



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

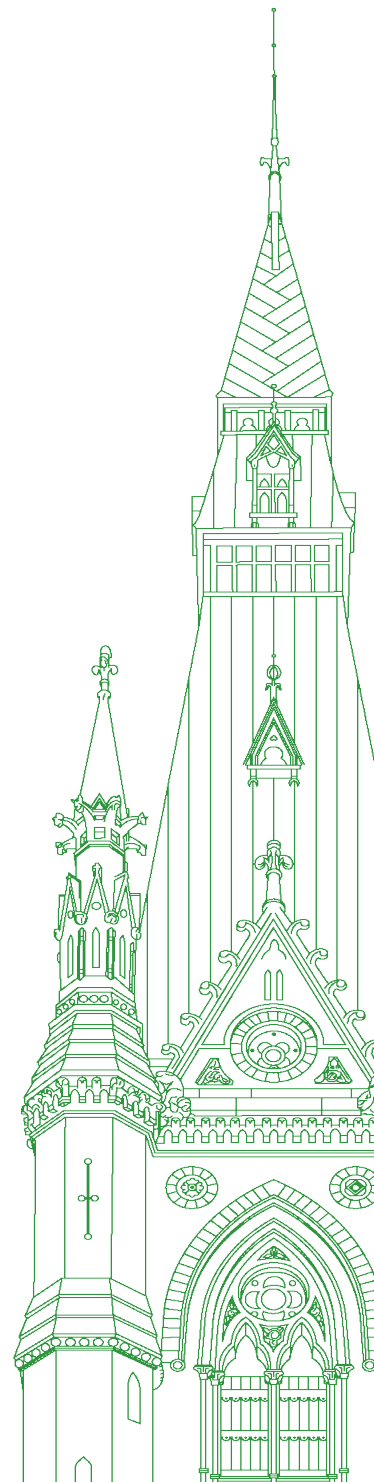
45th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

House of Commons Debates

Official Report
(Hansard)

Volume 152 No. 152
Wednesday, October 21, 2026

Speaker: The Honourable Francis Scarpaleggia



CONTENTS

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

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, October 21, 2026

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayer

● (1400)

[English]

The Speaker: The hon. member for Kitchener South—Hespeler will lead us today in the singing of the national anthem.

[Members sang the national anthem]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

GLOBAL DIGNITY DAY

Giovanna Mingarelli (Prescott—Russell—Cumberland, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I rise to mark Global Dignity Day. Dignity is something we all share regardless of our background, gender, beliefs, language or circumstances. We all deserve to be treated with respect and kindness. Now more than ever, we need a kindness revolution. In a world that can sometimes feel divided, our common humanity is stronger than what sets us apart.

I am proud that Prescott—Russell—Cumberland is leading the charge. During national Kindness Week this year, municipalities across our compassionate riding came together to show that kindness matters. In Russell, kindness meant bowling with firefighters and kids, and in Casselman and in Clarence-Rockland, it meant spending time with seniors. In Alfred and Plantagenet and in Hawkesbury, kindness meant sharing acts of kindness with the community.

These acts remind us that kindness starts with each and every one of us and that every gesture makes a difference. I wish all Canadians a happy Global Dignity Day.

* * *

SPECIAL OLYMPICS SUDBURY NATIONAL TEAM

Jim Bélanger (Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the Special Olympics Sudbury national team. Last week, I had the opportunity to meet with some of the athletes from the team, who proudly represented our community at the 2026 Canada Summer Games in Medicine Hat. I would like to extend my congratulations to Josée and Danie,

who brought home gold medals. I want to commend Jesse for earning both a silver medal and a bronze medal, an impressive achievement. I would also like to give a special shout-out to Eric and Renée, who finished fourth and fifth in the bocce competition. A special thanks goes to Lynne Houle, community coordinator for Special Olympics Sudbury, whose leadership and 23 years of dedicated service have helped countless athletes reach their goals and achieve their full potential.

I congratulate all the athletes, coaches and volunteers once again on their outstanding achievements.

* * *

GREEN GABLES ELEMENTARY

Sean Casey (Charlottetown, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there are few stories more closely associated with Prince Edward Island than *Anne of Green Gables*. It is fitting, then, that a new school, Green Gables Elementary, in Charlottetown's East Royalty area will carry that connection forward for another generation of island students.

Lucy Maud Montgomery's stories have introduced millions of readers around the world to the beauty, character and spirit of Prince Edward Island. That legacy lives on today, not only in our books and tourism, but in our schools, in our communities and most importantly in the young Islanders who are growing up there.

I want to congratulate the students, educators and community members who will make Green Gables Elementary a part of Charlottetown's future. May it be a place where generations of young Islanders learn, grow and perhaps find a little of their Anne Shirley spirit.

* * *

● (1405)

SMALL BUSINESS WEEK

Richard Bragdon (Tobique—Mactaquac, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this week is Small Business Week in Canada, and I want to recognize the hard-working entrepreneurs and small business owners across Tobique—Mactaquac, Atlantic Canada and the nation.

Statements by Members

One of the greatest privileges I have had of serving as a member of Parliament has been visiting small businesses throughout my region and witnessing first-hand the perseverance of all those who helped build them. These men and women do more than just create jobs. They support families, build communities and go above and beyond for their neighbours.

Canadians believe that hard work should pay off. On this side of the House, we will continue fighting for lower taxes and reduced red tape, and to give entrepreneurs the much-needed freedom to invest, hire and grow.

This Small Business Week, let us recognize the vital role these businesses play in our communities and do our part by buying and supporting local whenever possible. I thank them for being willing to make the sacrifices necessary, taking risks and dreaming big despite overwhelming odds. On behalf of a grateful nation, we say thanks. They helped to build this country, and they will be key to this country's comeback.

* * *

NATIONAL MILITARY CEMETERY

Hon. Mona Fortier (Ottawa—Vanier—Gloucester, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the National Military Cemetery of Canada is located at the Beechwood Cemetery in Ottawa—Vanier—Gloucester.

[Translation]

Every year, hundreds of Canadians gather at this historic site on Remembrance Day to pay tribute to the courage and ultimate sacrifice of the men and women who served our country.

Mr. Speaker, did you know that you can visit the Canadian Forces Artists Program Group 10 exhibition until December 6?

The artists who contributed to this 25th exhibit at the Beechwood Cemetery use art to share the deeper understanding they gained of the realities of military service, military operations and the duty to remember after being given access to Canadian Armed Forces personnel and activities.

[English]

Following the tragedy that occurred last week in Wainwright, let us remember the importance of honouring those who serve our country with courage and dedication. Together, let us continue to preserve their memory and pass on their stories for future generations.

We will remember them.

* * *

2026 POPPY CAMPAIGN

John Brassard (Barrie South—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this Friday, I will be joining veterans and their families, Canadian Armed Forces members, politicians and volunteers in the community as we launch central Ontario's 2026 poppy campaign at the Barrie Legion. This year's campaign is especially significant, as it marks the Legion's 100th anniversary.

From October 24 to November 11, Canadians will once again wear the poppy to honour those who served our country, those who

continue to serve and those who made the ultimate sacrifice as we remember them in this life after they have passed on to the next. As we gather, we do so with heavy hearts following the tragic loss of four members of the Canadian Armed Forces at CFB Wainwright. Our thoughts will be with their families, friends and fellow service members, as well as with those recovering from injuries.

In John 15:13, Jesus says, "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends." I encourage everyone to wear a poppy, support their local Legion, attend a Remembrance Day ceremony and take a moment to reflect on the rights and freedoms that our men and women in uniform have given us in laying down their lives. Let us commit to defending those rights and freedoms with everything we have.

* * *

RECOGNITION OF FUNDRAISING EXCELLENCE

Jessica Fancy (South Shore—St. Margarets, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize two remarkable young Nova Scotians who have gone the distance for causes that matter.

Landon Smith, a marathon runner and volunteer firefighter from Cape Sable Island, ran 804 kilometres from The Hawk to Meat Cove in just 14 days this summer. He ran for Autism Nova Scotia and its summer camps and helped raise \$65,000. Inspired by his autistic nephew, Landon turned a personal connection into meaningful support for Canadian families.

Darcy Eygun, from Bedford, ran 1,000 kilometres across Nova Scotia, raising money and awareness this summer for Feed Nova Scotia. I completed a 25-kilometre leg with him.

These young men remind us that leadership is defined not by our age or our title, but by a willingness to act for others. They have shown determination, compassion and community spirit in what they have accomplished.

I ask all members to join me in congratulating Landon and Darcy for turning every kilometre into a powerful message of hope and generosity.

* * *

• (1410)

[Translation]

FOOD SECURITY

Eric Lefebvre (Richmond—Arthabaska—des-Sources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the affordability crisis is spiralling out of control in Quebec. Even workers are struggling to feed their families.

According to Hunger Count 2026, which was published today by Food Banks Canada, food banks in Quebec are responding to over 3.2 million requests for food assistance every month, an increase of nearly 5%. What is even more troubling is that 23% of the recipients are employed. We are talking about Quebeckers who work and pay their bills but who cannot afford groceries anymore. In Montreal, half of the organizations say they have had to reduce the size of their food hampers so that they could feed more people.

There are real people behind these numbers: parents who are skipping meals to keep their kids fed, children who are going to school with an empty lunch box, and seniors who are struggling to put food on the table because of inflation. In a country as rich as Canada, no one should have to choose between putting a roof over their head and putting food on the table. Quebeckers need real action.

* * *

NATIONAL EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS WEEK

Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, since this week is National Early Childhood Educators Week, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who support our little ones as they make their first discoveries.

Day after day, they nurture our children's emotions, encourage their curiosity, and help them find their place in the group. Behind every story told, behind every child comforted, there is heart, dedication and, above all, a very, very, very deep well of patience.

Whether in private day care, home-based care, or a child care centre, a proud legacy of the Parti Québécois that significantly advanced gender equality, these professionals use their expertise to provide children with a solid foundation for life. Above all, parents know they can entrust their precious little ones to them with complete peace of mind.

On behalf of the families in my riding, the Bloc Québécois and, I am sure, all my colleagues in the House, I would like to thank all early childhood educators. On a personal note, I would like to thank Michèle and Sonia for taking care of my little boy every day. I thank them for the role they play, perhaps the most fundamental one of all, in helping to shape the Quebec of tomorrow.

* * *

[English]

MANITOBA ISLAMIC ASSOCIATION

Hon. Terry Duguid (Winnipeg South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, 50 years ago, a small group of Muslim families opened Manitoba's first mosque on Hazelwood Avenue in Winnipeg, now known as the Pioneer Mosque. The community grew, and the Manitoba Islamic Association opened the Winnipeg Grand Mosque on Waverley Street in 2007. I remember people wondering why it was built so far out of town. Today, it stands at the heart of the thriving neighbourhood of Waverley West in Winnipeg South, serving thousands in Manitoba's growing Muslim community.

My friendships with families like the El Tassis and the Zeids go back decades. Through Ramadan Iftars, community gatherings and my work helping families reunite in Canada, those friendships have

grown manyfold. The MIA continues to build bridges of understanding, welcoming neighbours of every faith to its open houses and other community events.

I thank Manitoba's Muslim community for their friendship, their trust and their tremendous contributions to our province, and I congratulate them on 50 remarkable years.

* * *

FOOD SECURITY

Kelly DeRidder (Kitchener Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada's food banks saw 2.36 million visits in March alone, up 117% since 2019. In Waterloo region, one in nine families relies on food banks just to get by.

Waterloo businessman Jim Balsillie donated an extraordinary \$4.5 million to our local food bank. That was an incredible act of kindness and generosity. The fact that our food bank still needs more support, despite a donation of that size, shows just how great the need has become.

It is clear that the Liberal government is failing to acknowledge the affordability crisis or ensure stability within our market. Until these things change, it is only going to get worse. Canadians need to be able to put warm food on the table without relying on a food bank. The Liberal government must react to the needs of everyday Canadians.

* * *

WORLD POLIO DAY

Brendan Hanley (Yukon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as we commemorate World Polio Day this week, we reflect on the extraordinary achievement of getting so close to eliminating polio while recognizing the hurdles ahead. Polio remains endemic in only two countries, but the challenges of reaching children amidst conflict, distrust and misinformation cannot be overstated. Canada's leadership, including a contribution of over \$1 billion, has helped vaccinate over two and a half billion children, reducing polio cases by over 99.9%.

I also applaud the incredible work and decades-long leadership of Rotary International, a founding partner in the global polio eradication initiative. One particular Rotarian is Yukon's Ramesh Ferris, a polio survivor and a champion for global health. Through his tireless advocacy around the world, Ramesh has helped keep alive our dream of eradicating polio.

Let us salute and join Ramesh, along with all the dedicated individuals, from those on the front line of immunization to the planners, policy-makers and volunteers, who continue to strive for a polio-free world.

Oral Questions

● (1415)

TRAGEDY AT CFB WAINWRIGHT

Kathy Borrelli (Windsor—Tecumseh—Lakeshore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in the wake of Saturday's tragedy at CFB Wainwright, I want to take a moment to recognize not only the tragedy but also the people and families whose lives have been changed forever.

From Tecumseh, Ontario, Private Daniel Thrasher, an infanteer with Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry since December 2025, was critically injured in Saturday's fire. Prior to joining the military, he was an athlete playing varsity football with Wilfrid Laurier University and the University of Windsor Lancers. He also worked as a wildland firefighter in Edson, Alberta.

Our thoughts remain with Daniel, his parents, John and Carmen, and his siblings during this difficult time.

In moments like these, we are reminded, across this nation, of the strength, compassion and solidarity of the brave men and women in uniform who put their lives on the line every day to protect our country. We ask all members of the House to keep Daniel and his family in their prayers.

* * *

*[Translation]***YOUNG PEOPLE AND PORNOGRAPHY**

Louis Villeneuve (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the courage of Charles-André, a 17-year-old who chose to give evidence before our Minister of Health about how easy it is for young people to access pornography, as well as the harmful effects it has on their development, both psychologically and physically. He talked about how he would like to see the government take action on this issue in order to better protect young people. That is exactly what we want to do.

I want to commend the courage he showed in sharing his own experience, despite the highly intimate nature of the subject, in an effort to help other young people. His evidence will help raise awareness about the consequences of trivializing sexuality and help discourage some inappropriate behaviour among young people. His testimony serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of Bill C-34 and the legislation that came out of Bill C-16.

Charles-André is a role model for young people his age. I would like to thank him for his inspiring conduct, his commitment and his courage. We are proud of him.

* * *

*[English]***TRAGEDY AT CFB WAINWRIGHT**

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as we stand here today, there are soldiers burned head to toe in hospitals across Alberta because they chose to run into the flames to save their compatriots again and again. They join the eternal list of heroes that of course includes the four great young men who lost their lives this last weekend.

I have just returned from Wainwright, where I met with soldiers, nurses, doctors and firefighters, and let me tell members that they

are good, they are great and they are grand in every single way. The road to recovery will be a long one for the town, the district, the base, the families that mourn the fallen and those who are recovering. The people can count on me to be their voice to fight for the government to do everything necessary to make this road shorter and easier.

In the meantime, I ask Canadians to donate their blood, their time and their money, and to remember how proud we should be, how grateful we should be, for those who gave their lives for this country. The country for which those young men died is the country for which we must live.

* * *

● (1420)

NATIONAL SCHOOL FOOD PROGRAM

Hon. Jenna Sudds (Kanata, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, earlier today, I had the pleasure of joining Brent Mansfield, the co-founder of LunchLAB and elementary school teacher, as he and a number of students ran 200 laps of the lawn of Parliament in support of our national school food program.

Earlier this year, our government made the national school food program permanent. I rise today proud of our government's ongoing commitment to strengthening access to nutritious food in schools across our country. The future starts with our children. Ensuring their bellies are full so they can focus on learning is essential.

I want to thank Brent, as well as the Coalition for Healthy School Food, the Ottawa Network for Education and all teachers and advocates who advocate with passion and dedication for school food across the country.

ORAL QUESTIONS*[Translation]***THE ECONOMY**

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are hungry, literally. They are hungry, yet putting food on the table is beyond their ability and their means. Food Banks Canada released a report showing that food bank visits have increased by 9% since this Prime Minister took office. There are 2.35 million visits in a single month.

The Prime Minister promised that he would be judged by the price at the grocery store, so what is the verdict according to all the people lining up?

Oral Questions

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement and Quebec Lieutenant, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his question. He is right: The government and all parliamentarians need to make fighting this country's affordability crisis a priority.

At every opportunity, however, members of his party have voted against highly concrete measures that are helping the neediest Quebecers and Canadians cope with the rising cost of living.

For example, his party's 10 Quebec members voted against 300,000 Quebecers who now have access to the Canadian dental care plan. These 10 Quebec members voted against \$900 million in Canada child benefit payments. It is high time that they backed up their words—

The Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, crisis? What crisis? Yesterday, the Prime Minister voted against a motion that would have recognized the affordability crisis.

He refuses to even acknowledge that there is a crisis, even though the number of people needing to visit food banks has more than doubled in the past seven years and is up another 9% this year.

The Prime Minister promised that his grand programs and fine words would make life affordable, so where is the affordable food today?

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement and Quebec Lieutenant, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for 20 years, this member has been debating semantics in the House. However, for 20 years, whenever the time has come to actually support people, he has not stepped up.

He did not step up for the 12 million Canadians who have access to the Canada groceries and essentials benefit or for the six million children who have access to the Canada child benefit. I should also mention the 400,000 children who are benefiting from Canada's national school food program. These are concrete measures that are having a direct impact on the lives of families in Canada.

[English]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are hungry, literally. They cannot afford to feed themselves. Today, Food Banks Canada released a report revealing that the number of visits is up 9% since the Prime Minister was elected on the promise that he would make food affordable. There were 2.35 million visits in one single month, and food banks are literally running out of food.

The Prime Minister said on his first day in office that he would be judged by the price at the grocery store, so what is the verdict according to the 2.35 million people lined up at food banks?

Hon. Evan Solomon (Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, before I answer, I want to thank the hon. member for the work he has done in his riding at CFB Wainwright. We all stand with the families who lost loved ones and the families of the injured. We thank him for the work he has done in the community, and we all stand together on that tragedy.

In terms of affordability, the government has taken multiple measures on affordability, and we look forward to the opposition at least once supporting those measures, whether it is our national school food program, the dental program or child care. Just once we would love to see the opposition support affordability measures.

● (1425)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is more proof that the Liberal government and the Prime Minister are out of touch, as Canadians are out of food and out of money.

Food Banks Canada's CEO said this report "is the story of what happens when millions of people are out of options." She also said, "In the past, most people in Canada could absorb a small financial setback... those days are over. Canada's bleak new reality is that millions of people are making impossible trade-offs every day as they choose between food or rent".

How could the Liberal government and the Prime Minister vote yesterday against the basic recognition that we are in an affordability crisis?

Hon. Evan Solomon (Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is a big difference between talking about something and doing something. The opposition had their opportunity—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I understand it is a bit noisy, and therefore it can be confusing.

I will let the minister begin from the top.

Hon. Evan Solomon: Mr. Speaker, there was an opportunity to vote for the groceries and essentials benefit to put \$1,900 in the pockets of Canadians. They voted against it. There was an opportunity for Conservatives to support the national school food program. What did they do to help kids? They voted against it. They voted against dental care and child care. At every opportunity, they talk about affordability, and they do nothing to help Canadians.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, he is absolutely right. There is a big difference between talk and results. The Liberals talked about how they were going to make food affordable, yet what did they do? They delivered 2.35 million visits to food banks. They talked about how they were going to reduce the cost of living, but what did they do? They are 50% over target on inflation numbers. They talked about doubling homebuilding, yet they delivered a 4% decrease in construction, and now they are not even talking about doubling homebuilding.

When will we have an end to all the Liberal talk and actually get some real results?

Oral Questions

Hon. Evan Solomon (Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are delighted to bring some real results that I wish the opposition supported. For example, we took the GST off new homes, saving \$250,000 for new homebuyers. They do not support that. We took the federal excise tax off gasoline, saving people 25¢. They do not support that. This is a critical moment in our country. Whether we are building affordable homes or supporting families, for once, the opposition should use this opportunity to work and build this country strong.

* * *

FINANCE

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are out of money while that minister and the Liberal government are out of touch. They are costing Canadians more. Just yesterday, the Parliamentary Budget Officer realized that the deficit next year will be \$7 billion, or 11% bigger than the Prime Minister promised just in the spring. The fastest-growing expenditure is interest on the national debt. The average family of four will spend \$6,000 on interest for the debt.

Why is the Prime Minister forcing Canadians to feed debt interest instead of feeding their families?

Hon. Evan Solomon (Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in the last 12 months, 217,000 jobs were created, with 156,000 in the private sector alone. There was 3.3% growth in Q2, which is the fastest in the G7. We have the lowest debt-to-GDP ratio in the G7. Business investment grew in Q2 by 8.9%. I know these are inconvenient facts for the opposition, who, for once, should stop talking down the country and join us to build it up, build strong, build right and build Canadian. They have to try it.

* * *

● (1430)

[Translation]

GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Bill C-39 is a case of conservative, authoritarian overreach. It eliminates environmental impact assessments for pipelines and nuclear power, gives the green light to projects without waiting for studies to be completed, places workers' right to strike under government control and allows for the seizure of land in Quebec and the provinces.

Simply put, neither Stephen Harper nor the current Conservative leader would have ever dared dream of introducing such a bill. It is no surprise that so many Conservatives are defecting to the Liberals. What is surprising is that the Liberals are staying put. I am genuinely concerned. Do they feel even somewhat torn about failing to stay true to their convictions?

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I disagree with my col-

league. As the member is well aware, this bill is designed to attract investment throughout the country in order to create good-paying jobs across the country and strengthen Canada's economic growth for future generations. The House now has an opportunity to advance legislation that will help build a stronger and more competitive economy. It is a shame that the parties on the other side of the House are opposing this bill, which is so important for Canada.

Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Bill C-39 is an authoritarian shift to the right that will have a lasting impact on the environment, labour relations, relations with Quebec and the provinces, and even reconciliation with indigenous peoples. Environmentalists are against it. Unions are against it. We heard from them yesterday in committee. Many first nations are against it. Oddly, the only ones in favour are the Conservatives. That speaks volumes and should give the Liberals pause. Only the member for West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country had the courage to criticize Bill C-39.

Is he the only Liberal who has principles?

Hon. Julie Dabrusin (Minister of the Environment, Climate Change and Nature, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is true that Bill C-39 will have a major impact. It will help us build major electricity and clean energy projects. In fact, it will also help us build projects such as Alto that will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. I thought the Bloc Québécois supported this project, but now it does not. It makes no sense.

Will the Bloc Québécois help us reduce greenhouse gas emissions and make life easier for Canadians?

* * *

LABOUR

Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday in committee, the unions were unanimous: Bill C-39 is an attack on workers. According to the machinists' representative, the employer will always put the lowest offer on the table knowing that the government will intervene. The Canadian Labour Congress representative said that she did not believe for a minute that the bill will improve the collective bargaining process and that it will embolden employers to hold out and not get a deal.

How can the Liberals be even more anti-union than the Conservatives?

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement and Quebec Lieutenant, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a great deal of respect for my opposition colleague, and I thank her for her question. However, that is not our vision at all. What we are trying to do is encourage the parties to reach an agreement, because we believe that the best agreement is always the one that is reached at the bargaining table. That is our aim here.

The objective of Bill C-39 is to get major projects built across the country. I want to point out that the last time we were in the House, the member's leader mocked the project in Churchill Falls, saying that our major project was in Newfoundland and Labrador, as though the Churchill Falls project would have no impact whatsoever on Quebec. That is a very narrow-minded view that I find quite baffling.

To quote the CEO of Hydro-Québec, Churchill Falls is the largest renewable energy project in North America. Prosperity—

The Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

* * *

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister made big promises that he was going to buy Canadian. However, in his first year in office, he increased U.S. purchases by \$7.8 billion. This week, we learned that he cast aside the Commissionaires, the single largest employer of veterans in Canada, in favour of an American company, to save just 1%. That company is linked to ICE and Donald Trump.

Why is the Prime Minister casting our veterans aside to favour an American company?

