find solutions with our constituents.

Now, I would like to focus on housing affordability, which remains a challenge for many Canadians, especially those looking to buy their first home. Thanks to our government's industrial strategies, economic development is and will be strong in our Lower Laurentians region. Business leaders are stressing the need for access to local labour. This means increasing the housing supply.

That is also why it is important for our government in Thérèse-De Blainville and the Lower Laurentians to quickly make housing more affordable for renters, buyers and homeowners who are paying down a mortgage. That is why we launched the Build Canada Homes program to accelerate the construction of affordable housing at scale across the country. That is also why we are investing in the infrastructure needed to build homes and in measures to lower development charges. We are also ushering in tax changes to make new homes more affordable.

Last May, we eliminated the GST on eligible newly built homes valued at up to \$1 million for eligible first-time homebuyers. This measure can save homebuyers up to \$50,000 on the purchase of a new home. The rebate is gradually phased out for homes valued between \$1 million and \$1.5 million.

● (1550)

For example, a home that costs \$1.25 million could qualify for 50% of the maximum rebate, meaning a savings of up to \$25,000. This measure is expected to save Canadians \$3.9 billion in taxes over the first five years, helping to lower the upfront cost of purchasing a home while encouraging the construction of new homes.

### *Business of Supply*

To be eligible, first-time homebuyers must meet a number of criteria. For example, they must be Canadian citizens or permanent residents, be at least 18 years old and not have lived, during the current calendar year or any of the previous four calendar years, in a home owned by themselves, their spouse or their common-law partner. In addition, we have extended the repayment grace period under the home buyers' plan from two years to five years for those making their first withdrawal. This gives new homeowners more time to manage the significant expenses that arise during the first few years of home ownership.

I would like to return to Build Canada Homes, which was launched in September 2025 to boost housing supply across the country, with a particular focus on affordable housing. It is designed to accelerate the construction of primarily affordable and off-market housing across Canada by bringing together four essential components: public land, flexible financing, expertise in property development and innovative construction methods.

While I am on the topic of innovative construction, I want to take this opportunity to highlight the innovation of the company Isothermic in Bois-des-Filion, in my riding. This company understands that affordability and energy needs are two important issues in our society. This company is innovating and creating buildings that are more energy efficient, able to withstand wind and water and able to resist the climate of tomorrow.

Since its launch, Build Canada Homes has advanced six direct housing development projects and established significant partnerships with provinces, territories, municipalities and indigenous partners. These efforts represent more than 11,000 new homes that are currently being built or are scheduled to be built soon.

In addition, there is the build communities strong fund, our government's key infrastructure program. This fund provides \$51 billion over 10 years, including \$3 billion a year in ongoing funding to build and renew infrastructure. After talking with the mayors in my region, I am also identifying opportunities through this fund to improve sports and cultural infrastructure. Being able to access and participate in culture and sports activities contributes to the quality of life of Canadians and to their physical and mental health and relational well-being.

A significant portion of these investments will be used to increase the housing supply and make housing more affordable in our region and across Canada. For example, the investments announced this year in Iqaluit are expected to support the construction of 2,000 to 2,500 housing units by 2031. In Headingley, Manitoba, investments are expected to support the construction of an additional 1,771 housing units. The expansion of water infrastructure in Quispamsis, New Brunswick, will make it possible to build 1,055 new housing units.

Other drinking water and waste water treatment infrastructure projects will support residential development projects in Cornwall, Prince Edward Island, and Halifax and Bridgewater, Nova Scotia.

Affordability is not an abstract concept. For the people of Thérèse-De Blainville, it means the ability to cover their basic expenses with a little leftover at the end of the month. The measures that I presented—including the groceries and essentials benefit, tax

relief, dental care, access to sports and cultural infrastructure, help with transportation costs and investments in affordable housing—help alleviate pressures on household budgets.

These measures do not make all of the problems go away, but they do provide real assistance with several major expenses in the family budget, while also helping to address the more long-term challenge of housing supply.

Canadians expect their government to respond to the rising cost of living with tangible solutions. That is exactly what we are doing. Our approach combines immediate assistance, targeted support for those who need it most, an increase in the housing supply, investments in our communities, and responsible management of public finances. As Canada continues to build a stronger, more resilient and more self-reliant economy, we are taking steps to bring costs down today while investing in our long-term prosperity. Affordability requires consistency and responsible choices.

• (1555)

[English]

**Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the member talked about so many announcements. There is a large number of announcements, but the result is very small. It is a fraction of the amount of housing needed for Canada. Housing prices are still high and still unaffordable. A lot of Canadians are leaving this dream behind.

What can the hon. member can tell Canadians about the result of the government's not delivering the plan it put in place?

[Translation]

**Madeleine Chenette:** Mr. Speaker, I must admit that I am surprised by the question because in my speech, I presented all the projects currently on the table. I am very proud that we already have 70 of them in my riding, and there is affordable housing throughout Canada. We are working to drive innovation in the construction sector to make it more environmentally friendly and more affordable. We have achieved concrete results in every region of Canada.

**Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in her speech, my colleague talked a lot about housing. I am vice-chair of the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities, which is the committee that studied the Build Canada Homes Act, among other things. The reason we let that bill pass was that there was apparently an agreement with Quebec. I say “apparently” because we are now hearing a lot of questions from a lot of different people. The Parliamentary Budget Officer has expressed concerns. The term “empty shell” was even used somewhere. The target was 19,000 housing units, but apparently there is really only going to be 2,000. I, too, am coming back with figures based on what I heard in committee.

*Business of Supply*

Just today, I met with representatives from Women's Shelters Canada, an organization supporting women who are victims of violence. They told me that they had not heard anything from Build Canada Homes as to whether it would actually meet their needs.

With all of that in mind, when will we get a few more details about Build Canada Homes, since the information we have about this program is still extremely vague?

**Madeleine Chenette:** Mr. Speaker, I want to point out to my colleague that it is up to regional MPs to reach out to local mayors to talk about Build Canada Homes and learn about opportunities to secure affordable housing and land in the region. These members need to work with us to round out the information on Build Canada Homes and accelerate project implementation. It is up to members to do the work on the ground and put our regions in contact with Build Canada Homes.

● (1600)

**Bienvenu-Olivier Ntumba (Mont-Saint-Bruno—L'Acadie, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague gave a great speech. She did an outstanding job of laying out all of our government's commitments.

I would like her to explain to the House again how all of the commitments we have made since our election have steered Canada in the right direction.

**Madeleine Chenette:** Mr. Speaker, I meet with a lot of organizational representatives and individuals. They talk to me about the impact they are seeing on the ground. They see projects taking root and getting built. They also see that we in government have the wherewithal to work effectively with them and with all stakeholders to help find solutions and implement the right programs. To conclude, I would like to say that they all tell me how happy they are with Prime Minister Carney and our cabinet right now when it comes to making progress.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** I would remind the hon. member not to use members' names, not even the Prime Minister's.

[English]

The hon. member for Courtenay—Alberni.

**Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, nobody is feeling the cost of living crisis more than people on fixed incomes, namely seniors and people living on disability.

I will talk about people living on disability. They are getting a meagre \$200 disability benefit from Canada, which is not a lot of money in today's world. We have long called for a universal basic income, starting with people living with disabilities and seniors.

To get the disability benefit, one needs to get the disability tax credit form approved. Good luck doing that. It also takes away a million patient visits a year from doctors.

My question is about a proposal that we have put forward. If someone is living with a disability in a province or territory, why would the federal government not acknowledge that instead of making people in a province or territory prove that they have a disability again?

[Translation]

**Madeleine Chenette:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my opposition colleague for raising the issue of seniors. We talk to seniors every week because we know that many of them are struggling with the cost of living. We need to find solutions to give them the support they need to get through these tough times. After a lifetime of contributing to our society, they are entitled to affordable housing. I am happy to work with my colleagues to find solutions.

[English]

**Hon. Kody Blois (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are here today to debate the Conservative opposition day motion. I thoroughly enjoy opposition day motions. They are an opportunity for the government to prod ideas from the opposition benches.

The text is quite simple today. It is, frankly, just two pieces. The first part is that the House recognize that the Liberal government has been in government for 11 years. We are happy to recognize that and talk about the accomplishments of successive Liberal governments. The second part is that we are in an affordability crisis. There lies a trap in how the Conservative Party has presented today's opposition day motion. It is undeniable that the Liberal Party has been in government for 11 years, and I am happy to talk about the accomplishments and the work that I am proud of, having been involved for seven years as a parliamentarian.

The truth is that we recognize as a government, and we have highlighted this, that there is an affordability challenge across the country. Reasonable members of Parliament could stand here and debate what the definition of an affordability crisis is. I recognize and this government has recognized that there are challenges across the country and that we ought to do something about them, but what is missing from today's Conservative opposition day motion is what to do about them and what measures the Conservative Party would put forward to support affordability. That is completely lacking in today's opposition day motion.

I would suggest that the opposition day motion is also lacking any recognition of the initiatives by this government, and by extension this House, because there have been examples where members of Parliament across the aisle have been supportive of government initiatives to improve affordability. There is no mention of that whatsoever.

That is why we will be voting against today's opposition day motion. It is not because we do not recognize that there are affordability challenges or we do not think there is something to be done about them, but the text of the motion, with the way it was drafted by the Conservative side, fails to recognize the initiatives that this House has taken forward. It leaves open what the definition of an affordability crisis could be and proposes zero measures to address it for Canadians.

Opposition day motions are a great opportunity for the opposition to put concrete policy forward and what it would look like. Today is a bit of a failure in leadership in that domain. We will not have the opportunity to debate policy that the Conservatives would implement if they were on this side of the bench, but that is okay.

*Business of Supply*

My remaining time gives me the opportunity to opine on two areas. One is that the motion talks about 11 years of Liberal government. I have been a member of Parliament since 2019. I would like to use my remaining time to talk about some of the initiatives that I am proud to have been a part of and some of the work I have done individually as a parliamentarian. I am also proud of being part of a government that has introduced measures that matter not only to the good people of Kings—Hants, but to Canadians across this country.

I am going to start with a really important announcement. Today, the Prime Minister announced a \$2-billion program for heat pumps. This program is going to support 800,000 homes across the country. It is going to allow up to a \$10,000 grant for homeowners below the provincial median income. Of course, that will differ whether it is Nova Scotia, Manitoba, Ontario or British Columbia, but anyone below the provincial median income will be eligible for a \$10,000 grant to put a heat pump in their home.

This is smart public policy. This program can reduce the cost of someone's energy bill. It is also, of course, an environmental measure, particularly in areas and jurisdictions where the electrical grid is much more affordable than using other forms of energy. This also allows for a \$2,000 grant for anyone who is above the provincial median income.

I see a lot of similarities between the work that was done by the Atlantic caucus in the last Parliament and the announcement today. I represent a number of people, some of whom may be on a fixed income and may not have the means to do some of the renovations that might be needed and that could save money long-term because they do not have the ability to get over the hump of having money up front to pay for some of the expenditures. One of the things I am proudest of as a parliamentarian was advocating for a \$500-million fund that we worked on with the Atlantic provinces to help roll out a similar type of program. It was successful.

● (1605)

I have dozens of examples. There are many more than that, but I am talking about dozens of people who have come to me personally and said that this intervention saved them on their home energy bill. Obviously, it is a smart environmental choice, but more importantly, it is an affordability measure.

It was quite remarkable to hear the Conservative Party attacking this idea. We want to put something in front of Canadians around affordability. Here is something important. We can produce heat pumps here in Canada. There are, for example, heat pump producers, independently, in my own constituency in Nova Scotia. They exist across the country. This is good public policy, and it is an example of something I am proud of today.

I am proud of the national school food program. We have a lot of constituents who were strong advocates of this. Many across the country advocated to say that we needed a program that could ensure that children who need this support in school have access to a healthy school food program. They said we should try to source the ingredients locally. Because of the action of many members of Parliament, the support in the last Parliament and ultimately the Liberal government, that policy is here today.

Again, we hear questions on it from the opposition benches. In fact, the leader of the official opposition calls this bureaucracy. I would invite the leader of the official opposition to come to Kings—Hants, where we see this program rolling out and benefiting children in schools today. It is quite remarkable that the leader calls that bureaucracy. I call it action. I call it making a difference on the ground. It is guided and informed by many people across the country who advocated to parliamentarians across the political spectrum to move in this direction.

As for national child care, we talked about this for 50 years in this country. This is something the Liberal government has introduced. The program is working across the country. There have been growing pains, but I think we need to recognize that there is a desire to have additional space. The government just recently announced a \$5-billion augmentation to support the provinces in the continued expansion of child care access across the country.

Right now, in Nova Scotia, we are on target for \$12 a day on average. This additional money will hopefully and presumably be able to get us closer to that mark. Whether or not it gets exactly to \$10, it has demonstrably moved the needle on affordability, access to early education, and the infrastructure that is needed to support our communities.

How about agriculture? I am up on my feet often talking about this. I am very proud to represent a constituency in Atlantic Canada that is the heart of agriculture. I am very proud of our 2025 platform. This platform had serious measures to support farmers, whether it was the AgriStability increases or the money for Agri-Marketing. A pledge to have \$200 million in an agri-food processing fund was realized by the current Minister of Agriculture under the national food security strategy. We are seeing those investments roll out in real time.

The Conservatives will sometimes talk about the idea that these announcements are not resulting in concrete action. I can tell members that they absolutely are. I am proud of the work that we have done around the increases to AgriStability, something that the Conservative Party under Mr. Harper cut. We have actually increased it over the time.

There are a lot of very good measures in the recently introduced Bill S-7. It is starting in the Senate, and it will work its way to the House. It is about reducing red tape in agriculture and has amendments to the Fertilizers Act, amendments to the Seeds Act and amendments to the Feeds Act. Anyone who knows agriculture well will know that a whole host of work had to be done. It did not happen in the last government, I am afraid to say, but I am very proud to see that some of the work I did as the minister of agriculture just before the last election has been continued by the current Minister of Agriculture, the hon. member for Malpeque. There is some really good stuff there.

I am proud of the work I have done to advocate for the resolution at the Avon River. This was an issue where the constituency and individuals in the Windsor and Falmouth area were not happy with successive decisions from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the ministers therein. I have worked with the current Minister of Fisheries to resolve that issue in a way that balances fish passage with ensuring that the community perspective and indigenous rights are respected.

I am proud of the rural transit fund. This is something I helped advocate for, along with our colleagues, so we could have a fund to help support smaller communities that did not have access to regular funding. I am proud of the fact that we have increased the volunteer tax credit for firefighters from \$3,000 to \$6,000, and allowed funding that goes to municipalities to support fire hall infrastructure. Lastly, I am proud of the work we have done to create a facility for The Flower Cart Group and CCOA, two really important organizations in my constituency.

• (1610)

**Jeff Kibble (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I was really glad to hear the member opposite say that he recognizes there is an affordability challenge, although it is contradictory to what the Prime Minister recently said in the House, which was that affordability is the best it has been in a decade. We are not quite sure what it is.

The member said he is proud of the national food security strategy and the concrete action that is being provided. When we look at food, there are 2.2 million people lining up at food banks each month. Is he proud of that, or the 700,000-plus children using food banks? Is he proud of the interest on our national debt, which now has payments exceeding transfers for health?

