HOUSE OF COMMONS
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CANADA

45th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

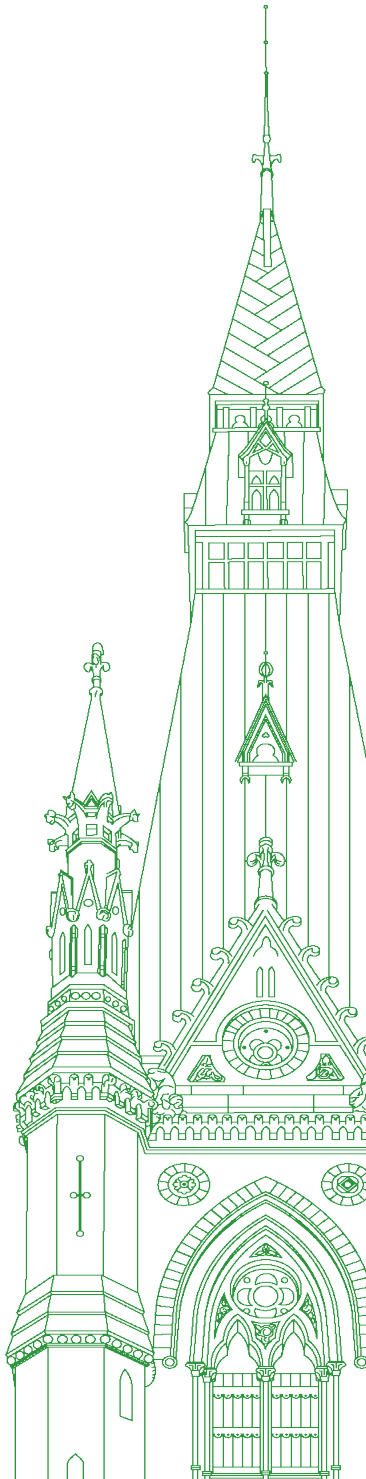
House of Commons Debates

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Thursday, November 19, 2026



Speaker: The Honourable Francis Scarpaleggia

CONTENTS

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

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, November 19, 2026

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayer

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

● (1000)

[*English*]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8)(a), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 17 petitions. These returns will be tabled in an electronic format.

* * *

[*Translation*]

NON-REGRESSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION LAWS ACT

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-296, An Act to enact the Non-regression of Environmental Protection Laws Act, to make consequential amendments to the Auditor General Act and the Interpretation Act and to make related amendments to the Building Canada Act.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House to introduce this bill, the non-regression of environmental protection laws act. Essentially, in layman's terms, this is an act to prevent any backtracking in the areas of climate and biodiversity, given that the government has taken the most significant steps backwards in the history of the country when it comes to addressing climate change.

This bill will ensure that parliamentarians can examine the various laws and regulations through the lens of climate change, so that any attempts by the government to weaken or scrap regulations, such as the methane regulations, the clean electricity regulations, the net-zero emissions regulations, or industrial or consumer carbon pricing, which are all examples of backtracking we have seen in recent years, can be documented, and parliamentarians will be aware of the climate, economic and human impacts when voting on legislation.

I am introducing this bill today. I hope that the government will take it up because, although the government claims it wants to continue to fight climate change and comply with the Paris Agreement, which is the international climate agreement, in reality, the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development is saying that the government is backtracking.

This bill will shed light on the government's true nature. Let us hope that it will take responsibility with respect to the climate crisis.

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

* * *

● (1005)

[*English*]

FEDERAL LAW–CIVIL LAW HARMONIZATION ACT, NO. 4

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill S-6, A fourth Act to harmonize federal law with the civil law of Quebec and to amend certain Acts in order to ensure that each language version takes into account the common law and the civil law.

(Motion agreed to and bill read the first time)

* * *

NATIONAL FRAMEWORK ON FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER ACT

Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill S-234, An Act respecting a national framework for fetal alcohol spectrum disorder.

He said: Mr. Speaker, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder is a leading neurological disability affecting about 4% of Canadians. People with FASD are at higher risk of struggling with mental health, suicidality, housing instability and substance abuse, and they are more likely to end up in jail.

Despite the large number of people impacted, there remains a critical need for more work on prevention, awareness, research and coordination. That is why I am tabling Bill S-234 to establish a national framework on fetal alcohol spectrum disorder. More must be done to support FASD prevention and promote healthy pregnancies in general. Canadians living with this disability, and with any disability, ought to be treated in ways that affirm their inherent human dignity, accommodate their circumstances and recognize their full potential.

I want to thank Senator Mohamed-Iqbal Ravalia for proposing and passing this legislation in the Senate. I want to thank my colleague from Oshawa for seconding this bill, and I want to recognize the critical work done by the Canada FASD Research Network.

I hope the discussion around this bill and its passage will strengthen our collective response to FASD at every level, including prevention, diagnosis and support.

(Motion agreed to and bill read the first time)

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PETITIONS

TRANS-CANADA HIGHWAY

Gaétan Malette (Kapuskasing—Timmins—Mushkegowuk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am back on my feet to present another signed petition, this time from the people of Val Gagné.

[*Translation*]

Northern Ontarians are calling on the government to designate Trans-Canada Highway 11 as a project of national interest. Every day of inaction puts more lives at risk.

[*English*]

Val Gagné may be a small community, but its voice carries just as far as any other. We have been going door to door, village to village, and the answer is the same everywhere. It is time that the government make Highway 11 a national priority.

FALUN GONG

Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today is a historic day for the Rohingya people, with the ICJ, the UN's top court, recognizing the genocide of the Rohingya people by Burmese security forces. I want to acknowledge that important ruling and the work done in the House to recognize that genocide from years ago.

The petition I am tabling is dealing with the issue of fundamental human rights in a different context. It is dealing with it in China and particularly in the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners. This petition I am tabling today calls on the government to take a stronger response in combatting the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners and calling on the government of China to end that persecution.

* * *

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 it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

● (1010)

[*English*]

THE BUDGET

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF MINISTER OF FINANCE

The House resumed from November 18 consideration of the motion that this House approve in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Hon. Jenna Sudds (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement and to the Secretary of State (Defence Procurement), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands.

Budget 2026 advances our government's commitment to build a stronger Canada. Through generational investments in our people, communities and our economy, we are creating more quality jobs, strengthening our sovereignty and laying the foundation for a more resilient Canada. In an era of evolving trade relationships, economic volatility and rapidly advancing technologies, we must adapt to the world around us.

For the communities that I represent in Kanata, Carp, Stittsville and Bells Corners, this means increased investment in infrastructure, such as recreation centres and affordable housing. It also means increased opportunities for growth in our technology and defence sectors.

Budget 2026 sets out an ambitious vision for our future, and that ambition drives how we become masters of our destiny. Our government recognizes that affordability, from the cost of groceries to the cost of housing and energy, is top of mind for Canadians. Budget 2026 is taking practical steps to make life more affordable and put money back in the pockets of Canadians.

Through the Canada groceries and essentials benefit supplement, over 12 million households will receive an additional boost to help cover everyday essentials. The build Canada workers benefit takes targeted action to strengthen support for low-income workers. By making the Canada caregiver credit fully refundable, we recognize the dedication of caregivers who provide essential support in our communities. We have also extended the temporary suspension of the federal fuel excise tax, providing ongoing saving for Canadians on gasoline and diesel. These practical measures reflect our government's commitment to ensuring that economic growth translates into greater affordability and security for Canadians.

Across Kanata, Carp, Bells Corners and Stittsville, we see our communities growing every day. As communities across our country grow, we must build affordable homes and efficiently meet the demand for them. Through Build Canada Homes, we are supporting modern construction methods to accelerate housing development and improve affordability. By collaborating with provinces and municipalities, we are removing red tape from construction, integrating AI and introducing electronic permitting. Together, these initiatives will support a housing market that benefits everyone.

At the core of budget 2026 is our government's ambitious 10-year plan to end homelessness in Canada, backed by programs like the integrated supports fund. Build Canada strong means ensuring that every Canadian has a safe, affordable place to live.

As the needs of our communities change, so should our community infrastructure. This is why budget 2026 proposes $1.5 billion over four years to invest in upgrading roads, water and waste water management systems. Through the build communities strong fund, we are also investing $51 billion over 10 years to keep our communities running smoothly. From hospitals to bridges and transit systems, this generational investment will accelerate the construction of critical infrastructure projects.

As part of this fund, budget 2026 will also support the construction, expansion and renewal of community recreation centres and ice rinks across Canada. We know these recreation centres are at the heart of our communities. They are where kids learn to skate, where families bond over sports and cultural activities, and where lasting memories are formed. As our economy continues to grow stronger, our government is creating more quality jobs so that Canadians can build careers, start businesses and provide for their families.

● (1015)

Budget 2026 outlines a plan to improve productivity and attract new investments to Canada. Through the productivity mega deduction, industries can invest in modern machinery, equipment and technology that will enhance domestic production and strengthen Canada's growth potential. With a proposed $930 million invested in the scientific research and experimental development program, SR&ED, we can support businesses with commercialization as they conduct cutting-edge research.

Through measures like the $15-million capital gains exemption for qualifying investments in eligible Canadian businesses and the early and growth stage investment strategy, we are helping entrepreneurs access the investment they need to grow. Our message to Canadian businesses is clear: We want them to invest here, to grow here and to succeed here.

Underscoring budget 2026 is our government's continued commitment to positioning Canada as a global leader in digital technologies. There is no finer example of our technological potential than in my riding of Kanata, which is home to Canada's largest technology park. We are home to world-class companies, researchers, engineers and entrepreneurs who are leading in telecommunications, AI, photonics, semiconductors, defence and advanced manufacturing, to name a few.

Canada has the confidence, the talent and the expertise to lead. However, our confidence must be rooted in technological sovereignty. Control over our data and our choices must drive our future. That is why budget 2026 proposes $2.7 billion in investment in artificial intelligence and quantum technologies. We are also advancing the commercialization of the Canadian photonics fabrication centre. Not only would these investments strengthen our domestic capabilities and promote technological advances, but they would also create thousands of new job opportunities.

During a time of geopolitical tension and global uncertainty, it is now more important than ever that we defend Canada's security and sovereignty. That is why our government is making landmark investments to strengthen our sovereign defence capabilities. Budget 2026 proposes $2.3 billion for the defence drone initiative and funding that would strengthen our defence industrial base, while supporting Canadian suppliers and small and medium-sized businesses. That means investing in Canadian expertise, supporting domestic manufacturing and ensuring Canadian businesses have the opportunities to contribute to our national defence.

Through our buy Canadian policy, we are becoming our own best customer. For Kanata's technology sector, as leaders in advanced communications, cybersecurity and innovative technologies, these investments present an opportunity to showcase Canadian innovation on the world stage. As we strengthen our defence capabilities and technology sector, we are on course for a stronger, more self-reliant country.

Ultimately, budget 2026 is about building a Canada that prioritizes our people, growth and sovereignty, while laying the groundwork for the next generation. People are Canada's greatest strength. We are working to shape a Canada that young people are proud to call home, where they can find quality jobs, afford to buy a house and build a life they want to live. We are shaping a Canada where businesses want to grow, innovate and invest. I see this rapid growth every day in Kanata's technology park. Most of all, we are shaping a Canada that is shifting from reliance to resilience so our children and grandchildren can live in a stronger Canada.