[English]

Peter Fragiskatos (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member raises the question of veterans, ultimately. I would remind him of the Conservative record on veterans and the endless cuts we saw under Conservative leadership.

We can leave that aside for a moment. The decision, as articulated yesterday, was taken through a transparent and open process. I leave that to the member to consider.

• (1435)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister made big promises that he was going to buy Canadian. Then we learned that in his first year in office, he spent \$7.8 billion more than the previous year on American companies, with Canadian tax dollars. This week, we learned that he cast aside the Commissionaires, the single largest employer of veterans in Canada, to favour an American security firm linked to Donald Trump and ICE.

Why did the Prime Minister, after making his big promise, cast aside our veterans to favour an American firm at Canadians' expense?

Hon. Jill McKnight (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me be clear. As highlighted yesterday by the Secretary of State for the Canada Revenue Agency, the CRA followed a fair and open procurement process for guard services. It selected a registered Canadian—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: It is hard to understand the minister's answer with some of the comments coming from across the way.

Oral Questions

I would ask the minister to start over from the top, please.

Hon. Jill McKnight: Mr. Speaker, let me be clear. As highlighted yesterday by the Secretary of State for the Canada Revenue Agency, the CRA followed a fair and open procurement process for guard services. It selected a registered Canadian business headquartered in Ontario that employs thousands of Canadians.

Our government will always stand with Canadian workers and Canadian businesses as we build the strongest economy in the G7.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals promised elbows up, and instead, they elbowed aside our veterans. Now their excuse is that they cannot control any of it, that all these billions of dollars for purchases are going out the door and the elected government has no authority to do anything about it at all, that this is just a bunch of self-determining bureaucrats.

That is not what the Prime Minister promised. He said he was going to ensure that our Canadian tax dollars went to Canadian firms. At the front of that list should have been Canadian veterans. The Commissionaires should be protecting us.

Why did the Liberals favour an American firm instead of Canadian veterans?

Hon. Jill McKnight (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I just said, the CRA followed a fair and open procurement process. I, of course, share the view that veterans have the right opportunities to find rewarding employment of their choosing when they are ready. It is at the core of the national veterans employment strategy. Again, as has been stated, this was a contract decision made by the CRA.

Our government has worked and will continue to work with veteran employers as we build the strongest economy in the G7.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister told Canadians he should be judged by their experience at the grocery store. For Becky, her experience has been a nightmare. She said she works hard, but she still cannot afford to put food on the table for her and her son. She is not alone. There have been more than 2.3 million visits to food banks in Canada in one month. The number of Canadian families forced to use a food bank is up 116% since 2019.

Will the Prime Minister admit that relying on a food bank is now a reality for many Canadians, or does he truly believe that affordability is the best it has been in a decade?

Oral Questions

Peter Fragiskatos (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there certainly is hardship in Canada. We should not ignore that fact. What we should do is work together and not politicize the hardship of Canadians. The member knows that. All members know that, or should know that.

We have six million Canadians receiving the Canada child benefit. We have 6.5 million Canadians receiving dental support. We have 400,000 children receiving the support of the school food program. We have 900,000 children and their families receiving the support of the child care program. We will continue in that vein on the basis that we represent our constituents and always have.

• (1440)

John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member said to not politicize a food affordability crisis, a crisis that lies clearly at the feet of the Liberal government. In its 10 years, food prices are up 30%. The number of Canadians being forced to a food bank has doubled. In my riding, in Okotoks, in one quarter, the food bank served 26,000 people. Shockingly, 30% of those people had full-time jobs, but they still were forced to a food bank because Liberal policies have made feeding their families unaffordable.

Will the Liberals check their egos at the door and eliminate taxes to make sure Canadians can put food on the table?

Peter Fragiskatos (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if he is going to cite Food Banks Canada and its report, he should look at the recommendations. The recommendations are clear. The groceries and essentials benefit is something the organization called for. This government enacted it, and 12 million Canadians are now receiving it. The organization also called for, among other things, housing. We have a serious focus on housing and the building up of critical infrastructure. In particular, the report called for expanding energy options in this country so Canadians can have access to cheaper energy.

I invite the Conservatives to put aside partisanship in the same way that Premier Ford has, in the same way that Premier Smith has, in the same way Stephen—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Oshawa.

Rhonda Kirkland (Oshawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after 11 years of the Liberal government, Canadians are paying more and getting less every single time they visit the grocery store. According to today's Food Banks Canada report, Canada had over 2.3 million food bank visits in March of 2026. That is an increase of over 200,000 visits since March of last year, yet the Liberal government continues to insist its economic plan is working.

Will the Liberals finally acknowledge that relying on food banks has become a reality for too many Canadians, or are the Liberals just too out of touch to admit it?

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.): Mr. Speaker, I want to start by acknowledging and thanking representatives of the Daily Bread Food Bank for being on the Hill and meeting with parliamentarians yesterday. It is one of the

biggest partners in this study. Its report asks us, and provincial governments in particular, to build a future where no one goes hungry, and that is what we are committed to doing.

That report talks about the importance of income security. It talks about the groceries and essentials benefit. It talks about the Canada disability benefit and the Canada disability tax credit. It talks about the Canada workers benefit. What do these measures have in common? The opposition voted against them.

Rhonda Kirkland (Oshawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Conservatives will support measures that keep Canadians' money in their own pockets. Just yesterday, the Liberals were the only party in the House to vote against acknowledging that Canada is in an affordability crisis. Meanwhile, families in Oshawa are living it. Over 3,600 people rely on the food bank in Oshawa every month. It has been forced to limit visits and close its doors to people who need it, because the resources are not there.

How can the government claim to have a plan to fix Canada's affordability crisis if it does not even admit there is a problem?

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.): Mr. Speaker, I think the problem Canadians have is that they see through the rhetoric on the other side of the House, which would cut the income security programs that a report such as this calls for and that are supporting Canadians right now.

If the member stands up and again votes against the national school food program, a program that is in 80% of public schools in this country, that is what Canadians have learned to expect of the opposition when it comes to the supports we are delivering for Canadians and Canadian children.

* * *

[Translation]

CANADIAN IDENTITY AND CULTURE

Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, let us not forget that the Liberals turned their backs on Quebec culture by waiving the levies for U.S. online streaming platforms to please Donald Trump.

In exchange, the government promised \$600 million for the cultural sector, which has yet to see a single penny. The levies were supposed to take effect last spring. That means that, since last spring, our cultural sector has received nothing: neither the levies nor the \$600 million. The only thing our cultural sector has received from Ottawa so far is bad news.

Oral Questions

When is the government going to take action?

• (1445)

Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture and Minister responsible for Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I said yesterday, it will be coming very soon.

Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I have said this before, but it bears repeating: The future of our culture depends on requiring American streaming platforms to pay levies. However, every time we talk about it, the minister descends into partisanship. That is a shame because the levies were the result of long-term work carried out across party lines. We have no problem saying that in Quebec, the amendment to the Broadcasting Act was seen as a good move by the Liberal government. However, the Prime Minister made it effectively meaningless by scrapping the levies.

Will the minister stand up today and announce that he has the courage to tell the Prime Minister that he made a mistake by scrapping the levies?

Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture and Minister responsible for Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that my colleague is accusing me of partisanship when I funded the poutine festival in his riding.

I will read a short list. The 2025 budget allocated \$150 million for CBC/Radio-Canada, \$150 million for Telefilm Canada, \$127 million for the Canada Media Fund, \$48 million for the Canada Music Fund, \$26 million for the National Film Board and an additional \$600 million for the audiovisual sector.

Two things are true about this list: Every Quebec member on this side of the House voted for it, and every member of the Bloc Québécois voted against it.

* * *

[English]

THE ECONOMY

Sandra Cobena (Newmarket—Aurora, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there are 2.4 million food bank visits in a single month. That is the highest ever recorded in this country, and one in three is for a child. What greater failure of a government's economic record is there than that a parent who works all day still cannot provide for their children? After more than a year and a half under the Liberal Prime Minister, Canadians are working harder but falling further behind.

Will the Prime Minister explain why, in a country such as Canada, honest work is no longer enough to provide for one's family?

Hon. Anna Gainey (Secretary of State (Children and Youth), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would also like to ask why members opposite can stand in the House on this issue without answering the question as to why they vote against school food. Why do they vote against dental workers?

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: We should allow the secretary of state to answer the question. We want to hear the answer.

The secretary of state, from the beginning, please.

Hon. Anna Gainey: Mr. Speaker, time and again, we take action on this side of the House. The government has advanced a national child care strategy, dental care and a national school food program, among other efforts to help Canadians make ends meet. Members opposite continue to vote against these things that have direct impacts on the people in their communities who rely on things such as checkups at the dentist and affordable child care. It makes no sense.

Sandra Cobena (Newmarket—Aurora, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member says that they are working, but the reality is that whatever they are doing is, in fact, not working, not when there are 2.4 million visits to a food bank in a single month and one in three of them is for children. I would encourage the member to stop measuring success by how many Canadians need government assistance, and start measuring by how many no longer do.

Therefore I ask again, why, after 11 years of the Liberal government, honest hard work is no longer enough to provide for one's family.

Hon. Anna Gainey (Secretary of State (Children and Youth), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the national school food program is reaching an additional 400,000 children across this country with nutritious meals. That is 80% of public schools across this country that are benefiting from this support. Again, why do the members opposite vote against things such as breakfast for children in elementary schools, dental care and other things that help families make ends meet?

Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC): Mr. Speaker, earlier this year, the Prime Minister said that affordability is the best it has been in over a decade, but despite the Prime Minister's promise, Canadian families are in trouble. In Yukon, food bank visits are up 24% from 2025. In the Northwest Territories and Nunavut, food bank visits are up 29% from 2025, and 32.5% of food bank visitors are children.

Will the Prime Minister admit that food banks are now the sad reality for too many Canadians, or is he really that out of touch?

• (1450)

Hon. Joanne Thompson (Minister of Fisheries, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, apart from the suite of supports that my colleagues have outlined already today, we are also diversifying our trade partners, supercharging major projects, investing in workers, drawing down costs and keeping the needs of Canadians foremost in every decision.

The other side of the House is just playing politics today. Why do the Conservatives not come along with the projects that are actually making a difference for this country and in people's lives?

*Oral Questions**[Translation]*

Joël Godin (Saint-Augustin—Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is so strange to hear this Liberal government boast that everything is just fine and life is good thanks to them. Today, Food Banks of Quebec reported that its network receives over 3.2 million requests a month from families, seniors and children. The food insecurity crisis is for real.

Let us put partisanship aside. Can the government use our Conservative plan to lower the cost of living?

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement and Quebec Lieutenant, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I find this line of questioning absolutely fascinating coming from a member and a party that consistently, at every opportunity, vote against measures that are actually helping their constituents.

Take the Canadian dental care plan, for example, which is helping thousands of his constituents in Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier. Other examples include the Canada child benefit, the Canada groceries and essentials benefit, the national school food program and the list goes on.

It is time for the members across the way to back up their words with action and start voting in favour of measures that will help their constituents.

Joël Godin (Saint-Augustin—Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what they have done is not working. The Liberals keep telling us that they have introduced a whole suite of measures but, as I was saying, they are not working. It is time for them to come back down to earth.

This morning, the Food Banks Canada report shows that food insecurity is getting worse across the country. In Quebec, more than one-third of those seeking help actually work full time. Why not adopt our proposal to abolish all federal taxes on diesel in order to bring down the cost of groceries and give Canadian families some breathing room?

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement and Quebec Lieutenant, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if the member believes these measures are not working, then he should explain that to the 24,366 children and their families who receive \$80 million annually through the Canada child benefit. He should also explain it to the 23,855 people in his riding who now have access to dental care through the Canadian dental care plan, a program he voted against. He should tell them that the program does not work, that it is not important, that the dental care that they and every Canadian should have access to makes no difference, and that the support this program provides is somehow not working.

I urge him to come to his senses and, at the very least, start voting in the interests of his constituents.

* * *

*[English]***FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

Sima Acan (Oakville West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the world wants what Canada has to offer. From our economic potential to the

strength of our international relationships, Canada has a great deal to bring to the table. We are engaging with partners around the world, advancing our interests and demonstrating what Canada can achieve.

Can the Minister of Foreign Affairs tell the House how Canada's economic potential is helping to strengthen our diplomatic relationships and attract greater international interest in Canada?

Hon. Anita Anand (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are entering a new era of Canada's foreign policy. Over the last year, we have signed more than 20 security, defence and economic partnerships. At the recent investment summit, we catalyzed \$500 billion of investment.

We are building Canada's national resilience. We are building Canada's strategic autonomy. More trade and more investment means a more prosperous Canada.

* * *

HOUSING

Jacob Mantle (York—Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when the Prime Minister promised what he called the most ambitious housing plan since the Second World War, Canadians can be forgiven for assuming that meant more homes, not fewer, but the Liberals' own housing agency, the CMHC, says that housing starts are down this year and that Canada is on track to build fewer homes this year than last year. It says the key risk is that we will not build enough.

Is it still the Liberal government's promise to build 500,000 new homes per year, or has the Prime Minister abandoned that target?

● (1455)

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are very focused on delivering affordable housing for Canadians, as seen by Build Canada Homes start-ups. We have over 19,000 homes now under way with Build Canada Homes, affordable non-market homes that are scaling up. We are going to continue to extend that work, and we are going to give Canadians every opportunity to buy or rent an affordable home. We are going to scale this work as aggressively as possible, and particularly if we have support from the members opposite, we will be able to go faster and farther.

Jacob Mantle (York—Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for all the talk and all the announcements, by the minister's own admission there are only 19,000 homes, but only 2,000 are actually under construction. That is all talk and no action.

This week, the Liberals announced a new housing project, and I thought maybe we are going to get some progress. The announcement was \$7.8 million for affordable housing, but, oops, it is gender-equitable affordable housing in the Dominican Republic.

Why are Canadian taxpayers paying for gender-equitable housing in the Dominican Republic when they cannot afford a home at all?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, clearly the member opposite is not paying attention. Not only do the member opposite and his colleagues not support investing in affordable housing, but they voted against Build Canada Homes. They voted against—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I cannot hear the minister. He should take another shot at it.

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Speaker, the noise from the other side illustrates that the members of the opposition do not care about affordable housing. They do not care that Canadians need housing. This side of the House continues to advance, to push hard for affordable housing to be delivered and to work with provinces and territories.

Last month, we launched the Canada rental protection fund, \$1.5 billion for 7,000 affordable rental homes that are protected. Are we going to see support from the other side? I do not think so.

Dan Muys (Flamborough—Glanbrook—Brant North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister promised Canadians the most ambitious housing plan since the Second World War, yet his own government's numbers tell a different story. According to CMHC, housing starts dropped 11% in the month of September. After a year and a half of more spending, more bureaucracy and more Liberal promises, fewer homes are being built, while home ownership slips further out of reach.

How many more young Canadians must give up on the dream of home ownership before the Liberals admit their plan has failed?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there are some basic facts around the housing market that we are challenged with as a country right now and that many other countries are challenged with. The world is struggling with uncertainty, and we have to focus on delivering on affordable housing. If we look at the results across the country, we have successful cities that are increasing their housing starts. We have some markets that are slow. We are intervening. We put GST on the table across the country right now. In Ontario, one can save up to \$200,000 on a new home. That is significant action. That is not being supported by Conservatives. On this side, we will continue to take action on housing—

[Translation]

The Speaker: The hon. member for Montmorency—Charlevoix.

Gabriel Hardy (Montmorency—Charlevoix, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I had a really interesting meeting this week with Quebec real estate professionals. They explained how CMHC's programs, which are run by the Liberals, encourage the construction of rental housing.

What does this mean? It means that developers are being encouraged to build rental housing; new single-family homes are at a disadvantage in the programs; existing homes that come onto the mar-

ket cost a fortune; and when our young people want to purchase a home, the price is so high that they cannot get financing.

Will the Liberal government acknowledge that its plan to help people access home ownership is not working?

Caroline Desrochers (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, we focus on the facts. We say this every day. I invite the member to be in the House on November 5, when we will be proposing even more measures to help with housing affordability.

The cost of housing is coming down, as the Minister of Housing has said several times. Housing construction has increased, including in Montreal. We are signing agreements across Canada to build more housing. We launched the Canada rental protection fund to maintain the affordable housing stock.

We on this side of the House are working to maintain affordability. Where are the Conservatives? Obviously, they are nowhere to be seen.

● (1500)

Gabriel Hardy (Montmorency—Charlevoix, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals want facts, so here are a few: 85% of Quebecers feel pessimistic about home ownership, while nearly 70% of Quebecers believe that buying a home in their area is impossible and that the situation has gotten worse over the past five years.

The Liberals' answer to that problem is more red tape and even fewer results. Their programs are being designed around large-scale real estate projects in big cities, but circumstances are different in regions like mine. Our businesses are looking for workers. Our young people want to settle in the regions. Families want to own their own home, not continue renting for the rest of their lives.

When will the Liberals realize that their programs are not working and design their policies to reflect what ordinary people, like those in Montmorency—Charlevoix, are facing?

Caroline Desrochers (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would once again invite the member opposite to make sure he has his facts straight before making statements like that in the House.

Oral Questions

The minister and I spent the summer touring the regions of Quebec. We visited Carleton-sur-Mer, Chicoutimi and the Gaspé. We made announcements, and some projects are currently in the construction phase. We took the needs of the regions into consideration to ensure that Build Canada Homes includes the regions and can build what they need. It is extremely important that we revitalize the regions, keep people in the regions and build the necessary infrastructure.

We are here at work with real programs. The Conservatives just vote against everything we do.

* * *

[English]

LABOUR

Grant Jackson (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Mr. Speaker, starting November 3, under a new Liberal policy, corporations will not have to prove they tried to hire a Canadian first. Instead, the Liberals are siding with corporations and institutions that do not want to put in the work to hire and train Canadians. They are doing this after 68,000 Canadians lost their jobs last month.

Can the immigration minister tell those 68,000 people why their government decided they do not even deserve to get a first look?

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.): Mr. Speaker, we will always favour Canadian labour and Canadian workers. What we are doing is ensuring that candidates with strong Canadian work experience for job offers in high-wage occupations are prioritized. It is a simpler process for key in-demand fields and for ensuring that we can recruit top, skilled talent. We are talking about health care. We are talking about engineering, technology and the skilled trades. This is core to our ability to build a strong economy, for our economic success and for supporting Canadian businesses right across the country.

Grant Jackson (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Mr. Speaker, everything that member just said is wrong based on the immigration minister's announcement. The rule for giving a Canadian job to a temporary foreign worker before November 3 is simple. Before they hire from abroad, they must prove they tried to hire here. That is the whole rule, and it protects Canadians from wage suppression, but the Liberals have announced that they are scrapping it. That is nuts.

In the middle of an affordability crisis, which part of trying to hire a Canadian first did the immigration minister think was too tough to manage?

Hon. Lena Metlege Diab (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I welcome that question. In fact, I have been waiting to answer that.

We have a clear focus building the strongest economy in the G7. Let me tell you what the Canadian Chamber of Commerce just posted:

We welcome these changes to Express Entry and applaud the government and Minister Diab's endeavour to reduce red tape in the immigration system, while also ensuring that international talent remains in Canada to fill labour gaps. In particular, eliminating the LMIA requirement for qualifying job offers—

The Speaker: I know that the minister was telling me so that everyone could hear. I should also mention that we cannot mention proper names even if it is our own.

The hon. member for Calgary Nose Hill.

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as we sat here, some sombre news just broke. BioWare, an Edmonton software firm, which produced beloved video games like Mass Effect and created jobs for Edmontonians, is being shuttered.

The immigration minister just scrapped the last safeguard that forces IT corporations to try to hire Canadians before offering the job to somebody from outside the country. What does she have to say to those people from BioWare who just lost their jobs and who might not get a look because of her policy decision?

● (1505)

Hon. Lena Metlege Diab (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me set the record straight. The member has been in that seat for 10 or 11 years, and she knows better. She is continually misleading Canadians.

This is a measure for permanent residents who are already here. This is cutting red tape and making it simpler. It is better. It is good for businesses. It is good for employers. Skilled individuals will be using it. This is not for temporary foreign workers.

* * *

IMMIGRATION

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want every person in this place to listen to what the immigration minister just said. She just said this: Scrapping this last safeguard is “good for businesses”. It is good for the corporations.

We need policy that is good for Canadian workers. That is what we need. This policy will scrap the last safeguard against corporate fraud in immigration in this country. It is unconscionable. How can she defend it?

Oral Questions

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.): Mr. Speaker, it must be a rough day on opposition benches when the Conservatives take aim at Canada's immigration system and TFWs in ways that they know are incorrect. They know that, for the temporary foreign worker program, its use is down 50% in the last year and TFWs make up less than 1% of our workforce.

However, the changes the government introduced are not about that. They are about highly skilled, top-wage earners coming into this country in fields where we have an immediate workforce need. This is the talent and skills we want to attract, and that is what we are doing.

* * *

[Translation]

NATURAL RESOURCES

Eric St-Pierre (Honoré-Mercier, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on October 8, the Prime Minister announced a \$2-billion national heat pump program to help one million homeowners. Low-income households can obtain rebates of \$10,000, allowing families to save \$1,400 a year and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25 megatonnes.

Could the Minister of the Environment, Climate Change and Nature explain why this program is a step in the right direction for making life more affordable for Canadians?

Hon. Julie Dabrusin (Minister of the Environment, Climate Change and Nature, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for Honoré-Mercier for his commitment to the environment and to our work together.

As the heating season begins, we know that heating affordability is extremely important to Canadians. That is why the Prime Minister was in Sherbrooke to announce the national heat pump rebate program, which is open to all homeowners and will offer rebates of up to \$10,000. It will help people who heat their homes with oil or electric baseboards—

[English]

The Speaker: The hon. member for Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola.

* * *

PUBLIC SAFETY

Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are losing faith in the parole system, and it is time for the Liberal government to take responsibility.

Zakaria Amara, the ringleader of the Toronto 18 terrorist plot who wanted to bomb Parliament, who wanted to bomb National Defence bases and who wanted to bomb CSIS, was recently granted full parole. No wonder the people of Canada have lost faith in the parole system.

When will the Liberal government take responsibility and reform parole?

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let us be very clear. The parole system works independently of government. It is people who are tasked with ensuring that parole is administered in a manner that is based on the information before them. Like the previous Conservative government, we continue to ensure the independence of the Parole Board, and the decisions it makes are fully independent of our government.

Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, CPC): Yes, Mr. Speaker, those independent decisions are based on the laws that this House passes and this House must act now.

Another reason Canadians are losing faith: Christopher Roulston, a designated dangerous offender who is doing time, an indeterminate sentence for sexual assault with a weapon and uttering threats, was recently granted day parole. He is a dangerous offender, a terrorist.

When will these Liberals take accountability, stop blaming independence and reform parole?

● (1510)

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what is clear is that the Conservative Party members come up with allegations. They come up with types of law reform that they are looking for, but when this government brings forward law reform, like we did in Bill C-14 on bail and sentencing, like we did with Bill C-16 on victims' rights and like we did on protecting vulnerable communities, they vote against it or they stall. This is doublespeak.

I will invite the member opposite to ensure that when we have legislation in front of the House, like Bill C-22, they pass it and they co-operate on—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Windsor—Tecumseh—Lakeshore.

Kathy Borrelli (Windsor—Tecumseh—Lakeshore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, recently I spoke with Tina from my community, whose nine-year-old son was murdered by Douglas Lambier. In the 21 years since her son's murder, her life has never been the same. While his parole was recently denied by the government, Mr. Lambier has been allowed to have a 60-day unescorted absence to attend a program.

Why is the Liberal government allowing a murderer who the Parole Board deems unfit to rejoin society to have a 60-day unescorted absence?

Private Members' Business

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me express my condolences to Tina, her family and her community. What the individual has done is unspeakable, but let me be very clear. The decision of the Parole Board is independent. It makes decisions based on the facts in front of it. That is the way that the Conservative Party, when it was in government, implemented the Parole Act, and we continue to do the same.

* * *

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Terry Sheehan (Sault Ste. Marie—Algoma, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know that keeping first nations children connected to their families, cultures and communities is essential to their well-being and to the strength of future generations. That is why supporting first nations leadership in child and family services is so important.