Will he acknowledge that the government's programs, despite their nice-sounding names, have put Canada into an affordability crisis and—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister.

**Hon. Kody Blois:** Mr. Speaker, I certainly reject the way the member is framing this. I thought I was pretty clear in my remarks, and I think we are pretty clear-eyed that there are challenges across the country. That is part of the reason we are putting initiatives forward, some of which the member has supported.

The member's predecessor in the last Parliament was a very thoughtful member when it came to agriculture. I believe the member has a lot of farmers in his constituency. I hope he is a bit disap-

### *Business of Supply*

pointed that he ran on a platform in 2025 from the Conservative Party that had absolutely nothing for farmers. There was no mention of AgriStability and no mention of AgriMarketing. The party that he sits with consistently votes against the initiatives that matter for the things that he just talked about, including affordability and feeding kids in school. I do not know why he would be against a program that feeds kids in school and uses local product, including maybe from his own farmers.

• (1615)

[Translation]

**Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to know one thing. Unaffordability is caused in part by climate change and the huge costs of wildfires and all the other ecological disasters. Does my colleague think we should take climate change and the associated costs into account as we address unaffordability?

**Hon. Kody Blois:** Mr. Speaker, the consequences of the climate crisis are real. That is exactly why our government worked with the governments of Quebec and Newfoundland and Labrador to reach an agreement on the development of Churchill Falls. The clean electricity generated by this project is enough to power Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver. This is the largest investment in clean energy in the history of North America. I hope my hon. colleague recognizes that this investment and this work are absolutely crucial for Quebec, for Canada and for the world.

[English]

**Madeleine Chenette (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture and Minister responsible for Official Languages and to the Secretary of State (Sport), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to ask a question of my colleague from Kings—Hants.

He referred to a big announcement today about heat pumps. Can he repeat to me what the benefits are of the great project he referred to?

**Hon. Kody Blois:** Mr. Speaker, I will with pleasure.

My hon. colleague is someone with a lot of experience in the economy and someone who worked at the OECD prior to joining politics. In fact, she was our ambassador and proudly served Canada.

Today's announcement by the Prime Minister was about trying to support 800,000 homes across the country. It will allow anyone who is below the provincial median income to be eligible for up to a \$10,000 grant to install a heat pump. Anyone who is above the provincial median income will be eligible for a \$2,000 grant.

*Business of Supply*

This is investment in Canada. It will support manufacturing at home, but it will also lower energy bills for beneficiaries. I think of a lot of my own constituents who do not have the ability to make this happen. We have seen it happen in the Atlantic. This is a great national program that I know will make a difference in the members' riding, in my riding and indeed across the country.

**Cheryl Gallant (Algonquin—Renfrew—Pembroke, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Red Deer.

I am pleased to rise on behalf of my price-conscious constituents of the fall foliage-filled riding of Algonquin—Renfrew—Pembroke.

The motion before us today simply asks that we recognize reality. Reality is that the Liberals have been in power 11 years. Reality indicates that we have an affordability crisis. Our Liberal colleagues would prefer we ignore reality. They prefer the fantasy world in which they are now a new government. They prefer that Canadians forget that higher prices are the official policy of the Liberal Party. The Liberals want to send the Trudeau years down the memory hole, but Canadians are living with the consequences of 11 years of bad Liberal policy.

When it comes to affordability, there are four bad Liberal policies that truly stand out. The first is the industrial carbon tax, the second is the new fuel standard, the third is the plastic packaging ban for food and the fourth is the Liberal electricity regulations. Liberals will insist that, taken in isolation, each policy is done with the best of Liberal intentions. The road to higher prices is paved with Liberal intentions.

The Liberals will claim that the purpose of the industrial carbon tax is to reduce emissions. What they do not tell us is that the consequence of the carbon tax is higher prices. Canadians understand that carbon taxes increase prices. Every Canadian saw first-hand the impact that eliminating the consumer carbon tax had on gas prices. The only difference between the consumer carbon tax and the industrial carbon tax is visibility. Most Canadians do not pay for the industrial carbon tax directly. It is paid indirectly, and the costs are absorbed first by employers. Companies have to pass those costs along to consumers if they can.

Some companies will not be able to raise prices, because of foreign competition. That is why the Liberal Prime Minister even promised carbon tariffs. As all Canadians know, tariffs increase the price of everything. The point of the Prime Minister's promised carbon tariff is to allow those companies paying the industrial carbon tax and facing foreign competition to raise prices. Before my Liberal colleagues start howling in outrage, I want to be clear: The Prime Minister has not imposed his promised carbon tariffs yet, and I have never met a Liberal prime minister who has not been prepared to break a promise in the face of poor polling.

Canadians should note that the Liberals' favourite defence of the industrial carbon tax is to claim that if we do not penalize our companies with a carbon tax, our European allies will violate our trade agreements and impose carbon tariffs on our exports. Given Europe's current energy crisis and growing debt concerns, our European friends are in no position to impose carbon tariffs, yet the Liberals will continue to repeat that carbon tax talking point. They will

say with a straight face that Europe will tariff us. At the same time, they claim to be expanding free trade with Europe because we can trust it not to tariff us.

The deeper irony is that the industrial carbon tax has the same impact on our exports as the U.S. tariffs do. Tariffs and taxes increase prices. It is the same as the other bad Liberal policy I mentioned, the Liberal fuel standard. Just as with the carbon tax, the Liberals claim that the intention behind the fuel regulations is to reduce emissions. The impact, though, is to increase prices on fuels.

Yesterday, the Liberals voted against our emergency fuel relief plan. It is part of a pattern with the Liberals. They vote to increase prices at every turn but then vote against any action to reduce costs for Canadians. They even had the audacity to call their legislation that hikes gas taxes in the middle of winter a fuel affordability bill. The only thing more cynical than that piece of gaslighting is the Liberals' rebranding the GST credit as the Canada groceries and essentials benefit.

When Mulroney brought the GST to tackle the first Trudeau deficit, his government established the GST credit and made sure not to apply the GST on most groceries and essentials. Stealing Conservative policies has become stock and trade with the Liberals, and if they actually adopted our policies faithfully, I would sing their praises, but they never do. They always have to put their own Liberal spin on it. With the GST credit, they increased the payment by 25%. That increases demand, and given the name change to the credit, the Liberals want increased demand to go toward groceries, and that means even more grocery inflation.

● (1620)

At the same time, the Liberals are pursuing their policy to ban 90% of plastic packages in the grocery store. Switching from plastic bottles to glass bottles would increase prices and reduce supply. A truck filled with glass jars of peanut butter will carry less peanut butter than if it were in plastic jars. Maybe our economist Prime Minister should explain to Canadians what happens when he increases demand and reduces supply.

The Liberal intention behind their plastic packaging ban is to reduce plastic pollution. The road to higher prices is paved with Liberal intentions. Bad Liberal policies are raising the prices of industrial goods, diesel, gasoline, everything that is made or shipped, and, worst of all, the price of food. Of course we need to give an honourable mention to the Liberal plan to increase the price of electricity with the constitutionally dubious clean electricity regulations.

It will not surprise me if my Liberal colleagues try to defend these policies individually. Their first impulse will be to deny and deflect. They will claim that the policy is not raising prices, and then they will point to \$10-a-day day care, which is not \$10 and is not available to many of our most marginalized families. The problem for the Liberals is something called the Canada Gazette. That is where they must publish their regulations and, most importantly, tell Canadians the truth. That is where Canadians can see in black and white that the Liberal regulations increase prices.

Most important, even if they reveal the impact of higher Liberal prices, it is not shared equally among Canadians. Lower-income Canadians are hit hardest. Rural Canadians and seniors are hit hard. For lower-income seniors in rural communities, it hits compound. The upper-income urban progressives can afford the luxury of paying for Liberal intentions. What the Liberals should not be doing is passing the higher cost onto those who can least afford it. Of course, if they do not deny and deflect, they will try to diminish the impact. Today they might claim the Liberal fuel standard has increased the price of gasoline by only five cents a litre, and they will ignore the PBO report that proves the cost will reach 17¢ per litre by 2030.

Whether it is for gasoline, diesel or electricity, every extra penny of the cost of energy cascades through the economy. Five cents a litre might not sound like much. It might not sound economically crippling for the average urban commuter, but what about the lakers, those ships on the Great Lakes that take iron from northern Ontario to be smelted into steel in southern Ontario? The lakers carry well over 500,000 litres of marine diesel. The Liberal fuel standards means they are paying over \$34,000 more to fill up that ship.

They pass those costs on to the steel plant. The steel plant passes those costs and their own extra costs onto the primary parts makers. The parts makers pass those costs on plus their extra costs to the appliance manufacturer. Those appliances are loaded onto trucks powered by diesel and shipped to the retailer. Sitting at the bottom of that cascade is every single consumer.

Only Conservatives are proposing positive policies to reduce energy prices. We are fighting for the cascade of lower prices. We want policies to increase supply, not demand. We need policies that will increase competition, not more protectionism. We need broad-based tax reform, not gimmicky megaductions. Most of all, we need every Liberal member to follow the advice of their leader, to look inside themselves. They need to ask if their intentions are aligned with the impact they will have on Canadians.

Higher prices are the official policy of the Liberal Party, and Canadians can see the results after 11 years of Liberal rule. Housing, energy and food have become more expensive. Bad Liberal policies and out-of-control spending have led us to this affordability

### *Business of Supply*

ty crisis. The road to recovery starts with the Liberals' admitting they have a problem, by supporting our Conservative motion.

• (1625)

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a fairly straightforward question for my friend across the way in regard to what the government has actually accomplished over the last 18 months. I will give an example. Is there anything from the last 18 months that the member opposite likes? For example, personally, I like the health infrastructure fund. It is a \$5-billion program over three years. For me, it gives hope to the residents I represent in Winnipeg North that we will be able to get the Seven Oaks General Hospital emergency department restored, or that it will at least put pressure on the provincial government.

Is there anything within the budget that the member likes?

**Cheryl Gallant:** Mr. Speaker, I would really like the budget if it came from Conservatives, because then there would not be the drawbacks and the little hidden costs that every consumer pays every time the Liberals put forth a program that is supposedly going to save them money.

**Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am going to try this again. We know that the people feeling the cost of living crisis more than anyone are those on fixed incomes, such as people living with disabilities. I spoke to my colleague earlier about this. Right now, the disability benefit is a meagre \$200 a month. I believe that people living with a disability should be getting a universal basic income so they are living above the poverty line. Instead, they need to apply for the disability tax credit to access the disability benefit. They have to get a health professional to approve it. It consumes about 250,000 patient visits a year for doctors, and a bunch of CRA time.

Does my colleague agree to get rid of this red tape and make it easier for people living with disabilities? The government should not make people prove twice that they have a disability in their home province or territory. If it has already been deemed that they have a disability, they should automatically qualify.

**Cheryl Gallant:** Mr. Speaker, Canadians living with disabilities are often the most hard hit by any consumer prices. However, I do not believe in a universal basic income in addition to what we already have.

*Business of Supply*

With respect to the disability tax credit application, there are 30,000 people in my riding who do not have a doctor. It is even hard to get a nurse practitioner and people are on a waiting list. Therefore, it is very difficult to get that form filled out in the first place. What I agree with is this: If somebody qualifies for the disability tax credit, they should not have to go through all the motions to obtain the disability benefit as well.

• (1630)

[Translation]

**Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the affordability crisis, if there is one segment of the population that has been affected by the never-ending increases in the cost of living since 2020, it is seniors. However, the government decided to increase the guaranteed income supplement for seniors aged 75 and over, but not for those aged 65 to 74. It is discriminating between seniors. These people are being discriminated against.

The bill tabled by the Bloc Québécois, Bill C-261, which we have introduced several times and which the government keeps rejecting, has two parts. First, it seeks to increase the guaranteed income supplement to stop this discrimination. Second, it would allow seniors who wish to continue working to do so without having their guaranteed income supplement reduced.

Does the member agree with these measures, and will she vote in favour of Bill C-261?

[English]

**Cheryl Gallant:** Mr. Speaker, I certainly agree with the member that seniors are the hardest hit. Seniors living in rural communities are even harder hit because they have to drive even to get groceries. Seniors who do not have a vehicle, if they have to take a car to the grocery store or to the doctor's office, or for anything that has to be done outside their home, have to take a taxi as we do not have buses. In our community, that sometimes costs \$40 just to go to the bank and another \$40 to get back. The cost of fuel keeps going up for taxi drivers, so every trip costs more because of the increasing price of fuel due to the carbon taxes and all the other taxes the Liberals keep on increasing.

**Harb Gill (Windsor West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, a taxpayer gets up in the morning, goes to work, pays taxes, pays the mortgage and pays insurance, and then gets a lecture from Ottawa as to how grateful they should be when they get a rebate cheque. Have we completely lost the plot? Is this how we show respect to our taxpayers?

**Cheryl Gallant:** Mr. Speaker, it is the typical giving with one hand and taking with the other. However, in this case, with the Liberals, it is take, take, take. They take money off the paycheques, they take money when we buy something and they take it no matter what we do. It is very difficult to save. Even on the money we are saving, they tax us.

**Burton Bailey (Red Deer, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address our Conservative motion calling on this House to recognize that Canada is in an affordability crisis.

For workers whose paycheques are barely covering their monthly expenses, families worrying about whether they will be able to provide nutritious food for their kids or even put them in extracurricu-

lar activities, low-income seniors whose pensions are dwindling by the day and young people who cannot even dream of ever owning a home, let alone starting a family, this affordability crisis is clear to them. However, unfortunately, to the Liberal government, it seems unclear.

For 11 years, the Liberals have been in power, controlling the levers of government spending and implementing policies that have negatively impacted the economy and social fabric of this nation, yet there is always someone or something else to blame but themselves. True leadership means taking responsibility, not passing the buck. After 11 years, the bank is dry. There are no more bucks to be passed.

Canadians are living through it every day at the grocery store. "Canada's Food Price Report 2026" estimated that a family of four would spend an average of \$17,500 on food. That is up nearly \$1,000 from the year before. One-quarter of Canadian households are food insecure. That is 2.75 million households, or nearly 10 million people. In Canada, a G7 country, that is a shocking number. In Red Deer, the food bank distributed more than 1.6 million pounds of food in 2025 and helped more than 30,500 families across the region.

MNP's latest consumer debt index found that 54% of Canadians say they "do not have enough savings to support themselves or their family for six months" if they were to lose their job, and 44% of Canadians report "being \$200 or less away from financial insolvency each month." These are not just numbers in reports. There are real Canadians and real people behind these unfortunate statistics, and things are not getting better.

Let us talk about housing. Habitat for Humanity reported that 56% of Canadian non-homeowners do not expect to ever own a home. That is the highest number among the 22 countries surveyed. The Liberals have spent 11 years announcing housing plans, but their own agencies keep confirming that nothing is getting built. For young people in Canada, it is even worse. Almost two-thirds are saying housing costs are making it difficult to start a family.

The family unit is the backbone of a cohesive and flourishing society. No matter what kind of NGO or special interest group tries to change that, it will always be true. When families are not treated as the base formation of our society pyramid, everything begins to crumble. As more and more young Canadians are struggling to start a family, our social fabric unravels. Canada is then stuck in a feedback loop of endless waves of unaffordability, unemployment and immigration. Rinse and repeat. Affordability, taxes and the cost of living are some of the primary determinants of how many Canadians start a family. It is incumbent on the government to make life more affordable, not less.