Budget 2026 is a statement of confidence and a guide for shaping Canada's future. Budget 2026 will make life more affordable, build homes more quickly, strengthen our communities, increase the supply of quality jobs, and invest in the sovereign technologies and capabilities that will define Canada's future. We have the resources, world-class talent and ambition, but most importantly, we have the plan.

● (1020)

Pat Kelly (Calgary Crowfoot, CPC): Madam Speaker, in the member's speech I did not hear anything about the shifting accounting trickery that is going on with this budget, which has been observed by everyone from the Parliamentary Budget Officer to the IMF and other observers. They note that the deficit itself, which is at $60 billion, is double the deficit that was enough to provoke the resignation of the previous minister of finance at this time two years ago. The borrowing requirement in this budget for this year alone is two and a half times the nominal deficit in this budget of $60 billion.

Can she comment on the $765 billion in debt that this budget will add and on the shifting deliberate accounting trickery that makes it so difficult to follow even how and where the borrowed money is going?

Hon. Jenna Sudds: Madam Speaker, as a mother of three teenagers, and as the member of Parliament for Kanata, Bells Corners, Stittsville and Carp, I see first-hand every day, through the eyes of young people, the impact of the decisions we are making today on their futures. I have immense pride in the decisions this government is making in investing in our defence, security and sovereignty. These are critical investments we are making today for the future. Therefore, when I think about these steps and this plan we have put forward through budget 2026, I am immensely proud and stand confident that these are the right decisions for us now, but also for generations to come.

[*Translation*]

Mario Simard (Jonquière—Hébertville—Pays-des-Bleuets, BQ): Madam Speaker, in her speech, my colleague praised the productivity mega deduction, a government measure that will will help build hospitals. However, I see things differently because the mega deduction was not negotiated with the provinces.

This measure will cost Quebec $1 billion a year, or $5 billion by the end of its run.

The same is true when it comes to health care. My colleague talks about building hospitals, yet health transfers will be cut to 3% starting next year. For Quebec, that represents a loss of $5 billion. Over five years, taking into account the health care system's rising costs, that shortfall could reach nearly $14 billion.

Far from being generational budget, this budget is deeply disappointing for Quebec and the other provinces.

Would my colleague care to comment?

[*English*]

Hon. Jenna Sudds: Madam Speaker, quite the contrary. I view this budget as an investment not only in today, but in tomorrow.

The conversations I am having in my community, particularly in the Kanata North technology park, around the productivity mega deduction are very positive. It allows our companies to make investments they might otherwise have put off. With the reality of geopolitical uncertainty and ongoing tariffs right now, there is uncertainty in the business climate. This is one way we have been able to support those businesses so they have some confidence in making those investments in their future. We are starting to see that already in the conversations I am having.

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the member's comments and the different aspects of the budget that were shared.

Something that is important to Waterloo that has not been as highlighted in the budget but should be is with respect to caregivers. There are a lot of people providing care across the country. We know that more than half of Canadian women are caregivers, with about one-quarter providing unpaid care to adults with long-term medical conditions or disabilities. This budget takes a non-refundable tax credit to a fully refundable tax credit, which will be really important and make a massive difference for Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

I would like to hear the member's comments on this advancement in the budget.

● (1025)

Hon. Jenna Sudds: Madam Speaker, I share that member's enthusiasm in the decision to move forward to make the caregiver credit fully refundable. These are individuals across our country, in every community, who are incredibly giving of themselves in caring for others, and this—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): We have to resume debate.

The hon. chief government whip.

Hon. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is an honour to rise today to speak to budget 2026. I want to use my time today to speak to a local issue, and then perhaps address some of the concerns that I have been hearing in this House from the Conservatives in particular.

It is not that often that we get to see local issues or something that is important to our community actually spelled out in a budget document. Members can imagine how happy I was when I saw a really important initiative had been put into budget 2026, and that has to do with the LaSalle Causeway in Kingston. A lot of people do not realize that the Cataraqui River has 29 locks in the Rideau Canal system. The Cataraqui River is the last part of it that flows out into Lake Ontario. These locks go all the way to Ottawa. If people were to travel these 29 locks, approximately 200 kilometres, which I know many people in eastern Ontario do, by boat, they could eventually get from Ottawa into Lake Ontario.

At that last little bit, right where the Cataraqui River spills out into Lake Ontario, there is a special bridge there, owned by the federal government. It was built in 1917. It was called the LaSalle Causeway. This was a lift-bridge that was so well designed for the time that the difference in the balancing act of this bridge was such that people could lift it by hand crank. There was only about a 300-pound difference that would actually tip the bridge to allow boats to go under. Over the years, it had work done to revitalize it and keep it up to current standards.

One thing that they definitely did not expect when it was being built was that the city would grow the way that it did. When the federal government built this piece of infrastructure, it was a link between the city and a way out of the city, along Highway 2, eventually continuing east throughout Ontario. Over the years, though, the city of Kingston grew into the eastern side of the city. It is obviously restricted; it cannot go south because of the water, and going north is difficult because of Highway 401 and the challenges of bringing infrastructure over or under Highway 401. It had already grown as west as it possibly could towards Napanee and into the Hastings area. The city naturally grew to the east. However, what this meant is that the LaSalle Causeway started to experience volumes that it was never built for.

During a routine repair of this bridge about three years ago, the bridge started to collapse. Under what was the right thing to do at the time, the department stepped in and immediately froze any activity on site until they could completely dismantle the bridge. The government then had to install a temporary bridge. This temporary bridge was incredibly important as about 5,000 or 6,000 cars a day travel over this bridge. Over the last number of years, the problem is that for people to use the canal system, to take their boats and to come into Lake Ontario, this bridge has to be manually lifted out of place for a day to allow the boats to go through. Whereas that lift would only be a 10- or 15-minute inconvenience for people travelling by vehicles, suddenly it becomes a major inconvenience, because now they have to find another way around and over the Cataraqui River.

I was very thrilled to see that the minister responsible for public services committed the necessary funds to rebuild the LaSalle Causeway, so that it can properly reflect the demand that is required today and that the federal government will maintain this important piece of infrastructure. I look forward to a bridge that was not designed for 1917, but that is designed for the current day and for decades to come. I want to thank the government for that very important investment in the Kingston region, again, keeping up a piece of infrastructure that is owned by the federal government.

I will shift in the last five minutes or so to talk a little about some of what I hear and, in particular, to respond to the concerns that I hear from Conservatives about the amount of debt that is incurred in this budget. A lot of people in this House and those who might watch the proceedings know that I have no problem trying to address some of those concerns, and I like to try to hit them head-on. One thing that I always hear from the Conservatives is about debt and deficit. They get up time and time again, and they challenge us on that.

● (1030)

Who does not ask a lot about how much debt we have? Our economists typically do not ask questions about how much debt a country has. They ask a much more important question, which is how much debt a country has compared to the size of its economy. That is actually the important question.

Think about it. If a really small country has a lot of debt, comparatively speaking, that can be extremely problematic. On the other hand, a really big country could have the exact same amount of debt, and it would not be the same kind of challenge.

What is really important is the strength of the economy, what the economy can deliver and how it can service that debt. This is why I think we are in an extremely responsible position when we talk about investing in our communities, especially at a time like this. We have the best fiscal position in the G7 when we compare our debt and our projected debt to our economy and the projected growth of our economy. I cannot think of a more important time than when our biggest trading partner has decided to take isolationist approaches to their economy and has reverted to protectionism instead of looking for opportunities.

We are not a country that believes that we will prosper through protecting our economy and closing it off to the world. We are a country that agrees, and I hope the vast majority of members in the House agree, that free trade is incredibly important to an economy in order to be prosperous. I know the Conservatives agree. They are the ones who really championed free trade back in the 1980s, and good for them for that.

Free trade is just collectively saying that we are really good at this, and another country is really good at something else, so when we put our resources together, we end up being better off. The sum is bigger than the two individual parts. This is why, when we have the fiscal power and the situation we are experiencing with our southern neighbours right now, I cannot imagine a more important time to be investing in our country.

There is another really important question, because I do not want to suggest that all debt is good. What it comes down to is what we are spending our money on. Are we spending our money on only giving tax breaks to the rich, hoping that trickles down, which was the Ronald Reagan approach in the 1980s, Reaganomics, or are we spending our money by actually investing? We realize that if we want to trade more with Europe and Asia, that means we need to rely more on port development as opposed to road infrastructure and transportation through trucks and other forms of moving and trading with the United States. That is the most important thing.

When members look at this budget and look at how we are investing and what we are investing in, they will see that we are investing in making sure that we can build a resilient, strong economy for tomorrow. When we do that, we will actually improve lives for generations to come.

I take the question and concern seriously, but I also know that Conservatives understand and know this. They know that in a growing economy, we can spend more because we have projected growth, which is going to pay for our spending and investing. I know that they know that, because 16 of the last 19 budgets introduced by Conservatives in this very House of Commons, by Brian Mulroney and Stephen Harper, ran deficits, so they know that this is how we do it. They know that every G7 economy does this.

I hope that they will come around, see the value in this budget and vote in favour of it.

● (1035)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I agree 100% with the member's comments, and I want to flesh them out a bit more in terms of investments.

As the member knows, since the last election we have had a Prime Minister who has been out, along with a number of ministers, pursuing trade opportunities that go beyond the Canada-U.S.A. border. This reinforces what the member is saying. At the end of the day, investing in things like the Montreal port and what is taking place at the Vancouver port is very expensive, but it is part of the reason we have been able to increase trade partners outside of the United States by 50%.

I wonder if the member could provide his thoughts in regard to the whole trade file.

Hon. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, the member is absolutely correct. Actually, we cannot just do one or the other. We cannot just go out and build trade relationships, sign trade agreements and make commitments with other countries. We also have to build the infrastructure to be able to do that. We have the infrastructure to trade with the United States, because it is all road networks, and 70% or 80% of our population lives within 100 kilometres of the U.S. border.

There was a time when it was easier to trade with the United States than even within our own country, because of the way that our infrastructure was set up. With the trading relationships and the relationships we look to seek out in the future, we need to build up that infrastructure. That is building on ports. That is building on other critical infrastructure to make those trade links with other parts of the world possible.

Rhonda Kirkland (Oshawa, CPC): Madam Speaker, I appreciated this speech more than others I have heard from this member, including different walks in the forest I have seen, which are lovely, but they do this one thing. I do not know if the member realizes that we have a Westminster system. The job of our opposition is to look very closely at things, to inspect them, to question them and to hold the government to account, and it feels as though every time we try to do that in the House, the member puts out a response that says, essentially, "How dare they not support us? They need to collaborate and stop obstructing."

Would he agree, then, that our questioning and our concerns about this budget are indeed collaboration in our government system and not obstruction?

Hon. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, forgive me if I start blushing, but I know that the member is an avid watcher of my social media platforms. I am flattered to hear that, but she missed a very important one, and I would encourage her and anyone watching to go to my social media feeds to look for it. There is a very important one where I talk about what the role of the opposition is. She is right, actually. Everything she just said is the role of the opposition.

The problem is that this is not what the Conservatives do in here. When they come in during question period, they do not challenge policy. They come in here, and the member for Barrie South—Innisfil stands up as the lead of the ethics committee and tries to drum up an ethics scandal that the Prime Minister is involved in, or the member for Dufferin—Caledon gets up and accuses a minister. They never actually try to address the policy. What they try to do is attack the individual, so the member is actually really bang on. What she said is what they are supposed to be doing, but the problem is that they are not doing that.