On October 7, our government signed a historic agreement with the Saskatoon Tribal Council that recognizes the importance of first nations leadership in child and family services and supports communities in determining what is best for their children.

Can the Minister of Indigenous Services share how this new government has stepped up to the plate to help indigenous children get connected to their family, cultures and languages while supporting first nations in exercising their inherent jurisdiction over the care and well-being of their children?

Hon. Mandy Gull-Masty (Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to first sincerely congratulate Tribal Chief Arkan and the Saskatoon Tribal Council on a historic milestone, reclaiming what has always been theirs: the authority to make decisions for their children. This landmark regional agreement, Māmowōhkamātowin, will see \$269 million deployed over seven years, which will put predictable, flexible funding where communities need it the most. Investing in prevention, housing, post-majority supports and first nations representative services, we proudly—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Regina—Wascana.

* * *

AIR TRANSPORTATION

Michael Kram (Regina—Wascana, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for decades, Canada's airports have been operated by non-profit airport authorities, with local governance and real accountability. Recently, the transport minister announced his intention to hand over control of Canada's major airports to foreign-owned, for-profit corporations. Even worse, the minister would not say whether this decision would lead to higher costs.

Canadians already pay some of the highest airfares in the world. How much more will Canadians have to pay to fly as a result of this latest Liberal boondoggle?

Mike Kelloway (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, indeed, it is important now more than ever to modernize airports. We are looking at modernizing airports. That will make them competitive, employ Canadians and do more business within those airports. We are not talking about the Government of Canada giving up land and other assets.

I will say this. For the member and other members around who have regional airports, the idea is to do well here so we can invest around Canada in regional airports and connect every Canadian.

* * *

● (1515)

JUSTICE

Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister called Bill C-39 “the most consequential legislation” in decades. This is true. It tramples on environmental protections and indigenous and workers' rights while handing ministers king powers to override constitutional safeguards in the name of the so-called national interest. Our constitutional rights are not an inconvenience.

Are the Liberals, with the help of the Conservatives, really trying to build a strong Canada, or are they just working together to build a pipeline to the courts?

Mike Kelloway (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, indeed, building Canada strong is focused on building Canada strong, working with every region and working with first nations. It is not just about the duty to consult. It is the right thing to do, working together to build up the country. By the way, if we look at the bill, it is not about changing standards. That is sacrosanct. What it is about is changing processes. We can do both and we will do both.

[Translation]

Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

During question period, I finally received an acknowledgement of receipt of the letter the Minister of Jobs and Families referred to yesterday. I therefore seek the unanimous consent of the House to table this letter now—

The Speaker: First of all, that is not a point of order, I have to say. Second, the member does not have the unanimous consent of the House to table the document.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[Translation]

UKRAINIAN HERITAGE MONTH ACT

The House resumed from October 7 consideration of the motion that Bill S-210, An Act respecting Ukrainian Heritage Month, be read the third time and passed.

The Speaker: It being 3:17 p.m., the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at third reading stage of Bill S-210, under Private Members' Business.

Call in the members.

Private Members' Business

● (1530)

[English]

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 180)

YEAS

Members

Acan	Aitchison
Al Soud	Albas
Ali	Allison
Alty	Anand
Anandasangaree	Anderson
Anstey	Arnold
Au	Auguste
Baber	Bains
Baker	Baldinelli
Bardeesy	Barlow
Barrett	Barsalou-Duval
Battiste	Beaulieu
Beech	Begum
Belanger (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River)	Bélanger (Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt)
Bendayan	Berthold
Bezan	Bittle
Blanchette-Joncas	Block
Blois	Bonin
Borrelli	Bragdon
Brassard	Brière
Brunelle-Duceppe	Caley
Calkins	Caputo
Carney	Carr
Casey	Chagger
Chambers	Champagne
Champoux	Chang
Chartrand	Chatel
Chenette	Chi
Chong	Church
Clark	Cobena
Cody	Connors
Cooper	Cormier
Coteau	Dabrusin
Dalton	Dancho
Dandurand	Danko
Davidson	Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Davies (Niagara South)	Dawson
DeBellefeuille	Deltell
d'Entremont	DeRidder
Deschênes	Deschênes-Thériault
Desrochers	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Diab
Diotte	Doherty
Dowdall	Duclos
Duguid	Duncan
Dzerowicz	Earle
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Epp	Eyolfson
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster—Meadow Lake)	Falk (Provencher)
Fancy	Fanjoy
Fergus	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fragiskatos	Fraser
Fry	Fuhr
Gaheer	Gainey
Gallant	Garon
Gasparro	Gaudreau
Gazan	Genuis
Gerretsen	Gill (Calgary Skyview)
Gill (Brampton West)	Gill (Calgary McKnight)

Gill (Windsor West)	Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan)
Gill (Abbotsford—South Langley)	Gladu
Gobeil	Godin
Goodridge	Gould
Gourde	Grant
Greaves	Groleau
Guay	Guglielmin
Gull-Masty	Hallan
Hanley	Hardy
Harrison	Hepfner
Hirtle	Hogan
Holman	Hussen
Iacono	Idlout
Jackson	Jaczek
Jansen	Jeneroux
Johns	Joly
Joseph	Kayabaga
Kelloway	Kelly
Khalid	Khanna
Kibble	Kirkland
Klassen	Kmiec
Konanz	Koutrakis
Kram	Kronis
Kuruc	Kusie
Kwan	Lake
Lalonde	Lambropoulos
Lamoureux	Lantsman
Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles)	Lapointe (Sudbury)
Larouche	Lauzon
Lavack	Lavoie
Lawrence	Lawton
LeBlanc	Lefebvre
Leitão	Lemire
Leslie	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Lightbound
Lloyd	Lobb
Long	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
Ma	MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacDonald (Cardigan)	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Mahal	Majumdar
Malette (Bay of Quinte)	Malette (Kapuskasing—Timmins—Mushkegowuk)
Maloney	Martin
May	Mazier
McCauley	McGuinty
McKelvie	McKenzie
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McKnight
McLean (Calgary Centre)	McLean (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke)
McPherson	Melillo
Ménard	Mendès
Menegakis	Michel
Miedema	Miller
Mingarelli	Moore
Morin	Morrison
Morrissey	Motz
Muys	Myles
Naqvi	Nater
Nathan	Nguyen
Noormohamed	Normandin
Ntumba	Oliphant
Olszewski	O'Rourke
Osborne	Patzer
Paul-Hus	Perron
Petitpas Taylor	Poilievre
Powlowski	Provost
Ramsay	Rana
Redekopp	Reid
Rempel Garner	Reynolds
Richards	Roberts
Robertson	Romanado
Rood	Ross
Rowe	Royer

Routine Proceedings

Ruff	Sahota
Saini	Sarai
Sari	Sawatzky
Scheer	Schiefke
Schmale	Seeback
Sgro	Shahnawaz
Sheehan	Shipley
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Simard
Small	Sodhi
Solomon	Sousa
Steinley	Ste-Marie
Stevenson	St-Pierre
Strahl	Stubbs
Sudds	Tesser Derksen
Thériault	Thomas
Thompson	Tochor
Tolmie	Uppal
Valdez	van Koeverden
Van Popta	Vandenbeld
Vien	Viersen
Villeneuve	Vis
Warkentin	Watchorn
Weiler	Williamson
Yip	Zahid
Zerucelli	Zimmer
Zuberi— 313	

NAYS

Nil

PAIRED

Members

Aboultaif	Bexte
Hoback	Hodgson
Housefather	Kramp-Neuman
Lattanzio	Plamondon
Rocheffort	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Turnbull	Waugh— 12

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

(Bill read the third time and passed)

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS*[English]***INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS**

Michael Coteau (Scarborough—Woburn, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the report of the Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association respecting its participation in the bilateral mission to Ethiopia and South Africa, which went to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and to Cape Town, Johannesburg and Pretoria, South Africa, from February 12 to 20.

* * *

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

HEALTH

Sukh Dhaliwal (Surrey Newton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the following two reports of the Standing Committee on Health.

The sixth report is entitled “Antimicrobial Resistance: Confronting a Silent Pandemic”. Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the

committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

The seventh report is in relation to Bill C-224, an act to amend the Food and Drugs Act, natural health products. The committee has studied the bill and has decided to report the bill back to the House, with amendments.

* * *

● (1535)

HUNGARIAN HERITAGE MONTH ACT

Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-294, An Act to designate the month of October as Hungarian Heritage Month.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to introduce legislation to designate October as Hungarian heritage month, with thanks to my seconder, the hon. member for Vancouver East.

As we commemorate the 70th anniversary of the 1956 Hungarian revolution, this bill would provide an important opportunity to recognize the remarkable contributions of Hungarian Canadians to our nation's social, economic, academic and cultural fabric.

From the first Hungarian immigrants in the late 19th century to the tens of thousands who arrived following the 1956 uprising, their resilience, talents and determination have helped build our country. With some 350,000 Canadians of Hungarian descent, from myself, proudly, to business leaders like Peter Munk, Nobel Prize winner John Polanyi and global music star Alanis Morissette, Hungarian Canadians have made their mark in Canada and on the world stage. Hungarian heritage month would help to celebrate that legacy and ensure that it is passed on to future generations.

I would like to thank His Excellency Miklos Lengyel, Hungary's ambassador to Canada, for his assistance with this initiative.

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

* * *

PETITIONS

RED BRIDGE

Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the people of Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola.

This is a petition on behalf of the people of Kamloops and elsewhere in the riding who want to see federal funding for the fast-tracking and rebuilding of the Red Bridge. This is a cultural landmark. It has been in Kamloops for many years. It was burned down by arson. It connects the area of Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc with Kamloops mainland over the Thompson River. It is time that this bridge get rebuilt with federal funding.

BARRIERE FIRE HALL

Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the people of Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola. In doing so, I want to highlight Barriere, British Columbia.

Barriere needs a new fire hall. Its fire hall is over 70 years old. It services many communities in the area of Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola. The people of Barriere are very hard-working, industrious people. They deserve a new fire hall for their safety, especially given wildfire season. I invite and encourage the federal government to fund the fire hall in the upcoming budget on November 5.

CANADA POST CORPORATION

Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today for my first petition, I rise on behalf of my constituents in Mission who are concerned about their post office. They call upon the Government of Canada to maintain the full operation of our iconic downtown post office so that small businesses can continue to use those services.

The second petition I would like to raise today is also regarding Canada Post. I will admit it is ironic that I am standing in the House to present this petition, as it is for something the Liberals campaigned against me for in 2015, but my constituents are very concerned with the Liberal government's decision to end door-to-door delivery. While I am totally fine with community mailboxes, some people are not, and I present this petition in good faith.

For my third petition, many Canadians are worried about the sustainability of Canada Post in rural communities across Canada. We know that there are serious problems with the management and oversight of public finances through this Crown corporation right here in Ottawa. It has not been nimble or quick enough to serve Canadian interests or adapt to a modern technology. The petitioners are calling for a change in leadership at Canada Post here in Ottawa to save rural postal services.

• (1540)

ANIMAL WELFARE

Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—Glengarry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the good people of Stormont—Dundas—Glengarry to present a petition.

I want to thank constituent Sue-Anne Atkins for her advocacy and leadership on this animal rights issue. She says that records indicate that hundreds of piglets have been used in Canadian military training exercises despite the availability of more humane and scientifically relevant alternatives.

The 1,509 Canadians who signed this petition are calling upon the Government of Canada to prohibit the use of live animals, including piglets, in Canadian Armed Forces medical and trauma training and to transition to fully modern, non-animal simulation technologies.

I am proud to table this on behalf of the petitioners' today.

COST OF BABY FORMULA

Michael Kram (Regina—Wascana, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to present a petition today on behalf of mothers and fathers in Regina and southern Saskatchewan who are concerned about the rising price of baby formula.

The price of Similac has doubled in the last two years. That represents an expense of approximately \$400 per month for mothers who are unable to breastfeed. The petitioners call for a parliamentary committee to study the root cause of the recent price increase,

Routine Proceedings

whether it be tariffs, price-fixing, government regulations or anything else, and for the committee to make recommendations to keep baby formula affordable and available to Canadians to ensure the health and well-being of infants and mothers.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to present this petition today in the House of Commons.

EMERGENCY ROOMS

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise to table a petition that deals with the Prime Minister's commitment to deliver \$5 billion over three years to improve health care facilities.

The petitioners want to see Seven Oaks emergency services re-established. We are hoping that the provincial government will work collaboratively with the federal government to make that happen.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise to table a petition that was first sponsored by my former NDP colleague, MP Alexandre Boulerice, which he passed on to me because 27,119 signers had raised their concerns.

Ambassadors accredited to Canada are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that respects Canadian sovereignty, values and the principles of diplomacy. Foreign envoys must maintain decorum, impartiality and respect toward the government and people of Canada, and there are concerns that certain actions of and statements by the U.S. ambassador, Pete Hoekstra, have been inconsistent with the standards of conduct expected of a diplomatic representative to Canada.

Therefore, the signers call on the House of Commons to formally review the conduct of U.S. ambassador Pete Hoekstra and, should the review find that the ambassador's actions are inconsistent with diplomatic protocol and detrimental to Canada's interests, the Government of Canada is to take appropriate diplomatic measures, including the possible request for his recall.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present two petitions.

Privilege

The first arises in the aftermath of the referendum that happened in Alberta this week. It is signed by over 40,000 Canadians. The petitioners recognize that the Alberta Prosperity Project, the driving force behind Monday's referendum, has met with officials from the Trump administration seeking financial support. The petitioners note that, with the Trump administration's extortion of Venezuela for its oil and continued threats against Canada's sovereignty, they worry Alberta is a clear target.

The petitioners call on the federal government to invoke its authority under section 53 of the Supreme Court Act to refer the constitutionality of Alberta's Justice Statutes Amendment Act, 2025, to the Supreme Court of Canada and to direct the foreign influence transparency commissioner to immediately investigate the meetings between the Alberta Prosperity Project and the Trump administration.

The second petition raises a similar concern about foreign interference and was signed by nearly 15,000 Canadians.

The petitioners note that Parliament has a responsibility to ensure that political activity in Canada is conducted transparently and free from improper foreign influence, so they call upon the House to mandate that a committee study the risks of foreign interference and foreign funding associated with political advocacy in Canada, including advocacy related to separatist movements. They request that relevant federal authorities assess and report to Parliament the nature and scope of any such risks identified and that we consider any legislative or policy measures necessary to strengthen transparency, enforcement and safeguards against foreign interference and foreign-funded political activity in Canada.

* * *

• (1545)

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

* * *

MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all notices of motions for the production of papers also be allowed to stand.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

PRIVILEGE**ALLEGED MIS-CHARACTERIZATION OF MEMBERS' REMARKS**

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I rise at this moment on a question of privilege arising from remarks made in this place by the hon. member for Halifax on October 7. I have to admit that I do so with sadness, because I much prefer, as a parliamentarian in this place, particularly as a woman parliamentarian, to encourage younger women in politics. In my 15 years as a member of Parliament, this is the first time I have risen on a question of privilege, but I have given one hour's notice of my intention to rise on this day on a question of personal privilege, pursuant to Standing Order 48(1).

I now do so because of the remarks that were made. Let me frame this issue in terms of the offence. The offence is one of imputing improper motives and essentially doing indirectly what a member is not allowed to do directly. In reviewing the hon. member for Halifax's second reading speech on Bill C-39, which I am sure the Speaker shall do, I do believe she violated my privileges and those of others by imputing improper motives and essentially doing indirectly what cannot be done directly, which is basically accusing other members of lying.

I will quote from her speech, in which she said, "This bill [Bill C-39] has been subject to a wild disinformation campaign, some of which has been perpetrated by members of this House." This can only be understood as a direct attack on the honesty—

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, I would ask the hon. member across the way to not heckle me or repeat the same disparaging remarks that gave rise to this question of personal privilege in the first place.

The Speaker: To the hon. member for St. Catharines, we are on a question of privilege, which the Chair would very much like to hear and understand.

Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, this is an important point. Had the hon. member said there was misinformation being spread, I would not be standing here right now. However, as a prominent member in this place and as someone who practised environmental law, has read Bill C-39, takes issue with specific points and ties those points to the text of the legislation, it is deeply offensive to be called a liar through the smear of a "wild disinformation campaign".

It is the job and duty of members of Parliament to study legislation and suggest ways in which legislation can be improved to allow the public to know what our concerns are. In other words, vigorous debate giving rise to disagreement is not a violation of privilege, but to essentially smear the reputation of any member who stands in this place, including the member for Edmonton Strathcona, who was specifically referenced in the member for Halifax's speech as lying about the impact on labour rights, is.

I repeated those same critiques about part 3 of the bill. This is an omnibus bill with many sections. I will try to be concise about this, but the hon. member repeated that this bill is subject to a “wild disinformation campaign”, and she felt it her duty to separate fact from fiction. To be accused of lying and of having motives of disinformation is deeply offensive.

In reference to our parliamentary privileges, and I specifically look at Standing Order 18 of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, fourth edition, there is no question that imputing deliberate deceit and dishonourable motives to parliamentarians, who are fulfilling their constitutional duty to scrutinize legislation, crosses the line. As well, Standing Order 18, and this is established in chapter 3 of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, fourth edition, explicitly prohibits any reflection upon a member's personal or professional integrity, as that obstructs our ability to discharge parliamentary duties without improper interference. There is a very large difference between opposition and deceit.

I did make attempts to ask the hon. member to apologize so I would not find myself standing here and publicly calling out her scurrilous and completely dishonourable speech. In this case, I would conclude by asking that there be a ruling that, in the opinion of this House, the remarks made by the member for Halifax accusing members of a campaign of disinformation constitute an unparliamentary reflection on members' integrity and that she be directed to unequivocally withdraw the remarks.

• (1550)

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member. It has been noted. We will get back to the House on this point.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we take the issue the leader of the Green Party has raised very seriously, but I would advise that we take a look at some of the debates that have taken place. I reference Bill C-9, in particular, as a very emotional debate. Often debates inside the chamber become very emotional due to all sorts of allegations and suggestions, and at times there is misleading information. This is very technical. It is about intentionally making a statement that tries to dishonour, if I can put it that way, another member.

At the end of the day, I have not heard anything from the member across the way that could not be termed as a dispute over facts. I do not see the merit of the Speaker having to investigate it further. I would reserve allowing the member she referenced to provide some additional feedback, but I think if you were to review the debates over the last while, you would see that nothing out of the norm has been said.

Chris Bittle (St. Catharines, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are supposed to bring questions of privilege at the first opportunity available. Even from the member's own statement, she has waited almost two weeks, as there was a constituency week in between, to bring this up.

I agree with the hon. member for Winnipeg North. Nothing improper was said during the statement. We talk about misinformation and disinformation in this House on a regular basis on all sides.

The Deputy Speaker: I will again recognize the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands, but just so this does not cause a debate

Government Orders

about the question of privilege, as that is not the purpose of this, I will note that if the member has additional information that she would like to share, which I assume is from the content of the letter, I will let her add that bit of information before we proceed to orders of the day.

Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the latitude.

I know that the rules require speaking at the earliest opportunity. The speech the member gave on October 7 was at 8 p.m. I spoke on Bill C-39 at 11 p.m., and I was not aware of the member's speech until I saw reference to it in media reports. I then spoke to the Speaker and did attempt to speak directly with the member for Halifax, and I asked for an apology so that I would not have to be in this place now.

I hope that addresses the issue of rising at my earliest opportunity. I did hope to resolve this short of rising on a question of personal privilege.

The Deputy Speaker: I thank all members who provided information. The Speaker will take it back for a response.

I wish to inform the House that because of the deferred recorded division, the time provided for Government Orders will be extended by 12 minutes.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1555)

[English]

SAFE SOCIAL MEDIA ACT

Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture and Minister responsible for Official Languages, Lib.) moved that Bill C-34, An Act to enact the Digital Safety Act and the Digital Safety Commission of Canada Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I will start off by seeking unanimous consent to share my time with the member for Outremont.

The Deputy Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Hon. Marc Miller: Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise today on Bill C-34, the safe social media act.

Upon taking office, the Prime Minister pledged to protect and strengthen Canada, and that is what we are doing today. We have also remained focused on ensuring that as Canadians, we take control of our own destiny, protect what we believe in and pave the way for future generations. That starts with keeping Canadians safe, not only in their communities but online. Today, I am here to reaffirm our government's unwavering commitment to protecting Canadians and, in particular, young Canadians.

Government Orders

[Translation]

We have all seen how online harms have exploded. These harms have real consequences for our communities. We need only think of the Tumbler Ridge tragedy, which claimed eight lives, including six children, and left many more injured. The perpetrator of the shooting used OpenAI's chatbot to get advice. Another example is the young person who was admitted to Toronto's SickKids hospital in a catatonic state after classmates set up a site just to humiliate them.

[English]

The Canadian Centre for Child Protection processes more than 100,000 reports of online child sexual abuse every month. Police-reported online child sexual exploitation incidents rose by 347% between 2014 and 2024 alone. Violent online networks are targeting our children on the platforms they use every day, encouraging them to hurt themselves or even take their own lives. If this activity happened on the playground, the playground would be shut down immediately.

[Translation]

One in four young people say they have been cyberbullied. This represents a 500% increase since 2014. We are also witnessing a rise in mental health challenges, including anxiety, low self-esteem and suicidal thoughts. These figures are alarming. Behind every one of these statistics is a child, parents and a family.

[English]

Over the summer, my colleagues on this side of the House and on the other side of the House and I met with Canadians, experts, parents and young people. Everywhere we went, we heard the same message: We need to act, and we need to act urgently.

[Translation]

Parents, teachers and caregivers cannot be expected to face these challenges alone, nor can they be expected to take on some of the world's most sophisticated technology companies by themselves. Urgent action is needed to hold online services accountable and to ensure that our children are safe on the platforms they are growing up with.

[English]

The reality is that our laws have not kept up and kept pace with technology. Current legislation imposes penalties only after the harm has occurred, rather than preventing it in the first place. This bill, the safe social media act, would establish clear responsibilities for regulated social media services and AI chatbot services operating in Canada. It would place the onus where it belongs: on the platforms themselves. It would ensure their services are safe.

This act is structured around three core duties.

The first is a duty to act responsibly. Social media services would need to assess and mitigate the risks of exposure to seven categories of clear, harmful content, apply labels to synthetically generated content, build safety measures into the design of their platforms, make it easy for Canadians to report and submit complaints, and, finally, provide Canadians with better tools to keep themselves safe, such as blocking and flagging functions. AI chatbot services would have to mitigate the risk of chatbots communicating harmful

content, intervene in crisis situations when a user intends to harm themselves or another person, and mitigate the risk of chatbots engaging in harmful behaviour with our children.

[Translation]

Secondly, social media platforms would have a duty to make certain content inaccessible. Platforms would be required to remove the most serious forms of harmful content within 24 hours of it being flagged or reported. This includes content that sexually victimizes a child or revictimizes a survivor and intimate content communicated without consent.

● (1600)

[English]

Third, the law would establish the duty to protect children. It would require social media and AI chatbot services to implement age-appropriate safeguards. This means building safety into the design of their services and ensuring that children are not exposed to high-risk interactions or harmful content.

[Translation]

This includes an obligation for regulated services to prevent children from accessing pornographic content on their services.

[English]

For regulated social media platforms, this would also mean having a responsibility to prevent children under the age of 16 from having social media accounts. This approach was requested by parents and educators almost unanimously. It is in line with the emerging international approaches to online safety, but this design is made for Canadians.

[Translation]

We expect platforms to adopt age verification and age estimation measures that meet the highest standards of security and privacy protection.

However, the age restriction is just one of the measures in this bill, because we know that the best way to protect young people is to design online spaces to be safe. That is why social media platforms that put sufficient safeguards in place will be able to seek an exemption from the age restriction.

Finally, regulated services will need to be transparent with Canadians and publish digital safety plans detailing how they are meeting their obligations.

We also recognize that Canadians deserve to know how their personal information is being used, shared and protected. That is why my colleague, the Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation, introduced Bill C-36. It represents the most significant change to Canada's private sector privacy law in over 25 years. This bill establishes clear guardrails to protect Canadians' personal information, with a special focus on children's personal information.