How does the government make money? Of course, there is no such thing as government money. The answer is taxes. The government collects taxes from Canadians and in turn provides services and protection. That is the basis of the social contract, but the social contract that Canadians are obligated to agree to has been ripped up by the Liberals. Their services are not serving and Canadians do not feel safe. Why is that?

Why, after over a decade of the Liberal government, has Canada gone from being the envy of the world to having that reputation reversed? Of course, as Carville famously said, "It's the economy". For over a decade, the Liberal government has blocked, stalled, delayed and denied nation-building, enriching and unifying projects. Liberal politics of division and pitting one region against another to score political points have sacrificed Canadian unity and economic prosperity for election results.

● (1635)

Canada should have some of the most affordable energy on the planet. We have the resources, we have the workers and we have the know-how. Recently, the Liberals found something else to blame: foreign wars. Here is the truth. Foreign wars and conflicts outside of our borders should not dictate whether Canada could be a self-sustaining energy superpower. It should already have been done. Record fuel costs did not magically appear. They are a result of a government that treats the Canadian energy and natural resource industry as a problem to be managed rather than the advantage it is.

The Conservatives would provide emergency prepermitting and tax relief for the construction of refineries, pipelines, rail and storage; eliminate all federal taxes on diesel consumption until at least Canada Day 2027; permanently eliminate taxes on diesel production; and increase production to one million barrels per day so that Canadians are never again dependent on foreign oil.

Speaking of buying foreign products, how about buying Canadian? Just yesterday at the health committee, the Liberals made a decision to decimate another Canadian industry. It was the quiet killing of small businesses in a sector millions of Canadians rely on every day. I am speaking of the natural health products industry. For decades, NHPs like vitamins, minerals, probiotics, herbal remedies and traditional Chinese medicines have been regulated and approved by Health Canada. The system worked as intended and the natural health products industry thrived across Canada. It was thriving so much that 80% of Canadians use NHPs. Canadian-owned small businesses like health food stores were growing and thriving.

However, in 2023, the Liberal government decided to seize more bureaucratic power and regulate natural health products in the same way as therapeutic drugs manufactured by big pharma and multinationals. That meant more regulations for small businesses, including new labelling, new fees and new penalties. A system that had been functioning properly for decades changed overnight. Canadian products were now required to go through more government, while any product could be purchased over the Internet and shipped into our country with no safety standards or approval. Products are disappearing from Canadian shelves. Customers are ordering from the United States. Jobs are leaving and businesses are closing.

### *Business of Supply*

The Conservative private member's bill, Bill C-224, would have reversed the Liberal big government decision and brought NHPs back to the way they were regulated before 2023, when they were working just fine. However, just yesterday, the Liberals unashamedly stripped this bill word by word and will now return a blank piece of paper to this House. Millions of Canadians who rely on natural health products have just been told by the Liberal government, "Too bad".

Pay more or buy American is not pro-Canada, but after 11 years, this is the pattern of the Liberal government. A common-sense bill that would have supported small businesses and consumer choices has been killed by the Liberals. Another main street employer has been told to absorb more cost, making the affordability crisis worse.

That is why the Conservatives brought forward this motion today. It is time for the Liberal government members to tell the truth. After 11 years of the Liberal government, Canada is in an affordability crisis.

The Conservatives will always fight to save Canadians money. We have an economic action plan to save Canadians money and jobs. We would green-light the 500 projects waiting for approval, take the GST off Canadian-made autos, have zero capital gains on reinvestment in Canada, end the industrial carbon tax and repeal job-killing bills, Bill C-48 and Bill C-69.

The Conservatives will fight for common-sense policies that would improve Canadian lives with stronger paycheques, lower food costs, homes Canadians can afford and an economy that rewards hard work. The Liberals must acknowledge the crisis of their making and vote for this Conservative motion.

● (1640)

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, less than 18 months ago, Canadians went to the polls and chose a new Prime Minister and a new government. There are 70-plus new Liberal MPs sitting in the government benches today.

*Business of Supply*

Virtually from day one, the Prime Minister has been talking about the issue of affordability, along with building a stronger and healthier Canadian economy and society. We have taken many measures. I have had a chance to list off many of the different affordability measures the government has actually taken, yet the Conservative Party continuously votes against them.

On the one hand, the Conservatives talk about doing something for affordability, but when we do, they vote against it. Why?

**Burton Bailey:** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has been in power for 18 months and yesterday, he said he just got here. For the first time, I heard his parliamentary secretary say we are in an affordability crisis.

Every time we talk about these programs, they are band-aids. We need solutions. The Conservatives have put forward a list of things that would make a difference to Canadians, not just a cheque in the mail that is a band-aid.

[Translation]

**Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his speech.

I was particularly interested in the part of his speech that addressed natural health products.

It is true that this is part of the economy. I have met with people from the sector on a few occasions. My colleague, the member for Montcalm, worked on the bill in the Standing Committee on Health. Unfortunately, the Liberals seem reluctant to engage fully on this issue. Although the Minister of Health has met with the pharmaceutical industry, she does not appear to have made the same effort to understand the challenges facing the natural health products sector. She has not even attempted to meet with representatives from this sector to gain a full appreciation of the complexity of the issue.

What does my colleague make of the Liberals' closed-minded attitude toward this association?

• (1645)

[English]

**Burton Bailey:** Mr. Speaker, this is a very important question. Bill C-224 was shut down yesterday at the health committee and stripped line by line. I felt like we had been misled by the Liberal health committee members.

This is truly going to hurt all of the natural health products people. The 80% of Canadians who use these products are going to be forced to either purchase them from the United States at a cheaper rate or pay more to have Canadian labelling and the bureaucracy of Health Canada.

I am still reeling from it, but I can assure members that the Conservatives will continue to fight for natural health products, and we will hear more about it in the House when this blank piece of paper that has been worked on since 2023 is presented in the House.

**Cheryl Gallant (Algonquin—Renfrew—Pembroke, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, how would life be different for Canadians had the pipeline to the Pacific that was approved by the Harper government

been allowed to proceed? How long is the minimum it would take for that pipeline to be built?

**Burton Bailey:** Mr. Speaker, I have a lot to say about that. The first thing I would like to say is we would be an energy superpower. We would have a stockpile. We would be able to control our fuel prices. Farmers would not be facing twice the price in fuel costs from year to year.

The actual building of a pipeline, if the bureaucracy of the Liberal government was not in the way, could be accomplished in a couple of years. The problem is that the Liberals continue to not consult with the provinces and they leave it to the last minute, and the next thing we know, the project is stalled or cancelled.

We cannot build pipelines with government money. It needs to be the private sector building these projects, because they will then get done in a reasonable time.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** 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 Brandon—Souris, Finance; and the hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, Finance.

[Translation]

**Anthony Housefather (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Emergency Management and Community Resilience, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out that I will be sharing my speaking time with the member for Cape Breton—Canso—Antigonish.

[English]

I often say what an honour it is to rise in the House to debate a motion. I actually cannot say that today, because this is one of the most nonsensical motions I have ever seen before the House of Commons. Normally, when we propose a motion, we have a solution; we have a proposal. We say, "This is my idea. I would like the House of Commons to debate it." Today, there are zero ideas in this motion. It makes two statements, both of which are actually true, but have no causal link to each other, necessarily.

The first statement we are debating is that the Liberals have been in power for 11 years. Well, yes, that is a true statement. I know that because I was first elected 11 years ago, and I have always sat on this side of the House, and my Conservative colleagues who proposed the motion have always sat on that side of the House. This is because Canadians, for four consecutive elections, have chosen a Liberal government. Let me read the results of those elections. In 2015, there were 184 Liberals elected to 99 Conservatives. In 2019, there were 157 Liberals elected to 121 Conservatives. In 2021, there were 160 Liberals elected to 119 Conservatives.

In the 2025 election, with our new Prime Minister and our new government, we had 169 Liberals elected to 144 Conservatives. We all know what has happened since that election. We have had many members of the Conservative Party cross the floor to become Liberals. The Liberal Party has won six consecutive by-elections to have new Liberal members. Today, we are at 173 Liberal members, plus there are six vacancies. It is true.

• (1650)

[Translation]

Canadians from across the country—from Quebec, Ontario, the Atlantic provinces, British Columbia and even Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan—elected Liberal MPs in the last election, and we now have a majority government. It is true. Will debating this motion actually achieve anything for Canadians?

[English]

The answer is no, but if that is what the Conservatives want to talk about, then sure.

The second statement is that Canada is in an affordability crisis. Well, sure, there is an affordability crisis in western democracies. There is an affordability crisis across the world because there are wars going on in Russia and Ukraine. There is a war going on constantly around Iran, and that has led to the rise in prices of things like fuel and wheat and other things, which has caused inflation to go up across the western world, and food in particular has been affected.

Canada actually, as a country, has one of the lower inflation rates in the G7. Since the pandemic, inflation has been rampant, and Canadians are suffering as a result, just like Americans are suffering, British people are suffering and people are suffering in many other countries. They are suffering because they have to worry about how they are going to afford to pay their grocery bills. This is why this government has put forward numerous initiatives to try to deal with that question. Somehow, in some way, the Conservatives today have tried to argue that inflation and affordability are issues only in Canada, which is certainly not the case. They are an issue everywhere, whether the government is a right-wing government or a left-wing government or a centrist government.

This government has actually dealt with the problem. We have put forward, in the last year and a half, numerous solutions that I can detail. Let us talk about the Canada groceries and essentials benefit, which will increase support for Canadian families by 25% over five years starting in July. In fact, the latest payment happened just a few days ago, which will allow Canadians to have more money to put towards their groceries and essentials. There is the first act that this government did, which was cutting taxes for 22 million Canadians by lowering the first marginal tax rate from 15% to 14%. It provided tax relief of \$420 in the first half of the year. This year, it will be \$840 a year for two-income families. This is a meaningful act to put more money in Canadians' pockets. We are eliminating the GST for first-time homebuyers and cancelling the federal consumer carbon tax, effective April 1, 2025, which was an idea the Conservatives supported.

I know it is disappointing to be sitting in opposition for 11 years. I understand the frustration. However, the Conservatives themselves chose to make mention of that in the motion. It was not me who chose to talk about the fact that the Liberals have been in power and have been chosen by Canadians over and over again. It was them, so maybe they should celebrate that.

Then there is the national school food program. We made that permanent, but the Conservatives voted against that. That program

### *Business of Supply*

lets kids get food at school. It allows families to know their children are able to have a warm, good lunch at school.

There are automatic federal benefits, where people who are lower income are automatically receiving benefits they qualify for.

There are lowering costs and strengthening competition in essential services, pro-competition measures in the telecom sector and the financial sector to reduce prices.

As well, there is the expanding and entrenching of the Canada child benefit. The Canada child benefit is something that millions of Canadians benefit from and is putting much more money into the pockets of parents of children until the age of 17.

There is the lowering costs for child care and kid essentials. Lowering the cost of child care across this country, creating more spots and making sure that day care is affordable has not only allowed women to go back in the workforce in many places to make sure we have a much more equal workforce, but also allowed families to know they do not have to pay extraordinary amounts to do that.

[Translation]

I am very proud that our province of Quebec was the first place in Canada, and perhaps one of the first in the world, to have affordable child care.

• (1655)

[English]

Let us talk about the Canada dental plan. For way too long in this country, Canadians have been able to get medical care, but not dental care. This means people know their bodies are healthy, except for their teeth and gums, but the teeth and gums are some of the most vital parts of the body that can bring infection to someone's entire body. For some reason, in Canada, we had never guaranteed that lower-income people would be able to pay for their dentist. These types of preventive measures are necessary to keep people healthy. If a person's family income is \$90,000 or less per year, they are able to qualify for dental care if they do not have other insurance provided by their employer. That is huge.

There is the \$500 Canada housing benefit top-up and the tax-free first home savings account that over 750,000 Canadians enrolled in. As well, there is the Canada disability benefit, where our government is delivering up to \$200 a month, which is helping 600,000 Canadians.

I can go on and on and on about all the affordability measures we are taking.

Yes, Canadians are hurting. Yes, affordability is a huge issue. It is one of the most important issues facing this country, and we need to do everything we can to make sure that Canadians can afford to live their lives, buy their groceries, have housing and have the most important essentials.

This motion today, as I return to it, proposes nothing. There is not one idea in the motion, not one.

*Business of Supply*

[Translation]

There is not a single idea in the motion. It merely makes two statements. There are no proposals. If they can waste time debating this in the House of Commons simply to acknowledge two facts and propose nothing, I fail to even see the purpose of the House of Commons.

[English]

The House of Commons, the Parliament of Canada, is here to listen to ideas, propose ideas and debate those ideas, not to simply put two different facts together that have no causality one to the other and say that it is a motion.

**Pat Kelly (Calgary Crowfoot, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the member, at the beginning and at the end of his speech, denied a connection between the first part and second part of the motion. He says that the motion could have proposed concrete solutions. We have proposed other concrete solutions, including earlier this week, that they voted against.

The first thing toward having a solution is to admit there is a problem. In this motion, we are asking the government to admit that after its 11 years, it has produced an affordability crisis. The member wants to blame external factors as if to say that over the last 11 years, when the government cancelled major projects, and now we need major projects, or imposed a carbon tax and then took it away, the government has not given us the present affordability crisis.

**Anthony Housefather:** Mr. Speaker, it must be very sad to be sitting in the opposition and have nothing as a solution to propose for affordability and to create a motion that basically does not propose anything at all.

Affordability is a very important issue. Affordability is a problem throughout western democracies. Affordability needs to be tackled. This government is tackling it, and the opposition has zero solutions to propose in today's motion.

[Translation]

**Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I too wanted to tell the member for Mount Royal that I came to the House at the same time as he did. I dare say that, in December 2024, when the Liberals were facing the prospect of being reduced to just 25 seats, he was not nearly as enthusiastic as he was at the beginning of his speech today. I would therefore encourage him to demonstrate a little more humility in his speeches because he is bound to find himself on this side of the House someday.

The fact remains that, over the past 11 years, the Bloc Québécois has stood up for affordability, particularly for seniors, while his government has stubbornly refused to end the discrimination against seniors aged 65 to 74. These seniors are grappling with this affordability crisis, but the government is doing nothing to end that discrimination.

Will he vote in favour of Bill C-261?

• (1700)

**Anthony Housefather:** Mr. Speaker, affordability is very important. Seniors' issues are also very important. We want all seniors to be able to live with dignity. That is why, in 2015, our government

reversed the Conservatives' decision to raise the retirement age from 65 to 67. Discussions will be held on this private member's bill.

I recognize that there are real challenges facing seniors aged 75 and over. In addition, many seniors aged 65 to 75 continue to work. That said, I am certainly always open to hear my colleague's arguments.

[English]

**Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have a lot of respect for my colleague. However, the Liberals have been in government for 11 years. There are 65,000 people who are homeless on any given night across this country. In 11 years in government, they have yet to present a plan on how they are going to address homelessness, and it is growing. We are at 3.3% non-market housing.