[*Translation*]

Mario Simard (Jonquière—Hébertville—Pays-des-Bleuets, BQ): Madam Speaker, earlier, in response to a question from my colleague from Winnipeg North, my colleague from Kingston and the Islands said that, given the trade conflict with the Americans, we need to further develop our infrastructure. Here is what I do not understand: Canadian oil is not subject to tariffs, yet the government is investing $40 billion, and likely more, in the Pacific link pipeline.

Where does most of that oil go? It goes to the United States. Fully 91% of our exports go to the United States, and the major oil companies are largely American-owned, so I do not understand why the government is investing in infrastructure that will benefit Americans, bolster their energy security and increase trade with them in a product that is not subject to tariffs. Perhaps my colleague can explain the logic behind that.

● (1040)

[*English*]

Hon. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, notwithstanding the fact that I do not know if I entirely agree with the member's assessment of that particular infrastructure project, it is really easy if we just pick one infrastructure project and talk about it and say that this one is dealing only with the United States, therefore the entire plan is like that, but it is not. What about some of the other stuff that we are doing? We are electrifying the entire country. What about what we are committed to in that? I know where Quebec is, specifically as it relates to electrification. When I look at all of the projects as a whole, it is very obvious that we are not looking just to build stronger links with the United States.

Rhonda Kirkland (Oshawa, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is always an honour to rise on behalf of Oshawa, my neighbours and friends.

Today, I rise to speak, of course, about the government's 2026 federal budget and what it means to Canadians who work hard, pay their taxes and hope to build a better future for their families.

When Canadians look at budget 2026, they want to know where their hard-earned tax dollars are going and whether the government's decisions will indeed make their lives more affordable. Unfortunately for families in Oshawa and across Canada, the answer is becoming harder to find, and that is why I am here to represent Oshawa's interests.

Groceries cost more. Filling up the family vehicle costs more. Housing remains out of reach for far too many Canadians, and small businesses continue to face rising expenses. Canadians have held up their end of the bargain. They have worked hard and followed the rules; they pay their taxes and contribute to their communities. They deserve a government that respects that hard work. Instead, the Prime Minister has delivered yet another costly budget that would increase spending, add drastically to our national debt and leave future generations with the bill.

I want to talk about what these rising costs actually mean for Canadian families. Let us bring it right down to where it matters most. It means a parent standing in the grocery aisle, adding up the cost of everything in their cart and deciding what they can afford and what they are going to have to put back. It means seniors on a fixed income, watching their savings disappear just to cover everyday expenses. It means families who work hard all week long, only to find that there is barely anything left after paying the mortgage, buying the groceries and filling up their car.

Conservatives propose removing all federal taxes, for instance, on gasoline, with estimated savings of approximately 20¢ per litre and up to $1,200 per family. The Liberals, of course, chose not to provide that relief. Instead, Canadians face the prospect of yet another increase in fuel costs next year.

Conservatives have called for cutting wasteful spending so Canadians could keep more of their own money, yet the government chose to spend more. Hard work should mean financial security, not a constant struggle to make ends meet.

I am also concerned about the government's continued lack of fiscal responsibility. The Prime Minister came into the office with what Canadians thought was an impressive financial résumé. He promised Canadians a different approach to managing money from the one we had in the 10 years prior to him under Justin Trudeau, yet here we are with another budget that would add billions in debt while Canadian families are already stretched to their limits. It is worse, far worse, than Justin Trudeau's spending. That is the shocker here. Conservatives are standing up in the House asking this current government to be as good as Justin Trudeau and spend a little less. Shockingly, that is where we are right now with budget 26.

The government's own projections show federal debt charges rising approximately $85.5 billion annually by 2031. If we think about that, it is billions of dollars every year, not to build homes or improve infrastructure but simply to pay interest on money the government has already borrowed.

Instead of addressing the problem, Liberals have introduced a new way of dividing operating spending and capital investment. The Parliamentary Budget Officer has raised concerns about the government's definition of capital investment, and they are legitimate concerns.

Is this an attempt to cook the books? I think so, and Canadians deserve a clear explanation of how the government accounts for their money, because no matter how the Liberals choose to classify their spending, the debt still has to be paid by our children and our grandchildren. What a shame. The Liberals borrow, but our children pay and Canadians pay. Families across Oshawa have been forced to stretch every dollar and make sacrifices to live within their means. It is about time this federal government learned to live within its means.

In Oshawa, we know the value of a good-paying job. Our city was built by generations of hard-working men and women in the automotive sector, manufacturing and local businesses that depend on those industries.

The Budget

● (1045)

When an auto worker loses his job, it is not just one paycheque that disappears. There are three to seven more along the supply chain. It affects each entire family that depends on that income, the small business down the street and the future of our community. Canadian businesses need competitive taxes, reliable energy and fewer unnecessary regulations in order to thrive. They deserve a government that encourages investment, supports expansion and creates the conditions for good-paying jobs here at home.

Oshawa's auto workers have helped build this country's economy for generations. They deserve a government that will stand up for their jobs, not simply try to manage the decline in our auto sector. In fact, the member for Whitby very recently said in this House that all these so-called jobs that were becoming available in the Durham region would help those coming out of auto jobs, implying the Liberals were planning for people to lose their jobs in the auto sector. They are not fighting for Oshawa or any Canadian auto jobs, from my perspective.

Housing is another issue I hear about regularly from residents in Oshawa. Young people are getting an education, working hard and saving whatever they can, yet the dream of owning a home continues to slip further away. Renters are spending enormous portions of their income simply to keep a roof over their heads, leaving little for groceries and transportation, and they can forget about savings. Imagine someone working full-time and still worrying about whether they can afford next month's rent.

Building more homes, speeding up construction and removing unnecessary barriers to development must be priorities, but housing and immigration policies cannot be treated as separate issues. Canada deserves an immigration system, for instance, that is fair, compassionate and sustainable.

Newcomers have contributed enormously to our country, but the government must ensure that communities have the housing, infrastructure and essential services necessary to support a growing population. That means enough housing, hospitals, schools, transportation and essential services. The government must be transparent about its immigration targets and ensure that population growth reflects the capacity of our communities. When hospitals and schools are already under pressure, we must plan carefully to ensure that families and newcomers can access the services they desperately need. A responsible immigration system must work for Canadians and it must work for newcomers.

We must address the growing food insecurity facing Canadian families as well. According to Food Banks Canada's report, there were more than 2.3 million visits to food banks across Canada in March this year alone. That is the highest number ever recorded. Food banks across the country, including in Oshawa at Simcoe Hall Settlement House, are running out of food and having to turn people away. Food banks do not have enough food to feed people in need. We must remember that every visit to a food bank is a Canadian facing difficult choices just to afford the necessities of life. In a country as wealthy and resourceful as Canada, it is deeply troubling that so many people must rely on food banks just to get through a single month.

It is not enough for the government to announce billions of dollars in new band-aid funding and expect Canadians to be satisfied. People deserve to know where that money is going, what it is accomplishing and whether their lives are actually improving. As the member of Parliament for Oshawa, I hear from residents always about affordability, housing, manufacturing jobs and the future of their families.

At the end of the day, I keep coming back to one question when I look at this budget. Are Canadians better off? I recently asked Oshawa residents if their lives reflect the Prime Minister's claim last spring that affordability is the best it has been in a decade, and so far, nobody has agreed.

When I think about the people of Oshawa, I think about our auto workers, small business owners, hard-working parents and seniors who have contributed so much to our community. They deserve a government that understands the pressures they face and takes their concerns seriously. Conservatives will continue to call for lower taxes, responsible spending, affordable housing and policies that support Canadian workers and businesses.

As the member of Parliament for Oshawa, I will continue to stand up for our workers, our families, our seniors and our young people. I will continue to advocate for the industries that have supported generations of families in Oshawa. I will continue to hold the government accountable for how it spends Canadians' hard-earned tax dollars while remaining accountable to the people who have entrusted me to represent them. Oshawa families have done their part. It is time the government did its part.

● (1050)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the issue I have with the member's statement is that as the world, because it is not unique to Canada, has to deal with the issue of affordability, the Prime Minister and this government understand the issue, and every member of the Liberal caucus recognizes that we need to do things such as the groceries and essentials benefit program in Canada, which puts money directly into pockets. We have seen the suspension of the fuel excise tax. We have programs like the dental program, which is helping seniors on fixed incomes get dental work done. We have 400,000 children being fed in our schools.

On all these types of programs, the Conservatives vote consistently against. Some of them they call absolute garbage, and they disagree with their very existence, yet they talk about affordability. Does the member not see any hypocrisy there?

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): Order.

Rhonda Kirkland: Madam Speaker, I take exception to the word "hypocrisy" for a very clear reason. We have a government that is telling Canadians, "Everything is fine. We're taking care of you. We're taking most of your money, but we're giving you a smidgen back, and that's us looking after you." The Liberals keep turning to global issues as the reason Canadians are struggling here at home, but we know it is the policies of the Liberal government that have put Canadians in this place in the first place, and I can promise members that Canadians are starting to pay attention.

Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Madam Speaker, as my colleague knows, as someone from rural Canada, the cadets program gives young people a place where they belong. Training together supports their mental and physical health, and through cadets, they learn Canada's history, take pride in their country and see the difference they can actually make in their own communities.

Now the government is adding billions of dollars in defence spending, and we know there is a huge retention and recruitment problem right now with the Canadian Armed Forces. Cadets are a critical point of entry, but we are learning that in British Columbia, my home province, and in Ontario, the government is cutting critical training funds, especially for weekends for cadets. Does my colleague agree that the Minister of National Defence needs to reverse this decision immediately?

Rhonda Kirkland: Yes, Madam Speaker, I agree 110%.

The truth is this. Cadets is an amazing program throughout this country for the army, air and navy. My son was a member of the 151 Chadburn Squadron in Oshawa, and I promise members this: He is a better adult because of the time he spent in our cadet program. I have seen that time and time again.

This decision needs to be reversed. We are not training soldiers in our cadet program. That is not really the purpose of it. The purpose is to create good citizens who contribute to our society. However, the member is correct. A lot of times it is an entryway for many of our most solid members who serve in our Canadian Armed Forces.

Helena Konanz (Similkameen—South Okanagan—West Kootenay, CPC): Madam Speaker, there are so many parts of my colleague's impassioned speech that really hit home.

The cost of groceries is what I am hearing about in Similkameen—South Okanagan—West Kootenay. People going to grocery stores are having to stay in the middle aisles. In other words, they cannot buy anything fresh, or meat. That is for sure. Some are even having to avoid the grocery store and are starting to go to food banks. It sounds like it is the same in Oshawa.

How does my colleague think the massive, growing debt in this budget is going to help everyday Canadians when all they want to do is put food on the table?

● (1055)

Rhonda Kirkland: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the question and the heart with which that question comes.

The truth is, as members of Parliament, we speak to people in our communities every day, and in Oshawa, it is the same. People are struggling. People are suffering. I have asked them, "Is affordability for you the best it's been in a decade?" I can promise members that it is not.

The ministers in the government who created this budget need to have more one-on-one conversations with Canadians in our communities to really understand that sadness of having to shop in the inside aisles and not around the edges where they can get the healthy food. Our country is suffering, and our people are becoming unhealthy because they cannot afford what they need.