Making Canadians safer online, enhancing platforms' accountability and preventing online harms before they occur must be priorities for us and the House.

[English]

The safe social media act would establish conditions necessary for the online services that shape our lives to operate responsibly and, importantly, transparently. It is designed to address current concerns while allowing us to keep pace with technological changes, which often outpace legislation. Finally, it would ensure that our children and Canadians can benefit from new technologies without compromising their safety and privacy.

Canada has been falling behind, and we must ensure that Canadian youth are no less protected than young people elsewhere as our world becomes increasingly digital. We need to act now. Canadians expect action from the House, and we must deliver.

I invite all members to give this bill serious consideration and engage in an open and constructive debate. Our children's safety must be a shared priority that rises above partisan lines. I am committed to working with all members of the House to protect our children online.

Rachael Thomas (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, one of the provisions in Bill C-34 is that those under the age of 16 would not be able to set up or maintain social media accounts. However, that provision is only in place temporarily until social media companies meet a set of guidelines that are yet to be determined. Those guidelines are not defined in the legislation.

For the sake of parents who are seeking clarity on this, I am wondering if the minister would care to expose what those guidelines might be in order to make sure that kids are in fact kept safe once those accounts once again become available to them.

Hon. Marc Miller: Mr. Speaker, I think an important feature to keep kids safe before the harm occurs, as opposed to prosecuting once the damage has occurred, is to make sure we have a regulator in place that can put together precisely these guidelines. I will admit that this bar would be quite high and that there is probably a legitimate debate to be had here and in committee as to what those regulations would be and whether they would be determined by the regulator or perhaps even by committee. Obviously, in the conception of a regulatory platform, regulation should not necessarily be debated in the House on every item. I think that is a careful balance we are willing to consider.

[Translation]

Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette—Manawan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by commending the minister for his bill and his speech.

Government Orders

The Standing Committee on Industry and Technology heard from representatives from Meta as part of our study on fraud. Basically, we learned that there are long delays when fraudulent ads or content are reported. Another witness who represented WealtheSimple said that scammers had impersonated WealtheSimple and that it took more than five days for the fraudulent ad to be taken down. The representative from Meta told us that the company is doing everything it can and that it cannot do any more.

How will the minister ensure that the web giants, the platforms that often seem to think that they are above the law, do comply with the law and co-operate?

● (1605)

Hon. Marc Miller: Mr. Speaker, that is a very good question. We need to be very clear about what the bill can and cannot necessarily cover. I think the issue of online fraud is of great concern to the House, particularly when it comes to the online experiences of our children and young people. Platforms have a duty of care.

This is a first in Canada. I believe it could help address certain aspects of online fraud, but it is clear that we need a highly targeted approach in this area and we must ensure that platforms act responsibly. This is an important first step, but it does not represent the entirety of the debate. I am certain the House will want to continue examining the issue of online fraud, and it may do so through another, more comprehensive bill.

[English]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I really want to express my gratitude that the minister has moved forward on such an important issue that many Canadians are genuinely concerned about. Protecting the interests of our children is so critically important with respect to social media, the advancement of AI and so much more. I wonder if there are individuals whom the minister would like to recognize who have contributed to the development of the legislation.

Hon. Marc Miller: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his advocacy in this matter, and I thank the member for Outremont, as well as members from across the way who have been engaging with citizens. I think there is cross-partisan support for this very targeted bill, which would be doing a very basic thing we need to do as elected officials: to protect our kids. I think that is key. If we cannot get it right, there is probably no reason for us to be here.

Government Orders

Educators, SickKids in Toronto and Alberta Children's Hospital have all been approaching us with the same concerns. If we talk to frontline workers, such as doctors who see kids in the emergency room, and this is gallows humour and everything, we hear that they want to see more broken bones as opposed to broken souls. It is really alarming to talk to doctors and hear them say that 10 years or 15 years ago, this was something they were seeing maybe on a monthly basis. They are now seeing it on a daily basis with their patients.

I want to thank all the doctors and educators and all the people out there who have been advocating for this for some time and holding us to account. I also want to give a particular shout-out to the online protection group in Winnipeg that has been doing amazing work to flag all this garbage online and to make sure people are held to account and put in jail where that is merited.

[Translation]

Hon. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am truly honoured to share my time with the minister himself as we begin debate on his safe social media bill. I sincerely thank him and his team for their leadership.

This debate is about young people's safety, but it is also about their rights and their freedom to learn, connect and express themselves. Our responsibility as parliamentarians is to preserve these rights and freedoms while protecting young people from harm.

• (1610)

[English]

This debate is about the kind of childhood we want our children to have: a childhood with room to explore, to make friends and to make mistakes without those mistakes necessarily following them for the rest of their life, and a childhood in which their safety comes first.

The numbers tell us how much is at stake. Twenty-three per cent of teenagers aged 12 to 17 spend five hours or more a day on social media, one in seven girls in grades 9 and 10 shows signs of addiction, and 52% of teens report receiving unwanted sexual images, mostly through social media platforms. Statistics Canada reports that the rate of police-reported online child luring rose by 65% in 2024, and that number continues to climb. That same year, cyber-tip.ca received more than 2,300 reports of sextortion.

I approach this debate of course as a parliamentarian but also as a mother. My daughter is nine years old. She is not on social media yet, but she is curious about technology and always comes home with stories about TikTok that are being shared in the playground, and I know the decisions so many Canadian parents have made already or are wrestling with today are waiting for me just on the other side: when to say yes, how to say no and how to keep her safe.

Parents are being asked to navigate technologies that evolve faster than most of us can follow, built by some of the largest and most sophisticated companies in the world. We tell parents to set better boundaries. We tell children to show more self-control. Well, it is time we told companies designing these platforms to do better. For too long, we have asked families to take on technology giants by themselves. We have asked children to resist products deliber-

ately designed to hold their attention. It is just not a fair fight, and it is time we changed the rules.

The call for change has come from across Canada: grandparents worried about their grandchildren, parents struggling to set boundaries, teachers seeing the pressures in their classrooms first-hand, and pediatricians and emergency room physicians confronting the consequences on a daily basis.

[Translation]

This call to action has come from people in my own community. In Outremont, our riding association submitted a resolution to make 16 the minimum age for having social media accounts and to require the major platforms to enforce that age restriction. I want to thank all members of our association, especially our chair, Jonathan Nuss, for spearheading this resolution with such conviction.

I was very proud to champion the resolution at our Liberal convention in Montreal in April, where party members from across the country overwhelmingly voted in its favour.

[English]

Going from the concerns of parents and teachers in our community to a debate here in Parliament is what grassroots politics can achieve. That is what democracy is capable of: people coming together, speaking up and pushing for change, and then change coming right here before the people's House in Ottawa. An Angus Reid Institute poll found that three-quarters of Canadians support a ban on social media use for children under 16. This is not a partisan issue. There is room in the House to disagree about the details. There should also be room to work together to get them right.

I have had the privilege of learning from advocates at the Canadian Centre for Child Protection, SickKids, the Canadian Medical Association, Apathy is Boring, Unplugged Canada, Phone-Free Schools Movement, Raising Awareness About Digital Dangers and many others. Their persistence has helped us come to this moment. We have also listened to teenagers. Many told me that they supported an age limit because being online did not feel like much of a choice anymore. When every friend is on the platform, opting out means being left out. We should listen carefully when young people tell us they want help.

Canada is not acting alone. Australia has already implemented a minimum age of 16 for accounts on social media platforms, and other governments are pursuing stronger protections as well. We should learn from those experiences and build an approach grounded in Canadian rights, Canadian values and our responsibility to children. At the heart of that approach is safety by design. That means looking at how a platform works. What does its algorithm recommend? What keeps a child scrolling for six or seven hours? What happens when a child is in distress, and what protections are in place before something goes terribly wrong?

Infinite scroll is a design choice. Autoplay is a design choice. Recommendation systems are design choices. Safety must be a design choice too.

[Translation]

In practical terms, under the bill before us, platforms subject to the age restriction would be required to take measures to prevent young people under the age of 16 from having an account. The bill also allows companies to seek an exemption if they can demonstrate that they have provided adequate safeguards for the protection of children. The decision would be made by the new digital safety commission of Canada, an independent body that sets the conditions for granting an exemption. Companies would have to provide evidence to convince the commission. We want companies to compete to better protect children, not just to keep their attention for as long as possible. They should use their capacity for innovation to keep young people safe.

AI chatbot services would also have certain obligations, particularly to reduce dangerous behaviours and to intervene in crisis situations. An independent regulator would enforce these obligations and would have the power to investigate, issue compliance orders and impose penalties. This framework is based on clear responsibilities, independent oversight and consequences for non-compliance.

• (1615)

[English]

Parliament has important work ahead. We must continue to hear from parents, young people, doctors, teachers, privacy experts and child safety advocates, as well as from the companies that would have to implement these rules. We must protect privacy and freedom of expression and make sure that the rules work in practice. That scrutiny is part of our responsibility, and so is acting. Innovation and accountability can and should go hand in hand. If we can build technology powerful enough to transform society, we can build that technology with children's safety at its core.

My daughter is nine years old. The decisions we make here will help shape the digital world she grows up in. I want her to benefit from technology, but I also want the tech companies building that digital world of the future to take her safety as seriously as I do. That is what every parent wants. That is what we should all want for every child. We are talking here about the next generation of our country.

Lianne Rood (Middlesex—London, CPC): Mr. Speaker, over one of the break weeks in September, I had an opportunity to host two town halls in Middlesex—London, where I heard from parents from all around the communities I am honoured and privileged to

Government Orders

represent. I think we can all agree that parents want to protect their children. We all want to protect children from online predators, but what I heard from parents is that they feel they should have the opportunity, first and foremost, to protect their children, and that they also should have the opportunity to be heard on this matter.

I am asking the government if it will consult with an array of Canadians from across this country to hear from parents what they would like the government to do, just as I did with my own constituents, and take that feedback going forward with this bill to make sure we get it right so we can all protect children from online predators.

Hon. Rachel Bendayan: Mr. Speaker, I would like to assure the hon. member that the conversations will continue. I would like to point out that the minister did extensive consultations over the summer, as did I. Of course, the bill will move to committee if it is passed at second reading in the House, and there will be an opportunity for further study of the bill, where we will again hear from parents.

I would like to point out that what the bill aims to do is to provide additional tools to parents. Nobody would be dictating to parents in any way how to teach or set boundaries for their own children. As my colleague would know from the bill itself, it aims to ensure that young people cannot create accounts, but if a parent would like their child to see something online, that would still remain possible.

I hope we will have the opportunity to work together so I can help address some of the concerns the member may have.

[Translation]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski-Neigette—Mitis—Matapédia—Les Basques, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I commend my colleague on her speech.

I agree with her that it is necessary, and indeed urgent, to regulate access to platforms, particularly to protect young people. What worries me is the issue of transparency or, more specifically, democratic oversight. My colleague mentioned that the government wants to create a new digital safety commission, but the bill does not specify which platforms it would regulate, nor is it clear what powers this new commission will have.

Can my colleague explain to us what specific new powers she wants this commission to have? We are willing to support a good idea from the government, but we do not know how this new commission will work. I get the impression that something is being created without any clear explanation as to how this will solve the problem.

Hon. Rachel Bendayan: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question from my colleague from the Bloc Québécois.

Government Orders

Yes, the bill before the House provides for the creation of a commission. The process will be conducted in a very transparent manner, but we are not there yet. If my colleague has any suggestions regarding the commission's powers beyond those already listed in the bill, we are ready to discuss them and work with him so that we can collaborate with the Bloc Québécois to move the bill forward.

• (1620)

Hon. Greg Fergus (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to commend my colleague for her speech and for her work on this bill.

I would like her to know that many of my constituents are concerned that the tech giants are behaving as though they bear no responsibility for what their algorithms show or what content appears on their platforms. I would like to know whether the parliamentary secretary is satisfied that this bill is a step in the right direction toward ensuring that everyone involved is held accountable for the content on their platforms.

Hon. Rachel Bendayan: Mr. Speaker, I can confirm that the bill before us will ensure better regulation of social media and better protection for young people online. It is indeed a step in the right direction.

In my opinion, a tremendous amount of work remains to be done. As we can see, the technologies keep evolving, but we absolutely must act, and now is the time.

[English]

Rachael Thomas (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there was a time when children spent their afternoons riding bikes around their neighbourhoods and families gathered around the dinner table and discussed their day. They caught up with friends after school, which, of course, meant meeting in person or picking up the land-line, often tethered to the wall, and making a phone call. An embarrassing moment at school might become the talk of the playground the next day, but it would never follow a child home in the form of a viral video. While children have always faced dangers from strangers in the past, those encounters were more likely to happen in person, where a stranger would have to go through a school or a parent to access the child.

Today's reality is very different. Children can now be reached by strangers through a screen in the privacy of their own bedroom. An embarrassing moment can be recorded, shared and viewed by thousands of people within seconds, and harmful content can appear on a child's screen without warning, while addictive algorithms are designed to keep young users scrolling long after they should have logged off. Today's children face a set of challenges unlike any previous generation in this regard. It is important for us to underscore the seriousness and severity of those challenges.

From an early age, children are exposed to digital devices, and they spend hours navigating online spaces, where the risks are not always apparent but often appear when it is too late. They face addictive algorithms designed to capture their attention, and they keep scrolling, often at the expense of sleep, physical activity and face-to-face interaction. They are exposed to harmful and inappropriate content, including material that can be disturbing, misleading or unsuitable for their age, and this happens without them even searching for it or wanting it.

They face cyber-bullying and online harassment where degrading comments, humiliating images and personal information can spread rapidly and remain accessible long after they have logged off. The consequences can be serious and long-lasting, leading to anxiety, depression, low self-esteem and social isolation. The spread of humiliating content can also damage a child's reputation or affect their academic performance, often leaving them feeling unsafe even in their own homes.

They are also vulnerable to online predators who can use anonymity to privately message them, gain a child's trust to manipulate them and exploit their vulnerability. The Canadian Centre for Child Protection reports that it receives over 100,000 reports every single month with regard to child exploitation. In fact, it is so grave that authorities simply cannot keep up. As children grow up online, they face growing concerns about privacy and mental health from the permanent circulation of personal images and the pressure of comparing themselves to the carefully curated and often half-false versions of other people's lives. These are serious challenges for children that, of course, have lasting implications. These children are still developing the judgment and maturity that they need to recognize risks and protect themselves.

Consider the case of Amanda Todd, a young British Columbia teenager whose story brought national and international attention to the dangers of online exploitation and cyber-bullying. At just 12 years old, Amanda Todd was targeted by an online predator operating from the Netherlands, thousands of kilometres away from her home in British Columbia. He persuaded her to expose herself on a webcam and saved the image for later. He used it to blackmail her, threatening to share it with her friends and family if she did not continue to do things for him. What followed was years of exploitation and harassment, online and off-line. Amanda died by suicide at the age of 15 due to this experience. Amanda's story is a devastating reminder that the Internet has no borders. A predator thousands of kilometres away was able to reach a Canadian child, exploit her trust and inflict lasting harm without ever being physically present in her life.

• (1625)

More recently, the tragedy in Tumbler Ridge, British Columbia, raised serious questions with regard to the role that artificial intelligence can play in the lives of young people, as well as the responsibility that technology companies have to protect the general public. On February 10, a shooting in Tumbler Ridge claimed the lives of eight people, including five students, and it forever altered the life of Maya, who has been left with life-altering injuries. This tragedy devastated families, it crushed a community, and it shook our entire country. In the months since, reports have emerged about the shooter's interaction with an artificial intelligence chatbot before the attack. The company has confirmed that an account associated with the shooter had been flagged and closed months before the tragedy, but nothing further had been done. A platform's inaction and negligence resulted in one of Canada's very worst mass shootings.

The reality is clear. Children are increasingly exposed to online risks, parents are struggling to keep up with rapidly evolving technology, and online platforms are failing to do enough to protect children and support families. Platform operators will often claim that they are adding safety features or tools for parents to use, but these are often buried in hard-to-find places and are too complicated for busy parents to be able to use. Sometimes parents are not tech-savvy enough, either. The truth of the matter is that the platforms' first priority is not the protection of children but rather their commercialization and, of course, making a profit, often at the expense of the safety and well-being of Canada's young people.

Canadians and legislators are saying enough is enough. We want to move forward. We want to make a difference. Platforms must be held accountable because they cannot be trusted to regulate themselves. We have tried that for too long. As legislators, therefore, it is our responsibility to ensure that online platforms are held accountable for their actions and the impact of their products. We must put legislation in place that truly empowers parents by putting control in their hands rather than in the hands of big tech.

I have heard from many parents who want legislation that reflects the concerns they face every day as they try to keep their children safe online. They want platforms to address harmful content and features that can negatively affect their children's mental health and well-being, rather than designing online experiences that put that well-being at risk. They want their children to be able to enjoy the benefits of technology without sacrificing their confidence, their sleep or their mental health. They want to know that their children will not be exposed to sexually explicit material while browsing the internet. They want platform operators to take responsibility for preventing children from accessing this material, rather than leaving parents to discover and address the problem when it is too late.

Parents want their children protected from online predators and from those who seek to manipulate, exploit or harm them. The non-consensual sharing of intimate images can have devastating consequences for children and their families. AI makes it easier than ever to create convincing yet fake intimate images of real people, putting children at great risk of humiliation, harassment and lasting harm. Parents rightly expect platforms to act swiftly to remove these images and take meaningful steps to prevent them from being created and shared in the first place. These are not unreasonable de-

Government Orders

mands. They are the concerns of parents who love their children and deeply want to protect them.

Parents are not asking the government to take over their role. Parents know their children better than any government official or any technology company ever could. Their judgment and their authority must be respected in whatever legislation is put forward. The role of government and online platforms should be to support parents, not replace them. That support must also come with safeguards for the privacy of children and their families. Furthermore, parents expect law enforcement agencies to have the necessary tools to investigate child exploitation and bring perpetrators to justice, all while upholding Canadians' constitutional freedoms.

Any legislation intended to keep kids safe and empower parents must address these concerns, which brings me to Bill C-34, the bill up for debate today. It has potential, but its success would depend on whether it would deliver meaningful protections for children and give parents the necessary support they need. Good intentions are not enough. We must look carefully at whether this bill's stated intent would in fact be achieved.

• (1630)

My colleagues and I have held dozens of town hall meetings across this country, and we have surveyed those in our communities. Canadian parents have a lot of questions about the bill. They want to know if the legislation would actually make the difference that they need. For example, the bill would require platforms to implement safe design features, but what that would really mean in practice is not transparent in the bill. How would the government ensure that recommendation algorithms, autoplay functions or notifications are designed with children's well-being in mind? Much of the detail of the legislation is left until later.

I have heard from parents who are concerned about the amount of time their children spend online and the difficulty of setting boundaries in an environment designed to keep them engaged. Imagine being a mother who wants her child to put their phone down to get a good night's sleep and to focus on school. She can set rules at home, but she cannot control the algorithms that are being used to influence her child and where her child looks. There are no settings with regard to notifications and when to draw them back or to turn off the device during school hours.

Government Orders

Many parents are asking about the regulations that are to be established after the bill is passed, and let us be honest, there are a lot of them that are to come later. They want to see real tools that would allow them as parents to set boundaries regarding who their children are connecting with, or to manage screen time and restrict inappropriate content. They want clear, accessible settings that work. There are also important questions about how this legislation proposes to restrict young people's access to social media.

If the government imposes a blanket social media ban for children under 16, what happens next? Young people tell me that they will find a workaround, and parents confirm that this is true. They know it. Many of these kids are smart. Australia applied a ban, and 70% of its youth are still plugged in, so what assurance do we have that Canada's model would actually be more effective?

Many parents are also concerned about age verification. Since these measures would apply to all social media users, regardless of age, Canadians want to know exactly how their identity would be verified. Would Canadians be asked to submit government-issued identification, biometric data or other sensitive personal information, and if so, what are the regulations that would guide that? What safeguards would ensure that this information is not retained, misused or exposed in a data breach?

In my conversation with parents, video games come up constantly. Kids spend hours on platforms like Roblox and Minecraft, where grooming and exploitation happen regularly. Why does Bill C-34 focus heavily on social media feeds while leaving these major gaming environments entirely out?

Other parents have pointed out that AI chatbots are now widely accessible. Dedicated platforms such as OpenAI offer chatbot services, while similar tools are increasingly available on social media platforms like Instagram. Over the summer, a doctor shared with me a very heartbreaking story. She told me about a patient of hers who suffered from severe bullying. Looking for help, the young girl asked an AI chatbot how to end her life by overdosing on iron pills. When she hesitated to swallow that many pills, the chatbot actually suggested an alternative way of being able to consume them. The girl did as the chatbot told her and ended up in the hospital. Fortunately, however, she was saved. This is alarming. A child who was already struggling, who needed support and compassion, turned to a chatbot for answers and received instructions that were meant to end her life.

Bill C-34 introduces duties for chatbot services and automated systems, but how would the government ensure that these safeguards apply wherever children might turn for help within the AI system, whether through social media, independent chat apps or educational tools? Parents want to know the answers to these questions.

Parents are also asking fair questions about the digital safety commission, which would be created under Bill C-34. Given the tremendous power that would be granted to the commission to act as rule-maker, investigator, enforcer and judge, what specific checks and balances does Bill C-34 include to ensure the new commission would not abuse its extensive power and would in fact respect the rights and freedoms of Canadians? These are important questions, because the details of the legislation would affect what

Canadians could access online, how platforms would operate and how children's safety would or would not be protected.

When so much is left up to future decisions by a regulatory body to be made behind closed doors with no accountability, Canadians need clarity. They need clarity about the limits of the authority that would be given to this commission and the safeguards that would be given to make it work for us as Canadians.

● (1635)

Protecting children online is not a partisan issue. Parents across Canada want to know that their children can use technology safely without being exposed to exploitation, dangerous content or preventable harm. Legislation must address these concerns in practical and effective ways. We must ensure that online platforms are held accountable for the design choices they make and the risks they create. We must give parents accessible and easy-to-use tools to protect their children. Parents want to be empowered. We must ensure that safeguards keep pace with emerging technologies, including artificial technology, and we must do all of this while protecting the privacy and constitutional rights of Canadians. This is what is required. It is a tall order, but I do believe it is possible.

The government cannot simply tell parents that their children are safer because a bill has been passed. It must demonstrate that the measures introduced will actually work and will actually make a difference. To that end, Bill C-34 needs to be studied carefully with input from children, parents, doctors, child psychologists, law enforcement officials, technology and artificial intelligence specialists, civil liberty advocates and other witnesses who can help us understand the risks children face online and determine how best to address them.

Protecting kids online is non-negotiable for Conservatives. It is a must, which is why we are thankful that the government is finally doing something. This is the Liberals' third attempt after all. However, good intentions require sound mechanisms. We are focused on holding tech giants accountable and empowering parents, not expanding government bureaucracy. As the bill before us moves to committee, we will scrutinize its provisions to ensure that it delivers real protection, because we owe it to Canadian families to get this right.

[Translation]

The Deputy Speaker: 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 Oxford, Public Safety; the hon. member for Edmonton Strathcona, Steel and Aluminum Industry; the hon. member for Algonquin—Renfrew—Pembroke, Taxation.

[English]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the presentation of Bill C-34 and the establishment of things such as the safety commission clearly demonstrates that there is political will. I believe that political will is on all sides of the House in anticipation that we will see necessary legislation to protect our children. The member makes a good example with the number of files she raised.

The question I have for the member is related to the importance of recognizing, and she made reference to the safety commission, that the safety commission has the capability to address directly some of the issues that she raised as concerns for our young people. I agree, there needs to be accountability, and I look forward to the legislation ultimately going to committee.

I would like to hear her thoughts on that.

● (1640)

Rachael Thomas: Mr. Speaker, I spent the summer speaking with Canadians from coast to coast with regards to this legislation and the concerns they carry. One of them, with regard to the safety commission, is the fact that there is this bureaucratic body that will be set up in order to determine the regulations that will guide our way forward concerning safety online for children. However, it is more than that. This commission is meant to exist with a minimum of five people but, according to the legislation, it can exist with as few as one person. One individual could have the ability to carry out all of the power that is vested in the commission. There are legal experts who have brought to our attention that this power is vested in no other body in any other democratic country in the world. That deserves careful consideration.