The Liberals talk about their major projects list. When is ending homelessness going to make it to the major projects list?

**Anthony Housefather:** Mr. Speaker, on whether the projects list would include ending homelessness, I am not quite sure that is what the project list works for. However, ending homelessness is a very important issue. Making sure that people have a roof over their head is incredibly important. Whatever government programs deal with that and continue to deal with that certainly are priorities for all of us in this House.

I have a lot of respect for my colleague, and I am sure he would have preferred that, in the motion before us, there was a solution to the homelessness crisis. A motion could have proposed to debate how we could make housing more affordable versus the nothing motion that was put forward today.

I am happy to talk to the member about the homelessness issue.

**Tim Watchorn (Les Pays-d'en-Haut, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, everybody knows that prices are high because of the war in Iran and the trade war we have with the U.S. We are going to control what we can control.

We voted today on Bill C-39, which would advance major projects. I would like the member to explain to us how getting major projects done in Canada is going to work in a great way and get Canadians to work.

**Anthony Housefather:** Mr. Speaker, that is a wonderful question.

To me, one of the things that is most important about this government is making Canada work and working with the provinces. We will see provincial premiers saluting the government and the Prime Minister. They say what a pleasure it is to work together to create projects that will have a national scale and that will allow us to bring things to market that we otherwise would not have been able to bring.

We also need to diversify our trade. We need to make sure we have a way to get our oil to the Asia-Pacific region and not just leave it here in North America and only trade with the United States.

**Jaime Battiste (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to take part in today's debate and to discuss our government's plan to ease financial pressures on households and help Canadians build a better future for their families and our country. Our government knows that Canada is strongest when we look after one another and ensure everyone has a fair chance to succeed. That is why we are taking action to make everyday life more affordable.

In January, the government announced the new Canada groceries and essentials benefit to put more money back in Canadians' pockets. The benefit is helping more than 12 million low- and modest-income Canadians afford everyday essentials. It replaces the existing GST credit while providing more generous support. We increased it by 25% for five years, starting in July, and added a one-time payment this year. Together, these enhancements will provide substantial support to those most affected by rising food prices.

For example, a person living alone who is eligible for the GST credit could previously only receive a maximum of \$543 for 2026-27. With the one-time payment and the 2026-27 benefit combined, that person will receive approximately \$950 in total. For a couple with two children, total support will increase from approximately \$1,086 to \$1,890. These increases will make meaningful differences for households facing higher food costs. The benefit is also indexed to inflation to ensure payments rise each year with the cost of living. We are taking these steps because helping Canadians afford everyday essentials is the right thing to do.

The Canada groceries and essentials benefit is part of a broader package of measures to ease grocery cost pressures across Canada. Canada's first-ever national food security strategy will address food insecurity, support producers and strengthen supply chains to help lower prices for Canadians. The strategy is backed by more than \$3 billion in investments over 10 years. It includes a \$1-billion investment in food infrastructure, including food terminals, to help independent grocers buy and move completely produced products. The strategy also includes a \$1-billion investment through Farm Credit Canada and a \$150-million food security fund to help Canadian businesses grow, produce and process more food in Canada. A further \$750 million will go to expanding year-round Canadian fruit and vegetable production. These measures will address the root causes of food insecurity by strengthening domestic food production and improving access to affordable, nutritious food.

### *Business of Supply*

We are not only putting more money in the pockets of those who need it the most. We are also helping Canadians keep more of what they earn through a middle-class tax cut. We have reduced the tax rate from 15% to 14%. As a result, nearly 22 million Canadians are receiving tax relief of up to \$420 per person, while two-income families can save up to \$840 this year. In 2026, the lower rate applies to taxable income of up to \$58,523, providing meaningful relief during a period of economic uncertainty. Most of the tax relief will go to Canadians in the two lowest tax brackets, with nearly half directed to those in the first bracket. In other words, the measure is targeted to those who need support the most.

Above all, we must consider our children, and that is why we made the national school food program permanent. It will provide healthy school meals to as many as 400,000 children and save families with two children about \$800 a year on groceries. Working with provinces, territories and indigenous partners, we will continue to expand the program to more schools across Canada, ensuring that hunger is never a deterrent to getting one's education.

• (1705)

Our government also recognizes that recent global developments have made life more difficult for Canadians. Tariffs imposed by our largest trading partner have had a significant impact on Canadian workers and businesses from coast to coast to coast. Conflict and instability in the Middle East have also driven up fuel prices worldwide. In these circumstances, Canadians need relief, and our government has delivered it. Through carefully targeted measures, we are helping Canadians meet these challenges while strengthening Canada's sovereignty and economic resilience.

For example, last spring we acted to ease the impact of high fuel costs on Canadians. In April, after disruptions to crude oil shipments through the Strait of Hormuz pushed fuel prices higher, our government temporarily suspended the federal fuel excise tax. The measure has saved Canadians and Canadian businesses up to 10¢ per litre on gasoline and unleaded aviation gasoline, up to 11¢ per litre on leaded aviation gasoline and up to four cents a litre on diesel and aviation fuel. The savings were immediate. On the first day the temporary suspensions took effect, gasoline prices fell by 11¢ per litre, providing direct relief to consumers.

### *Business of Supply*

Through Bill C-38, we propose to continue providing relief at the pump by extending the temporary suspension of the federal fuel excise tax through January 31, 2027, and then from February 1 to March 31, 2027, the tax would apply at 50% of its regular rate. The extension would lower everyday costs for Canadians, including truckers and businesses in the food, agriculture, housing, construction and delivery sectors. In short, it would provide timely, meaningful relief when Canadians need it the most. By easing pressure on gasoline and diesel prices at the pump, we are lowering costs for Canadians today while building a stronger, more resilient and more independent economy for the future.

To conclude, Canadians should feel the benefits of economic growth not only in the economic reports but also in their wallets and around the kitchen table. That starts with ensuring that everyone can afford to put good food on the table. We are building a stronger Canada, one where economic growth improves everyday life and gives every Canadian a fair opportunity to succeed. That is how we will build a more prosperous and inclusive future.

## ROYAL ASSENT

• (1710)

[Translation]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** Order. I have the honour to inform the House that a communication has been received as follows:

Rideau Hall

October 8, 2026

Mr. Speaker,

I have the honour to inform you that Mr. Ryan McAdam, Deputy of the Governor General of Canada, signified royal assent by written declaration to the bill listed in the Schedule to this letter on the 8th day of October, 2026, at 3:57 p.m.

Yours sincerely,

Eduardo Rivas

Manager, Office of the Secretary to the Governor General

The schedule indicates the bill assented to on Thursday, October 8, 2026, was Bill C-27, An Act to give effect to the Final Self-Government Agreement for the Tłeḡóhł Got'ınę and to make consequential amendments to other Acts—Chapter 23.

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—AFFORDABILITY CRISIS

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

**Kristina Tesser Derksen (Milton East—Halton Hills South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the parliamentary secretary for his speech. I know he is very involved in advocating for indigenous communities. He is the chair of our national Liberal indigenous caucus, and I have learned a lot from him.

We know that when there are pressures with respect to affordability, marginalized communities often feel them more acutely than others. I wonder if my colleague could speak to the different programs and benefits our government has introduced and how they specifically affect the indigenous communities in his riding and across the country.

**Jaime Battiste (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, when I became a member of Parliament in my community of Eskasoni, child poverty rates there were at 75%. If my son was going to school, that would be the majority of his classmates. One of the reasons I have been so proud is that our government, since 2024, has put a national school food program in place, and today I can say those children receive a healthy breakfast when they go to school in our communities. It is one of the things I am most proud of.

We need to help Canadians. We need to continue to support marginalized communities. I am really proud of the efforts of our government to ensure that all of the families who need help in my community and many others across Canada are able to benefit.

**Jim Bélanger (Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I heard my colleague talk about fuel relief and the suspension of the taxes on petroleum, gasoline and diesel. He was telling us about those benefits. The other side is always asking us about coming up with ideas and helping. If he agrees with me that the suspension of the tax is good, I would like to suggest that it last longer, up until Canada Day or even longer. We understand the price of fuel has doubled over the last year, and HST is a tax over a tax, so there is a lot of revenue going to the government with the extra costs of the fuel. As such, there is ample opportunity to provide relief for a further period of time.

**Jaime Battiste:** Mr. Speaker, I can agree that our government's response in ensuring that we remove the federal fuel excise tax was a necessary step, but I would also talk about all of the programs we have that add to that. Removing gas taxes is one part of it, but we also have to ensure that the most marginalized and the most disadvantaged are being supported. We can talk about the Canada child benefit, affordable day care, the national food program and dental care. We can talk about a lot of programs that our government, over the past number of years, has put in place to help and to target those who need it the most.

• (1715)

[Translation]

**Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, one thing that is often overlooked but is a major contributor to this affordability crisis is climate change. Think of all the natural disasters, the wildfires and floods, that are caused by climate change and rising greenhouse gas emissions.

Does my colleague think it would be a good idea to examine this in depth in the context of the affordability crisis?

[English]

**Jaime Battiste:** Mr. Speaker, I would agree entirely with my colleague over there that we have to continue to ensure that we are taking care of our environment. As a Mi'kmaw person, I was taught from a very young age about *netukulink*, our responsibilities not only to our families and our communities but to our ecosystem. This has to be a driving force.

When we look at the economy, we have to ensure that we are able to walk and chew bubble gum at the same time by having a plan for the environment as a part of a plan for the economy. That is why I believe these targeted supports are important, not just reducing the prices of gas, which is often what the Conservatives go to first instead of looking at the most vulnerable people who actually need the supports across our country.

**Jim Bélanger (Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of our Conservative motion calling on the House to recognize that Canada is in an affordability crisis. This is an issue that comes up time and time again when I speak with my constituents in northern Ontario. I hear of it constantly. The cost of housing, food, fuel and everyday necessities is through the roof, and northerners are living paycheque to paycheque.

The affordability crisis Canadians are experiencing today did not happen by accident. For the last decade, the Liberals' economic approach has been driven by higher spending, growing deficits, increasing debt and more taxes, rather than by economic productivity and growth. Instead of creating the conditions for Canadians to get ahead, they have created a country where more and more families are struggling simply to keep up.

Canada should be one of the wealthiest countries in the world. We are blessed with abundant natural resources and hard-working people. We have what the world wants, yet we have not been able to efficiently service that demand and live up to our potential. After 10 years of the Liberal government, Canada has experienced weak economic growth, declining purchasing power and countless missed opportunities. Rather than removing barriers to investment, reducing taxes and getting projects built, the Liberal answer is more bureaucracy, more red tape and slower approval processes. The result is a country facing a severe affordability crisis.

Habitat for Humanity's recent international report paints worrying numbers. More than half of Canadian non-homeowners now believe they will never own a home. Two-thirds of Canadians have cut back on other expenses simply to keep up with housing costs, while 44% say that one unexpected bill could threaten their ability to remain housed. That is not the sign of a healthy housing market. It is evidence of a country where the dream of home ownership is slipping away, out of reach. Affordable homes have virtually disappeared in my region of northern Ontario.

When I was a young man starting a family, my wife and I did not have significant savings, but what we did have were good jobs, modest paycheques and the confidence that if we worked hard and managed our finances responsibly, we would be able to buy a home. We did all that in the same week we got married.

### *Business of Supply*

That was the reality and the opportunity of the Canada I grew up in. Today, too many young Canadians no longer believe that owning a home is possible. They are doing everything right. They work hard and follow the rules, yet home ownership is further away than ever. Our younger generation is losing faith that they can build a future in Canada.

The affordability crisis extends well beyond housing. Statistics and surveys continue to show that Canadians are struggling with the rising cost of essentials. Housing, groceries, energy, transportation and other necessities are consuming a growing portion of a household's income. Lower-income households, renters, young Canadians and single-parent families are among those being hit the hardest. Middle-class Canadians who once felt financially secure are now finding it increasingly difficult to balance their budgets.

In northern Ontario, those pressures are often magnified. People in my riding travel long distances for work, medical appointments and essential services. Higher fuel costs, increasing transportation expenses and rising home heating bills place significant strain on household budgets. As winter approaches, many families are once again wondering how they will make ends meet.

● (1720)

Unfortunately, nowhere is this pressure felt more clearly than at the grocery store. As families prepare to gather for Thanksgiving this weekend, many are not focused on celebrating with loved ones. Instead, they are worried about whether they can afford the meal on their table. According to researchers at Dalhousie University, the cost of a traditional Thanksgiving dinner continues to rise, with basic staples costing 10% more than they did just a year ago. Thanksgiving should be a time for family and gratitude. It should not be a time when parents are calculating whether they can afford a turkey dinner.

Canadians do not need more government affordability programs designed to help them cope with the consequences of bad policy. What they need is a government that addresses the root causes of the crisis. We would not need so many affordability measures if inflationary spending, mounting debt and economic mismanagement had not pushed the cost of living so high in the first place.

It is worth examining the data about incomes measured by GDP. Affordability is about the relationship among what households earn, what government leaves them to spend after taxes and transfers, and what that income can actually buy. At the end of 2025, per-person GDP in Canada stood at 3.5% higher than at the end of 2014. For perspective, from the end of 2003 to the end of 2014, per-person GDP grew by 11.7%.

The numbers look even worse when compared to those of other industrialized countries. For example, at the end of 2025, per-person GDP in the United States was 21.7% higher than at the end of 2014, so the U.S. economy outperformed our economy by 18% in that same period.

*Private Members' Business*

Canada's economy has generated remarkably little new income over the past decade. Real GDP per capita has grown by an average of just 0.6% annually, the weakest performance since the Great Depression, while real household disposable income has risen only 0.8% per year. Without stronger income growth, affordability will continue to deteriorate.

• (1725)

[Translation]

My constituents are dealing with an affordability crisis, fuelled by a decade of inflationary Liberal policies. While the cost of essentials continues to rise, Canadians' purchasing power remains stagnant. The Canadian dream of homeownership is slipping away for an entire generation. In northern Ontario, the cost of transportation, heating and groceries is weighing more and more heavily on families' budgets.

Canadians need hope. They need policies that will revive our economy, make life affordable again and give everyone a chance to improve their lives.

[English]

The Prime Minister has said that affordability is now better than it has been in a decade. In reality, Canadians face unaffordable housing, higher grocery prices and stagnant incomes. Affordability remains a major problem, and the government should recognize that and vote in favour of our motion.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** It being 5:27 p.m., it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the business of supply.

The question is on the motion.

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

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

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** Pursuant to Standing Order 45, the division stands deferred until Monday, October 19, 2026, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I expect if you were to canvass the House, you would find unanimous consent at this time to call it 5:42 p.m. so we can get on to private members' hour.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** Is it agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

---

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

### SERGEI MAGNITSKY INTERNATIONAL ANTI-CORRUPTION AND HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-219, An Act to amend the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Develop-

ment Act, the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act (Sergei Magnitsky Law), the Special Economic Measures Act and the Broadcasting Act, as reported (with amendments) from the committee.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** There being no motion at report stage, the House will now proceed, without debate, to putting the question on the motion to concur in the bill at report stage.

**James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC)** moved that the bill, as amended, be concurred in at report stage.