Clifford Small (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is an honour and a privilege to stand here today to speak on behalf of the people of Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame and the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

This budget is going to have a $62-billion deficit and new spending of $151.5 billion in the next fiscal year. It is going to add $765 billion of new debt over the next five years for this country, representing $44,000 of extra expenses for each household in this country, but it is no wonder. We just heard the announcement of a $1.2-billion spend on the new oceans protection fund. Industries like fishing, aquaculture, tourism, goods transportation, and oil and gas will be placed under attack. Every industry that depends on the ocean to earn its livelihood will be under attack.

It is totally unnecessary. Canada has the most protected oceans in the world. Is the Oceans Act not enough? Who is going to receive all this funding? Will it be the ENGOs that are already working feverishly to shut down our fishing industry, our aquaculture industry and our oil and gas and to severely restrict cruise ships, which many of our coastal communities depend on for tourism?

Conservatives have been trying to get Canada's ocean envoy, the Prime Minister's wife, Madame Fox Carney, to come to the fisheries committee and to every other relevant standing committee here in Parliament to explain her role with the $1.2-billion fund the Prime Minister just announced to be administered by none other than his wife. Again today, Liberals voted for the fourth time to shut down debate on the motion we put forward to have Ms. Fox Carney appear at the fisheries committee. I do not know what the cover-up is. We cannot even debate the motion. They could have simply voted it down and said she is not coming, but they do not want to talk about it. What is the big deal?

We just heard talk of nearly half a billion dollars committed by the Prime Minister to the forests of Brazil, which his very own companies helped to destroy. That money can buy 10 brand new water bombers to protect the forests of Canada. Are the forests of Canada not worth protecting?

In spite of all this rampant spending, the Liberals have cut funding to Canada's military cadet and junior rangers programs. We have been hearing concerns from parents. In fact, one parent who was to bring her child to Ottawa this weekend as a part of his cadet program was in touch with our office today. She told us it was cancelled because the funding is not there. The leaders of the cadet program are extremely disappointed. They care about these youth, and they care about what the cadet program means for our next generation, our younger generation.

● (1100)

Nine communities in Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame have cadet programs: Bishop's Falls, Botwood, Gander, Grand Falls-Windsor, Lewisporte, Springdale, Summerford and Triton. The Summerford program supports Twillingate, New World Island and the surrounding areas. The impact is massive. In a cost of living crisis, when parents are struggling to find affordable activities to enrol their kids in, the most affordable program and most meaningful program in Canada that is basically free for parents is being slashed while enrolment is at a record level.

Cadet programs have increased their enrolment over the last year, year over year, by 10,000. It is a program that teaches our youth responsibility, respect, discipline and courage. It introduces them to volunteering in an age where volunteerism is dying. That shows the priorities of the Liberal government. The cadet program is so important because cadets are 10 times more likely to serve in the armed forces than non-cadets are. It is nearly 100% guaranteed that they are going to get through boot camp, their basic training. Of all the new entrants into the armed forces, the ones the Liberals bragged about last year, nearly 90% of them failed out of basic training, and they had to bump them up.

Our cadets want to serve, and they will do well in training. At a time when the Liberals have promised 5% of Canada's GDP to the military, they are cutting the legs out from underneath the very basis, the foundation, that brings people into our military to serve and protect our country. It is very disheartening that there is all this spending but a program like the cadets is being axed when its enrolment is at an all-time high. During a cost of living crisis, a valuable program for parents and families is being pulled out from under their feet. It is just not good enough.

Everyone knows we are in a cost of living crisis. It is caused by a few things, mostly by fiscal mismanagement and a Prime Minister who came with a big promise a year and a half ago but has not delivered. Our Canadian dollar is less than or equal to where it was when he was elected. If he is a fiscal guru who is running our economy but our dollar is in the toilet, and everything we import, even gas at the pumps, is costing about 80¢ or 90¢ a litre more than it should because of the weak Canadian dollar, then the government needs to do better.

We need Canada to prosper. We have the third-highest amount of natural resources in the world. We should not have deficits. We should be giving out cheques to everybody. Education should be free here. However, the government squashed it. We have a revenue problem and an even more terrible spending problem. It is not good enough, and I will not support this budget.

● (1105)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am not at all surprised the member is saying that he is not supporting this budget. In fact, the most memorable statement that the member has made in the House of Commons in the last couple of years was when he called the national school food program a “garbage” program. I remember it vividly. He stood up and said that it is garbage. Four hundred thousand children are being fed in Canada, in every region, and that is what the member had to say about it.

I have a question for the member. The Conservatives opposed the national dental care program that provides dental services for seniors, for example, who are on a fixed income, including in his very own riding. Does he believe that this program, like the national school food program, is garbage? What does he really feel about the dental care program? Does he support the Conservative position that it is a bad program too?

Clifford Small: Madam Speaker, I am so thankful that the member for Winnipeg North asked me that question.

Just a couple of weeks ago, a senior came into our office in Gander. They had been hit with a bill for $10,000. Their eligibility criteria had shifted in a year for some reason or other. Maybe they drew from an RIF or an RRSP, received more pension, or whatever. Their eligibility changed, and they were eliminated from the program. They were handed the bill and told that if they wanted their dentures, they had to bring back the $10,000. Does that sound like a caring program?

[*Translation*]

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would like to come back to a rather important point. My colleague mentioned the scope of the cuts to health transfers, which will now be set at 3% over the next few years. In practical terms, this means a budget cut of about $14 billion for Quebec, when we know that health care is a priority for people and that there are major problems with the health care system, including issues with our hospitals and services. That is $14 billion that Quebec will not have to work with. The government should be increasing transfers, but instead it is doing the exact opposite.

I would like to hear my colleague's thoughts on that. In his opinion, should we be concerned about the fact that the federal government is creating a $14-billion hole for Quebec in health care?

[*English*]

Clifford Small: Madam Speaker, obviously it is concerning when provinces are losing out on transfers.

However, I mentioned that we have a revenue problem. Quebec needs that money. It has a slight revenue problem. Newfoundland and Labrador has a revenue problem. However, Quebec has lots of oil and gas. It needs the government to lift the ban on developing it, in order to get the revenue flowing in. Then Quebec would be fine.

Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Madam Speaker, the government can find billions of dollars for defence spending to buy equipment and arms, but what did it do? It cut a program in British Columbia and Ontario for cadets to get training on the weekends. This is during a time when we have a recruitment and hiring problem in the Canadian Armed Forces. The cadet program is a critical point of entry. Not only is it good for the cadets' physical and mental health. It also supports their opportunity to learn about our history, our pride in our country and whatnot.

Does my colleague agree how important the cadets are for recruitment and retention for the Canadian Armed Forces and how absurd it is that we can find billions of dollars to buy equipment when we do not even know who is going to operate it because there is a huge shortage gap in HR in the Canadian Armed Forces?

● (1110)

Clifford Small: Madam Speaker, I agree with my colleague 100% on how devastating this is for that key entry point into the Canadian Armed Forces.

I will just touch on something else, which was not in my speech. When businesses are hiring youth, they go through their résumés, and when they see that an applicant was a cadet, they know they are getting a really good worker coming into their business.

Patrick Weiler (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am going to be sharing my time with the member for Winnipeg North.

Before I begin, I want to acknowledge the tragic loss of four lives in two separate incidents in Squamish over the past week. My deepest condolences go out to the families, friends, loved ones and everyone in our community who has been affected by these tragedies. I also want to recognize the extraordinary efforts of search and rescue, the RCMP and all first responders, who worked under extremely difficult conditions.

I rise today to speak to budget 2026 and what it means for people in the communities I represent in West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country. When I speak with residents and business owners, I hear many of the same concerns: the rising cost of living, the shortage of housing and the difficulty of finding workers.

Our economy is incredibly diverse. We have world-class tourism and outdoor recreation, innovative clean technology companies, forestry and marine industries, and a thriving community of small businesses, artists and entrepreneurs. Much of this prosperity depends on our extraordinary natural environment. Our mountains, forests and coastlines are not only places we cherish. They are what attract people to our region and sustain the industries that employ tens of thousands of people, so protecting our natural environment and growing our economy are not competing objectives. In our region, they are fundamentally connected.

I want to focus on three ways this budget can help build on these strengths and address the barriers holding our communities back.

First, we need to help Canadian businesses invest, innovate and create good jobs. Budget 2026 introduces the productivity mega deduction, allowing businesses to immediately write off a much broader range of eligible investments in equipment, manufacturing and technology. For a restaurant in Whistler upgrading its kitchen, a contractor in Squamish investing in new machinery, or a local farm purchasing equipment to expand production, this can make the next investment more affordable.

For our growing clean technology sector, it creates better conditions for businesses to develop and manufacture new products. In Squamish, companies such as Quantum Technology and such as Carbon Engineering demonstrate the potential of Canadian innovation. We want more of these businesses to grow, commercialize their technologies and create those skilled jobs in Canada. We want those companies to stay in Canada. This budget also introduces investment incentives and expanded research and development support to help those Canadian companies scale.

However, our local economy is about much more than technology. Tourism and outdoor recreation are major economic drivers, supporting restaurants, accommodation providers, guides, retailers and countless small businesses. When international visitors come to experience our region, they bring their export earnings directly into our communities. Therefore, tourism deserves to be recognized as an important part of Canada's economic growth and trade diversification strategy.

On the Sunshine Coast, the challenges facing forestry are particularly urgent. Earlier this year, the Howe Sound Pulp and Paper mill came dangerously close to shutting down, putting approximately 400 direct union jobs at risk, but the impact could extend much further. Countless other jobs, from forestry contractors and transportation companies, to suppliers and local businesses depend on the mill's continued operation. I welcome the agreements that allowed the mill to continue operating, but the underlying challenges remain. The company pointed to declining access for affordable domestic fibre, weak global pulp prices and reduced demand from Asian markets.

That is why the measures in budget 2026 focused on forestry are particularly relevant. It proposes $500 million to strengthen fibre supply chains, $2 billion to modernize facilities and develop higher-value products and $4 billion to support major transformations in the forest sector. These measures directly respond to some of the structural challenges that nearly cost the Sunshine Coast its most important employer. We need to ensure that these investments translate into a more competitive forest sector and lasting jobs for forestry communities.

Second, tariffs are nowhere near the greatest threat to the economy in my region. Rather, the barriers that need to be addressed are the linked issues of housing and access to workforce. When a restaurant cannot hire staff because workers cannot afford to live nearby, that business cannot grow. In many cases, those businesses shut down. When a construction company cannot retain skilled tradespeople, it becomes harder to build the houses we need. When teachers, nurses and young families cannot find somewhere to live, the entire community suffers the consequences.

● (1115)

Housing, workforce development and economic growth cannot be treated as separate priorities. That is why I welcome the additional investments in Build Canada Homes to expand affordable and non-market housing. We have strong local partners including the Whistler Housing Authority, the Squamish Community Housing Society and the Sunshine Coast Affordable Housing Society among many others that are already working to create the homes that local workers and families can afford. This funding will help them scale that work.

Through the build communities strong fund, at least 20% of the provincial and territorial stream will go directly to rural, northern and indigenous communities. Those commitments matter deeply in regions like ours where smaller communities often struggle to find the infrastructure support needed for new housing.