[Translation]

Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette—Manawan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by congratulating my colleague on her very moving and poignant speech. Indeed, urgent action is needed to protect our young people and improve digital safety.

My colleague referred to the measures put in place in Australia that did not produce the desired results. Can she tell us what lessons we can learn from the measures introduced in Australia? What role

should the federal government play in ensuring safety, and what role should the provinces play?

[English]

Rachael Thomas: Mr. Speaker, in Australia, there was legislation put in place that essentially banned anyone under the age of 16 from setting up or maintaining a social media account. Within their legislation, they outlined 10 specific social platforms. What ended up happening is that many young people just went to other platforms that were not regulated. Of course, there is an argument to be said that this actually drives young people into the dark web, which is potentially dangerous.

There is another thing that happened in Australia. When the legislation was independently reviewed in terms of its effect or its impact, it was found that, three months after it was implemented, only 30% of youth had complied. In other words, 70% of youth accounts still existed and 70% of young people were still online within these social media platforms. There are questions there with regard to the efficacy of the legislation and whether it can work. I think that is one of the things we will be bringing to committee. What changes would be needed for the legislation to be successful?

Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for her concern for the victims of Tumbler Ridge, Maya, of course, and also Paige, who is another survivor.

This gives me a chance to highlight one thing. I would like to say a special thanks to Kash Patel, director of the FBI; Mike Harrington, special agent in charge of the FBI in Washington state; Michael Duheme, RCMP commissioner; and Elija Rain, assistant commissioner, B.C. RCMP, for their work in apprehending James Cody Bryant.

I have less of a question and more of a comment. I just want to thank the hon. member for showing her heart for Maya and for the victims' families. They watch this kind of thing and they appreciate it. They are not forgotten. I also want to thank the hon. member for her concern about Canadians' privacy. In the effort to protect our kids, we cannot lose that effort.

Rachael Thomas: Mr. Speaker, I will comment on the last thing there, and that was with regard to the importance of protecting privacy while simultaneously protecting children. It can be done. That is where I would ask the members of the House to come with a surgical instrument to the legislation and to figure out exactly the best way forward. We do need to make sure that kids are kept safe within their online experience. We also need to make sure that the rights and freedoms and the privacy rights of Canadians are also upheld. In fact, the UN draws attention to this with regard to the rights of the child and making sure that those are maintained. I do look forward to further discussion on that.

● (1645)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to go back to the digital safety commission because I think it is a very important aspect of the legislation.

Government Orders

Can the member give a clear indication whether, in principle, the Conservative Party recognizes the value of having such a commission?

Rachael Thomas: Mr. Speaker, Conservatives very much believe that platforms need to be held accountable. For too long, they have been left to exist according to their own rules.

The government has been in power for 11 years. The Liberals had come to the table with several pieces of legislation before this that were turned down by the Canadian public because they got it wrong. I think that within Bill C-34, they have brought forward the commission as their answer to holding platforms accountable.

There absolutely needs to be a body, a regulator, that brings about that accountability. In terms of the scope of authority given to that commission, I think there are big questions pertaining to Bill C-34. I look forward to diving deep into those.

[Translation]

Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is my turn to congratulate my colleague from Lethbridge on her speech. I was moved when she mentioned Amanda Todd and the tragedy in Tumbler Ridge. I found those events very upsetting. I fully support her statement that platforms that host content, whatever it may be, must be held accountable for the content that is made available to everyone, but especially to young people and vulnerable youth.

I agree that platforms must be held accountable. However, my colleague and I may not agree on how to do that. Does she think that platforms should be more transparent, for example when they are asked, for obvious reasons, to disclose their algorithms or the reports they have carried out on measures implemented to ensure user safety? I would like to know how far my colleague thinks platforms' accountability should extend.

[English]

Rachael Thomas: Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member might be pleased to find out that we may actually agree a little more than he thinks.

At the end of the day, platforms need to be held accountable. That is not going to happen without us, as legislators, requiring something of them. That "something of them" has to include transparency. They must be transparent about the actions they are taking and the impact of those actions that are being taken. They must be transparent with regard to the things they are doing to mitigate risk and how effective those actions are.

Furthermore, if platforms are found not to be in compliance with this legislation and the forthcoming regulations, then platforms need to be held accountable. Those measures do in fact need to be in place if we are going to generate change going forward.

Bob Zimmer: Mr. Speaker, I was chair of the ethics committee when we were holding Facebook to account. We challenged the then corporations and the platforms. Apple was one example, and it is often one of the best groups to self-police and to actually develop technology to best keep Canadians and kids safe.

Does the member think that instead of government, the platforms should be held more accountable for keeping kids safe?

Rachael Thomas: Mr. Speaker, certainly, the responsibility needs to rest with the platforms. This legislation, obviously, should outline a basis on which those platforms are held accountable, which is where we take some issue with the legislation because it leaves a lot up to regulation, which is to come later.

[Translation]

Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, to begin with, I would like to acknowledge my colleagues who spoke before me on this bill, which I consider to be one of the most important bills before this Parliament. It is extremely important, but also extremely overdue. This comes as no surprise, because with this government, everything happens a little too late, everything happens a little too hastily, and everything is handled rather clumsily at times.

I must say that Bill C-34 has several positive aspects, but above all, it raises a number of points for discussion. I really appreciated the minister's openness at the outset, when he introduced this bill in the House in June. His first instinct after introducing it was to reach out and say that he would love to talk about it, to discuss it, because he would like to know where we stand on the issue, what our position is, and how we could work together to improve the bill. I presume he took the same approach with colleagues from other parties in the House.

It is that spirit of openness that leads to well-crafted legislation that takes into account different perspectives and beliefs. It also enables us, as parliamentarians, to make our voices heard and to represent our constituents by consulting them, as my colleague from Lethbridge said earlier. She mentioned that she had met with constituents over the summer and discussed the issues addressed by this bill. Many parents have expressed concerns, often feeling overwhelmed by technologies that literally captivate our children and can take them places we dare not imagine. In fact, parents are often unaware of what their children are exposed to until it is too late.

The government should not wait for tragedy to strike before taking action on the toxic content found online. The government should not wait for such events to occur before introducing legislation. Despite the truly shocking and tragic incidents that have occurred over the last few years, the government still dragged its feet. It waited until 2026 to bring forward legislation aimed at addressing online content that is harmful to young social media users in particular.

I would remind members that, in the previous Parliament, we had Bill C-63, an omnibus bill that we tried to split up. We tried to split the bill so that we could quickly pass part 1, which was basically in the same spirit as Bill C-34. Most members of the House thought that we could come to an agreement on that part, so we said, let us split the bill, take care of the part that can be dealt with quickly and work together like adults.

I think we all feel this issue transcends party lines. After all, we are talking about young people's safety, our children's future, and how to keep them safe as they navigate an environment that we do not even fully understand ourselves. It was high time that we addressed this issue, so I welcome the introduction of Bill C-34, even though there are still a lot of things that need to be discussed.

The Bloc Québécois is open to this legislation. As I just said, and I think it is rather clear, we agree with the principle of the bill. Obviously, like everyone here, and especially as parents, we care a lot about these issues and are deeply concerned about them.

I have teenagers who spend far too much time on screens, especially on their phones and on platforms like Snapchat, Instagram and obviously TikTok, which I am not happy about. They are exposed to content over which I have little or no control. That troubles me as a parent.

Where do we draw the line? How do we supervise our children without stopping them from participating in activities that are part of their social life these days? Whether we like it or not, whether we think it is a good idea or not, a big part of their life happens on these platforms. It is their social network, unfortunately. The name says it all. That damned name says it all. It is a social network that we, as parents and legislators, have a duty to supervise, but we also have a duty to do more to hold the platforms accountable. I will come back to that.

• (1650)

I would like to share a few figures and statistics that illustrate the extent to which screens and social media have become a part of our lives, particularly among young people. Some 50% of children aged seven to 11 have access to a mobile device and use it on a daily basis. Again, that is one in two children aged seven to 11. Some 83% of children from grade 4 to the end of high school have a mobile device, which is pretty much everyone, and 100% of young people aged 15 and over use the Internet. Kids spend an average of three to five hours a day in front of a screen for entertainment, and most of that time is without parental supervision. That means they are free to go pretty much anywhere the social media platform or website they are using allows them. I think these figures should give any parent cause for concern, worry and even alarm.

Why do we need legislation? Why do we have to legislate on this issue? First, as I said a moment ago, we have a role to play as legislators because this is not only a societal issue, but a health issue as well. We must not overlook a single tool. In this case, our tool is our ability to draft and vote on laws and work as hard as possible to ensure that our laws are minimally imperfect and meet our objective as much as possible. As the saying goes, "It takes a village to raise a child". Imagine social media as a supercity; it takes everyone to navigate it and regulate it safely.

There is an important reality that we need to understand, one that I have explored in some depth through discussions with stakeholders in this sector. The Bloc Québécois has met with a number of them, as have my colleagues. In fact, the critics from the various parties have met with many of the same people. What has become clear to me is the extent to which social media is designed to captivate, to literally capture people's attention and keep it for as long as possible. That is their business model. That is how these platforms

generate revenue. It is similar to television, where they try to get the best viewing numbers. Social media operates on the same principle. They use algorithms as a tool to attract young people and keep them engaged. Algorithms are a trap. They act like a tunnel, guiding users to destinations they could never have anticipated when they first set off down that path.

Mr. Speaker, there is a lot of noise. Might I ask that you put a stop—

• (1655)

The Deputy Speaker: Yes, I just asked someone to go and tell the people outside the chamber to keep it down. I know it is rather noisy.

Order seems to have been restored. However, I would like to remind the members who are walking around outside the chamber that their conversations are disrupting the proceedings.

I invite the hon. member for Drummond to continue his speech.

Martin Champoux: Mr. Speaker, that is my fan club. I cannot control them. I am really sorry.

I want to come back to the idea of social media platforms and the algorithms they use to attract not just young people, but adults as well. We are talking about young people and saying that they are vulnerable, but often adults are too. Let us face it. Sometimes we fall asleep with our phone in our hand after spending too long watching silly videos, although we do also watch intelligent content.

That said, the platforms use these algorithms to get young people addicted to their content. I want to say it again. Sometimes the content is very low quality, completely inane. It is not going to help our young people become doctors or great researchers. I think it is important for this law to be enacted and it is important to hold the platforms accountable.

Government Orders

It is also important for parents to understand their role. Parents have good intentions. I never question parents' good intentions in raising their children, but I do think that parents are quite literally overwhelmed. I can see this. These tools, the social media and the platforms specifically designed for young people, are not necessarily from the parents' generation. They also feel a bit overwhelmed by them. That is also why Parliament needs to step in and tell parents that it is going to create a framework and that everyone is going to play a role. There will be legislation. The representatives of these platforms will be held accountable for the content they host and make accessible to young people. The government needs to hold them accountable for any harmful content that ends up on their platforms. They will need to be accountable for their content. They need to understand that however much money they invest in developing tools to attract young people, they should be investing at least as much, if not more, in protecting their users from this extremely dangerous content.

There is the matter of age. I know that can be a sensitive subject. We have seen what is being done in other places like Australia. We have talked about it. Earlier, I heard my colleagues talking in their speeches about what is being done in Australia. We are also looking at what is being done in Europe. The idea of banning social media is one of the concerns that I raised from the very beginning in the conversations that I had with all of the stakeholders I met with. I told them right away that I disagreed with banning it. I disagree with a ban because when a young person is banned from doing something, it basically turns into forbidden fruit. They will definitely find a way around the restrictions. If members do not believe me, just ask my parents. My parents will tell them that when a young person is banned from doing something, they will find a way to do it anyway. It is true. I am kidding around, but anyone who has teenagers or who remembers being a teenager knows that when teens are banned from doing something, their first reaction is not to quietly accept the decision and agree that they are not allowed to do it. Their first reaction is to find a way to do it anyway, because they feel like going on social media. If we choose to ban young people from using social media, we are just going to end up dealing with the problem of them getting around the ban. We will also lose an opportunity to teach, train, warn and protect them, because we will simply be turning a blind eye and saying that social media has been banned and is no longer a problem. We risk losing control.

That was my position before we began these extensive consultations. I must admit that I still have not reached a definitive conclusion about what solution we should adopt when it comes to restricting or prohibiting access to these platforms. I am much more open-minded today than I was at the outset, largely because I have heard perspectives that I found both compelling and relevant. With respect to a ban, my esteemed colleague from Lethbridge spoke earlier about what Australia did. She rightly pointed out that restricting access to social media for youth under 16 has not been as effective as some had hoped. Many young people have kept their accounts, while others have found ways around the restrictions by using VPNs or providing false information when creating accounts. However, there has still been a significant reduction in the number of young users on these platforms in Australia. My understanding is that the numbers have fallen by 30% or 35%. I do not have the exact figures here, but it is somewhere around there.

● (1700)

This measure was implemented in December 2025. It has not even been in place for a full year, yet the number of people under 16 who are active on social media has dropped by about 35%. Some might say it was not a success, that it failed, but we could also look at it from a different angle and point out that there are now 30% fewer young people online. Maybe they replaced their screen time with something else, like playing outside, participating in activities, reading a book or socializing. Whatever alternative they chose, their time was not spent on social media, because they had no access to it. While it may not have been the resounding success that was hoped for, the minister is no Harry Potter. There is no magic involved. I do not think that we should look on it as a failure. As a measure, it can be adjusted based on the progress or observations made over time. In my opinion, a measure implemented in 2025 that has achieved a 30% success rate should not be dismissed out of hand.

All of this brings me to a conversation that really took me by surprise. I was in my riding last week, and I met some exceptional individuals in a confidential setting. I am sorry, but I cannot discuss the details, regardless of parliamentary privilege. One of those exceptional individuals was a physician, Dr. Caroline Bissonnette-Roy, to whom I extend my regards. She works in the community, specifically at the Centre de pédiatrie sociale en communauté Les Petits bonheurs, a pediatric care centre in Drummondville. As everyone knows, these kinds of centres work miracles. The staff there are fantastic.

In a conversation with this doctor, we spoke specifically about young people in vulnerable situations. Obviously, the parents of these young people often do not have much education and do not have a lot of time to devote to this part of their kids' lives. She told me about her day-to-day work, about the children she saw who were psychologically affected by excessive screen time. Often, in certain situations, parents prefer to leave their kids to fend for themselves, for various reasons. I am not judging, obviously. There are all sorts of circumstances, all sorts of contexts. She is seeing this in her own community, in her practice. She is seeing the damage caused by excessive screen time for these kids.

We also discussed the situation in Australia. An article had just been published that discussed the relatively questionable success rate of this measure. She told me she was in favour of a total ban, based on what she was seeing, of course. She sees some very difficult cases. She told me that we should ban social media entirely for anyone under the age of 16 or 18. We need to teach young people to go play outside, as I was saying earlier. We need to teach them to go out, go to the park, play hockey in the street, and do activities just like we used to when we were that age. We managed to get by just fine without cellphones.

She told me that, as far as she was concerned, if we could get children away from screens and social media, that would be a victory, regardless of how many children we save. Whether we save 20%, 30% or 40% of them does not matter. It is going to be a victory because, according to her, we are literally going to save these young people. Their brains will develop normally, without being stunted by excessive screen time and exposure to the kind of content found on TikTok and other platforms that young people use.

I thought that was an interesting perspective. I think we need to take advantage of the minister's open-mindedness and the government's willingness to reach out. Let us hope that this will also be the case when the bill is studied in committee. The government seems to be willing to reach out and listen to various perspectives and perhaps to adjust certain positions that may be too strict according to some or too soft according to others. I think we are going to end up with something that truly measures up to expectations. I feel strange saying this, but the whole world is watching. I said the same thing when we were talking about Bill C-11, the Online Streaming Act. The whole world was watching us then too. Somebody needed to start regulating online streaming platforms.

• (1705)

So far, not many countries have taken the lead, shown some backbone and decided to legislate on these issues. I think we owe it to our young people to do this. We also need to do it for the benefit of the entire world. That may sound a bit hyperbolic, but I think it is true. Suffice it to say that we need to adopt robust, binding measures for the digital companies that control these algorithms, which we now know are so harmful to the development of our young people. We need to show that we will not back down and that we are going to set up a system that will hold the right people accountable. When I say that, I am not just talking about the platforms. I am also talking about parents, because we need to give them the best tools we can. As legislators, we absolutely must stand up and do something to try to reverse these negative side effects that are literally destroying an entire generation.

I think this is a topic we feel passionately about. We will also be able to discuss video games, which are another place where young people get exposed to all kinds of content through video game chat platforms. We are going to have to address a lot of different issues. I am really looking forward to studying this bill in committee. Bill C-34 is an extremely important bill. It places a heavy responsibility on our shoulders, and we must carry out this work as responsibly as possible.

David Myles (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture and Minister responsible for Official Languages and to the Secretary of State (Nature), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working in committee with the member for Drummond and with the member for Lethbridge to do this work. I just heard my colleague say that this is an extremely important issue in Canada right now. I believe we share the same concerns, not only as Canadians, but also as parents. I also have teenagers, so I understand where the member for Drummond is coming from.

Given this spirit of openness and given the concerns we share, I am wondering what you think will be the biggest challenges we

Government Orders

will face in committee as we work to develop a law that works for Canadians.

• (1710)

The Deputy Speaker: I would like to remind the member to avoid using the second person to address other members. He must address his remarks through the Chair.

That said, I invite the member for Drummond to share his thoughts.

Martin Champoux: Mr. Speaker, I thought the question was for you. That was my understanding. No? Then I will answer. That is an excellent question, and I thank my colleague, the parliamentary secretary, for asking it.

I think we are going to run into a number of challenges. The biggest challenge we may face is pleasing everyone. Based on the correspondence that we have received regarding Bill C-34, some people's opinions already seem rather entrenched. I think we need to create an environment conducive to open and respectful dialogue, where we listen to opinions that require us to adjust our positions on different aspects of the bill.

In my opinion, the challenge lies in coming up with a bill we can all agree on, a bill that offers something for everyone so the final result suits everyone's needs. It will be a challenge, which is why I say it will need to be a collaborative undertaking that is carried out responsibly and in a spirit of co-operation.

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski-Neigette—Mitis—Matapédia—Les Basques, BQ): Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage, my colleague took part in a study on the impact of influencers and social media. As part of its study, the committee made recommendations to the government, including a recommendation to take a more flexible approach. As everyone knows, youth protection is very much the responsibility of Quebec and the provinces.

I would like my colleague to talk a bit more about this, specifically about adopting an approach that is much more focused on the realities on the ground in every area where this phenomenon may occur. These are the issues we want to tackle today.

Martin Champoux: Mr. Speaker, that is an excellent point that I was unfortunately unable to address as I only had 20 minutes for my speech. Yes, the jurisdictions of Quebec and the provinces will have to be respected.

One aspect of Bill C-34, or the approach we feel will have to be taken, is education. As members know, education falls within the jurisdiction of Quebec and the provinces. It will therefore be important for the committee, as part of its study, to hear from all the provincial legislatures and the National Assembly to ensure that there is no encroachment. We must ensure that any recommendations that we end up implementing respect the constitutional division of powers, if they relate to education, health care or community-based services, for example.

Government Orders

He makes an excellent point. There are issues of potential encroachment on provincial powers. We will need to take this into account and exercise caution.

[English]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate many of the words the member put on the record. I, too, am very concerned about algorithms. I think we should all be concerned about algorithms and the impact they have on the Internet. No one is saying that the Internet is bad, but we need to recognize that when it comes to platforms and algorithms, there is a role for government to play in terms of regulation. I really appreciate the member's comments.

Does the member see anything offhand that the legislation should be incorporating that it is not necessarily addressing? Is there something specific, potentially in the form of an amendment, that he would like to see?

[Translation]

Martin Champoux: Mr. Speaker, at this stage, I do not see anything that needs amending. I cannot think of any amendments off the top of my head. I think there will be a lot of discussion before we get to the point of drafting amendments.

There is one thing that might be worth taking a closer look at: video games, the video game industry. There is a lot of discussion going on, and it is an industry that has regulated itself effectively and is well-equipped to detect potential predatory behaviour. These are people who may not traditionally be heard in this context, and I think it will be helpful to include them in the discussion.

Other questions will certainly arise along the way. It is a little too early for me to think about amendments.

• (1715)

[English]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I want to pick up on some of the criticisms, or highlights, by Conservative Party members in regard to the safety commission. Having a digital safety commission is a critical component to the legislation. It is one of the ways we can ensure the protection of our children.

I am wondering if Bloc members have taken any sort of principled position in regard to that aspect of the legislation. Do they see the principle of having that commission as a positive thing?

[Translation]

Martin Champoux: Mr. Speaker, the answer is yes. There is a positive element to it, but much will depend on the powers ultimately granted to the commission in question. I believe it is important to have an independent body somewhat along the lines of what we see with a quasi-judicial tribunal such as the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, or CRTC. The CRTC has its flaws, but no one can say that we would be better off without it and with the government acting as the sole regulator.

The role of this commission will need to be defined. We would also need to ensure that it is independent from the government and that the minister is not constantly intervening in its decisions or proceedings. I think that is important. It is also important for the

commission to have teeth, that it be able to take enforcement action, identify offenders and be given the tools it needs to do its job properly.

If the commission is structured in such a way as to be effective and as independent as possible from political power, since it can never be 100% independent, I do think that a commission is necessary in such a context.

[English]

Rachael Thomas (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will pick up where he left off with regard to the commission. The commission is one example of a regulatory body that could be used to make sure platforms are held accountable and that could give this legislation "teeth". Another body that could be used is the CRTC, which is already in existence. The CRTC already receives complaints with regard to telecommunications, for example, and investigates those complaints and then applies fines when an organization or institution is found to not be in compliance.

The government has decided to create a commission, give it broad sweeping authority and leave many of its decisions up to regulation, which would be put in place behind closed doors with very little accountability. Does this concern the Bloc member at all?

[Translation]

Martin Champoux: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Lethbridge for her very relevant question. I find it interesting to hear her talk about the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, or CRTC, as the organization that could take on those powers, considering that it is not every day that I hear her praise the work of the CRTC.

That said, we are completely open to this type of conversation. Personally, when it comes to the CRTC, I agree in principle. However, we are willing to discuss any more efficient and cost-effective solutions that are presented. I have my doubts with regard to the CRTC, since it is already having a hard time hearing all of the cases on its docket. There is a big backlog. It took nearly three years to just to come up with regulations on levies for streaming platforms, so I would be surprised if adding this task to the CRTC's workload would be more efficient and cost-effective than creating a commission.

That said, I completely agree with my colleague that there is a difference between keeping an arm's length from political influence and operating without transparency. All bodies must be transparent. That is what we expect, and we would expect the same from this commission.

• (1720)

Sameer Zuberi (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Winnipeg North.

[English]

I rise today to speak about Bill C-34, the safe social media act.

One of the most important parts of my work is hearing directly from Pierrefonds—Dollard residents. Earlier this summer, I sat down with upwards of 200 residents during our annual coffee, cookies and conversation round tables. We spoke about many different things: the cost of living, the economy, the affordability crisis and the housing crisis, among many other things. We talked about the need for social media spaces to reflect the conduct we expect from one another in real life too. Residents told me that they want a safer social media environment. That is why our government has been working with stakeholders from across many different fields to make the digital world safer.

Let me spend a moment on that idea, because that is the heart of Bill C-34. In our communities, we all live by shared expectations and values. We expect neighbours to treat one another with respect. We expect that someone who harasses a person in public will be held to account. These are the basic standards of decency that bind our society and that promote harmony. These concepts are also part of what makes Canada great, but somewhere along the way, some began to think that the online world operates by different rules. That is what we are here today to address.

We need to be mindful that things that we would never tolerate on the streets should not become acceptable, but somehow that has been the case online. It should not be the case online or off-line. One's behaviour online should ideally be consistent with how we expect one to act in real life and how we would expect ourselves to act in real life. That is the principle behind Bill C-34. It does not ask for anything new of Canadians. It just asks that our behaviour be more consistent. It asks that the standards that we already hold apply across spaces.