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

**James Bezan:** Mr. Speaker, we would like the motion to pass unanimously.

(Motion agreed to)

**James Bezan:** moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure to rise for my private member's bill, Bill C-219, the international anti-corruption and human rights act, or Sergei Magnitsky law no. 3, which we decided on at committee.

I think it is important, every time we start these debates, especially for those who might be watching for the very first time, to ask, why Magnitsky? Who is he? Who is Sergei Magnitsky? We have to remember that Sergei was a Russian lawyer. He was an auditor, a husband and a father of two. He was a guy who believed in fairness. He believed in the rule of law. He believed in standing up for a new Russia. Sadly, because he was not afraid to stand up for what he believed in, was not afraid to stand up for what matters and was not afraid to stand up against oligarchs and corrupt officials in the Kremlin and across Russia, he was murdered.

Sergei uncovered the largest tax fraud in Russian history. The proper course of action was obvious to him. He took it to court and exposed the corruption. In doing so, he was the one who was arrested. He was the one who was detained. They tortured him in prison. They denied him medical attention, and eventually he was murdered in a Russian prison by the very officials who had taken this fraud through the Russian government, to the tune of hundreds of millions of U.S. dollars. The Russian government allowed him to be killed and has been trying to cover it up for the past 17 years.

*Private Members' Business*

Using Sergei Magnitsky's name, which we have been doing since 2017, is important, in that it delivers a strong political message to Vladimir Putin, to his corrupt oligarchs in the Kremlin and in industry, and of course to the corrupt allies he has around the world, who are not afraid to use corruption to enrich themselves at the expense of the people they are supposed to be representing and protecting or who are not afraid to commit gross human rights violations.

Originally, we were going to call the bill the Sergei Magnitsky international anti-corruption and human rights act. It now has the new name. The bill would change the name of the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act, which we passed back in 2017 and was done by Senator Raynell Andreychuk and me. It would now be called the Sergei Magnitsky law. We would also change the name of the Special Economic Measures Act to the global sanctions and special economic measures act. It would be called the Sergei Magnitsky law no. 2, to keep it all straight and even.

It is important to recognize that the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the government agreed that we needed to use Sergei Magnitsky's name every time we lay out a sanction against those who are committing these abuses and committing aggression against their neighbours, as Putin is committing in Ukraine today with the Russian war machine that Putin has, as well as against others around the world who are committing gross human rights violations.

Unfortunately, a number of amendments were made to the original version we tabled here. I will just say, for those who have been following this, that the one thing the bill would not do anymore is it would not immediately sanction family members of sanctioned individuals whom Canada has recognized and put on our global sanctions list. It would just be those individuals and not their spouses, children, girlfriends or boyfriends.

We know that Russian oligarchs have done an amazing job of taking their wealth out of their country. Even though they might be sanctioned and cannot move their wealth or travel to Canada or other places, they have been sending their children to university here with millions of dollars. They have been sending their wives and spouses over to Canada, putting up bank accounts and getting around the rules we have. Of course, they are using Canada as a safe haven.

The other ones who are really good at this is those in the IRGC, with the regime in Tehran. It is the same thing. They are moving here with their families and spouses, hiding assets and buying amazing properties. It would be nice if we could sanction their children, spouses and other family members on the immediate family level so that this does not happen.

The bill would no longer require the RCMP and FINTRAC to report to the minister on what is happening and whether there should be sanctions coming forward. It would no longer require the minister to report names and the status of prisoners of conscience in an annual report on human rights. It would also not amend the Broadcasting Act to make sure that state broadcasters from countries that are committing a genocide recognized in the House or in the Senate would not be allowed to broadcast on our airwaves.

• (1730)

We are still happy with the bill in this form. I may have been fairly ambitious in bringing it forward the first time. When we were still in a minority government situation, it looked like it was going to go through, maybe without any amendments, but that changed, unfortunately. We have to accept that and roll with the punches, as one might say.

I want to again mention former Senator Raynell Andreychuk. She and I worked very hard together back in 2017 to bring the original Sergei Magnitsky Law to Parliament. I did it in the House, and she brought it forward and passed it through the Senate, and it became law. Even at that time, back in 2017, there was collaboration among all parties to make sure that it was passed and that we were finally targeting the corrupt foreign officials who were committing gross human rights violations.

It is important to note that the reason we have to come back to this is that there were some loopholes, and I have already pointed out some of them. In this version of Bill C-219, we would close those loopholes and address some of the shortcomings. This means that we would be better aligned with our allies and how they sanction, whether it is the United States, the European Union, Australia or others. It would also provide better coordination among the legislation and regulations we have right here in Canada. Having the three bills come together under this umbrella private member's bill, which is uncommon in this House, and coordinating three pieces of legislation into one would be a positive move. It would make it a lot easier, in the administration of justice, to address things like human rights, state aggression and gross human rights violations.

I want to point out what this bill would do, and I think it is important that we celebrate it. This is the first time in Canadian law that we would define prisoners of conscience and require the Minister of Foreign Affairs to publish an annual report. That annual report would be tabled here in the House and would require the minister to talk about how the Government of Canada is advancing human rights around the world and how it is supporting prisoners of conscience and other human rights defenders.

A lot of people may be asking what a prisoner of conscience is, so I will read it into the record:

prisoner of conscience means an individual who, in contravention of international human rights standards, has been detained or otherwise physically restricted solely because of their identity or their conscientiously held beliefs, including religious or political beliefs.

We would also define for the very first time what transnational repression is and would sanction the foreign nationals who commit transnational repression right here in Canada and elsewhere around the world:

### *Private Members' Business*

transnational repression means tactics used by a foreign state to intimidate, harass, surveil or threaten individuals or groups located outside the state borders or physically harm such individuals or members of such groups, including elected officials, political dissidents, human rights defenders, exiled journalists, diaspora communities, civil society activists and refugees, for the purpose of silencing dissent and stifling activism.

Just so people understand how this would apply here in Canada, I will note that a prisoner of conscience is what we are witnessing right now in Hong Kong with Jimmy Lai, who stood up for the freedom of speech and for democracy in Hong Kong. He is in his late seventies now. He is diabetic. He has been held in detention, in solitary confinement, for the last several years because of his belief in the freedom of speech and the freedom of the press, because he owned a paper. He has connections to Canada. His sister, nephews and nieces live here, and he has properties here in Canada. The Chinese regime, the Communist regime that is overseeing the administration in Hong Kong, jailed him on trumped-up charges and finally dragged him in front of a kangaroo court after delaying and staying proceedings for years.

Jimmy Lai is languishing in prison. He has been sentenced to life, and he will not last long, sadly enough. He is a prisoner of conscience, and we need to rescue him. The Government of Canada needs to stand up on the right side of this, from the standpoint of human rights.

● (1735)

Transnational repression is the flip side of that. As we all know, the Communist regime in Beijing has police stations here in Canada. It has interfered in at least two elections. We had a big judicial inquiry on the foreign interference in our electoral process here. We need to make sure that the individuals who are acting on behalf of the state in Canada to repress our elections, or repress nationals from that country who now call Canada home, are not getting away with it.

I received a letter just last week from a Falun Gong practitioner who had been peacefully protesting in Toronto in front of the Chinese consulate and was assaulted by an employee from the consulate. The employee beat this lady and made death threats to her. Not only would we call this a criminal act here in Canada, but because they can hide behind their diplomatic immunity, such individuals would be considered under transnational repression and would have to stand trial for that.

Under Bill C-219, we would require that Parliament put out a list of the foreign national entities that are going to be added to our sanctions list. We want to increase the penalties on this and find the people who are committing prisoner-of-conscience abuse and transnational repression. The penalties could be increased up to \$100,000 under this piece of legislation, which I think would be a huge move to actually help police all the abuse we are witnessing.

One of the great things in the bill is that it would also provide a timeline to the Government of Canada for forfeiting of frozen assets. I always like to use as an example the fact that everybody who goes through Toronto Pearson airport sees the great big Russian Antonov aircraft that is sitting there because it is a frozen asset. The oligarchs who own the company have definitely been sanctioned by Canada.

Instead of sitting there, as the aircraft has been for four years, within 24 months, assets should be forfeited and liquidated so the government can then distribute those assets to the victims or to the government. In this case, it would be given to the Ukraine to help them deal with the cost of the war such as the cost of the damage to Ukrainian homes and infrastructure and the loss of life because of the barbaric actions of the Russian military.

This is also true with other holdings, but the focus is on those owned by private individuals or private entities, not government entities. If they have been sanctioned, any of their assets here in Canada should, after 24 months, be turned over by the state, Canada, to the victims.

Finally, the preamble of the bill calls for the government to continue the good work they are doing in trying to establish the international anti-corruption court in The Hague. With respect to all the people out there who are committing genocides, trampling on human rights and abusing their own citizens or neighbours, those oligarchs, such as Putin in particular but also, historically, people such as the Mussolinis and the Hitlers of the world who committed mass genocides, how did they all start? Putin first started as a corrupt official. By having the international criminal court, we could actually change the behaviour of psychopaths who are in places of power, and have them back off from what they are doing to their own citizenry.

In conclusion, I believe, although the original version of Bill C-219 provided more in sanctioning, enforcement and oversight across Canada's sanctioning regime, that the amended version we have before the House today remains critical for modernizing the sanctions mechanisms for the future.

● (1740)

[Translation]

**Hon. Mona Fortier (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I want to commend my colleague on all the work he has done. He sponsored this bill. I will be delivering my remarks on the bill shortly.

[English]

I do want to ask my colleague if he could maybe share a bit about the impact of some of the amendments that were brought, one of which would introduce a new requirement for the minister of foreign affairs to report annually on Canada's efforts to advance human rights internationally. How is this important to the bill?

**James Bezan:** Madam Speaker, yes, this is important. Originally, the bill called for the minister's office to publish the names of political prisoners we have been advocating for. After reflection and testimonies that were heard at the committee, it was decided to take that component out. However, it allows us to ensure that the Government of Canada is always standing up, first and foremost, for human rights in Canada and around the world and for actions taken to promote human rights around the world.

Having it tabled here gives a chance for the foreign affairs committee or others to go through and hear from the minister and study that report and look at the cases that the government is working on, especially on the broad scale. Although it is not in the bill anymore, Parliament has the opportunity, through committees, to hear from diaspora groups and other experts on corruption and gross human rights violations and bring those to the committee, which can report it back to the House.

• (1745)

**Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I congratulate my hon. colleague for bringing this forward to strengthen the current protocol or regime we have regarding this important issue. Why is this bill very important?

**James Bezan:** Madam Speaker, first and foremost, this bill is about coordination of how we sanction corrupt foreign officials and how we go after human rights abusers within our own regulatory framework and, more importantly, how we ensure that we are working in better coordination with our allies. If the free world countries, democratic states in the EU, our NATO allies and our democratic allies in the Asia-Pacific, are not working in lockstep, which this bill encourages, then those corrupt foreign officials, those oligarchs, those world leaders who are enriching themselves at the cost of their own citizens, persist. I take, for example, how the Falun Gong community has been used. People have been victimized and killed and their organs illegally harvested and sold all around the world. If we are not working in lockstep to sanction the individuals who are enriching themselves on this black market, this grotesque trade in human organs, we will never be able to stop them. This is about working together so that we can stand up for the human rights of those individuals and others around the world.

[Translation]

**Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate my colleague on his bill, which will certainly be very useful. I would like him to talk a bit about the process for sanctioning states or individuals.

[English]

**James Bezan:** Madam Speaker, right now the process is that the government, through its assessment, determines which individuals are responsible for allowing a state, government, organization or individuals who are actually out there acting inappropriately and abusing the rights of individuals. I will go back to the Falun Gong practitioners example. There are actually doctors out there and others who are involved in this grotesque trade of illicitly harvested human organs: hearts, lungs, livers, kidneys. It is a disgusting practice. Never mind what the PRC regime is doing to the Uyghurs, having them reprogrammed and sterilizing them and using them as forced labour, essentially slave labour. By having this bill, we would more clearly define what those prisoners of conscience and human rights defenders are, and ensure that we are standing up and fighting for each and every one of them around the world.

**Chi Nguyen (Spadina—Harbourfront, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I rise in the House today to speak to Bill C-219, the Sergei Magnitsky international anti-corruption and human rights act.

I would like to thank the hon. member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman for bringing this legislation forward. It was very helpful to

have more of the context and the story behind why he has been pushing forward this bill.

#### *Private Members' Business*

Bill C-219 reflects core values that Canada has always represented. These values are represented in the institutions we have built as a country, including the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The charter was introduced under a Liberal government and reflects our nationwide commitment to fundamental freedoms, equality, democratic rights and the rule of law. These values do not stop at our borders. They also shape how we engage internationally. When we speak out against human rights abuses or take action against corruption and repression abroad, we do so because these are the core values that Canadians believe in.

Bill C-219 would build on these principles by strengthening Canada's ability to better respond to international human rights challenges and violations while also continuing to uphold the humanitarian principles that define us.

Bill C-219 proposes amendments to three laws: the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Act; the Special Economic Measures Act; and the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act. The amendments would strengthen Canada's sanctions and update human rights frameworks. These amendments would occur in the following ways.

Firstly, the bill would amend the DFATD Act to require the minister to report annually on human rights efforts, including efforts to secure the release of human rights defenders and prisoners of conscience.

The bill would also amend the Special Economic Measures Act and the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act to lower the threshold for the use of sanctions to be inclusive of emerging threats like transnational repression and cybercrime. It would also provide for increased penalties, establish clear timelines and rename Canada's existing sanctions legislation to commemorate Sergei Magnitsky.

The Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development also made important amendments to further strengthen the bill. The reporting provisions were amended to take into consideration the complex situation that prisoners of conscience and human rights defenders are in, while still making sure the government is accountable in publishing an annual report on these activities.

*Private Members' Business*

The committee also adopted a broadened trigger related to conduct that undermines peace, stability and democracy, allowing the government to sanction individuals for a wide range of activities including cybercrime, organized crime, arbitrary detention and other forms of transnational misconduct. These changes recognize that threats to human rights increasingly cross borders. Canada must be equipped to respond to evolving challenges.

The amendments would also ensure that the seizure of private assets of sanctioned individuals follows a clear legislative process and timeline while ensuring that due process is respected. These changes would also increase and align evasion penalties to provide greater consistency through a Canada sanctions framework.

The work on this bill shows what we can achieve when parliamentarians work productively together. The committee spent weeks working collaboratively to strengthen the legislation by removing provisions that could have created unnecessary burdens, hindered the government's ability to adapt sanctions or potentially put human rights defenders at risk. This is a strong example of how multipartisan efforts can make Canada stronger, both here at home and abroad.

Bill C-219 would make important changes to modernize Canada's sanctions regime. These measures would increase accountability by requiring the government to publish an annual report on efforts to advance human rights.

In recent months, our country has been having important discussions about how Canada can strengthen its role on the stage as a middle power. As Prime Minister Mark Carney has noted, middle powers like Canada are not powerless in the face of global uncertainty. By working with like-minded partners—

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

• (1750)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès):** I have to advise the hon. member that we cannot use the names of current members.

I thank the hon. member for Regina—Lewvan for noticing it.