I also welcome the budget's commitment to end homelessness within 10 years with investments in supportive housing, mental health care and addiction services, because getting someone into housing is only the beginning. We also need to help people stay housed and rebuild their lives. This will be a key partnership with provinces and territories across the country.

Access to health care is another important challenge, particularly in rural and coastal communities. The budget's extension of federal support for mental health, addictions, home and community care is welcome. We need to work with the province to ensure that it improves access to services locally.

Even as we build more homes and strengthen services, businesses need workers today. This is where immigration policy needs to better reflect the realities of our regions.

I regularly hear from employers in tourism, hospitality and construction who cannot find or retain the workers they need. Canada needs a well-managed immigration system that protects workers and prioritizes Canadians for available jobs, but responds to genuine labour shortages, because the labour market in Whistler and the Sunshine Coast is not the same as the labour market in Surrey or Vancouver.

I welcome the changes to the temporary foreign worker program that will extend the maximum duration of employment authorized through a labour market impact assessment from one to two years, providing greater flexibility for regional labour shortages like those in rural areas. I also welcome making the rural community immigration pilot a permanent program, giving more workers the opportunity to settle and build their lives in smaller communities. The budget proposes a one-time pathway for up to 100,000 eligible workers already in Canada to transition to permanent residence, importantly, only if it is asked for by the provinces.

I believe a significant share of those opportunities should be prioritized for rural and smaller communities where labour shortages are particularly acute, because behind these policies are real people. Members should think of a worker who has come from the Philippines, uprooted their family and moved to one of our smaller communities to fill a job caring for seniors that an employer has otherwise struggled to fill. They work hard, they pay taxes, volunteer locally and build relationships with their neighbours. They become part of the community, yet they still face enormous uncertainty about whether they can stay. When someone is contributing to our community, filling a genuine labour shortage and wants to build their future here, we should be creating opportunities for them to stay. That is good for local businesses and for the long-term vitality of our communities.

Of course, affordability is also about the bills people face every week. This budget builds on the middle-class tax cut and provides a groceries and essentials benefit that will provide almost $2,600 for a family of four next year.

The temporary suspension of the federal fuel excise tax also matters where driving is a necessity. I have raised concerns about the inexplicably high gasoline prices along the Sea-to-Sky corridor and on the Sunshine Coast. I have provided some evidence to the Competition Bureau and written to the B.C. Utilities Commission, which is now actually doing a study into those high gas prices.

Lastly, we need to invest in the culture and community spaces that make our region such a special place to live. On the Sunshine Coast, events like the Sunshine Coast Art Crawl and the Festival of the Written Arts showcase an extraordinary community of artists and creators. These events are part of our cultural identity, but they also attract visitors, support local businesses and create economic opportunities. Budget 2026 proposes $4 billion for Canadian culture creators and cultural institutions to support events like these, but I am particularly pleased with the proposed Canada creative credit, which will provide a tax exemption on the first $45,000 of income for artistic work.

Community recreation facilities are equally important. When the Brennan Park community recreation centre opened in Squamish in 1979, the community was a third of the size that it is today. For nearly five decades, this has been an incredibly important hub for the community, but Squamish has grown enormously since then. One recreation centre can no longer meet all the needs. In this budget, we have $1.5 billion for new community recreation facilities and ice rinks, which will be critical for communities like Squamish.

● (1120)

As I see my time is running out, I just want to say that budget 2026 provides some important tools to tackle the challenges I have highlighted. I hope all members of the House will support this bill, and I look forward to questions from my colleagues.

Grant Jackson (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Madam Speaker, the member mentioned the need for Canada to have a well-managed immigration system. Conservatives could not agree more.

I wonder if that member, after highlighting a number of challenges that exist within Canada's immigration system, is willing to put on the record today just who is responsible for the flawed immigration system we have in existence in this country right now?

Patrick Weiler: Madam Speaker, I would say that right now we have a tremendous need for international workers, particularly in rural areas. That is what I spoke about in my speech. This budget and the immigration levels plan and some of the programs that have been changed respond directly to that.

Particularly, we have these short-term labour shortages, but we need to look at the long term. How we are going to make sure that folks are going to set down roots in these communities? How are we going to support businesses in our communities to be viable and vibrant for the long term?

We know many of these regions have populations that are disproportionately senior. We need the help to be there. These are some important measures. I look forward to seeing how they get further detailed, and how we work with the provinces to align these immigration numbers with the needs they have, which is going to be absolutely critical.

[*Translation*]

Mario Simard (Jonquière—Hébertville—Pays-des-Bleuets, BQ): Madam Speaker, I have a great deal of respect for my colleague, who is very clear-headed and demonstrates intellectual fortitude, especially when it comes to Bill C-39. I would would like to hear his thoughts on something.

The federal government is investing in oil and gas infrastructure. At the risk of repeating myself, this infrastructure mainly serves American interests, and oil is the only product that is not subject to tariffs.

Given that we are in the midst of a tariff war with the U.S., does my colleague think it makes sense that the largest infrastructure investment the government is making will benefit the Americans?

Patrick Weiler: Madam Speaker, Canadians will be the primary beneficiaries of these investments.

The budget focuses on infrastructure investment across the board. The biggest measure is the productivity mega deduction.

There is also major investment in clean energy, totalling $50 billion. It will be necessary to ensure that we can generate the electricity our economy will need while also improving affordability.

I believe this budget is truly centred on these investments, and that they will make a real difference in communities across the country.

[*English*]

Karim Bardeesy (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I was very compelled by my colleague's speech. He mentioned a few sectors, in particular the arts and culture sector and the sustainability sector. He also spoke about the need for workers, but also the potential role for young workers in his riding to grow through the investments in those sectors.

I wonder if he could elaborate on that.

● (1125)

Patrick Weiler: Madam Speaker, absolutely. When we are talking about these large investments and making a more attractive place for companies to invest, that is going to create jobs for Canadians, particularly young Canadians. There are some of the youngest communities in the province in my riding, particularly in Squamish, where people are attracted by what it has to offer.

The investments we are making in the apprenticeships and trades are going to make a major difference. If we are going to be building these major projects, we need to make sure we have the workforce to do just that. We are creating pathways for journeymen and apprenticeships to do just that, which is going to be absolutely critical. Young people are going to have tremendous opportunities in so many sectors, and this is what this budget is really about.

Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Madam Speaker, I have a lot of respect for my colleague. This week, the MP for Victoria put on Facebook: "Our ferry services are an essential public highway for Victoria and the Island as a whole. Funding disparities with ferry services on the East Coast are deeply unfair to people on the West Coast of BC."

Finally, we have a Liberal MP standing up with coastal British Columbians and standing up for fair ferry funding. This budget would give $1.35 billion for infrastructure to the east coast. We support that, but what do we get on the west coast? We get a loan. When it comes to operating costs, we get $37 million on the west coast. The east coast gets $182 million.

Does my colleague agree with me and with the MP for Victoria that we get treated deeply unfairly? Will he support us in calling on his government to fix this disparity?

Patrick Weiler: Madam Speaker, I absolutely support having more investments in BC Ferries. I think there is an incredible opportunity in Performance Term 7, as well as in the revitalization that is going on in BC Ferries, to really focus on what that could be like. We need more ships. We need new terminals, and there is a critical role the federal government can play in ensuring that we are a big part of bringing those into action.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise and address this aspect of the budget. I wanted to amplify a couple of points, maybe even a few if I get the time. The Conservatives have been somewhat ongoing in their criticism about credentials of the Prime Minister. I do find that unfortunate. I do not believe Canadians are listening. They are tuning out when the Conservative Party continues to push that issue. I would like to remind my colleagues across the way to maybe just do a comparison between the leader of the Conservative Party and the Prime Minister.

From the Prime Minister's perspective, there was his appointment to be the Governor of the Bank of Canada and, by the way, it was a Conservative who appointed the Prime Minister to that position. He was the Governor of the Bank of England, the first non-British-born appointment to that bank. There is the recognition that the Prime Minister gets internationally because of his economics and understanding of the economy and industry as a whole. I like to believe that one of the greatest assets that we have today is someone who truly understands what needs to take place. That is one of the criticisms.

The other criticism feeds into it. The Conservatives talk about the issue of deficit. One of the fundamental differences between the Conservative Party and the Liberal Party is that we understand the benefits of using our financial positioning in order to build a stronger, healthier Canada that works for all Canadians and that is there for all of us, while the Conservative Party has that preoccupation with character assassination along with their blowing the whole idea of being reasonable on the issue of the debt or financing.

Canada actually has the lowest net debt in the G7. If we listen to the International Monetary Fund, we have the second-fastest-growing economy in the G7 predicted for 2027. That is in part because of the actions that this government has taken and its leadership since the last federal election. Our Prime Minister and the government get criticized because of the travelling that is taking place. It has clearly been demonstrated that some of the greatest ambassadors that we have, in terms of promoting our economy and creating opportunities, are our Prime Minister and the many cabinet ministers who are out there expanding opportunities for us here in Canada.

We have gotten a couple dozen or more economic and defence treaties in the last 18 months. We have passed trade agreements dealing with Indonesia and the U.K. in the last 18 months. Earlier this month, we had trade agreement discussions come to an end in a positive way with the Philippines. I am anticipating that we are going to be seeing the same sort of conclusion of discussions with India. We are talking about hundreds of millions, going into billions, of consumers. We can talk about being the only G7 country that now has trade agreements with all the G7 nations. We can talk about the percentage of increase of trade, which is so much further ahead than what we had hoped to achieve. There has been an over 50% increase in exports outside of the Canada-U.S. economic trade that takes place.

● (1130)

Those are all substantial opportunities that create jobs and improve the lives of Canadians. We have to start thinking big. That is what we find lacking in the official opposition. Instead, they want to focus on everything that is negative. I was in opposition for many years. I was in opposition for more years than I have been in government. Hopefully that will change. I was in opposition for over 20 years. I hope to be just as many years in government as I was in opposition. I can say that I learned a lot from those days in opposition. It is called being creative, talking about ideas that can actually help Canadians, and not just opposing for the sake of opposition. One can actually come up with some good ideas.

An hon. member: I remember you complimenting us all the time.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, yes, there has been the odd one. Listening to the opposition today, I think they need to refocus themselves. Let me give a really good example, the Canada productivity mega deduction. Let us hear Conservatives stand up and say that it is a good idea. By God, it is a good idea. Every region of Canada will benefit by that deduction.

We get the standard response from the NDP members, that only corporations will benefit. They do not know what they are talking about, quite frankly. They really and truly do not. There is the NDP in power and then there is the NDP here in Ottawa. I can say that the deduction is a potential goldmine for all of our communities: small businesses, medium-sized businesses and big businesses alike. That is the reality of it. Imagine a small business being able to write something off, in part, through a deduction in the first year, as opposed to having to time it out.

That public policy is going to see not only modernization but the expansion of industries in every region of our nation, as a direct result of that policy. Correct me if I am wrong, but I do not think I have heard one Conservative Party member say anything positive about that particular policy. I would suggest that it is something that all of us should be able to be supportive of, because it will grow our economy. It will generate more jobs.

Within the budget, we see a reinforcement of supports for our programs. Whether it is the dental program or the food program for children in schools, whether it is the grocery rebate or the tax benefit or the tax breaks for millions of Canadians, whether it is the suspension of the excise tax continuation, which is budgeted for, on the issue of affordability, or also those critically important health care programs, through health transfers, it reinforces the importance of capital and how the federal government can contribute to it.