I want to highlight the positive impacts that social media plays in our lives. The digital world gives us a sense of community and belonging. It is a powerful tool for sharing information. Many social justice movements and advocates utilize social media to share messages and raise awareness. This is critical, and we as parliamentarians utilize social media to share the good work we are doing within our constituencies and across this country. It is also utilized by our government to share the work that our government is doing: new trade deals, partnerships, new housing initiatives and the new ways we are building Canada strong.

The social media world is now part of our daily life too. In 2025, 95% of Canadian adults had at least one social media account. Many of us here have multiple social media accounts. However, the same platforms that connect us can also be used to harm us. They can spread hate, misinformation and even harassment, and for our children, the consequences can be grave and severe.

In 2024, police reported nearly 17,000 incidents involving online child sexual exploitation offences. That same year, police reported 368 incidents of sexual extortion involving victims 17 years of age or younger. In 2025, police reported over 3,000 incidents of non-consensual distribution of intimate images, and nearly 500 of those involved a victim who was 17 or younger. Behind each of these numbers is a child, a loved one, a family member and sometimes a life injured or even shattered.

We are also seeing serious and growing youth mental health concerns. In the past decade, depression has doubled and anxiety has

Government Orders

quadrupled within the demographic of Canadians aged 15 to 24. These phenomena are not limited to this demographic, though. We cannot pretend that the online environment plays no role. Let me be clear. Children are not the only ones struggling with the challenges due to harmful online behaviour; adults are not immune to these phenomena.

● (1725)

As I mentioned earlier, we need to also recognize that digital platforms are designed to keep us engaged for long periods of time. Through features such as endless scrolling and personalized recommendations, we can spend hours on social media platforms. None of this happens by accident. These are choices made by people who build and operate these platforms. If the harm can be built in, the safety can be built in too.

Canadians gave us a mandate to protect, including in online spaces, and that is exactly what we would be doing through Bill C-34. We would be making sure that social media services and AI chatbots are safe by design. Just as we are encouraging responsible behaviour online, we should not expect platforms to play this role without legislation such as this. We need to engender and support a healthier online environment.

Bill C-34 has two main parts: enacting the digital safety act and enacting the digital safety commission act of Canada. The framework would focus on three core duties for social media services: the duty to act responsibly, the duty to protect children and the duty to make certain content inaccessible.

The safe social media act is essential and would be a timely step that is necessary to promote a safe-by-design social media environment. We are also asking social media and chatbot service operators to disclose the steps they are taking to protect users from harmful content. We are focusing only on serious harm. We are not looking to impact everyday content or conversations.

[*Translation*]

Under this bill, a new commission, the digital safety commission of Canada, will be established to regulate these services. It will consist of three to five full-time members to be appointed by the Governor in Council. The commission will be responsible for administering and enforcing the digital safety act.

Within three months after the end of each fiscal year, it must submit a report on its activities to the minister, who will table that report in Parliament. Our government recognizes that transparency is essential to advancing digital safety.

Privilege

The commission will also be tasked with promoting digital safety in Canada. It will do so through research and education, in collaboration with experts and professionals. It will investigate complaints relating to content that sexually victimizes a child or revictimizes a survivor. It will also address intimate content communicated without consent and will ensure that operators of regulated services are transparent and accountable.

This summer, as I said earlier, I met with 200 residents of Pierrefonds—Dollard. We discussed many topics, including the importance of ensuring that social media is a space where everyone can feel respected. We know that a community is built on respect and on the way we treat each other. These values should not stop just because we are online. Interactions on social media are now part of our daily lives. We must be able to find the same respect there that we want to see in real life. That is the spirit behind this bill.

The work begins at the committee stage, where parliamentarians will be speaking to experts and stakeholders. I urge all members of the House to support this bill.

• (1730)

[English]

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I am making a comment. It may be slightly out of turn, but I was in this place and then went off to take a high school group from my riding on a tour all around and I missed the beginning of the Bill C-34 debate.

I just want to say that a whole group of students saw question period and were disillusioned. However, they saw the beginning of this debate. I want to thank the hon. member for Lethbridge and the hon. Minister of Justice, because what the students saw with respect to Bill C-34 restored their faith in Parliament as a place of thoughtful, civil discourse.

Sameer Zuberi: Mr. Speaker, the leader of the Green Party is always reminding us about best practices in this House, and I really appreciate that in the member opposite. She reminds us frequently about our comportment and decorum and to respect one another. That is something that we should be doing within this chamber and also in other spaces, as this bill is seeking to do.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I like to think that every member of the House can understand and appreciate the impact that the Internet has on all people. This legislation is, I would suggest, somewhat historic in the sense that we are addressing a problem that everyone is concerned about. How we pass this legislation through would provide the assurances that it would not be taking away the rights of parents. It would complement them in many ways and demonstrate that the government very much wants to play a role in protecting people's interests by looking at platforms and algorithms. That is what we should be doing as government. I am wondering if the member could provide his thoughts on why it is important that the national government play a leadership role in bringing forward legislation of this nature.

Sameer Zuberi: Mr. Speaker, the member for Winnipeg North was referring to parents, and many of us here are parents. We care about raising our children, and we make sure that they are taken care of. We do not put our children into spaces where there is po-

tential harm. However, we know, unfortunately, that online spaces can sometimes be the Wild West, and something that this bill is addressing is to put guardrails on the most egregious of behaviours.

I would say, frankly, that this is long overdue. The fact we are actually legislating on this right now, today, after the Internet and things have been in existence for what is now running to decades, is something that we need to reflect on as a chamber. How is it possible we are so late in this? This is something we should have addressed a long time ago. Therefore, I am really happy that we are doing this now. We need to reflect on our tardiness in dealing with this situation.

[Translation]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski-Neigette—Mitis—Matapédia—Les Basques, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I commend my colleague on his speech.

The Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage did a study on the effects of influencers and social media on our daily lives. Recommendations were made, including taking into consideration the context in different parts of Canada, Quebec and in the different provinces. Protecting youth is a responsibility of Quebec and the provinces. Take for example how the ban on alcohol is enforced: it varies from place to place across Canada.

If the government implements a ban, will it apply equally across Canada? I would like my colleague to elaborate on this point, particularly regarding the need to consult with Canada's other legislatures as part of the process of drafting this legislation.

Sameer Zuberi: Mr. Speaker, respecting provincial jurisdictions is a must. In the government's view, and in my view, this bill respects the Constitution and the jurisdictions of the federal government and of the provinces. Dialogue with the provinces is important. I take note of my colleague's comments. I am certain that the government is mindful of the opposition members' comments.

* * *

• (1735)

[English]

PRIVILEGE**FREEDOM OF SPEECH IN MEMBERS' PARLIAMENTARY WORK**

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am rising to respond to the intervention raised by the member for Kitchener South—Hespeler respecting the member for Thunder Bay—Rainy River's parliamentary work.

I will state that this issue does not constitute a matter of privilege. The long history of parliamentary privilege protects members from interference by external organizations and bodies in their particular duties. Article 9 of the Bill of Rights of 1689 states, in regard to the protections of members to do their work unimpeded by external bodies such as courts or other adjudicative bodies, “That the freedom of speech and debates or proceedings in Parliament ought not to be impeached or questioned in any court or place out of Parliament.”

The 24th edition of Erksine May's *Parliamentary Practice* states on page 233:

Article 9 is a provision of the highest constitutional importance, and should not be narrowly construed.

Four of the terms in Article 9 are particularly critical to its understanding: “impeached”, “questioned”, “proceedings in Parliament”, and “court or place out of Parliament”.

It is clear that the member for Thunder Bay—Rainy River, in making comments in a supplementary opinion attached to the first report of the Special Joint Committee on Medical Assistance in Dying, was doing so in an official proceeding of Parliament as a member of Parliament. These proceedings in Parliament are protected by the ancient privileges established for just this purpose.

While the complaint to the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario is under consideration, the member should not fear any reprisal for discharging his parliamentary duties protected by privilege. The Speaker is the guardian of the rights and privileges of the House, and as an institution, it confers upon the individual in that role the power to defend these rights through legal proceedings or any place out of Parliament. The Speaker does not need the authority of a resolution of the House to execute his or her role as guardian of the rights and privileges of the House. I submit that the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario is well aware of the 400-year-old statutory regime that concretizes the rights of the House and its members to deliberate without external molestation.

I therefore conclude that members be reassured that their rights and privileges will always be upheld by the Speaker as the guardian of rights and privileges of the House as an institution.

I am thankful for the time to express that.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I thank the hon. member for his intervention. The Speaker will take it under advisement and return in due course.

* * *

SAFE SOCIAL MEDIA ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-34, An Act to enact the Digital Safety Act and the Digital Safety Commission of Canada Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise today to address Bill C-34. I will pick up on the concern that the member from the Conservative Party officially expressed, and I can appreciate the sensitivity to it.

Private Members' Business

Having a digital safety commission of Canada, I would ultimately argue, is the right way to go. The member seemed not to oppose it when I put forward a question in terms of principle: In principle, does the Conservative Party support the idea of having a commission? She was virtually non-committal but at least did not say no. She was concerned about the makeup of the commission in that one person alone would have so much power. However, it would actually be three to five full-time commissioners who would be appointed by the Governor in Council. Of course, the chair would be running the day-to-day operations.

I am hoping the Conservatives will see the merit of having such a commission. There is a level of expertise that would be warranted for something of this nature. We can also look at the power the commission would have to address international platforms that are brought into Canada or those that are within our boundaries.

The impact of the Internet can and will always have a very positive role for all of us, including our children. However, it is very important to recognize that there is great potential for harm on the Internet. There are things such as algorithms and unregulated platforms, to the degree that individuals, as cited by the member of the opposition, see things about how to commit suicide, or deepfakes that cause horrendous humiliation. There is the impact that social media or chatbots can have. There are a lot of things we need to be concerned about.

This legislation is about complementing parents by providing government leadership in protecting our children.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1740)

[Translation]

GEORGINA'S LAW

Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC) moved that Bill S-242, An Act respecting national action for the prevention of intimate partner violence, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

She said: Mr. Speaker, we have discussed some very poignant issues today, social issues that affect us all. I would like to add another point this evening. I am going to address a subject that is sensitive, difficult to hear and, of course, difficult to describe. I will be talking about violence against women, particularly violence against women in the context of domestic violence, which is becoming increasingly common. Even one incident is one too many. All too often, this violence claims its victim's life.

Despite the sensitive nature of the subject, I am pleased to rise today as the sponsor in the House of Commons of Bill S-242, introduced by Senator Fabian Manning, who is close by here this evening. My hope is that everything we do as politicians will help build a safer society for our women and girls. We must break the silence surrounding this violence. We must strip this violence of the shame that often falls over the victims, and cast it over to the other side, as we learned from a French woman who was a victim herself, who is known for her immense courage.

Private Members' Business

This is Mr. Manning's third attempt to get a bill passed that would require the federal government and all provincial governments to stand shoulder to shoulder, with better coordination nationwide, in addressing violence against women. The idea of introducing this bill came to him after a meeting with Georgina McGrath, a Newfoundlander who survived many years of domestic violence. Georgina's story is the product of a system that fails to protect our women and girls, a system that sadly appears to protect abusers more than the victims, whose numbers are constantly rising to frightening levels.

I will share some statistics that illustrate my point. Here in Canada, the surge in violent crime since 2015 has been alarming. Overall, violent crime has increased by 57%. Firearm-related crime, in particular, has risen by 103% since 2015. Extortion, meanwhile, has increased by 300% over the same period. Homicides are up by nearly 10% since 2015. Intimate partner and gender-based violence is usually directed at women. It can be physical, psychological or sexual in nature. Since 2015, sexual assaults in this country have surged by 74%. The reality of sexual violence and abuse against young women is that over six in 10 women aged 15 to 24, or 61%, experienced unwanted sexual behaviour in a public place, the highest rate of any age group.

To fully grasp the gravity of the situation, and the national crisis we are facing when it comes to violence against women, we need only consider that, since the start of this year, some 19 femicides have reportedly been committed in Quebec alone. According to the Canadian Femicide Observatory for Justice and Accountability, 147 women and girls were violently killed across the country last year. The Government of Canada even states plainly on its own website that, in this country, a G7 nation, a woman is killed every 48 hours. Is anyone paying attention? Is anyone not turning a blind eye? Is anyone not simply moving on, convinced that there are more pressing matters to address? We must act because the next victim is alive tonight. She is still alive.

● (1745)

In the section on 16 days of activism against gender-based violence, which will be held from November 25 to December 10, we note that a woman is killed every two days in Canada. The Government of Canada's website states:

GBV [gender-based violence] continues to affect women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ communities at alarming rates. Every 48 hours in Canada, a woman or girl is killed in an act of gender-based violence. In 2024, 240 women and girls were murdered, primarily by men, a 54% increase over pre-COVID rates.

Victims and survivors of GBV often face lasting personal, social, and economic impacts with consequences that can echo across generations.

GBV carries a high economic cost, with Canadian governments spending billions annually on healthcare, justice, and social services to respond to it.

I will now share some more numbers that show that women are right to be constantly hypervigilant, which, of course, is not normal. The number of female victims of police-reported domestic violence is up 39%. Since 2018, intimate partner violence has increased by 14% nation-wide. Furthermore, in Canada, 28% of all violent crimes are committed by an intimate partner. This represents nearly one in three crimes. Lastly, 79% of victims of intimate partner homicide are women.

That is why Senator Manning wants all governments in Canada to sit down together and coordinate their actions. The senator has long called on the government to implement a national plan to address intimate partner violence. Since this plan now exists, he is now asking, through this bill, for the federal government to support this national strategy and show leadership by sitting down at the same table with all the provincial governments to develop a clear vision of the situation and take joint action to address violence against women.

Georgina's Law contains four sections and sets out the following for the Minister of Women and Gender Equality to consider.

First, it says that the "Minister must continue to lead national action to prevent and address intimate partner violence." What is interesting is the ongoing nature the wording of the bill adds to any national action or strategy. The government can call it whatever it wants. The goal here is a national initiative that will outlast all governments.

Second, it states that the Minister of Women and Gender Equality must "engage annually with other federal ministers and with provincial ministers responsible for the status of women and regularly with Indigenous partners, victims and survivors, and stakeholders with respect to: (a) the adequacy of current programs and strategies aimed at preventing intimate partner violence and at protecting and assisting victims of intimate partner violence". We want to ensure that the measures put forward are effective and provide an appropriate response to any situation involving violence.

Allow me to continue: "(b) partnerships in the prevention of intimate partner violence and the protection of victims of intimate partner violence". The idea is that ministers across Canada will discuss "the financial and other costs of action to prevent and address intimate partner violence". Finally, of course, discussions must be held on "any constitutional, legal or jurisdictional implications of action to prevent and address intimate partner violence." The bill also states that "the engagements...must begin within one year after the day on which this Act receives royal assent." Of course, we hope that it will be adopted as soon as possible.

● (1750)

With respect to accountability, as this is an important element, the bill provides that, within two years of the day on which the bill receives royal assent and every two years thereafter, the minister must prepare a report setting out progress on national action to prevent and address intimate partner violence. That report must then be tabled in each House of Parliament. In other words, is it possible to share our best practices? Could we not avoid reinventing the wheel and improve how we talk to each other?

Let us talk about Georgina's law for Georgina McGrath. This woman knew cowardly men who beat her. The last one that fit this profile almost killed her. The following is an excerpt from her testimony in the Senate on April 11, 2024. I need to give a little warning, because it is not easy to hear.

The mental and emotional abuse followed hand in hand with the physical abuse. Everything was my fault, of course, and I was crazy for questioning him on anything. His reign of terror continued over the next few months. I had black eyes, a broken-off tooth, a concussion and a tiring amount of emotional and mental abuse.

Later in her testimony, she went on to say the following:

On September 25, 2014, I received the biggest beating of my life.... He...started strangling me.... He...started punching me on the side of my head.... I just lay there waiting for the final punch.

That day she managed to reach her sister. After attempting to commit suicide, in the end, thankfully she woke up in the hospital.

She continued by telling the senator the following:

The next thing I remember is waking in the hospital and seeing my two children. That's when I knew I was in for the fight of my life. I had ruptured ear drums, temporal and facial damages and bruises all over my body that took seven weeks to fade away.

These women, like Georgina, are broken inside. They will bear the scars for the rest of their lives. They are forever marked by these experiences. Georgina McGrath encouraged Conservative Senator Fabian Manning to take action. This is a relay race. Now, it is up to us to take the baton and say yes to Mr. Manning, yes to Georgina and yes to all the women who do not feel safe and who fear for their lives. This evening, we need to say yes to them. Let us also do our part and pass this bill, which is a reasonable, common-sense piece of legislation.

I think that the Liberals, the Bloc Québécois, and the New Democrats can easily join me and the Conservatives in supporting this bill without hesitation. Let us take inspiration from the bipartisan consensus among the three provincial parties in Newfoundland and Labrador that support this initiative. Let us take inspiration from the National Assembly of Quebec, which unanimously passed the Gabie Renaud Act in a bipartisan effort in June 2026.

● (1755)

[English]

Jessica Fancy (South Shore—St. Margarets, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Quebec very much for sponsoring this bill. We talked a lot about collaboration between all of the parties. The minister worked with the Conservative senator, Senator Fabian Manning, to advance this bill. The Conservative members of FEWO, and our member who just spoke is doing an amazing job as chair of FEWO and I really respect the work she is doing, helped pass Bill C-225, Bailey's law, to strengthen protections for survivors and victims of intimate partner violence.

I am wondering if the member could please speak to the importance of this cross-party collaboration in advancing action on intimate partner violence.

[Translation]

Dominique Vien: Mr. Speaker, some issues call for co-operation. By their very nature, they do not lend themselves to partisan debate or political point-scoring. This year marks 20 years since I entered politics. On several occasions, I have seen parliamentarians

recognize that certain issues simply cannot be subjected to partisan battles.

There are indeed several bills in the works. People listening to us at home will be happy to hear that, in committees or in other areas of Parliament, we are able to engage in parliamentary debate, reach agreement, and be on the same page. I am convinced that, when it comes to this particular bill, we will be able to work hand in hand, because ultimately, the goal is to ensure that when women wake up in the morning, they wake up happy and safe, and that, when they go to bed at night, they remain safe.

Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague with whom I work on the Standing Committee on the Status of Women. She is the chair of the committee, and I truly enjoy working with her. This is not a partisan issue, but I still have a question for her. In Quebec, we worked across party lines, all together, and produced a report on rebuilding trust.

The report contained a recommendation for the federal government, which I tackled head-on. We carried out a study at the Standing Committee on the Status of Women and we held a press conference, with all the political parties, to ask the federal government to do its part and to respond to Quebec's request that it criminalize coercive control. We succeeded in doing that. Coercive control is now included in the law resulting from Bill C-16. We took that step, which was a request from Quebec. As my colleague mentioned, the Gabie Renaud law was unanimously passed before last summer.

How does the member see her bill? How does she see it fitting in since the report on rebuilding trust did not call for a national policy and there are already things being done in Quebec? How does she see her bill fitting in with all that?

● (1800)

Dominique Vien: Mr. Speaker, Senator Manning's initiative is very much in keeping with the various measures that can be undertaken, be they strategies, national initiatives or legislation. In this case, we have legislation that provides a framework for a national effort to prevent violence against women. I commend the Government of Canada for having put that effort in place. Senator Manning called for it, and that request has been answered. Now comes a second request: that this national effort survive the various governments that eventually sit on the other side, regardless of which party sits on the government side. The aim is precisely to ensure that this strategy has staying power. I think that is the goal: to reach the kind of consensus that will bring about real change.

*Private Members' Business**[English]*

Kelly DeRidder (Kitchener Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as the shadow minister for the status of women, I find this to be an incredibly important topic: ensuring that it remains non-partisan and that we work together to advance a national framework. That being said, I am going to ask my colleague if she could just quickly state how this will move toward protecting women from intimate partner violence and how we can better ensure that they can get out of these situations and be supported in building their own futures.

[Translation]

Dominique Vien: Mr. Speaker, this is a national initiative designed to bring together all the partners from across Canada, from every province, to sit down and discuss the situation.

We need a clear picture of the current situation. We need to approach this issue objectively. What programs are in place? How is violence against women being addressed? Are there initiatives in the west, the Maritimes, Quebec, Ontario or elsewhere that have proven effective and could be replicated in other regions? It really is about establishing national coordination to ensure that we are all working from a common understanding and pursuing shared objectives in addressing violence against women.

[English]

Jessica Fancy (South Shore—St. Margarets, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I stand before the House today to support Bill S-242, Georgina's law. Above all else, I stand here in support of every victim and survivor of intimate partner violence across this country.

At the heart of this bill is Georgina McGrath. For years, Georgina lived through physical, mental and emotional abuse. In 2014, her life was nearly taken away from her. Her experience is her own, but the fear, the control and the isolation she endured are a reality that far too many people across Canada know.

Intimate partner violence does not always begin with physical violence or physical harm. Sometimes it begins quietly, through control over someone's choices, their relationships and eventually their sense of safety. For many survivors, leaving does not mean the danger is over. This is what makes intimate partner violence so devastating. It can follow someone into their home, their workplace, their relationships and every part of their daily life.

The numbers tell us how widespread this violence remains. In 2024, nearly eight in 10 people who reported intimate partner violence to police were women and girls. Most devastatingly, in 2024 as well, a woman in Canada was killed by an intimate partner every five days. Behind every one of these numbers, though, is a person whose life and story cannot be reduced to those statistics. While anyone can experience intimate partner violence, we know people face greater risks and greater barriers when they try to finally get help.

● (1805)

[Translation]

Indigenous women, women with disabilities and those living in northern, rural and remote communities, including members of the 2SLGBTQ+ community, often face greater barriers when it comes to ensuring their safety and access to justice.

[English]

For many, these barriers are compounded by discrimination, language differences and limited access to services that understand their experiences. Too often, their stories are questioned and not believed. Survivors have told us what they need: a safe place to turn, someone who will listen and a system that meets their needs with understanding. They need systems that understand. That is the principle behind Canada's work through the federal gender-based violence strategy and the national action plan to end gender-based violence.

However, these are strategies and plans. They are only good if changes can be made to somebody's life. This bill would require the Minister of Women and Gender Equality to continue leading these national efforts. For example, it would mean that a child arriving at a shelter, scared and confused, can be met with someone better equipped to understand what they have been through and to help them feel safe. Between 2021 and 2024, that work trained hundreds of shelter staff across Canada, including staff in indigenous shelters and northern communities. For a survivor who has already endured so much, having someone beside them to explain their rights and guide them through the justice system can make a very overwhelming experience a little less lonely.

I myself will be forever indebted to Chrysalis House in Kentville, Nova Scotia, a women's shelter that took me and my one-year-old in for eight weeks after we had left a situation that still shakes me to my core today. Places like Chrysalis House can mean getting help with navigating the justice system. I had received a public defender who did not even know my name, failed to show up to review my statement and forgot to attend my pretrial hearing prep. I was up against a very well-known defence attorney and large resources.

Having navigators, which would be part of this bill, could mean not having to face these processes alone. This is what it means to put survivors at the centre of our work and to build systems that understand what people have lived through, but also respond to what they need most.

When we speak about the importance of the work, we must also remember Georgina. After everything that she had endured, she chose to speak. She chose to use her voice, hoping that her experience could help protect someone else. Together with Senator Fabian Manning, she helped bring forward Bill S-242.

Last spring, I got the chance to meet Georgina and hear about her personal story and what having this bill passed would mean to her. This bill would require the federal government to continue the national work to prevent intimate partner violence and publicly report on the progress every two years. It would also require ongoing discussions with governments, indigenous partners, victims, survivors and stakeholders about whether our response is working, and that matters. Survivors should never be brought into a conversation only after decisions have been made. Their experiences must help shape the decisions themselves, because they understand in many ways where our systems have fallen short and others might not.

In speaking today about the impact of sexual violence, I would also like to add that it was an absolute honour on Monday to attend the Governor General's 2026 award event to celebrate two extraordinary Nova Scotians whose work is also making a lasting impression in this realm.