**Chi Nguyen:** Madam Speaker, by working with like-minded partners, we can help uphold human rights, defend democracy and strengthen the rules-based international order. On the world stage, our government has been working hard on strengthening our international relationships and trade. We have advanced engagement with Vietnam, India, the Philippines and ASEAN partners, among others. We are on track to doubling Canada's preferential global market access from 1.5 billion to three billion consumers in the next six months.

Canada's role as a middle power is about more than trade. It is also about working with partners to defend human rights, uphold the rule of law and respond to those who threaten peace, security and democratic institutions. Trade cannot come at the expense of workers, whether in Canada or in our partner countries. Supporting labour rights and workers' rights helps ensure that Canadian trade is not built on exploitation or sweatshop conditions. We must also take corruption seriously. Corruption undermines democratic insti-

tutions, weakens economic development, distorts markets and erodes public trust.

Canada has rightly recognized the strategic importance of regions such as the Indo-Pacific, and we do not need to wait for countries to achieve perfect democratic outcomes before building strong bilateral relationships. Engagement allows Canada to strengthen economic ties, deepen people-to-people connections and create opportunities for co-operation on shared challenges. We know we cannot meaningfully engage in international trade and strengthen Canada's presence on the world stage without also standing up for the most vulnerable in places where their rights are neglected.

I often hear from constituents in my riding of Spadina—Harbourfront about their concerns regarding international human rights abuses. As one of Canada's most diverse communities, Spadina—Harbourfront is home to people with roots in every corner of the world. Many remain closely connected to family, friends and communities abroad. I have had the opportunity to meet with a wide range of constituents, many of whom have been very clear with me about the importance of democratic institutions, human rights and fundamental freedoms. These conversations remind me that human rights cannot be held as abstract concepts. The consequences of political repression, arbitrary detention, corruption and democratic backsliding are felt by real people in real time.

Canadians expect their elected officials to stand up for the human rights and dignity of all people. They also expect our government to take urgent action. Our government continues to defend human rights through targeted sanctions against individuals responsible for gross human rights violations. Since 2022, Canada has sanctioned nearly 4,000 entities or vessels. In total, over 5,000 individuals and entities have been designated by Canada across its autonomous sanctions regime. Our government remains committed to playing a leadership role in preserving and strengthening the international rules-based order.

As Canadians, we are proud of our commitment to democracy, human rights and the rule of law. These values are reflected in our charter, our institutions and the way we engage with the world. Human rights are not only Canadian values but universal values.

Sanctions are one means of ensuring accountability when individuals engage in serious human rights abuses. Bill C-219 recognizes that these threats continue to evolve and that Canada's legislative framework evolves alongside them. At its core, this bill is about accountability and ensuring that people responsible for serious human rights abuses and corruption face consequences for their actions. Bill C-219 would strengthen our ability to meet that significant responsibility and lead us toward a more secure and just world.

Canada must stand up when rights and freedoms are under threat. For that reason, I am pleased to support this legislation.

• (1755)

[Translation]

**Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ):** Madam Speaker, after a thorough and careful study in committee, the Bloc Québécois will be voting in favour of Bill C-219.

This is an important initiative aimed at strengthening our legislative framework on international human rights. As mentioned earlier, this bill proposes a definition of what constitutes a prisoner of conscience. A prisoner of conscience is an individual who, in contravention of international human rights standards, has been detained or otherwise physically restricted solely because of their identity or their conscientiously held beliefs, including religious or political beliefs.

One of the purposes of this bill is to amend the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Act to require foreign affairs ministers to table an annual report in Parliament on the government's actions to advance human rights internationally. The report would include information on political prisoners and prisoners of conscience, as well as Canada's efforts to support them. Bill C-219 is essentially the same as Bill C-281, which received the unanimous support of the House of Commons at third reading before dying on the Order Paper in the Senate.

This bill includes one vital component that we welcome and fully endorse: recognition of transnational repression. This was requested by the Bloc Québécois and it even formed part of its election platform. The bill defines transnational repression as:

tactics used by a foreign state to intimidate, harass, surveil or threaten individuals or groups located outside the state borders or physically harm such individuals or members of such groups, including elected officials, political dissidents, human rights defenders, exiled journalists, diaspora communities, civil society activists and refugees, for the purpose of silencing dissent and stifling activism.

In Quebec and Canada, we regularly confront transnational repression. Examples were given earlier involving our Uyghur, Tibetan and Taiwanese friends, but there are many others. I have seen cases of transnational repression targeting Kabylia separatists firsthand. Many of them report that simply expressing their opinions publicly or on social media can provoke intimidation against family members and retaliatory measures in Algeria.

This bill broadens the scope of the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act, also known as the Sergei Magnitsky law, as mentioned earlier, by adding transnational repression to the list of explicit grounds for imposing sanctions on foreign individuals. As has already been noted, Sergei Magnitsky was a Russian lawyer who exposed corruption in the Kremlin. He was subsequently im-

prisoned for fraud in a Moscow jail. He died in custody in 2009 after being subjected to torture.

Bill C-219 will strengthen efforts to combat attempts by foreign states to intimidate, surveil or harass individuals living in Quebec, Canada or elsewhere outside their national borders. It will enable Canada to impose sanctions on foreign nationals who have engaged in activities that undermine international peace, security or stability in a manner inconsistent with international law or who are responsible for, or complicit in, gross and systematic violations of internationally recognized human rights or acts of corruption. The bill also enhances the effectiveness of sanctions by prohibiting visas and other official documents from being issued to the immediate family members of sanctioned individuals. This measure recognizes that family members are often used by sanctioned individuals and criminal actors, both in Canada and abroad, to circumvent the sanctions in place.

• (1800)

The bill would give the government new tools by requiring close inter-institutional co-operation between the RCMP and the Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada, which would have to give the department the necessary information to develop and track the application of these sanctions. Some provisions aim to facilitate the seizure and possible forfeiture of assets belonging to sanctioned foreign officials.

The bill would also amend the Broadcasting Act to prevent the issuance, renewal or continuation of licences for broadcasting undertakings influenced by foreign persons or entities involved in a genocide recognized by Parliament or already sanctioned by Canada.

All in all, Bill C-219 would strengthen human rights protections, help in the fight against foreign interference and increase government accountability in the implementation of international sanctions. That is why we will support Bill C-219.

[English]

**Hon. Mona Fortier (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak to this private member's bill, Bill C-219, an act to amend the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Act; the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act, Sergei Magnitsky Law; and the Special Economic Measures Act, which will also be known as the Sergei Magnitsky Law No. 2.

I want to begin by again acknowledging the member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman for his leadership in introducing and championing this bill.

*Private Members' Business**[Translation]*

For generations, countries around the world have regarded Canada as a global leader in the protection of human rights and the promotion of democratic values.

Bill C-219 will introduce significant reforms to increase transparency and modernize Canada's sanctions regime so that it reflects the challenges we face today. This all-party effort will improve Canada's ability to hold those who violate human rights to account.

*[English]*

I was encouraged by the constructive discussions that took place on Bill C-219 at the House of Commons Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development. As a committee, we worked together to adopt several amendments to strengthen the bill, improving the effectiveness and flexibility of its key elements while mitigating risks and unintended consequences. I will focus my remarks today on these key improvements.

First, we brought greater coherence to how the Minister of Foreign Affairs should report on the government's efforts. Bill C-219 proposes amendments to the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Act that introduce a new requirement for the minister to report annually on Canada's efforts to advance human rights internationally. We welcome this requirement as an important step to demonstrate how Canada is promoting and protecting human rights, but how we report is important.

- (1805)

*[Translation]*

It is essential to protect the safety and privacy of human rights activists. Canada's approach to supporting human rights activists is guided by the do no harm principle.

In its original form, the bill required the report to include a detailed list of the names and circumstances of the prisoners of conscience whom Canada was trying to help. Many witnesses told the committee that publishing such a list could have serious consequences, including causing undue harm to detainees or having unintended consequences on the delivery of consular services to Canadians.

*[English]*

Instead, the report would now protect those most vulnerable, and it would outline more broadly the measures taken by the government to support human rights defenders and prisoners of conscience internationally as part of Canada's foreign policy.

Second, to honour the life and work of Sergei Magnitsky, the committee agreed to rename Canada's existing sanctions laws. This would make Canada the first country to have Sergei Magnitsky laws with a total of three in the franchise: the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act, the first Sergei Magnitsky law; SE-MA, Sergei Magnitsky Law No. 2; and Bill C-219, Sergei Magnitsky Law No. 3.

Third, Bill C-219 seeks to expand and clarify the circumstances under which sanctions may be imposed, including in response to transnational repression. Committee amendments were adopted to further strengthen and expand Canada's legal basis for sanctions.

*[Translation]*

We have adopted not only a criterion for imposing sanctions in cases of transnational repression but also a broader criterion related to threats to peace, stability and democracy. This will enable the government to impose sanctions on those responsible for a wide variety of transnational crimes, including cybercrime, organized crime, arbitrary detention, threats to democracy and so on.

Fourth, Bill C-219 imposes mandatory timelines for the forfeiture and disposal of property seized under existing laws.

*[English]*

Fifth, we have increased and aligned evasion penalties, to be consistent throughout our existing legislation.

Finally, the committee removed elements of the bill in order to increase its effectiveness, reduce red tape and ensure the overall coherence of Canadian legislation. Simply put, these problematic provisions would not have improved Canada's ability to respond to human rights abuses.

*[Translation]*

In a world of growing uncertainty, Canada's core values continue to guide our government's foreign policy. We will always work to hold anyone to account who violates human rights, democracy or the rule of law.

In closing, I want to thank the member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman and my colleagues on the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development once again for the cross-party work that has made Bill C-219 a solid piece of legislation. By working together, we reaffirm Canada's leadership on human rights and send a clear message: Canada will never stand idly by or keep silent when confronted with attacks against human dignity.

*[English]*

By working together, we will continue to make sure that Canada can serve as a beacon in an uncertain world. Our government will continue to add to Canada's human rights legacy and will honour the sacrifices that have been made in fights against tyranny and oppression.

I look forward to seeing Bill C-219 implemented.

[Translation]

**Sameer Zuberi (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is an honour to rise today to speak in support of Bill C-219.

I also want to thank the member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman for introducing this bill, as well as the members of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development for their work.

• (1810)

[English]

We are here today to talk, first off, about a new and important update around the sanctions regime. At the same time, we are honouring an important figure in world history, Sergei Magnitsky, who was a brave soul and brave person who stood up to tyrants, who stood up to those who were abusing rights. He gave his life for that at the age of 37. We know that he was imprisoned and suffered grave mistreatment. Even after he died at 37 years of age, he was tried, the reasons for which just boggle the mind. The man had already lost his life and he was tried after the fact.

We are honouring Sergei Magnitsky, an important individual in world history. While thinking about his name, we can take his example and remember what he did. He challenged authority, he challenged injustice and he stood strong. That is what I would suggest we in this House all need to do.

This bill is an improvement from one that was previously deposited in a previous Parliament, and a number of fixes have come about. Before I get to that, though, it is important to note that 60% of the sanctions that Canada has implemented have manifested within the last four years. These sanctions have touched on a number of different themes and different subjects. They include sanctions against Russian officials due to the unjustified occupation and war in Ukraine. They include sanctions against Chinese officials for what is happening within the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. They include sanctions against West Bank settlers because of activities in the State of Palestine, West Bank. They include sanctions against the IRGC and Russian officials because of what the IRGC has done to its own people. There are others. These sanctions are an important signal to those who break international norms and abuse human rights and are a deterring mechanism so that anybody who abuses basic dignity and promotes grave violations knows they will face consequences.

Canada has always stood up for human rights. Within the international community, we are looked upon as a leading voice and are looked upon as a country that promotes the rules-based order. Therefore, this update put forth by the member opposite is an important update and is salutary.

It is important to note the people who have been working here in Canada and overseas on this. At the subcommittee on international human rights, we did a study on a particular aspect that relates to this legislation: transnational repression. We heard from a number of witnesses who themselves had been subject to transnational repression or were advocating on behalf of those who had been subject to transnational repression. They included Tibetans. They included Falun Gong and Falun Dafa advocates. They included Uyghurs. They included Hong Kongers, and others. We heard from

### *Private Members' Business*

those who have suffered repression from Iran's government and Russia, just to name a few countries.

All of those brave souls spoke about the different methods of transnational repression. They spoke about how they and their families were harassed and intimidated and how that happened both on-line and off-line, and said that anonymous people during important moments sought to intimidate and silence them. These people chose not to be silenced, though, like Sergei Magnitsky.

They have shared how challenging it is to be working in an environment where there is transnational repression and how important it is for us, as a country, to confront it, respond to it and address it. There are a number of ways in which we address it. One way is through our intelligence agencies and the RCMP, which are fully monitoring what is happening and ensuring that foreign actors are not involved in transnational repression or foreign interference. There are reports that can be made to the police and to the RCMP. While they are not perfect, they exist and they are a method to address this issue. The updated legislation we are addressing today is another method, because it would allow for sanctions to be administered when individuals are propagating transnational repression, whatever its form, be it in person, online or in any way.

I also want to speak about the importance of those who are raising their voice, not only here in Canada but overseas. Initially, when this legislation was deposited in the previous Parliament, it asked that we give details that would have compromised human rights defenders overseas. Thankfully, that has been fixed in this legislation by the foreign affairs committee. What happened is—

• (1815)

**Garnett Genuis:** We fixed that in the last Parliament.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès):** Order. This is not a conversation. The hon. member will have the opportunity to make his comments outside of the chamber.

The hon. member for Pierrefonds—Dollard can finish his speech.

**Sameer Zuberi:** Madam Speaker, thankfully, that has been fixed in this legislation, ensuring that the personal information of human rights defenders who are in grave situations would not be rendered public. In a previous version, the challenge was that this data would not be anonymized. Today, it would be anonymized and, therefore, a report can be made to Parliament. That is a very positive new addition.

Again, I want to underscore how important it is that we are working together to make this happen and that there has been some great work done by the foreign affairs committee to get to this point. I look forward to this legislature passing the bill and seeing it become law.

I also want to salute and thank everyone who stands up for human rights, be it here in Canada or overseas. They are an inspiration to us, and we should take the lesson they are giving us so that we can really defend what is good, proper and right.

### *Adjournment Proceedings*

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès):** I invite the hon. member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman to rise for his right of reply. He has five minutes.

**James Bezan:** Madam Speaker, I want to thank all my colleagues who participated in tonight's debate. I particularly want to thank the member for Stormont—Dundas—Glengarry for seconding the bill at third reading. He is our shadow minister for foreign affairs.

Our previous shadow minister for foreign affairs, the member for Wellington—Halton Hills North, was a huge asset in helping to get the bill through committee, making amendments and trying to negotiate compromise where necessary to get a better bill at the end of the day. There were some things that I wish were still in there but were gutted by the majority on committee, the Liberals.

I also want to recognize the member for Northumberland—Clarke, because in the last Parliament he brought forward a private member's bill called the international human rights act. Part of his bill is in the bill before us. It would require the minister to have an annual report on advocating for human rights, political prisoners and prisoners of conscience around the world.

I think it is also important to recognize the Minister of Foreign Affairs. It was with her support that we were able to get to all-party consensus on this private member's bill.