Along with support from my Manitoba colleagues, I was able to put the Seven Oaks General Hospital and its emergency services back on the radar in a very real, tangible way. They are going to get money from Ottawa to support emergency services being restored at the Seven Oaks Hospital. It was the Manitoba Liberal caucus that put it on the agenda in a very real and tangible way. We are putting money into it.

That capital program of $5 billion is going to help build and reinforce our health care infrastructure. These are the types of things that make a difference. Not only are we building that stronger, healthier economy, but we are also building an infrastructure that demonstrates that we are a caring government and that we are going to be there for people.

● (1135)

Harb Gill (Windsor West, CPC): Madam Speaker, I know we are debating the budget. However, since the member brought up the credentials of the Prime Minister, people in Windsor are wondering how he can stand in front of Canadians and call the Stellantis sale a "betrayal". They have also heard that four Liberal MPs toured the plant with Roshel in July, and government officials were meeting with the company months before the announcement. People are wondering if the government is genuinely opposed to the deal or involved in discussions behind closed doors while performing outrage in front of the cameras? Frankly, Canadians are tired of this drama.

Can we get some clear answers from the government?

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, let me provide a very clear answer. I am sure the member is aware of Stelco. After all, the Conservatives were critical of the issue of Stelco. The government said we would get the job done, and we did just that. Those jobs were restored. At the end of the day, I believe the constituents where the plant is understand that they have a government and a minister that will have their back. We are going to continue to push to retain those jobs, just as we did for Stelco. I hope we get victory. We will be guaranteed money back or jobs back. It will be one of the two.

[*Translation*]

Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Madam Speaker, when it comes to this budget, the elephant in the room is health care transfers. Health care transfers are transfers of structural funding that provide predictability to Quebec and the provinces and give them the flexibility to rebuild their health care systems.

In the wake of the pandemic, the government was set to contribute 18¢ per dollar, when it used to be a 50-50 split at one point, when the health insurance deal was struck. The government has restored the balance somewhat by injecting some new funds, but it has allocated only $46 billion over 10 years, even though the provinces were asking for $280 billion in new funding.

Does my colleague think it is normal that, in addition to not having allocated that money, the Liberals decided to reduce the escalator from 6% to 3%, even though system costs are between 5% and 6%? That means the provinces will be out billions of dollars for taking care of their—

● (1140)

[*English*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, first of all, I do not necessarily concur with the numbers the member just put on the record. I can say with respect to health care that yes, we are continuing our health transfer payments.

I will use the example of the province of Manitoba. In Manitoba, the day after the budget, the Prime Minister was at the table at an announcement with the premier, the mayor of the city of Winnipeg and indigenous leaders, where we made a commitment of $200 million dealing with health care, addictions, mental health and the issue of homelessness. The premier himself said that he was going to use that $200 million in order to build a hospital to deal with that issue.

I am not too sure exactly what hospital that is, but the member tried to give the impression that the federal government is cutting back on health, when we see announcements of that nature and the Prime Minister saying that he wants to work collaboratively with other jurisdictions dealing with homelessness and dealing with the issues of addiction. Nothing could be further from the truth than what the member just put on the record, because this is a government that is committed to health care in Canada.

Tamara Kronis (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, CPC): Madam Speaker, I want to ask the member a question about the difference between announcements and delivery.

In the spring economic update, the government said it was going to provide $195 million over five years, plus $45 million ongoing, to expand cadet programs, yet this week we are seeing the cancellation of many cadet activities in communities like mine because of the government's failure to provide that funding. It needs to explain why it is making cuts instead of delivering on that promise.

I would like to know if the member would commit to working with me immediately, on a short-term basis, to figure out how to get this money back to our kids.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I will continue to work with the parliamentary secretary, who has been a very strong advocate for the cadet program. The core of the cadet program is not going to go away. At the end of the day, there might be some changes occurring, but the cadet program is going to continue to survive.

Equally, I would suggest to members, if we look at the military, because many people associate it with the military recruitment, that we have had a historic number of people applying to become members of the Canadian forces. I see that as a positive thing, because the government—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): Resuming debate, the hon. member for Abbotsford—South Langley.

Sukhman Gill (Abbotsford—South Langley, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is always an honour to rise on behalf of the good people of Abbotsford—South Langley. Today, we are talking about one of the most important topics. It is the federal budget that the government is presenting for Canadians. The Prime Minister promised to spend less. Instead, he has ended up spending more on consultants, borrowing more money and making life more expensive for Canadians. His budget should be called "Masters of debt". The first priority of his budget should have been to save Canadians more money during these hard times, but what did the Prime Minister end up doing? He ended up adding $765 billion to a new debt, a record-smashing sum over the next five years.

The Prime Minister will continue to inflate costs, fuel, food and homes. The budget is going to cost the households in Abbotsford—South Langley and nationwide $1.85 billion. Yes, that is billion with a B. This is just the borrowing amount, and it does not include the interest payments on the new debt. In fact, seniors, single moms and small businesses will now have to spend $60 billion each year on interest to bankers and bondholders. Every hard-working family of four in my riding of Abbotsford—South Langley will spend $6,000 a year on interest alone, an amount that rises to $8,100 annually by the year 2030-31.

The Liberals are living in a completely different reality from what they are presenting and what they are displaying in front of us. Canadians are forced to cut back at grocery stores, and the Liberals are spending at speeds never seen before. Just last year, they spent over $19 billion on consultants alone, not doctors, not nurses and not hard-working families. They spent $19 billion on consultants. They spent $19 billion on Liberal insiders as well. How much more out of touch can the government possibly be?

I want to break this down even further. I want to break it down and highlight how expensive these interest payments truly are. An average family of four in Abbotsford—South Langley, my riding, is spending $1,500 a month on groceries. The amount they will have to pay toward interest in the first year alone is equivalent to a third of their monthly grocery bill.

The federal government and the B.C. provincial government signed a deal to expand Roberts Bank terminal two to increase trade and increase container capacity. It is a great plan and a great idea, but if the federal government is looking to increase development, it must also emphasize local infrastructure. We have said this again and again. My colleagues on the Conservative side, including my colleague from Abbotsford, have been advocating this for years now. We have had devastating floods over numerous years, and we have been advocating for our communities to make sure that local infrastructure is up to par.

Just this summer, an MOU was signed to create a parallel line alongside the existing energy corridor in the Sumas Prairie region. With investment into our energy sector, it is great news, but without investment into our local infrastructure, our local highways and land development, the new development will leave the local area and the residents vulnerable to floods again.

This year marks the five-year anniversary of the tragic floods that happened in the Sumas Valley area. When the floods happened, the residents on the Lower Mainland were told that the floods were due to a once-in-a-century type of storm. In 2025, floods happened again. Thankfully, because the community came together and made sure we were able to pull through in 2021, we had experience, but we are on the verge of another flood. We know winter is around the corner. We know rainfall has started again, and we know we are vulnerable. This is why we advocate to the government. While it allocates new plans for these terminal increases, which are great, we need to make sure our local infrastructure is up to par.

This speaks to the larger question of whether or not our local infrastructure will be up to par. The Lower Mainland is gearing up for another season of rain. I have heard from many residents across the Fraser Valley who feel that another flood is bound to happen, not because there is going to be another storm of the century, but rather because local infrastructure has not been maintained.

When speaking about the catastrophic flooding in Abbotsford five years ago, poultry farmer Dave Martens told the news, "Any time we hear of rain, there's always anxiousness." This is not how our residents should be living. The insecurity Dave and other residents feel increases year after year when the flood prevention mechanisms are not up to par or properly maintained.

● (1145)

Energy sector growth is essential and necessary. Development of local infrastructure must be kept up to par so families living around the area do not bear the negative consequences of this growth. However, given the rhetoric and announcements around expansion in B.C., it is not hard to notice the reality on the ground. Just last month, Liberal MPs voted against Bill C-264, which would have repealed the west coast oil tanker ban.

Strathcona Resources proposed exporting up to 250,000 barrels of Canadian crude oil daily through Prince Rupert using existing rail infrastructure and a new marine export terminal. The company says it could reach international markets under two years without any government subsidies, which would help Canada diversify energy exports, reduce dependency on the United States and attract private investment. Instead, the tanker ban remains in place, which is limiting our opportunities to bring Canadian oil to the market. The Liberals say they want to make Canada an energy superpower, yet they continue to maintain barriers preventing Canadian energy from reaching these markets.

While we are talking about spending money and affordability, it is important to speak about rising food prices as well. The Prime Minister told Canadians to judge him based on the price at the grocery store. If Canadians were to grade the government's performance, they would definitely give it an F. Food bank usage has hit a record high, with 2.35 million Canadians visiting food banks. It is up 117% since 2019. Archway Abbotsford Food Bank is serving more people than ever before, with a record number of people visiting the food bank. In 2024, the number was only 5,000 people per month.

While Canadians are standing in line at the food bank, the Prime Minister fronted a bill of $524,000 for inflight catering. Canadians are told to cut back while the leader of the country is spending luxuriously. Liberals are living in a completely different reality, and it is time to call them out. They are out of touch.

Conservatives have been fighting for relief for Canadians, and we will continue to call on the government to eliminate all federal taxes on diesel until at least Canada Day of 2027. The impact of high gas prices goes well beyond the families that are filling up at local gas stations. I think about the farmers, the truckers, the contractors and the small businesses. Fuel is not an option for these Canadians. It is their day-to-day cost of doing business. A trucker cannot deliver goods without diesel, a farmer cannot operate its equipment and machinery without diesel, and a contractor cannot take lumber and tools to a job site on public transit. For millions of Canadians, driving is not a luxury; it is a necessity. It is the way they earn a living, and fuel is built into the cost of living for everything.

During a time that Canadians need money in their pockets more than ever, the Liberals have proposed a budget that would increase borrowing and interest costs. The strategy of the Prime Minister went from building at speeds not seen in generations to borrowing at speeds not seen in generations. Canadians deserve real, tangible results. They do not deserve this rhetoric again and again.

● (1150)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, as economies around the world are having to deal with issues like affordability, the government in Canada has been doing just that. We understand affordability, and that is the reason we brought forward numerous policies to support Canadians on affordability.

What surprises me is that the Conservatives like to talk about and criticize the government on affordability, but when we bring forward programs, the Conservative Party votes against them. It seems to me that, if we were to look up the word “hypocrisy”, we might want to give consideration to the collective efforts of the Conservative Party of Canada. Why else are you voting against the affordability measures?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): I will remind the hon. member that I am not voting against anything.

The hon. member for Abbotsford—South Langley.

Sukhman Gill: Madam Speaker, it is quite funny, because it has been a decade under the Liberal government's leadership, and its members talk about affordability as being the best it has ever been.

I would like to question my hon. member. Why are wait lineups at food banks longer than ever before? Why are Canadians now struggling more than ever just to put food on their tables, if affordability is the best it has ever been?

Tamara Kronis (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, CPC): Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for focusing on the very real ways that weather impacts our life in British Columbia. We often say that our colleagues here have planes, trains and automobiles, but we add seaplanes, helicopters and ferries, and that missing the ferry is, in fact, an excuse to miss just about everything, up to and including one's own wedding.

I would like the member to expand a little, if he could, on the fact that the national programs on flood and drought do not incorporate British Columbia data, and how important it is to make sure that there is spending in this budget in order to do that integration and that work, which is life-saving.