Sunny Marriner, from my riding of South Shore—St. Margarets, has spent nearly 30 years advocating for survivors of sexual violence and demanding accountability from the institutions responsible for protecting them. Her leadership has helped transform how police investigations are reviewed, with independent advocate review teams now operating in 32 communities across five provinces. Sunny recently chaired the expert advisory panel for the Federal Ombudsperson for Victims of Crime's systemic investigation into survivors' treatment in the criminal justice system, and testified on the institutional police response to sexual violence during Nova Scotia's Mass Casualty Commission.

Also recognized during this event was Shianne Gordon, an African Nova Scotian two-spirit queer community advocate from Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, with deep roots in Africville. It is through her work in violence prevention, youth outreach and supporting survivors of sexual violence that she is also helping build a safer, more inclusive community. That is the type of navigation we are talking about that is needed, and bills like this one will help bolster programs and support those giants.

Both women remind us that meaningful change takes courage, compassion and commitment. It is tough work to ensure that every person is treated with dignity. On behalf of South Shore—St. Margarets, I congratulate Sunny and Shianne on this very well-deserved recognition. Nova Scotia is very proud of them.

Addressing intimate partner violence should never be a partisan issue, as we are talking about today in this House. This is an issue where we can come together and protect the women in our country. Georgina chose to use her voice. We have an opportunity to make that hope a reality now, but we must also remember the women who are no longer here to share their stories, and those who remind us why this work matters. May Georgina's law honour their memory and help ensure that other women have a chance to live the lives that they deserved. That is why I am proud to support Bill S-242.

• (1810)

[*Translation*]

Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, these are difficult issues. I rise today to speak to Bill S-242, an act respecting national action for the prevention of intimate partner violence. It is a Senate bill introduced in December 2025 by Senator Fabian Man-

Private Members' Business

ning of the Conservative Party of Canada, and it passed third reading in the Senate on February 24, 2026.

In his speech introducing the bill at second reading, the senator highlighted the patience and tenacity of a woman from Newfoundland, Georgina McGrath, and talked about the correspondence he had exchanged with her over the following years.

The woman told him about the ordeal she had suffered at the hands of her intimate partner. Of course, we commend Ms. McGrath's contribution, her courage in speaking out publicly and her persistence in fighting the violence, domination and abuse suffered by victims of intimate partner violence. We encourage all victims in Quebec and throughout all Canadian provinces and territories to do the same. This is a huge societal challenge.

That said, it is objectively safe to say that significant progress has been made in this regard. All political parties in the House have been working together constructively to implement transformative measures.

No one doubts the senator's sincere commitment, but he knew himself that Bill S-242 could not end abuse or eliminate intimate partner violence. He therefore obtained the support of the member for Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, and I commend her for introducing this bill.

Basically, as the bill title suggests, the bill provides for the continuation of national action for the prevention of intimate partner violence.

The Bloc Québécois has concerns about this bill, which does not have any real impact other than to interfere in one of areas under the jurisdiction of Quebec and the other provinces and territories. It is important to remember that the administration of justice, like social services, falls under the Government of Quebec's jurisdiction. It is up to Quebec and the other provinces to implement their own strategies for eliminating this problem. Quebec has done its part in that regard. Quebec, as a distinct nation, and all of the Canadian provinces must have the autonomy and latitude to deal with these tragedies as they see fit. Each community in Quebec and Canada is unique and has its own specific needs.

I will therefore continue my speech by first discussing in more detail who is doing what to address domestic violence. Then, I will talk about what is already being done in Quebec and Canada, and finally, I will address what still needs to be done.

Private Members' Business

First, we cannot lose sight of the fact that it is governments—the ones delivering services, hearing from community organizations, health care networks, police services and the justice system—that must determine what is best at a local level. This is a matter for Quebec and the provinces.

It is no longer a secret that Ottawa must increase health transfers. Challenges and crises such as intimate partner violence, random acts of violent crime, substance abuse and homelessness continue to grow, often because of insufficient resources. Fortunately, it is not due to a lack of dedicated people on the ground. Every day, workers hold the social fabric together with sheer determination. My thoughts are with those who continue to work tirelessly in the community sector. Once again, Ottawa appears to be attempting to shape provincial public policy through a bill that, at first glance, seems harmless and whose objectives few would question in principle.

The Bloc Québécois has vigorously defended victims' rights and worked constructively during committee studies on intimate partner violence and coercive control, supporting every initiative aimed at strengthening protections for victims. We were the first to advocate treating the murder of an intimate partner as first-degree murder, curbing the violence associated with it and ensuring a rapid decline in such violence, including through the use of technological tools such as electronic bracelets that can help prevent unwanted, and sometimes fatal, encounters.

As in many other areas where Quebec and the provinces work together, all governments can draw on one another's best practices and most effective approaches to put an end to these tragedies and address their root causes through increased funding for psychosocial crisis centres, suicide prevention services and crisis intervention workshops.

We must also recognize the vital contribution of the shelters that assist people in distress who must flee a violent partner. Everyone agrees that the time for discussion has passed. We must act quickly, and indeed very quickly.

● (1815)

Instead of public money being squandered on planning meetings, it should be used directly on the front lines. The needs are urgent. Dozens of witnesses who appeared before the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights and the Standing Committee on the Status of Women called for direct support and adequate, predictable funding. All the stakeholders who are called upon when a situation involving intimate partner violence escalates, whether they are patrol officers, mental health and social workers, shelters for people in distress, medical and psychiatric services, or the courts, agree that they need a lot more resources to help them handle these cases that can shatter lives or, in the worst-case scenario, claim innocent lives.

If the Minister of Women and Gender Equality is willing to keep the momentum going and take action to prevent and address intimate partner violence, it would be a welcome addition to our efforts to tackle this urgent and deeply concerning challenge. Let me reiterate that the communities and frontline stakeholders know their needs best and that the Government of Quebec and the governments of the provinces and territories must remain in control of

their own strategies in this area. Ottawa should play an important supporting role, rather than overseeing the work of the provinces.

Furthermore, when it comes to aligning existing strategies and programs or consulting with partners on any constitutional or legal issues related to this initiative, including respect for jurisdictions, the Bloc Québécois strongly denounces these principles, because intervening in this way constitutes interference in the affairs of Quebec and the other provinces and territories.

Second, as with other legislation, the government can request a review of existing laws relating to intimate partner violence and direct a committee to conduct a study on the issue. It is important to remember that Parliament has passed some very important laws to curb and deter this type of violence. Some examples are Bill C-225, introduced by the member for Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, and the government's Bill C-16, which received royal assent before the 2026 summer recess.

Additionally, important bills were passed in the previous Parliament, including Bill C-332 on coercive control introduced by the former NDP member for Victoria, and Bill C-48, which was recognized for reversing the burden of proof for certain intimate partner violence offences, including when the accused has previously received a discharge for this type of offence.

I would remind the House that Quebec already has comprehensive, effective infrastructure for supporting children and families. This bill will inevitably create another parallel federal bureaucratic process. As it stands, the bill introduces a structure that will let Ottawa impose its vision, priorities and conditions on the provinces, turning a seemingly innocuous bill into a tool for centralization.

During this Parliament, however, some very important progress has been made to deter intimate partner violence and strengthen the sentences. The Bloc Québécois believes that the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights, along with the Standing Committee on the Status of Women or any other committee concerned by these issues, can at any time examine, study and measure the effects of these laws, determine their impact and success, and adjust them to suit needs at a frequency to be determined by the committees.

For example, Bill C-225, known as Bailey's law, strengthens the penalties for homicide, femicide and offences involving intimate partner violence, while Bill C-16 makes coercive or controlling conduct a separate offence and expands the definition of first degree murder in some situations involving femicide. These two laws function in a complementary way.

In May, following a study initiated by the Bloc Québécois and the Conservatives, the Standing Committee on the Status of Women also tabled a report entitled "Preventing Violence Against Women: Criminal Code Peace Bonds, Bail and Sentencing Reforms in Canada", so we have already heard from many witnesses regarding peace bonds, better known as section 810 orders, in the context of intimate partner violence, and Senator Manning's concerns were addressed by those witnesses.

Throughout the study, the committee heard concerns about the effectiveness of these provisions. Witnesses called for reforms to Canada's criminal justice system to better protect women and children from domestic violence and intimate partner violence. In releasing this report, including its 19 recommendations and two observations, the committee hopes to contribute to ongoing efforts to combat gender-based, domestic and intimate partner violence in Canada.

I will have to touch briefly on the third point in just a few seconds. Another step the government could take is to increase health transfers, without conditions, as well as social transfers, to allow the provinces and Quebec to invest in their own priorities. These are measures that could be taken.

As Canada prepares to criminalize coercive control, there are calls emphasizing the importance of laying the groundwork for this new legislation.

• (1820)

I would like to say one last thing. In an interview with The Canadian Press, Annick Brazeau, president of the Regroupement des maisons pour femmes victimes de violence conjugale, explained that “femicide and homicide in a domestic violence setting often represents the tip of the iceberg”, the culmination of a long-standing pattern of violence. She noted, however, that “such tragedies sometimes happen without any prior violence”.

We considered all of that, but the most important thing is to make sure there is not one victim more.

[English]

Kelly DeRidder (Kitchener Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, one of the hardest things to imagine is being afraid of the person one lives with: the person who is supposed to care about them, the person they share their home with, and the person who may know exactly how to make them feel trapped, isolated and afraid to leave. For some people experiencing intimate partner violence, getting out is not always as simple as walking through the front door. There may be children or pets involved. There may be nowhere else to live. There may be financial barriers, threats or even a real fear of what happens when an abusive partner finds out that they even want to leave. We have to keep these things in mind when we talk about preventing intimate partner violence.

In 2024, police recorded more than 128,000 victims of intimate partner violence in Canada. Nearly eight in 10 were women and girls. That same year, 81 women were killed by a current or former intimate partner. Those numbers are devastating, and behind every one of them is a person, a family and a life that is forever changed. As the shadow minister for women and gender equality, I take this issue seriously. It is also something we have been hearing about through our work in committee. We have just wrapped up a study on women's shelters, and we look forward to finalizing the report and putting forward recommendations that reflect what we have heard.

During that study, we heard from amazing witnesses. Some of them work on the front lines, helping women navigate the difficult times and these difficult moments in their life. Others have survived abuse and have since dedicated their life to helping other

women find safety and rebuild. There is something important about hearing from people with lived experience. They understand what it takes to leave. They understand the fear, the uncertainty and the challenges that come with starting over, and they know that getting someone out of immediate danger is only a part of their journey.

A woman also needs somewhere safe to go. She may need help finding housing, supporting her children, accessing counselling or getting back on her feet financially. She needs to know that when she asks for help, there will be someone there to help her walk through her very next steps. A common theme that kept coming up during committee was the need for practical supports that meet women where they are at, along with coordinated resources to make support accessible. Telling a woman to leave an abusive situation is one thing. Making sure she has somewhere safe to go when she does it is another. We need to be honest about that difference.

That is why Bill S-242, Georgina's law, is worth talking about. The bill is about continuing a national action plan to prevent intimate partner violence. We can announce funding and study the issue, but what matters most is where we do the work. We need to ask the right questions. Where are women having trouble getting help? What happens when a shelter is full? What options does a woman have if she decides to leave tonight? How do we make sure that women in smaller communities have access to supports too? How do we make it easier for the organizations helping these women to collaborate and work together?

These are not hypothetical scenarios. They are the real kinds of work and what a woman thinks about before they leave. It helps her determine if there is an actual safe way out. We cannot expect someone who is already dealing with fear and uncertainty to spend days calling different organizations, repeating her story and trying to figure out which services might be able to help her. We need to make it easier for women to find all the available support, and we need to be honest about where that support is falling short.

That is where the experiences of the witnesses we heard from become so important. They have seen what works. They have seen where women get stuck. They know what happens when women are ready to leave but do not have the money, housing or support to make that possible. When survivors dedicate their life to helping other women, we should listen to what they have learned. Their experiences cannot be something we listen to and acknowledge just during committee but forget the moment we walk outside those doors. They should help shape decisions we make.

Private Members' Business

One of the things I want to see from this kind of national work is a clear focus on prevention. Far too often, we have this conversation only after the tragedy has occurred. A woman is seriously hurt, or a family loses someone they love, and everyone asks, "How could this happen?" We need to ask those questions before we reach that point. Did someone recognize the warning signs? Was there help available? Did the person experiencing abuse know where to turn? What barriers were in place that left them feeling that leaving was impossible?

● (1825)

IPV does not always begin with physical violence. It can start with controlling behaviour, threats, isolation or financial abuse. A person may gradually lose contact with friends or family or become increasingly dependent on a partner causing them harm. By the time we reach out, they may have been dealing with the situation for a very long time.

We need to make sure that people take the warning signs seriously. We need accessible support and people who know how to respond to services and can help prevent the situation before it escalates. We need to remember that leaving an abusive relationship can become one of the most dangerous periods for the victim. That makes safety planning and access to knowledgeable support all the more important.

Prevention is not simply telling people that abuse is wrong. It is making sure that people recognize they are in an unsafe situation and know that they have support to turn to and a way to move forward.

I would also like to take a moment to acknowledge and thank the people who work in women's shelters and support organizations every single day, like a few in my riding such as Women in Crisis, the YWCA, Safe Families, the Sexual Assault Service Centre and many more.

These people sit with women in crisis, help them make difficult decisions and work with them to give their children and themselves a chance to move forward, sometimes to the point of burnout. Their work matters tremendously, but we cannot rely on them to make up for every gap in the system. They need resources to be able to do their jobs, they need to be able to connect women with the services they require and they need us to take their concerns seriously when they say that something is not working.

That is one of the reasons I look forward to finalizing our committee's report on women's shelters. We have heard from people with lived experience and from survivors who turned some of the hardest moments of their lives into a commitment to helping others. We owe it to them to take their testimony seriously and consider what changes would make a real difference in their lives. There is not a one-size-fits-all approach, but there should be a common expectation that women who need help immediately can find it, and they should be treated with dignity and respect as they do.

I want to be clear about what Georgina's law can accomplish. On its own, this bill would not create more shelter beds or frontline organizations. What it would do is require continued national action, engagement with those affected by IPV and regular reporting. If a woman cannot find a safe space to stay, we need to address that. If

services are difficult to navigate, we need to look at how to make them more accessible. If organizations are identifying gaps in support, we need to hear about them and respond. That is how we keep this work grounded in the lives of the people it is meant to help.

No woman should feel like her options are to stay in the abusive relationship or leave without knowing where she stands or where her children will sleep. No woman should have to navigate a maze of services all the time in trying to get herself to safety. No survivor should come forward to tell us what needs to change and feel their experience has gone unheard.

Georgina's law is an opportunity to keep prevention on the agenda and bring the right people together to identify what is working, what gaps remain and how we are going to fix them. At the end of the day, we can have meeting after meeting and create endless programs to help, but that is not success. We measure it by whether a woman needs help and can get it, whether she can find a safe place to go, whether she and her children can begin to rebuild their lives and whether we are doing everything we can to prevent another family from losing a loved one. That is the responsibility we have and it is the work we must continue.

● (1830)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise and address Bill S-242 today. It is a bill that I believe has universal support. At the end of the day, when we think of intimate partner violence, we need to recognize that it is not just a women's issue. In fact, in many ways, we also need men to step up to the plate and address the issue in a very positive and creative way.

I believe that every member of Parliament understands the importance of the issue. In terms of intimate partner violence, we can think of coercive control, which often takes place, the stalking and the emotional and psychological impact of abuse. We can talk about how violence, whether it is physical, sexual or cyber, continues to grow and has become a real concern. The impacts physically, mentally and economically are significant. These are all the types of things we have to deal with when we talk about intimate partner violence and why it is so critically important that we do what we can.

That is what pleases me about this debate. We have seen, in the last year or so, significant actions taken. Today it is about Bill S-242, which originated from the Senate, but members will recall Bailey's law. Bailey's law originated out of the Conservative caucus. We can talk about Bill C-16. I do want to spend a bit of time talking about Bill C-16 because of the significance of Canada and the national government demonstrating leadership. I note these three pieces of legislation because they amplify the fact that parliamentarians of all political entities here in Ottawa understand how important this issue is to our society.

We all have a right to live in a safe society. Far too often, we hear of a victim of intimate partner violence. Every year, far too many women are murdered as a direct result. We need to recognize that not only the federal government has a responsibility. We see that within the legislation. There is a responsibility for governments of all levels and the many different stakeholders out there, all of which need to realize how important it is that we deal, in this case, with issues like Georgina's law.

I appreciate members sharing the comments that Georgina made before the Senate. It puts one face on the tens of thousands of victims of varying degrees throughout our nation every year. That is why we have seen the type of support we have seen in the debates thus far.

To go back to some of the issues from a personal perspective, in terms of advocacy, I remember back in the days when I was an MLA taking a tour of Osborne House. That would have been in the 1990s. Osborne House does not exist anymore. Technically, it does. It is called Willow Place now, but it performs the same sorts of services for victims.

● (1835)

It is important that different levels of government support these facilities, because they are providing absolutely essential services to the women in our community. These are women who have been sexually abused, physically abused and emotionally abused, and they are often scared to be in their home. They often have children. Sadly, the demand for these services is not decreasing. Collectively, we need to do a better job.

I think it was over the summer that we announced over half a billion dollars to continue the fight on gender-based violence. I was glad to hear the responses we were getting from all sides of the House when we brought in Bill C-16, because there were some historic measures that were being taken. We took into consideration patterns of coercive control and making it a criminal offence, which is truly unique, not only here in Canada, but in the Commonwealth, along with the issue of femicide.

It was quite encouraging to hear the expressions during that debate, and we are seeing a good sample of that in this debate dealing with issues like deepfakes and the emotional harm, the humiliation, as a direct result. Imagine being a 13-year-old girl or a full-grown adult who does not give consent to an abuser. These are the types of issues we have been dealing with over the last year, recognizing that some issues have to be raised above political partisanship. We want to see support for this legislation. We want to see it brought to committee.

Privilege

The Minister of Women and Gender Equality has done an outstanding job of being out there in the community. The idea of having the minister ultimately providing those reports every second year is a positive thing, because it would provide a tangible update. We can bring in laws and change laws. We can provide budgetary measures to support the issue, but we need to have the numbers. We need to see the impact that it is having.

I want to extend my appreciation and thanks to those non-profit organizations and to all, females and males, who are involved in taking on this very serious societal issue.

● (1840)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired, and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

I believe the opposition House leader is rising to respond to a question of privilege.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

ALLEGED PREMATURE DISCLOSURE OF BILL C-40

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I just want to add some further commentary to the question of privilege that is currently before the Chair and to rebut some of the arguments offered yesterday by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons concerning my question of privilege about the apparent leak of details in Bill C-40.

The key thrust of the parliamentary secretary's argument was, basically, "trust me". I agree with him that, consistent with the traditions of the House, we take members at their word. To that end, I accept that the parliamentary secretary himself did not leak the content of Bill C-40. The "comprehensive investigation" which he spoke about frequently, but not extensively, is another matter. The parliamentary secretary gave no insight into the scope or thoroughness of the so-called investigation, just that it happened and nothing was found, but how hard did they look?

In 2001, after details about the Anti-terrorism Act 2001 had been leaked to Bob Fife ahead of its introduction in Parliament, in addition to Mr. Speaker Milliken finding a *prima facie* case of privilege, as referenced in my original intervention, the Privy Council Office initiated its own investigation.

The Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, in its 40th report, outlined what was involved with that investigation:

Adjournment Proceedings

Mr. Fadden explained that the Privy Council Office had initiated an administrative review of the unauthorized disclosure of information regarding the anti-terrorist legislation, and contracted with the firm of Deloitte & Touche. The final report, dated November 20, 2001, was provided to the Committee. It indicated that, during the period October 25, 2001 to November 20, 2001, Deloitte & Touche itself had conducted 53 interviews, including 11 Ministers, and Departmental Security Officers had conducted 419 interviews, for a total of 472. These were people who had been identified as being involved in the drafting process, the review process and the roll-out and communications process of the bill.

The Deloitte & Touche report indicates that nine persons interviewed admitted to having spoken with the media with respect to what became Bill C-36, but only four spoke with either Mr. Fife or [Luiza] Chwialkowska. Of these four, three persons admitted having spoken to the two journalists in the few days prior to the appearance of the article in the National Post on October 13, 2001. All nine persons adamantly denied having provided any unauthorized information to the media in general, or to Mr. Fife or Ms. Chwialkowska in particular.

Four hundred and seventy-two professional interviews compared to who knows what, but take him on his word. He insists.

Next, I want to turn to the argument he offered that the government had never really decided to pick a lane on structuring the Defence Investment Agency. Let us look at the actual sequence of events that he scattered throughout his intervention.

On April 27, Doug Guzman, the Defence Investment Agency's Chief Executive Officer, told the Standing Committee on National Defence that there were "a number of ways" in which the Defence Investment Agency could be set up, including a Crown corporation. According to the parliamentary secretary, this was a sign that there was "still a live debate within the government."

Fair enough, but the very next day, April 28, the government answered the question and settled the debate when the Minister of Finance and National Revenue laid upon the table the 2026 Spring Economic Update. On pages 82 and 145, the minister signalled the government's intention to establish the Defence Investment Agency as a "stand-alone entity". That policy announcement assumed legislative expression through the introduction of Bill C-31 on May 6, which the following day, the minister referred to in a press release as making good on the government's pressures, among others, "establishing the Defence Investment Agency as a stand-alone entity".

The government had never made any statements here in Parliament or, indeed, anywhere else, repudiating its policy or its proposals in Bill C-31, currently before the Standing Committee on Finance, that is, until Bill C-40 was tabled. Let us be honest about what actually happened. Mr. Guzman threatened to rage-quit from the government because of his impatience with public servants, something we also know because of sourced reporting on the pages of The Globe and Mail, and Bill C-40 suddenly became an urgent Liberal measure to keep the Prime Minister's Bay Street pal kicking around Ottawa.

I worry that the parliamentary secretary might find himself in trouble if the Prime Minister actually catches wind of his argument yesterday. The most frequent Liberal spokesperson in the House has basically stood up and told the world that we cannot rely on government decisions announced in Parliament, that we cannot rely on the word of the finance minister, given a mere seven sitting weeks earlier, and that we cannot assume that legislation introduced by the finance minister six sitting weeks earlier represents the actual policy of the government.

● (1845)

For a government that is making a big show about negotiating foreign deals and seeking foreign investment while talking about other governments signing agreements in pencil, the parliamentary secretary's argument that we should not rely on federal government announcements, economic updates and budget implementing legislation as authoritative representations of government policy is actually quite chilling. In the current era of heightened global uncertainty, it is what is called "political risk", which has fundamentally driven many business and economic considerations of late.

For his part, the parliamentary secretary has single-handedly signalled to investment markets that they need to recalculate Canada's political risk, because the finance minister's word and the government's word apparently cannot be relied upon even in the short term. Alternatively, the parliamentary secretary is saying that in the government's pecking order, Mr. Guzman actually outranks the finance minister and that we should value their respective pronouncements accordingly. Either way, it is not good.

Finally, another argument the parliamentary secretary offered is that the media got it all wrong and therefore there could not have been any leak because it was reported that the legislation would provide for an associate minister of national defence, when in fact Bill C-40 would create the position of associate minister of national defence for procurement. This sounds like a distinction without a difference. If anything, the phrase "associate minister" is the dead giveaway, the smoking gun, that there was a leak of details found within the bill. The phrase is a very precise and specific expression. It is very much an inside baseball term in the Ottawa field known as the "machinery of government". The phrase was nowhere in the defence procurement lexicon until the night before Bill C-40 was introduced. It certainly was not in any of the quotations offered by the parliamentary secretary yesterday.