It is important that we recognize the efforts of a number of diaspora communities here in Canada that have been wanting these changes, have worked closely with me and my office for quite some time and have been the targets of transnational repression and foreign interference. I want to recognize the Hong Kong community; the Taiwanese community; Ukrainians; Belarusians; Tibetans; Russians for democracy; the Uyghurs, whom I have met with many times; members of the Falun Dafa; and the Burmese, Persian and of course the Iranian communities right across this country.

I also have to recognize and thank Ian Lynch from Integrity Initiatives International, which is leading the charge to establish an international anti-corruption court in The Hague. He has definitely had input in this.

We have also had great assistance from the Hon. Irwin Cotler and the Hon. John McKay. They have been supportive. They have been huge assets. They are people who have stood up for human rights around the world and have been backing the bill from the start.

Finally, we have to thank all the witnesses who appeared at committee, providing their expert testimony: Kate McInnes; Brandon Silver, who works with Irwin Cotler; Marcus Kolga, who has done so much in fighting for the Belarusian community and the Baltics as well, fighting against Russian aggression and corruption; and Bill Browder, who is the founder and CEO of Hermitage Capital Management. He is the one who hired Sergei Magnitsky, he is the one on whom the Russians committed the \$230 million tax fraud, and he is the one who has been advocating for Sergei Magnitsky sanctions, not just in Canada but in the U.K., the United States and around the world.

I also want to recognize the testimony from Vladimir Kara-Murza, who is the vice-president of Open Russia. He has been poisoned twice by the Kremlin, has been jailed twice by the Kremlin and continues to fight against Vladimir Putin, stand up for democracy and human rights and fight corruption in Russia and around the world.

There were many people behind the scenes, of course, including my staff and people we have worked with across party lines to make the bill possible.

By passing Bill C-219, we would be advancing human rights and standing up for our shared democratic values and the freedom that everyone needs to enjoy.

● (1820)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès):** The question is on the motion.

[Translation]

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

[English]

**James Bezan:** Madam Speaker, there has been discussion among all parties, and we are in agreement that the bill do now pass.

(Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed)

---

## 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):** Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to join in adjournment debates this evening.

I asked a question in May, before we adjourned for the summer, about microlooting and said the most popular talk show in Regina and across Saskatchewan, *The Evan Bray Show*, talked about whether it is okay to steal groceries or microloot at grocery stores because grocery prices are so high. I asked the minister that question. The answer I got back was not sufficient, in my opinion. She actually talked about day care when I was talking about the price of groceries. I think it is an important conversation because we are talking about the price of groceries and basically the affordability crisis that we are seeing right now across the country.

I think the hon. member for Whitby is going to answer this question, so I am going to make it short and sweet. I know he has a family. I have three kids, and my wife and I go grocery shopping. Have the member and his wife seen grocery prices go down over the last three years or go up?

**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.):** Madam Speaker, the hon. member for Regina—Lewvan and I have had lots of spirited debates in this House before, and I appreciate his question.

I do have a family. I have three daughters and a wife. I am very proud of them and very happy to support them. I do a lot of the grocery shopping in my family and, in fact, a lot of the cooking, which I enjoy very much.

The member opposite should be able to recognize the way household budgets work. People might save money on child care, save money on dental care, get a Canada child benefit cheque, get the groceries and essentials benefit or benefit from the income tax cut given to 22 million Canadians. There are a number of other programs, measures and benefits that our government has put in place.

By my estimate, for the average family of four in my riding of Whitby, and I am sure it is the same in the member opposite's riding, there is approximately \$30,000 a year of savings to the household budget. That is over a course of a year, so divide that by 12 months. It is a significant amount.

My family is a good example, but I think for many families across my riding, there are significant savings. That does not directly address the cost of groceries, which I acknowledge are a challenge for families, but with those costs decreasing, families on fixed incomes are able to afford the essentials and the things they need.

Let us be honest. The groceries and essentials benefit is specifically designed to increase the GST rebate in order to address the very issue the member opposite is pointing to. The national school food program is another example of how we are saving families money. It is essentially for children from lower-income families. In fact, it has universal access, and so any family whose kid is going to school and may not have the nutritional support they need from their household is able to access school lunches or breakfast programs all across the country. That is 400,000 more kids who are able to eat at school and get the sustenance they need to learn, grow and develop.

The member opposite voted against many of these measures. I am not sure how he can stand up and lecture us about the price of groceries when in fact he voted against the very supports we put in place as a government that affect household budgets. Remember, we cut tax on income, housing and fuel. We cut tax on new business investment, making Canada the most tax-competitive advanced economy in the entire world, by the way. That is the productivity mega deduction.

It is very hard for me to stand here and listen to the member opposite's question. I get that he wants to ask his question, but I think he should acknowledge the facts. With household budgets, when people can save money in one or two other places, it better enables them to afford the monthly costs of groceries and essentials.

● (1825)

**Warren Steinfelt:** Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Whitby, but he did not answer the question, because he does not

### *Adjournment Proceedings*

want to tell the actual truth about what is going on with grocery prices. He is kind of channelling his inner Jean Chrétien: A proof is a proof.

The member talked about child care. Well, if a person is lucky enough to hit the lottery and get a government-subsidized child care spot, they are saving that money, but for everyone across Saskatchewan, it is actually called a child care wasteland because there are so few spots. In Saskatchewan, 30% to 40% of the people are waiting for that subsidized child care spot. They are not saving the money this guy is talking about. It is actually ridiculous.

Also, I have friends who have kids in child care now, and because the money does not actually cover the cost to hire people and to feed the kids, they are charging parents another \$100 or \$200 to help cover the cost. Parents are paying more out of their pocket because the money the government has given for the day care spots does not cover the cost it is supposed to, for those children to get the care they want, so I—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès):** The member is out of time.

The hon. parliamentary secretary has the floor.

**Ryan Turnbull:** Madam Speaker, the hon. member for Regina—Lewvan should hold his provincial government accountable to the agreements that it signed with the federal government.

We transferred significant amounts of federal taxpayer dollars to every province and territory in the country in order to expand the number of child care spots. We are committed to child care because we know it works. It is a great policy. It increases productivity in the economy. It increases the rate at which parents return to work. It increases the productivity and labour market participation of women in particular, which is a great advancement for our country. The highest participation rate of women in our history is the result of that specific program.

For an average family in my riding, do members know how much it costs for child care? It is \$1,800. That price has come down to \$410 per month for anyone who can get a child care spot. There are a significant number of people saving \$1,400 a month. That is a mortgage payment for many—

● (1830)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès):** The hon. member for Brandon—Souris.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

## FINANCE

**Grant Jackson (Brandon—Souris, CPC):** Madam Speaker, when the Liberals first announced their costly credit card budget last fall, Conservatives asked where their platform commitment to spend less and invest more went. Then, when the Prime Minister announced that he planned to split operating and capital spending in the Liberal budget, the alarm bells started to go off. Canadians do not get to split their credit card spending into different categories and pretend they owe less money. The Prime Minister should not get to do that either.

Since then, the Parliamentary Budget Officer has found contradictions in how the Liberals classify spending, making it harder to determine whether they are actually meeting their own fiscal targets. The Prime Minister claims that they are ahead of their targets, but the PBO projects that the Liberals will not balance their operating budget until 2029 or 2030, a year later than originally promised.

The question is simple. Does the government still stand by its promise to balance the operating budget by 2028-29? If not, who is misinformed, the Prime Minister or the Parliamentary Budget Officer?

**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.):** Madam Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to stand up and talk about best practices in fiscal management. I think our government has done a great thing in having a capital budgeting framework and splitting out operational from capital spending so that our capital budgeting framework can help support capital formation in the economy.

The members opposite should agree with the fact that investment that is strategic in revenue generation for our economy creates an investment supercycle and will create a virtuous circle of investment and growth in the economy. Growth begets growth. We get growth in the economy, higher productivity and higher wages, which we have seen every month that the government has been in power. Wages have outpaced inflation. Per capita GDP growth has been up as well. We had the highest quarterly GDP growth in the G7. The member opposite does not seem to like to hear those statistics.

For ages in the House, maybe before the member joined us in the House, we heard Conservatives talk about GDP per capita as being the number one indicator of economic health in the country. We now have that, and that is great. As to whether we are going to close the gap in terms of balancing the operational budget, I will answer the member directly: Yes, we will.

**Grant Jackson:** Madam Speaker, the member took a very long time to get to that answer. I do not need to address the litany of false things that he put on the record. He did not address the question about whether the Parliamentary Budget Officer or the Prime Minister is misinformed. They are saying two different things about the fiscal outlook for the government's budget and spending habits.

Which is it? Does the member disagree with the Prime Minister, or does he think the Parliamentary Budget Officer is wrong in the statements that he is putting out there about the financial path that the government is on?

**Ryan Turnbull:** Madam Speaker, let me correct the member opposite first. The Parliamentary Budget Officer is a woman, not a man. It is Annette Ryan, and she is doing a wonderful job. I believe highly in the work of the Parliamentary Budget Officer. The function of that office is very important to our democracy.

I cannot tell the member whether she is right. All I can say is that she is basing her projections on the information that she has, and they are not the most current projections of the federal government. Obviously, budget 2026 is coming before the House sometime this fall, and the member opposite will see the update on how our government is progressing toward one of our key fiscal anchors, which is to balance the operating budget. This is key because our government has conducted a comprehensive expenditure review, saving \$60 billion over five years. That is part of the process of how we will balance the operating budget over the next two years.

## FINANCE

**Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to be able to address the House tonight and highlight the Conservative push for more flexible parental leave. We recognize and celebrate those who are doing the hard work of having and raising children, and also, we note the sad fact that many people report in polls that they would like to have more children than for whatever reason their circumstances have allowed them to have. The self-reported desired number of children in Canada is much higher than the number of children people are actually having, and I think there are a number of factors contributing to that.

One of them is that it is so much harder to find a job and afford a home today that young people are hitting some of those milestones associated with starting life in a family much later, which leaves them with less time available to live out some of these personal goals, but also, the parental leave system simply has not kept up with the reality of more people working and also of more flexible work being available. Today it is much more possible for people to, for instance, continue working part time or take more flexible leave from home, because technology allows remote work, flexible work, odd hours work, etc.

This is a reality that I see among many people around, including in my own family. My wife is a doctor, she has a medical practice and she sees her patients virtually from our home office at flexible hours that work for our family and that work for her. This is not that unique an example. There are many people doing this, but the parental leave system has simply not kept up.

In a constructive spirit, Conservatives have put forward constructive proposals for more flexible parental leave, and we have asked the government to consider adopting these proposals. I am following up on a question I asked about this earlier. So far we have not heard from the government yet on whether it wants to adopt these proposals. Again, we are putting them forward in a positive, hopeful, constructive spirit, in hopes that the government will embrace these good ideas and consider other ones to make parental leave more flexible.

We are proposing, first of all, flexible parental leave, allowing parents to pause and then resume their leave, provided that this pausing and resuming stays within an 18-month window. This is similar to the existing model in Quebec. In Quebec, parents are able to pause and then resume their leave, which means potentially that if someone is in more seasonal work, if their spouse is able to take some time off with the children or if they really need that extra money for a period of time, they can return to work, but then resume their leave. This is valuable for individuals, but also can be valuable for employers if they want to offer employees the opportunity to return to work for a period of time when they are very busy. I can think of a lot of different kinds of professions where there are particularly busy seasons.

We are calling for that interruptibility, which currently is available in Quebec, to be available in the rest of the country as well.

Second, we are calling for learning on leave to be available, so that a person would have the clear ability to take courses and to study. Likely from home or in a flexible way, they would be able to take courses or advance their studies while they are on parental leave.

Third is a caregiving exception to EI parental leave benefit clawbacks. This would allow somebody who is on leave watching their own child to also offer paid child care to neighbours, family members, etc. Effectively, if someone is caring for their own children, they could also at the same time care for someone else's children and be paid to do that without facing the kind of benefit clawbacks that would otherwise apply.

These are three reasonable proposals that would have other benefits that would allow people to develop themselves professionally. Increasing the availability of local and flexible child care would create opportunities for more economic vitality, including for self-employed individuals, by allowing that pausing and resuming to respond to the natural cycles that happen within families as well as within work.

These are constructive proposals, and we would love to hear if the government is interested in adopting all or some of them going forward.

● (1835)

**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.):** Madam Speaker, it is great to be here this evening. We are always interested in constructive proposals. What is interesting is that the member opposite's question has nothing to do with the question that

### *Adjournment Proceedings*

has been put on notice, but that is okay. I will answer the question that was put on notice anyway.

In an increasingly fragmented and uncertain world, our government is concentrating on what it can control, which is maintaining fiscal sustainability while making targeted high-impact investments in Canadians and the economy. That is responsible leadership. It means investing in a brighter future while protecting Canada's fiscal strength, the lowest net debt-to-GDP ratio in the G7, a sound fiscal position and a clear path to long-term sustainability.

In fact, by investing strategically and responsibly today, we are positioning Canadians to benefit from a stronger tomorrow, and at the same time, our fiscally disciplined approach—

**Garnett Genuis:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès):** I have an interruption to the hon. parliament secretary.

There are no points of order in the adjournment debates, but this is just a reminder to the hon. member that his question had absolutely nothing to do with the question that was on the Order Paper.

**Garnett Genuis:** I am sorry. My question did.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès):** No, it did not.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

**Ryan Turnbull:** Madam Speaker, the member opposite's question on the Notice Paper was about apprentices. It was about Canada facing unemployment. It was about youth. It was about the budget and EI premiums. It was about taxes on jobs. It was about a jobs crisis. That is about it.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès):** I will reread the question:

Mr. Speaker, those apprentices desperately need projects to go forward that they can work on.

Canada faces an unemployment crisis, most severe among youth, yet this Liberal costly credit card budget plans further increases to EI premiums. Increasing the tax on jobs now would make it harder for businesses to create jobs and would make the jobs crisis even worse. Why are the Liberals paying for their costly credit card budget with further tax increases on jobs?

That is the question that was put on notice.

● (1840)

**Ryan Turnbull:** Madam Speaker, that is the question I prepared to answer, not the member opposite's suggestions. Although I do not discount good-faith suggestions and positive proposals that could be considered by the government at a later date, they are not what I was anticipating answering to tonight. Therefore, I will speak to the fact that our fiscally disciplined approach is helping to lower everyday costs for Canadians.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

Budget 2025 marked a tactical shift in the government's management of public finances. That plan is focused on expanding federal capital spending to mobilize investment in the country while maintaining fiscal discipline. Our plan is built on a bedrock of fiscal responsibility not for its own sake, but to create the capacity to invest for the long-term future to ensure our economic strength and greater self-reliance. That is consistent with our approach and the approach in the spring economic update, which was also guided by the government's two fiscal anchors. These are balancing operating spending with revenues by 2028-29 and maintaining a declining deficit-to-GDP ratio.

Our plan is working. As recently announced by the Prime Minister, the government is on track to balance the operating budget in 2027-28, one year ahead of schedule.

We are committed to the disciplined implementation of the efficiency measures in budget 2025. This includes a comprehensive expenditure review, which was proposed to save \$60 billion over five years. That comprehensive expenditure review is also returning the size of the public service to a more sustainable level through early retirement incentives, workforce adjustments and attrition. With implementation well under way, the focus is now turning toward targeted, ongoing, horizontal reviews, beginning with efforts to rein in spending on external management and other consulting services. These challenging but necessary actions will continue to support our objective of spending less to invest more in Canadians.