Sukhman Gill: Madam Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith for her great work. She has been a great advocate for her community, and she has always been on top, delivering results.

When we talk about food affordability, and droughts as well, and maintaining our B.C. corridor, a great example I gave during the speech is the terminal announcement from the government. Announcements are being made, but we know that it is crucial for infrastructure to be maintained, including flood infrastructure in the Lower Mainland, in the Sumas Prairie region, where everything runs through. We have pipelines, railways and highways that run through it

If we want to make sure we can expand B.C.'s portfolio for international trade, that is a main corridor that will impact everything. That is why it is very crucial that we maintain and keep up these corridors. As we are investing in our country, we want to make sure we invest into these corridors.

The Budget

● (1155)

Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Madam Speaker, the Liberals found money to make national parks free, but at same time, they are cutting the workers who protect those parks. As New Democrats, we support affordable access, but inviting more visitors, while cutting staff, puts conservation, visitor safety and rural livelihoods at risk.

My colleague from British Columbia knows how important the Pacific Rim National Park Reserve is, which is in my riding, and how important national parks across the country are, but protecting nature requires people on the ground. Ecological integrity is the minister's first priority. That is actually law.

Does my colleague agree that the Liberals need to reverse these cuts and support affordable access, especially in times like today, when the cost of living is challenging, but that they absolutely have to support and protect the workers needed to deliver the integrity of those parks safely?

Sukhman Gill: Madam Speaker, I think there are many better ways that money can be spent for Canadians and this country. Right now, the way the government is laying out its plan is failing. Canadians are struggling all over. Our first priority is to make sure we can benefit Canadians, cut back on taxes and deliver results. That is what we are going to be working toward.

Sandra Cobena (Newmarket—Aurora, CPC): Madam Speaker, before I came to Parliament, I worked in commercial banking for 15 years. When someone came in for a loan, we started with two simple questions: How much money is needed, and how is it going to be repaid? I thought all bankers asked the same questions.

Then I read the government's budget and realized that the Prime Minister is a banker who only asks the first question: How much money is needed? I guess that is the difference between a banker who spends his career printing money and one who does not. The reality is that there is no credible plan to repay the debt in this budget. There is only a plan to borrow more, more in five years than Justin Trudeau's government borrowed in 10, and that includes during COVID. The Prime Minister will be taking on more debt in five years than all prime ministers before 2015 combined. People think that the cover of the budget shows hydro wires. They are, in fact, wrong. The cover shows mountains, and it is a metaphor for the rolling mountains of debt that our children will inherit.

Equally scary is how the government has redefined $136 billion in expenses and relabelled them as investments to trick Canadians into believing that it has magically balanced the budget. The Prime Minister has not, in fact, balanced the budget. He has invented an accounting scheme to make the numbers look better, and then, magically, the operating budget is balanced. Under the original definitions, that same budget remains in deficit for at least five more years. The finance minister was asked this very question in the finance committee, and he responded by saying he is doing this for transparency purposes. These are invented definitions used nowhere else in the world that are applied inconsistently and cannot be independently replicated with public information for transparency, and that was not enough.

The government then turned to Crown corporations to hide more debt, $262 billion to be exact. There are hundreds of billions of dollars of debt set out in a single sentence in the budget, billions of dollars with one sentence of information without adequate breakdowns, identifying individual corporations, financing purposes or expected financial returns. As it is Crown corporations taking on debt, Canadians do not see it in the deficit numbers, but the obligation to pay is still there.

In the upcoming year, the new debt taken on will be $169 billion. That is nearly $10,000 in additional federal borrowing for every Canadian household in just one year. The government focuses Canadians' attention on the smaller number, the $62-billion deficit number, not on that $169 billion of debt. Interest costs are the fastest-growing expense and cost more than health care. Interest is more than all the GST collected in this country. Canadians deserve straight answers from their government and real solutions. Canada has a productivity problem.

Productivity is what allows businesses to pay higher wages, families to enjoy a better standard of living, and governments to afford the services they depend on. When productivity grows, Canadians can earn more without everything having to cost more. When it stagnates, families work harder but struggle to get ahead. After a decade of economic stagnation, Canadians were promised something different. They were promised a prime minister who would spend less and invest more. Instead, they got a Prime Minister who spends more, borrows more and hides more. The Liberals promised houses built at speeds not seen in generations, a single national economy and fiscal prudence, but we got massive amounts of debt.

Canada cannot borrow its way to productivity and it cannot spend its way to prosperity. Quite frankly, governments generally have a horrible track record with predicting markets and making sound investments. Let us think about the $50 billion spent on the EV industry, which has now closed down in many respects. We need an economy that rewards hard work, not a government that hand-picks the winners and losers. With the holidays coming up, a survey just found that 62% of Canadians are worried about their finances. For too many families, that worry starts at the grocery store.

● (1200)

Last month, Food Banks Canada reported nearly 2.4 million food bank visits in a single month, and a third of those visits were from children. That requires confronting the real obstacles holding back our economy.

Canada has an investment problem. Businesses invest in new equipment, technology and facilities when they have confidence in the future. They need affordable energy, predictable regulations, competitive taxes and access to markets, but after years of uncertainty and rising costs, too many Canadian businesses are choosing not to expand. The government points to its productivity mega deduction, and encouraging businesses to invest in new equipment is a positive step, but a tax deduction is of little use to a business that cannot afford to make the investment in the first place. A business cannot write off a machine it cannot afford to buy or reduce the tax burden on profits that do not exist, not to mention that most funds spent purchasing equipment leave Canada, as most equipment is purchased outside of Canada.

The C.D. Howe Institute has warned that the government's productivity measures are far from sufficient. Why? It is because tax incentives alone cannot overcome the broader barriers preventing businesses from investing in Canada. We need to remove those barriers, not simply offer businesses other government incentives to work around them.

Canada has a small business problem. In Newmarket—Aurora, I regularly meet with entrepreneurs who have invested their entire life savings into building their businesses. They create jobs, train our young people and support our communities. They are not asking the government to build their businesses for them. They are asking for the opportunity to succeed, yet the government seems far more interested in foreign companies than addressing the daily challenges faced by small and medium-sized businesses that are at the heart of our economy.

At the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, they called this budget “mega disappointing”. They asked the government to lower the federal small business tax rate from 9% to 6%. They asked for meaningful regulatory relief and better access to tariff support. Instead, entrepreneurs continue to face high costs and burdens that make it harder to expand.

Small businesses do not need another government announcement. They need room to grow from a small business to a medium business to a large business. What does that look like? It means a barrier-free national economy, so businesses can grow nationally. It means less government intervention in the markets, so they do not become dependent on government handouts. It means access to talent. It means a government that moves fast on export loans, projects, permits and infrastructure. Today, we still have only announcements.

We do not measure prosperity by how much the government spends. Canadians measure it by whether their wages are rising, whether their businesses can grow, whether their children can have better opportunities than they did, and whether a young family working hard and doing everything right can afford to build a home and a future. That is the real test of this budget.

Canada is a country of extraordinary potential. We have natural resources, talented people, remarkable entrepreneurs and every reason to succeed. What we need is a government that trusts Canadians to build that prosperity, that removes obstacles instead of creating new programs, that rewards investment instead of depending on subsidies, and that measures success by results instead of announcements. Prosperity is not something a government can announce into existence. It is something Canadians create through their hard work, ingenuity and determination. It is time we had a budget that helped them do exactly that.

● (1205)

Karim Bardeesy (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague's remarks, and I appreciate her concern for debt and public debt. As someone who represents many young Canadians, and as someone who worked for a considerable period of time in the Ontario Ministry of Finance, I understand the role that debt plays in constraining or giving opportunities to governments to make the kinds of investments they need to make.

I would ask my colleague if she would agree that the debt-to-GDP ratio, which measures a government's ability to carry debt in the context of an economy, is an important measure to consider, and that Canada's debt-to-GDP ratio across all governments, as exhibited in the IMF's October 2026 “Fiscal Monitor”, is showing us at 9.3% compared to the next peer country in the G7, Germany, at over 49%, indicating that Canada is actually in a strong fiscal position.

Sandra Cobena: Mr. Speaker, the member is correct in that when we look at that, we have to look at the scale and what it actually means. The concern here is that the levels of debt the government is taking on are more than what Justin Trudeau took on in 10 years. It is taking it in five years. It is more than all prime ministers combined before 2015. The scale of the debt is concerning, and it is particularly concerning because debt has to be repaid, and repaid with interest. The interest is now the fastest-growing expense for the government, and that money cannot be redirected to tax breaks for Canadians, for instance, or for better health care. This is the heart of the problem with the amount of debt. The debt-to-GDP ratio is an important ratio to consider, and I question why the Prime Minister chose to drop it.

[*Translation*]

Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Quebec and the provinces are the big losers in this budget. They are responsible for health care, yet they are dealing with a government that takes with one hand and gives with the other.

As for health transfers, the escalator will not even be maintained at 6%. Instead, it will be set at 3%, which is 2% below the growth rate of operating costs.

As a result, as we emerge from the pandemic—we are in fact still playing catch-up—the provinces will be short billions of dollars to care for their people.

That is how much the Liberals prioritize health care.

[*English*]

Sandra Cobena: Mr. Speaker, I agree with the member. It is particularly concerning to see how much interest is being eaten up within this budget. The cost of the interest is $85 billion at the end of the five-year period, and these are funds that are not going to be redirected towards health care. Health care is particularly important to Canadians in all provinces, including the province of Quebec, and the $85 billion could have been used towards more nurses and doctors and services for Canadians, but it was not. It is being spent on interest. This is a big problem when Canadians are working hard and paying their taxes, but it is going towards interest.

● (1210)

Tamara Kronis (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for the thoughtful approach she takes to Canadians' finances and taxpayer dollars. The budget counts the net profit and investment returns of self-financing Crown corporations as revenue, while generally excluding those corporations' own gross debt from the federal government accounts. When Ottawa lends to or invests in them, it records the money as an asset, not as an expense, so that the advance raises the government's borrowing requirement without immediately increasing the deficit. Where we see that reflected in the budget is with a $62.5-billion deficit becoming a net cash borrowing requirement of $169 million.

I am wondering if my colleague could expand on that and explain the dangers for Canadians.

Sandra Cobena: Mr. Speaker, it is true. The Prime Minister is hiding high amounts of debt in Crown corporations, and that is not reflected in the debt number. It is in fact reflected as an asset. He gets to do that because of the probability of repayment, but let us think about it. For example, some of this debt is going to a Crown corporation like Canada Post. Canada Post has not turned a profit since 2017. It is highly unlikely that we are going to get that money back, but the Prime Minister calls it an asset.

[*Translation*]

Sean Casey (Charlottetown, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the distinguished member for Compton—Stanstead.

[*English*]

I am very pleased to rise to share some thoughts on budget 2026 from the constituents I am so proud to represent in Charlottetown, the birthplace of Confederation.

The timing of the budget, immediately before a constituency week, afforded us an opportunity to be in our ridings and hear feedback directly from those who sent us here.

In Charlottetown, affordability, health care and good government are always top of mind. So too are veterans, and not just during Veterans' Week. There is only one federal government department that has its national headquarters outside the national capital region, and that is the Department of Veterans Affairs in Charlottetown. I will touch on each of these themes in my remarks today.