All told, Mr. Speaker, I would urge you to give the parliamentary secretary's intervention the appropriate weight, namely an acknowledgement that he himself did not leak Bill C-40 to The Globe and Mail or the CBC. When we strip away the verbiage of his intervention, we are left with a threadbare argument by a government seemingly desperate to avoid any committee investigation related to the leak of this bill.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I thank the hon. opposition House leader for his intervention. The Chair will take it under advisement and return to the House in due course.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

*Adjournment Proceedings**[English]*

PUBLIC SAFETY

Arpan Khanna (Oxford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to start off by recognizing the great farmers in Oxford county who are busy bringing home the harvest. Behind every field, there is a family working around the clock, sacrificing it all, fighting the elements and fighting economic pressures, but they still have hopes that this year they will bring back a strong harvest for Canadians. I want to thank our farmers, who feed our families every single day.

The Liberals often talk about public safety. It took a lot to get there. First, they denied the problem existed and that crime was happening in our community, but it was under Conservative pressure that they finally started acting, or tried to act.

Here are some of the headlines we are hearing. Drones are delivering McDonald's McNuggets and alcohol to Canada's most secure prison. Corrections Canada is planning to distribute paper straws to inmates for safer snorting. A convicted B.C. child killer was granted leave to take cooking classes. A convicted murderer who killed his pregnant girlfriend was granted escorted leave for a carpentry apprenticeship. A convicted murderer on day parole is attending McGill law school, raising safety concerns for students. A B.C. offender with 274 convictions is out on bail once again. Fifteen offenders in Kelowna are generating over 1,300 police files in a single year. One of those offenders had 423 police files and 66 convictions and was out on bail. Twelve offenders in Chilliwack are accounting for up to 60% of local crime, with one offender having 350 police files and 12 convictions and another having 331 files and 58 convictions. Three GTA auto theft suspects already out on bail were arrested in a ring linked to more than 75 stolen vehicles, with over 90 charges.

Here is a crazy one. A man accused of shootings at a London cannabis shop and a Scarborough movie theatre was granted bail. Guess for how much. It was one penny. We do not even make pennies anymore, yet under the Liberal government, serious offenders are being released on bail for a penny. The Liberals are running ads that tell Canadians not to worry because they are all safe, that they should trust them. That is what they are spending millions of dollars on, but what they are not doing is keeping Canadians safe. They are failing at that.

I can tell members that Canadians do not feel safe in their own homes anymore. I just gave real headlines in the media that come up every single day, so how can the Liberals stand up, look Canadians in the eye, look victims in the eye and tell them their Liberal justice system is working?

• (1850)

Mike Kelloway (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, people in Canada have been clear that they want their communities to be safe, that repeat violent offenders should be dealt with firmly and that the justice system must work to protect victims. That is exactly what the government is delivering through the Bail and Sentencing Reform Act, formerly Bill C-14. The issues raised by my colleague are indeed serious. Organized crime, fentanyl trafficking and repeat offending cause real harm, but slogans about “catch and release” do not fix the problem.

Careful, targeted reform does. That is what the Bail and Sentencing Reform Act has delivered.

At its core, the Bail and Sentencing Reform Act is about focusing the system where the risks are the highest. It has strengthened bail laws for repeat and violent offenders by clarifying that public safety must be central in decision-making. It has expanded the use of reverse onus provisions to address specific high-risk offences where the accused must demonstrate why they should be released. This is not an automatic detention, but it is a clear shift to ensure that those who pose the greatest danger face stricter scrutiny before being granted bail.

The act also aims to improve the quality of bail decisions. Courts are now required to more rigorously assess release plans. Accused persons who are subject to a reverse onus will have to clearly demonstrate that their proposed plan addresses the risk they pose as it relates to the grounds of detention. This matters because Canadians have seen cases where conditions were imposed but not effective in managing risk. The Bail and Sentencing Reform Act addresses these issues directly.

On sentencing, the legislation introduces new aggravating factors and requires consecutive sentences in certain circumstances. This reinforces accountability and sends a message of denunciation and deterrence. However, legislation alone is not enough.

Public safety depends on enforcement capacity, and the government is making those investments. The government is hiring 1,000 new RCMP personnel to strengthen federal policing across our country. These officers will enhance our ability to combat organized crime networks, financial crime, online exploitation and drug trafficking operations, like those referenced by the member opposite.

Adjournment Proceedings

At the border, the government is making one of the largest security investments in recent history, \$1.3 billion, to strengthen Canada's borders and immigration system. This includes hiring 800 new border services officers as well as 200 additional personnel in critical roles such as intelligence, enforcement and investigations. These are the very people who intercept illegal drugs, disrupt smuggling operations and protect our communities before harm occurs. This is a comprehensive strategy: stronger laws, stronger enforcement and smarter prevention.

The Bail and Sentencing Reform Act is not about rhetoric. It is about results. It targets repeat and violent offenders, strengthens bail and sentencing, and backs it up with historic investments in policing and border security. That is how we protect people in Canada, and that is how we build a safer community for all.

• (1855)

Arpan Khanna: Mr. Speaker, the Liberals' solutions are band-aid solutions. They are not fixing the problem. I just gave recent headlines as examples since their measures have taken effect. A person with 274 convictions was released on bail.

I want to send a clear message to Canadians. The crime they are seeing in their communities is not normal. We cannot accept the chaos that is happening on our streets. The Liberals talked about bail. They still believe in the principle of restraint. That means releasing an accused at the earliest opportunity on the least restrictive conditions. That is still part of the Liberal law. The member talks about these big promises of hiring 1,000 new officers. We have heard that I do not know how many times, yet there have never been any results. It is all talk, no results.

Will the member stand up and tell us how many of those police officers have actually been hired as of today?

Mike Kelloway: Mr. Speaker, the Bail and Sentencing Reform Act directly targets repeat and violent offenders with stricter bail and sentencing changes. At the same time, and I want to reiterate this, the government is hiring 1,000 new RCMP officers and investing \$1.3 billion to secure our borders and to stop illegal drugs before they reach our streets. That is real action, and that is a government that is choosing results, with stronger laws, stronger enforcement and safer communities.

STEEL AND ALUMINUM INDUSTRY

Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, for years, United Steelworkers has warned the government that Canada's dependence on American markets and the failure to have a good, comprehensive industrial strategy, including a national steel strategy, were putting our steel industry and Canadian workers at risk. Now at Stelco, hundreds of United Steelworker members are facing layoffs.

The human cost of this decision is devastating. Workers who have spent years building this country are now facing uncertainty about their job, their mortgage and their family's future, and the circumstances around this make it even more outrageous. Cleveland-Cliffs, the American corporation that owns Stelco and has cheered on Donald Trump and the U.S. steel tariffs, made binding legal commitments to maintain unionized employment for five years, when the federal government approved its purchase in 2024. Now those jobs are at risk.

United Steelworkers has demanded an immediate compliance review and enforcement of these commitments. It has asked the government to act decisively and not simply issue press releases after workers have received their layoff notices. The government has legal tools available under the Investment Canada Act. It must use them aggressively and without delay. If Cleveland-Cliffs will not honour the commitments that secured approval for its takeover, the government must be prepared to pursue meaningful consequences, because if the Liberal government does not act, then it is telling every single corporate bad actor that agreements do not matter, that breaking legal commitments does not have consequences and that impunity will be rewarded.

Today the Prime Minister and Doug Ford announced a package to support Ontario's steel sector, and that is a good step, but let us be clear: An announcement is not a plan to protect every worker facing a layoff right now, and billions of dollars in support cannot be a blank cheque for corporations while workers are left behind. How much of this support will protect jobs at Stelco right now? What conditions will be attached to public money? Will the government finally use every tool available under the Investment Canada Act to enforce Cleveland-Cliffs's commitments?

United Steelworkers has laid out what Canada needs. We need stronger protections against dumped steel, tighter import controls, and loopholes closed, so foreign steel cannot displace Canadian production. We need buy Canadian procurement that creates reliable demand for Canadian-made steel. We need investment in modern steelmaking technology and a comprehensive industrial strategy that builds on Canadian production and reduces our dependence on the United States, and we need immediate action for workers, including retention and income supports, alongside enforceable conditions that protect Canadian jobs whenever public money is provided to industry.

These are not new demands. The USW has been calling for this kind of action for years. The government should not have needed a trade war, layoffs at Stelco and mounting uncertainty for Canadian families to understand the urgency. The Liberals talk about building a stronger economy, protecting our sovereignty and creating a better future, but we cannot build a strong economy while workers lose their livelihood. We cannot build a strong Canada by weakening unions and allowing good jobs to disappear, and we cannot build a strong future by asking working people to sacrifice their security while corporations protect their profits.

Workers' rights are not separate from economic strength; they are part of its foundation. It is time for the government to act.

● (1900)

Karim Bardeesy (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I very much appreciate the intervention from my colleague from Edmonton Strathcona on this very important and very timely topic at this important and timely moment for Canada's steel sector.

As I think the member acknowledges, in part at least, that what we are seeing right now is a result of unjust, unjustifiable and illegal tariffs on the sector, affecting not just workers but Canadian communities across the country. These tariffs have undermined our workers by raising production costs and prices that have threatened their livelihood, and, yes, if unanswered, those impacts would result in fewer jobs and lower wages. We cannot allow that to happen, because these products are not just important for their communities; they also anchor crucial manufacturing clusters around the country that employ hundreds of thousands of Canadians. We just cannot stand by while our workers and families remain exposed to the impacts of these illegal tariffs.

There are things we cannot control, but there are many things we can control. We cannot control the actions of foreign governments, but we can control our actions. The hon. member refers to some of the tools under the Investment Canada Act. Indeed, we are looking at all those options: the forced divestiture of assets, financial penalties, and requirements that the company honour its undertakings that it made sacredly through the Investment Canada Act provisions to every worker, to the government and, in fact, to the entire country. I want to encourage the hon. member to walk with us as we take a very strong and committed line with the company to say that it must honour its undertakings and that we are looking at all available steps under the Investment Canada Act.

I would also add that the member referred to the visit by Premier Ford today. I just want to highlight the really significant measures that were in today's announcement with the Prime Minister, ministers, and the Premier of Ontario.

There is a joint steel action fund, with five-year funding commitments of \$3.55 billion from Canada and an additional \$1.67 billion from the Province of Ontario.

The hon. member mentioned the buy Canadian policy. We intend to leverage the buy Canadian policy and the buy Ontario policy to prioritize Canadian steel and public procurement and strengthen domestic demand, a measure that was not mentioned in the hon. mem-

ber's remarks but I know is important to the United Steelworkers and is important to her.

We are strengthening protections against foreign steel dumping and unfair subsidizing, through enhanced enforcement by the Canada Border Services Agency and tighter trade remedy practices and compliance measures.

We have a new Canada-Ontario steel task force to coordinate the implementation of measures to support the steel sector and improve its competitiveness.

The steel sector is fundamental to our economic competitiveness. Steel is a product we have been making in Canada for a long time. It is something we will continue to make and continue to turn into the kinds of products that are needed by manufacturers not just in Canada but around the world.

The hon. member referred to innovation and progress in the sector and government partnership. I will just point her to the very innovative partnership we have made with Algoma Steel to help it improve and refine its production.

When it comes to workers, I would point to the many tariff relief programs we have brought forward, the many tariff relief programs that are applied to business, and the specific protections for workers through Employment and Social Development Canada, with \$70 million over three years allocated for steelworkers through labour market development agreements with the provinces to retrain and upskill up to 10,000 steelworkers.

We have also committed \$382 million over five years to create six workforce alliances, working in partnership, hand in hand, with workers, unions, Canadian businesses and those who are standing for a strong Canadian economy. What is being done to the workers at Stelco is a betrayal of those workers. We will not stand for it. The Hamilton caucus members on this side have been very active in working in partnership with us to defend them. We want the company to honour its commitments.

● (1905)

Heather McPherson: Mr. Speaker, the steelworkers have done their part. They warned us what was coming. They put forward solutions. They helped build this country. Now the government must do its part. It must use the money announced today to build Canadian steel capacity, to put enforceable conditions on public support, to deliver the protections United Steelworkers has demanded, and to make Cleveland-Cliffs answer for the commitments it made to Canadian workers.

Adjournment Proceedings

The real measure of today's announcement will not be the size of the headline or the number of press conferences. The real measure will be whether Canadian workers keep their jobs, whether our steel industry grows stronger and whether the government finally proves that when it makes a promise to workers, it intends to keep it.

Karim Bardeesy: Mr. Speaker, we fully intend to be behind those workers who have built this country, in the way the hon. member mentioned, by ensuring the commitments made by companies, whether through the Investment Canada Act, through subsidy programs or other contribution agreements we make with them, are honoured to the letter. In the case of Stelco and Cleveland-Cliffs, we are looking at all our legal options and the potential remedies, including forced divestiture of assets, financial penalties and a requirement that the company honour its undertakings.

We are standing side by side, walking with workers and with Canadian businesses to make sure we have the appropriate reactions, the appropriate supports and the appropriate approach, which states very strongly that we are going to use all policy levers at our disposal to make sure that those workers, not only in Hamilton but across Canada, who are affected by these tariffs and who can benefit from a more forward-thinking approach are embraced by our approach and that we are there for them.

TAXATION

Cheryl Gallant (Algonquin—Renfrew—Pembroke, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise on behalf of the farm-filled riding of Algonquin—Renfrew—Pembroke to address the absence of an answer from the Liberal government when asked if the Liberals would support our Conservative emergency fuel relief plan.

Soaring diesel costs are putting even more pressure on the cost of food. Diesel prices have risen by nearly 80% over the last year. Diesel powers the tractors that grow our food. Diesel powers the trucks and trains that move it. When those costs rise, farmers, businesses and families pay more. That is why the Conservatives put forward the emergency fuel relief plan to cut diesel costs, produce more Canadian fuel and save Canadians money. Sadly, the Liberal MPs voted it down. Lower costs for farmers who grow our food and the businesses that ship it mean lower costs throughout the supply chain.

Our plan to save Canadians money stands in stark contrast to the Liberals' official policy of higher prices. The Liberal plan to ban 90% of plastic in grocery stores will increase the price of food. The Liberal plan to increase ethanol and gasoline has increased, and will continue to increase, the prices at the pump. The Prime Minister's promise to impose carbon tariffs will increase the cost of imports from countries without a carbon tax. The Liberal plan to impose costly new electricity regulations will push up the price of Canadians' power bills. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister claims this is all fake news. He waves his hand and tells us, "These are not the Liberal policies you're looking for."

Instead, the Liberals reach for the Trump playbook, specifically the page on meaningless symbolic renamings. Just as the U.S. president renamed Lake Ontario, the Liberals renamed the GST credit, but the Liberal gaslighting starts when they claim their renamed GST credit is somehow proof that they care about affordability. The

truth is that this is evidence of their guilt. Gaslighting is the only way to describe a party led by an economist who makes the claim that giving people back their own money lowers prices. Liberal policies such as the plastic packaging ban, as well as electricity and fuel regulations, increase costs. The Prime Minister's out of control spending is fuelling inflation.

The latest PBO report highlights just how much more reckless this Liberal government is compared to the previous Trudeau government. The report reveals that, before any new spending has been announced in the upcoming budget, total borrowing over the next five years will reach three quarters of a trillion dollars. Every Canadian should know that the first \$1,500 they send the government in taxes is going to pay the interest on the Liberal debt. Interest payments are the fastest-growing expense. By the end of the government's term in office, the federal government will be spending \$83 billion on interest payments, and that same year the federal government is budgeted to spend \$64 billion on health care. We have an aging population, but prime minister Brookfield wants to spend more on corporate welfare than Canadians' health care.

Out of control spending pushes up demand in the economy and stokes inflation. Liberal regulations push up the cost of fuel and electricity. They will deny this reality as long as they can, but Canadians paying higher prices can see the truth. Higher prices are the official policy of the Liberal Party.

● (1910)

Mike Kelloway (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government recognizes that Canadians are facing economic uncertainty as global instability and rising costs put pressure on household budgets. Tariffs imposed by our largest trading partner are having a significant impact on workers and businesses from coast to coast to coast. At the same time, conflict and instability in the Middle East have contributed to higher fuel prices around the world.

In the face of these pressures, Canadians need relief, and our government has delivered. Last spring, we acted to ease the impact of the high fuel costs on Canadians. In April, after disruptions to crude oil shipments passing through the Strait of Hormuz drove fuel prices even higher, our government temporarily suspended the federal fuel excise tax.

This measure 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 per litre on diesel and aviation fuel. The cost savings were immediate. When the temporary suspension of the federal fuel excise tax was first introduced, gasoline prices declined by 11% per litre on the first day of the implementation, delivering immediate results to consumers.

With Bill C-38, we are continuing to provide relief at the pump by proposing to extend the temporary suspension of the federal fuel excise tax until and including January 31, 2027, and to apply 50% of the regular excise tax rate from February 1 through March 31, 2027, inclusively. This measure would help lower everyday costs for Canadians, including truckers and businesses in the food, agriculture, housing, construction and delivery sectors. In short, it would continue providing timely and meaningful relief when Canadians need it the most.

We also recognize that groceries do not reach the store shelves on their own. In a country as vast as Canada, moving people and goods is essential and it depends heavily on diesel fuel. Higher diesel prices at the pump have also squeezed business margins by increasing the cost of bringing goods to market. The government remains in close contact with refiners as they maximize diesel production capacity to respond to current conditions.

As our government has said many times, we remain focused on what we can control, including strengthening Canada's economy, diversifying our international trade partnerships, managing public finances responsibly and supporting Canadians, who are facing rising costs on a daily basis.

Across the country, Canadians are concerned about the cost of essentials, including fuel, food, housing and other basic necessities. Our government understands these pressures and is taking concrete, responsible action to provide relief while safeguarding Canada's long-term economic stability. That action includes temporarily suspending the excise tax on gasoline and diesel.

• (1915)

Cheryl Gallant: Mr. Speaker, in the Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister's response to my question, he randomly accused

Adjournment Proceedings

me of not supporting farmers in Pembroke. While there are nearly 1,000 farms in my riding, none of them are located in the city of Pembroke. This geographic confusion is easily corrected.

There is no better time than autumn for a road trip to the Ottawa Valley. I would like to invite all members of Parliament to take a drive along the scenic Opeongo Line, stop for lunch at Calabogie's Redneck Bistro or enjoy a dinner at Whitewater Brewing in Cobden. There is even still a little time for picking apples at McGregor's Orchard near Renfrew.

The Prime Minister's hand-picked parliamentary secretary may have hallucinated farms in Pembroke, but he can be rest assured that I support all the non-imaginary employers in the beautiful riding of Algonquin—Renfrew—Pembroke.

Mike Kelloway: Mr. Speaker, to reiterate, temporarily suspending the excise tax on gasoline and diesel reflects our government's balanced approach to delivering immediate cost relief through very targeted supports. Our government will continue to address affordability measures with fairness, discipline and a clear focus on the results for Canadians. We are helping Canadians manage today's uncertainty and affordability challenges while building a stronger, more resilient and more independent economy. That means once again taking practical steps to lower costs while investing in long-term prosperity.

Finally, I would like to say that, if the member is offering to travel to some of these places, I would take that invitation and join her. As a Cape Bretoner speaking to someone from Ontario, I would relish that opportunity.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The motion that the House do now adjourn is 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 7:17 p.m.)

CONTENTS

Wednesday, October 21, 2026

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Global Dignity Day	
Mingarelli	10537
Special Olympics Sudbury National Team	
Bélanger (Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt)	10537
Green Gables Elementary	
Casey	10537
Small Business Week	
Bragdon	10537
National Military Cemetery	
Fortier	10538
2026 Poppy Campaign	
Brassard	10538
Recognition of Fundraising Excellence	
Fancy	10538
Food Security	
Lefebvre	10538
National Early Childhood Educators Week	
Garon	10539
Manitoba Islamic Association	
Duguid	10539
Food Security	
DeRidder	10539
World Polio Day	
Hanley	10539
Tragedy at CFB Wainwright	
Borrelli	10540
Young People and Pornography	
Villeneuve	10540
Tragedy at CFB Wainwright	
Poilievre	10540
National School Food Program	
Sudds	10540

ORAL QUESTIONS

The Economy	
Poilievre	10540
Lightbound	10541
Poilievre	10541
Lightbound	10541
Poilievre	10541
Solomon	10541
Poilievre	10541
Solomon	10541

Poilievre	10541
Solomon	10542
Finance	
Poilievre	10542
Solomon	10542
Government Priorities	
Normandin	10542
Fraser	10542
Normandin	10542
Dabrusin	10542
Labour	
Larouche	10542
Lightbound	10542
Public Services and Procurement	
Poilievre	10543
Fragiskatos	10543
Poilievre	10543
McKnight	10543
Poilievre	10543
McKnight	10543
The Economy	
Barlow	10543
Fragiskatos	10544
Barlow	10544
Fragiskatos	10544
Kirkland	10544
Church	10544
Kirkland	10544
Church	10544
Canadian Identity and Culture	
Champoux	10544
Miller	10545
Champoux	10545
Miller	10545
The Economy	
Cobena	10545
Gainey	10545
Cobena	10545
Gainey	10545
Zimmer	10545
Thompson	10545
Godin	10546
Lightbound	10546
Godin	10546
Lightbound	10546
Foreign Affairs	
Acan	10546
Anand	10546

Housing

Mantle	10546
Robertson	10546
Mantle	10546
Robertson	10547
Muys	10547
Robertson	10547
Hardy	10547
Desrochers	10547
Hardy	10547
Desrochers	10547

Labour

Jackson	10548
Church	10548
Jackson	10548
Diab	10548
Rempel Garner	10548
Diab	10548

Immigration

Rempel Garner	10548
Church	10549

Natural Resources

St-Pierre	10549
Dabrusin	10549

Public Safety

Caputo	10549
Anandasangaree	10549
Caputo	10549
Anandasangaree	10549
Borrelli	10549
Anandasangaree	10550

Indigenous Affairs

Sheehan	10550
Gull-Masty	10550

Air Transportation

Kram	10550
Kelloway	10550

Justice

Gazan	10550
Kelloway	10550

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**Ukrainian Heritage Month Act**

Bill S-210. Third reading	10550
Motion agreed to	10552
(Bill read the third time and passed)	10552

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**Interparliamentary Delegations**

Coteau	10552
--------------	-------

Committees of the House**Health**

Dhaliwal	10552
----------------	-------

Hungarian Heritage Month Act

Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)	10552
Bill C-294. Introduction and first reading	10552
(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed)	10552

Petitions**Red Bridge**

Caputo	10552
--------------	-------

Barriere Fire Hall

Caputo	10552
--------------	-------

Canada Post Corporation

Vis	10553
-----------	-------

Animal Welfare

Duncan	10553
--------------	-------

Cost of Baby Formula

Kram	10553
------------	-------

Emergency Rooms

Lamoureux	10553
-----------------	-------

United States of America

Kwan	10553
------------	-------

Foreign Affairs

Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)	10553
-----------------------------------	-------

Questions on the Order Paper

Lamoureux	10554
-----------------	-------

Motions for Papers

Lamoureux	10554
-----------------	-------

Privilege**Alleged Mis-characterization of Members' Remarks**

May	10554
Lamoureux	10555
Bittle	10555

GOVERNMENT ORDERS**Safe Social Media Act**

Miller	10555
Bill C-34. Second reading	10555
Thomas	10557
Ste-Marie	10557
Lamoureux	10557
Bendayan	10558
Rood	10559
Blanchette-Joncas	10559
Fergus	10560
Thomas	10560
Lamoureux	10563
Ste-Marie	10563
Zimmer	10563

Lamoureux	10563
Champoux	10564
Champoux	10564
Myles	10567
Blanchette-Joncas	10567
Lamoureux	10568
Thomas	10568
Zuberi	10568
May	10570
Lamoureux	10570
Blanchette-Joncas	10570

Privilege

Freedom of Speech in Members' Parliamentary Work

Lamoureux	10570
-----------------	-------

Safe Social Media Act

Bill C-34. Second reading	10571
Lamoureux	10571

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Georgina's Law

Vien	10571
Bill S-242. Second reading	10571

Fancy	10573
Larouche	10573
DeRidder	10574
Fancy	10574
Larouche	10575
DeRidder	10577
Lamoureux	10578

Privilege

Alleged Premature Disclosure of Bill C-40

Scheer	10579
--------------	-------

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

Public Safety

Khanna	10581
Kelloway	10581

Steel and Aluminum Industry

McPherson	10582
Bardeesy	10583

Taxation

Gallant	10584
Kelloway	10584

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>