In budget 2025, we also outlined a capital budgeting framework. This framework has distinguished day-to-day operational spending from long-term investments that strengthen our economy. Importantly, this framework is designed to enhance, not replace, existing financial reporting. It also creates further transparency for all opposition parties and all parties in this House.

**Garnett Genuis:** Madam Speaker, I am trying to track down the miscommunication here. It is a good-faith one in any event, and we will have to get to the bottom of it later. I look forward to returning to press the government more on the issue of parental leave, because it seems that an email I received is different. The date of the

original question is different from what the Table has. We will track that down.

I want to firmly disagree with everything the member just said about falsely claiming that the government is doing well on the economy.

I want to encourage the member and other members to consider the important parental leave proposals we have made. I suppose I will have additional opportunities to bring them back to the House and, again, constructively propose that we can work together to make parental leave more flexible for parents to incorporate the modern realities of how flexible work is more possible and available, especially in the technological environment we are now in.

**Ryan Turnbull:** Madam Speaker, in fact, our government is doing well when it comes to the economy. The member opposite is obviously fully able to disagree with me, but I will state for the record that our government is getting results for Canadians. There are 217,000-plus net new jobs in the economy and the highest GDP growth in quarter two in the G7. We have also seen an almost two-decade record high in foreign direct investment. The Prime Minister's investment summit garnered interest from investors around the world and got domestic investors to commit almost \$500 billion in new investment in our economy.

Those things did not happen by accident. They happened because our government has put in place a plan, a framework and a set of policies that are stimulating our economy, has a capital budgeting framework that is fiscally responsible and is making those generational investments in our economic strength and growth for the prosperity of all Canadians.

● (1845)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès):** 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 6:45 p.m.)





# CONTENTS

Thursday, October 8, 2026

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### Commissioner of Official Languages

The Speaker ..... 10273

### Information Commissioner

The Speaker ..... 10273

### Criminal Code

Roberts ..... 10273

Bill C-292. Introduction and first reading ..... 10273

(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed) ..... 10273

### Petitions

#### National Gallery of Canada

May ..... 10273

#### Weather and Climate Monitoring

Johns ..... 10274

#### The Environment

Johns ..... 10274

#### Firearms

Arnold ..... 10274

### Questions on the Order Paper

Lamoureux ..... 10274

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

### Business of Supply

#### Opposition Motion—Affordability Crisis

Poilievre ..... 10274

Motion ..... 10274

Lamoureux ..... 10276

Simard ..... 10276

Gill (Windsor West) ..... 10276

Roberts ..... 10276

Lamoureux ..... 10278

Johns ..... 10278

Cody ..... 10278

May ..... 10278

Lamoureux ..... 10279

Deltell ..... 10281

Bonin ..... 10281

Gill (Windsor West) ..... 10281

May ..... 10282

Arnold ..... 10282

Clark ..... 10282

Ste-Marie ..... 10282

St-Pierre ..... 10284

Deltell ..... 10284

Bardeesy ..... 10284

Simard ..... 10285

Lamoureux ..... 10286

Deltell ..... 10286

Ste-Marie ..... 10287

Leslie ..... 10287

St-Pierre ..... 10288

Epp ..... 10289

Simard ..... 10289

Church ..... 10289

Ste-Marie ..... 10291

Davidson ..... 10291

Nguyen ..... 10291

Gill (Windsor West) ..... 10291

Jackson ..... 10291

Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles) ..... 10293

Bonin ..... 10293

Davidson ..... 10293

Petitpas Taylor ..... 10294

Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles) ..... 10294

Dalton ..... 10295

Bonin ..... 10296

Sgro ..... 10296

Vis ..... 10296

Lamoureux ..... 10297

Bonin ..... 10298

Kirkland ..... 10298

Gerretsen ..... 10300

Dalton ..... 10300

Petitpas Taylor ..... 10300

Dhillon ..... 10301

Davidson ..... 10302

St-Pierre ..... 10302

Dalton ..... 10302

Lamoureux ..... 10302

McPherson ..... 10303

St-Pierre ..... 10304

Davidson ..... 10304

Lamoureux ..... 10304

### Privilege

#### Alleged Premature Disclosure of Bill C-40

Davies (Vancouver Kingsway) ..... 10305

### Business of Supply

#### Opposition Motion—Affordability Crisis

Motion ..... 10305

Cobena ..... 10305

Gerretsen ..... 10306

Patzer ..... 10307

Lamoureux ..... 10307

Hardy ..... 10307

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

|                                                      |       |
|------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| <b>Ron Schlegel</b>                                  |       |
| Louis .....                                          | 10308 |
| <b>Employment</b>                                    |       |
| Bailey .....                                         | 10308 |
| <b>Norwood Fall Fair</b>                             |       |
| Harrison .....                                       | 10308 |
| <b>Proposed Toronto Homeless Shelter</b>             |       |
| Baber .....                                          | 10308 |
| <b>Latin American and Hispanic Day on the Hill</b>   |       |
| Schiefke .....                                       | 10309 |
| <b>New Travel Routes in London</b>                   |       |
| Holman .....                                         | 10309 |
| <b>ParticipACTION Community Challenge</b>            |       |
| Lavoie .....                                         | 10309 |
| <b>Ken Krawetz</b>                                   |       |
| Steinley .....                                       | 10309 |
| <b>Anne-Claire Poirier</b>                           |       |
| Champoux .....                                       | 10310 |
| <b>Latin American and Hispanic Day on the Hill</b>   |       |
| Sgro .....                                           | 10310 |
| <b>Alberta Referendum</b>                            |       |
| McKenzie .....                                       | 10310 |
| <b>Firefighters' National Memorial Day</b>           |       |
| Chi .....                                            | 10310 |
| <b>Alberta Referendum</b>                            |       |
| Morin .....                                          | 10310 |
| <b>Mouvement d'implication francophone à Orléans</b> |       |
| Lalonde .....                                        | 10311 |
| <b>Alberta Referendum</b>                            |       |
| Lloyd .....                                          | 10311 |
| <b>Latin American and Hispanic Day on the Hill</b>   |       |
| Greaves .....                                        | 10311 |

## ORAL QUESTIONS

|                    |       |
|--------------------|-------|
| <b>Finance</b>     |       |
| Brassard .....     | 10311 |
| MacKinnon .....    | 10312 |
| Brassard .....     | 10312 |
| Provost .....      | 10312 |
| <b>The Economy</b> |       |
| Hallan .....       | 10312 |
| Champagne .....    | 10312 |
| Hallan .....       | 10312 |
| Champagne .....    | 10312 |
| Vien .....         | 10313 |
| Provost .....      | 10313 |
| Vien .....         | 10313 |

|               |       |
|---------------|-------|
| Provost ..... | 10313 |
|---------------|-------|

## Government Priorities

|                 |       |
|-----------------|-------|
| Normandin ..... | 10313 |
| MacKinnon ..... | 10313 |
| Normandin ..... | 10313 |
| Champagne ..... | 10313 |
| Ste-Marie ..... | 10313 |
| MacKinnon ..... | 10314 |

## Public Services and Procurement

|                |       |
|----------------|-------|
| Paul-Hus ..... | 10314 |
| Fuhr .....     | 10314 |
| Paul-Hus ..... | 10314 |
| Fuhr .....     | 10314 |
| Kibble .....   | 10314 |
| Fuhr .....     | 10314 |
| Kibble .....   | 10314 |
| Fuhr .....     | 10315 |
| Bezan .....    | 10315 |
| Romanado ..... | 10315 |
| Bezan .....    | 10315 |
| Romanado ..... | 10315 |

## The Economy

|                  |       |
|------------------|-------|
| Deltell .....    | 10315 |
| Desrochers ..... | 10315 |

## Climate Change

|                 |       |
|-----------------|-------|
| Bonin .....     | 10315 |
| Provost .....   | 10316 |
| Bonin .....     | 10316 |
| MacKinnon ..... | 10316 |

## Housing

|                |       |
|----------------|-------|
| Mantle .....   | 10316 |
| McKelvie ..... | 10316 |
| Mantle .....   | 10316 |
| McKelvie ..... | 10316 |

## Employment

|                 |       |
|-----------------|-------|
| Jansen .....    | 10316 |
| Champagne ..... | 10317 |
| Jansen .....    | 10317 |
| Hodgson .....   | 10317 |

## Housing

|                |       |
|----------------|-------|
| Ho .....       | 10317 |
| McKelvie ..... | 10317 |

## Agriculture and Agri-Food

|                            |       |
|----------------------------|-------|
| Fancy .....                | 10317 |
| MacDonald (Malpeque) ..... | 10317 |

## Public Safety

|                      |       |
|----------------------|-------|
| Duncan .....         | 10317 |
| Anandasangaree ..... | 10318 |
| Duncan .....         | 10318 |
| Anandasangaree ..... | 10318 |

## Democratic Institutions

|                      |       |
|----------------------|-------|
| Cooper .....         | 10318 |
| Anandasangaree ..... | 10318 |

|                      |       |
|----------------------|-------|
| Cooper .....         | 10318 |
| Anandasangaree ..... | 10318 |
| Hardy .....          | 10318 |
| Anandasangaree ..... | 10318 |
| Hardy .....          | 10319 |
| Anandasangaree ..... | 10319 |

#### **Fisheries and Oceans**

|                |       |
|----------------|-------|
| Rowe .....     | 10319 |
| Thompson ..... | 10319 |
| Small .....    | 10319 |
| Thompson ..... | 10319 |
| Small .....    | 10319 |
| Thompson ..... | 10320 |

#### **Health**

|              |       |
|--------------|-------|
| Sari .....   | 10320 |
| Michel ..... | 10320 |

#### **The Economy**

|                                                      |       |
|------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Goodridge .....                                      | 10320 |
| van Koeverden .....                                  | 10320 |
| Goodridge .....                                      | 10320 |
| Fragiskatos .....                                    | 10320 |
| Waugh .....                                          | 10320 |
| Belanger (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River) ..... | 10321 |

#### **The Environment**

|                |       |
|----------------|-------|
| Miedema .....  | 10321 |
| Thompson ..... | 10321 |

#### **Justice**

|              |       |
|--------------|-------|
| Au .....     | 10321 |
| Fraser ..... | 10321 |

#### **Health**

|              |       |
|--------------|-------|
| Johns .....  | 10321 |
| Michel ..... | 10321 |

#### **Fisheries and Oceans**

|                |       |
|----------------|-------|
| May .....      | 10321 |
| Thompson ..... | 10322 |

### **GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

#### **Building Canada Strong Act**

|                                                            |       |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Bill C-39. Second reading .....                            | 10322 |
| Motion agreed to .....                                     | 10323 |
| (Bill read the second time and referred to a committee) .. | 10323 |

#### **Business of the House**

|                          |       |
|--------------------------|-------|
| Scheer .....             | 10324 |
| MacKinnon .....          | 10324 |
| Motion .....             | 10324 |
| (Motion agreed to) ..... | 10324 |

#### **Business of Supply**

##### **Opposition Motion—Affordability Crisis**

|                |       |
|----------------|-------|
| Motion .....   | 10325 |
| Hardy .....    | 10325 |
| Watchorn ..... | 10326 |

|                                                      |       |
|------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Thériault .....                                      | 10326 |
| Bélanger (Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt) ..... | 10326 |
| Blois .....                                          | 10326 |

#### **Message from the Senate**

|                                                 |       |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------|
| The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater) ..... | 10327 |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------|

#### **Business of Supply**

##### **Opposition Motion—Affordability Crisis**

|                           |       |
|---------------------------|-------|
| Motion .....              | 10327 |
| Chenette .....            | 10327 |
| Aboultaif .....           | 10328 |
| Larouche .....            | 10328 |
| Ntumba .....              | 10329 |
| Johns .....               | 10329 |
| Blois .....               | 10329 |
| Kibble .....              | 10331 |
| Beaulieu .....            | 10331 |
| Chenette .....            | 10331 |
| Gallant .....             | 10332 |
| Lamoureux .....           | 10333 |
| Johns .....               | 10333 |
| Thériault .....           | 10334 |
| Gill (Windsor West) ..... | 10334 |
| Bailey .....              | 10334 |
| Lamoureux .....           | 10335 |
| Larouche .....            | 10336 |
| Gallant .....             | 10336 |
| Housefather .....         | 10336 |
| Kelly .....               | 10338 |
| Thériault .....           | 10338 |
| Johns .....               | 10338 |
| Watchorn .....            | 10338 |
| Battiste .....            | 10339 |

### **ROYAL ASSENT**

|                                                 |       |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------|
| The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater) ..... | 10340 |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------|

### **GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

#### **Business of Supply**

##### **Opposition Motion—Affordability Crisis**

|                                                      |       |
|------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Motion .....                                         | 10340 |
| Tesser Derksen .....                                 | 10340 |
| Battiste .....                                       | 10340 |
| Bélanger (Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt) ..... | 10340 |
| Beaulieu .....                                       | 10340 |
| Bélanger (Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt) ..... | 10341 |
| Division on motion deferred .....                    | 10342 |

### **PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

#### **Sergei Magnitsky International Anti-Corruption and Human Rights Act**

|                                |       |
|--------------------------------|-------|
| Bill C-219. Report stage ..... | 10342 |
| Bezan .....                    | 10342 |

|                                                             |       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Motion for concurrence .....                                | 10342 |
| (Motion agreed to) .....                                    | 10342 |
| Third reading .....                                         | 10342 |
| Fortier .....                                               | 10344 |
| Aboultaif .....                                             | 10345 |
| Beaulieu .....                                              | 10345 |
| Nguyen .....                                                | 10345 |
| Beaulieu .....                                              | 10347 |
| Fortier .....                                               | 10347 |
| Zuberi .....                                                | 10349 |
| (Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed) ... | 10350 |

## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

### The Economy

|                |       |
|----------------|-------|
| Steinley ..... | 10350 |
| Turnbull ..... | 10351 |

### Finance

|                |       |
|----------------|-------|
| Jackson .....  | 10352 |
| Turnbull ..... | 10352 |

### Finance

|                |       |
|----------------|-------|
| Genuis .....   | 10352 |
| Turnbull ..... | 10353 |



Published under the authority of the Speaker of  
the House of Commons

---

### **SPEAKER'S PERMISSION**

---

The proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees are hereby made available to provide greater public access. The parliamentary privilege of the House of Commons to control the publication and broadcast of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees is nonetheless reserved. All copyrights therein are also reserved.

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the Copyright Act. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the Copyright Act.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

---

Also available on the House of Commons website at the following address: <https://www.ourcommons.ca>

Publié en conformité de l'autorité  
du Président de la Chambre des communes

---

### **PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT**

---

Les délibérations de la Chambre des communes et de ses comités sont mises à la disposition du public pour mieux le renseigner. La Chambre conserve néanmoins son privilège parlementaire de contrôler la publication et la diffusion des délibérations et elle possède tous les droits d'auteur sur celles-ci.

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la Loi sur le droit d'auteur. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre des communes.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la Loi sur le droit d'auteur.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

---

Aussi disponible sur le site Web de la Chambre des communes à l'adresse suivante :  
<https://www.noscommunes.ca>