Here in Ottawa, we are in a bubble. For the most part, the things we debate here resonate only with people who follow politics closely, like us. Few people in Charlottetown pay attention to the theatre that is question period, or to the conspiracy theories and partisanship on display here. That is why it is always nice to get out of the bubble, walk around town and listen to people about what keeps them up at night. For the 15 years that the people of Charlottetown have been sending me back to this place, it is those conversations that ground me and help me to focus on what really matters to them.

There is no question that the cost of living is a major preoccupation in Canada, including in Prince Edward Island, but there is not much appetite for the blame game that plays out daily here. I will speak to some of the many substantive measures in the budget that address this reality.

As a starting point, I offer these facts as a snapshot as to where Canada is right now in a time of so much geopolitical upheaval. Canada has the lowest debt-to-GDP ratio in the G7. It has the highest possible credit rating.

When it is convenient, Conservatives like to compare us to their beloved United States on economic issues and to bemoan the investments made by this government in people and economic growth. In so doing, we never hear an acknowledgement that the cost of borrowing is lower in Canada than it is in the U.S., but it is.

I was elected to Parliament when Stephen Harper won his only majority government. I remember the deep and disproportionate cuts levelled at our region and the mean-spirited changes to the EI system. Austerity did not work for us, and I still maintain that this experience clearly established that we cannot cut our way to economic growth.

The pillars in this budget, of growth, people and sovereignty, resonate in my community. A focus on people starts with affordability measures, and this budget has delivered.

Until 2021, P.E.I. lagged behind almost all other provinces in terms of the number of drugs included in the provincial formulary. The Trudeau government entered into an agreement with the province to bring the drugs covered in the formulary up to the standard of the other provinces in the region and to bring down the levels of copay required by patients under provincial government group insurance programs. This program has been remarkably well received, and this budget appropriately extends it so that the cost of prescription drugs does not become an undue burden in Prince Edward Island.

The groceries and essentials benefit is another important and welcome affordability measure. There are about 75,000 households in Prince Edward Island, and approximately two-thirds of those households are in receipt of this benefit. This will be a welcome bump to those two-thirds of P.E.I. households of up to $679 for a family of four, just after Christmas and in the dead of winter. That is how a government that understands the affordability challenges of 2027 responds.

The build Canada workers benefit is paid out to about 15% of all workers in Prince Edward Island. The measures in this budget would pay out more money to more low-income workers, up to about $3,000 per year for families. There is little doubt that low- and modest-income workers are on the front lines of the affordability challenges. This measure will provide some modicum of relief in a manner whereby the money is virtually assured to be rapidly recirculated into the local economy.

● (1215)

Finally, the Canada caregiver benefit will be enhanced and made fully refundable, again increasing the reach and the quantum of financial relief to low-income modern-day heroes, dedicating themselves to a loved one in need. This is the Government of Canada saying to these modern-day heroes, “We see you and you are appreciated”.

As I indicated earlier, the Department of Veterans Affairs is a major employer in Charlottetown. This is one of the reasons that any measures impacting veterans carry a heightened level of significance for the constituents I am honoured to represent. In our election platform, at page 14, we committed to "preserve the National Field of Honour through work with the Last Post Fund to assume ownership of the National Field of Honour in Montreal so that it remains an appropriate and respectful final resting place for Veterans.” That was a promise made and it is a promise kept.

On page 232 of the budget, at long last, funds have been allocated to acquire, remediate and operate the National Field of Honour. Congratulations are in order for the Quebec Liberal caucus and especially the member for Vimy and the member for Lac Saint-Louis, who have been perfectly impatient in reminding the ministry of this platform commitment.

The charge on this initiative has truly been led by former ambassadors Robert Peck and Peter MacArthur. It has been a relentless, compelling and persistent campaign by these former diplomats to press the government to do the right thing to honour the service of the 20,000 veterans and family members laid to rest in the National Field of Honour. To Robert Peck and Peter MacArthur, I offer hearty congratulations and profound thanks for their effective advocacy and their diplomacy.

In addition to fulfilling that campaign commitment, the budget also committed new monies to case management services for veterans and former RCMP members. It is critically important that resources are dedicated to personalized attention for veterans with complex health and rehabilitation needs.

Finally, the veteran and family well-being fund is one that provides funding for research and community initiatives. It is consistently oversubscribed and has funded numerous worthwhile projects. This budget injected additional monies into this fund that will continue to advance projects and research related to women's health, another platform commitment, post-service employment and service recognition.

Budget 2026 responds to the issues of our time. It incentivizes private investment, productivity and growth, but it is not one-dimensional. It meets the moment for the millions of Canadians struggling with affordability. It reinforces our identity as a smart, compassionate and proud nation through generational investments in culture, identity, inclusion and reconciliation.

For the constituents I am so proud to represent, the affordability measures and the renewed investment in health care, including mental health, home care and recreation infrastructure, respond directly to the main issues raised on the doorsteps. A specific pressing concern in my province is the future of the Charlottetown farmers' market, which was heavily damaged by fire on Christmas Day in 2025. The building was located on federal lands. It is my sincere hope that local food infrastructure renewal will be part of that solution.

I will proudly support this budget, which is good for Canada, good for Prince Edward Island and good for Charlottetown.

● (1220)

Harb Gill (Windsor West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, almost half of Canadians do not expect this budget to make any positive difference to their personal finances. What does the government say to the working family that earns too much to qualify for assistance but is struggling to pay their mortgage, buy groceries and put gas in their car? Where is the relief for those families? That is what they are asking. I am asking that on their behalf, as well.

Sean Casey: Mr. Speaker, there is absolutely no question that the measures that are contained in the budget specifically target those with low and moderate incomes.

However, there has been a broad-based tax cut that came into place almost immediately upon us coming into power, in addition to the removal of the carbon tax on gasoline. There will also be, with the generational investments in productivity and economic growth, an overall lifting of all ships, if we will, in the economy, because of the way the budget has been crafted.

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Moncton—Dieppe, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wanted to take a moment to thank my colleague from Charlottetown for his advocacy for veterans affairs. We certainly know that the head office is within his riding. He has always been a strong advocate for veterans and all the staff who work in that facility. With respect to the affordability issue, I am sure that in Charlottetown, like in my riding in Moncton, affordability continues to be top of mind. The groceries and essentials rebate, I believe, is going to make a huge difference in the lives of our constituents.

I am wondering if he could elaborate on that.

Sean Casey: Mr. Speaker, there are few people in this place who know the challenges and the satisfaction that come with serving veterans better than the former minister of veterans affairs. The groceries and essentials benefit, as I indicated in my speech, is something that lands in the bank accounts of two-thirds of the households in Prince Edward Island. The $679 that will show up in early 2027 will be a welcome bit of relief in the middle of winter, immediately after Christmas. It is something that absolutely matters. It will absolutely be appreciated. Just as importantly, it will be spent virtually immediately and go back into the local economy. It is a win for the recipients and it is a win for local business.

Steven Bonk (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the previous questioner said that one of the biggest questions facing her constituency is affordability and the rising cost of groceries, of heating one's home and of rent in Canada. We have a government now that is spending obscene, reckless amounts of money on projects like a rainforest in Brazil or a billion dollars for an oceans ministry.

How on earth can the Liberals say that they want to help affordability when they are absolutely mismanaging the finances of the country and that they are proud of the budget, which makes it even worse for Canadians?

Sean Casey: Mr. Speaker, here we go again with the Conservatives talking down the Canadian economy, an economy that has the lowest debt-to-GDP ratio in the G7, an economy that has lower borrowing costs than the United States. The affordability measures that are contained in the budget are necessary. I do not know which ones my hon. friend would like to see cut but the groceries and essentials benefit is absolutely critical. The Canada workers benefit and the fully refundable caregivers benefit all matter. All of these things land on the ground. For people who are really on the front lines of the affordability challenges in the country, it lands right in their bank account. That is exactly as it should be, and I am proud of that.

● (1225)

[*Translation*]

Marianne Dandurand (Compton—Stanstead, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, thank you for giving me the opportunity to rise today and speak to budget 2026. As the member for Compton—Stanstead, I was mainly concerned with finding out what the budget had to offer the people back home. I wanted to know if it addressed the priorities that I hear about on the ground while I am door knocking or attending events. I can honestly say that it does. The budget addresses the priorities that my constituents raise with me, as well as the priorities that I set for myself when I was elected to represent my region.

When I started looking the budget over, the keywords that I searched for were the ones that I have kept front and centre since my election. For each of these keywords, I found a measure supporting a priority that is important to me and my constituents. In my opinion, the budget is very satisfactory. It will come as no surprise to hear that I am absolutely going to vote for this budget, which fills me with pride.

I would now like to tell my colleagues about some of the measures that I think are particularly important. One of the issues I often hear about when I am in my community is the cost of living. Seniors in particular ask me what we are doing to help them, as they sometimes struggle to make ends meet. The budget includes measures to support anyone who might be a little more vulnerable, and the most important of these measures, in my view, is the increase to the Canada groceries and essentials benefit. This benefit will increase by 50% for eligible people this winter. A single person could receive $339 early this winter, and a couple with two children could receive $679. Combining this increase with what was announced in budget 2025, a family of four will have $2,570 more to spend on groceries and essentials. This is the sort of measure that makes a real difference, and that is what I tell seniors when they ask how we are helping them. That is just one of our measures. Some 12 million Canadians are benefiting from this.

Here is another way we are supporting people. My mother would not be pleased if I mentioned her age, but she is retired and cares for my grandmother. Like many Canadians, she is a caregiver. One of the measures we introduced for people like my mother and my aunts, who also help care for my grandmother, is the Canada caregiver credit, which we have made fully refundable. Beginning in 2027, people like my mother, my aunts, and other caregivers across Canada supporting loved ones who need daily assistance will be eligible for up to $1,260 per year. These are very important measures.

There is also another way we can improve affordability, and that is by trying to reduce the cost of housing. We continue to invest in building more homes, and we are making a huge investment to tackle the scourge of homelessness. Some $44.7 billion will be allocated over 11 years to expand the supply of non-market housing and to put Canada on a path to end homelessness within 10 years. This is very ambitious, but it is also very important. These are national measures, but they will have an impact in my riding, including in much smaller communities. Quite honestly, it pains me to see that in my riding, in small communities, some people are struggling to find housing and they end up on the street. I want to commend all the organizations that support those folks. What I am being told is that if we can solve the housing crisis, if we can provide more affordable housing, it will make a huge difference in regions like mine and really address the homelessness crisis plaguing communities across Canada.

It will come as no surprise to my colleagues that one of the first things I looked for in the budget was measures related to cellular connectivity. As my colleagues are well aware, I care deeply about cellular connectivity. This issue is very important to all my colleagues in the regions.

● (1230)

Budget 2026 recognizes that there are significant gaps in wireless coverage in rural and remote communities. When I first began working on this issue through my private member's bill, which is now nearing the final stages of consideration in the House and will soon come to the final stage of third reading, my goal was to get people talking about it and make the government aware of it. I know the government was already aware of the challenge, but the aim was to spur action and make it a priority. Seeing this issue reflected in the budget, I feel my mission is accomplished: It is a priority for the government and we will be working on it. I am genuinely confident that by combining the measures announced in the budget with those contained in my bill, plus ongoing private sector investment and technological innovation, we will finally achieve connectivity in rural areas. As I often say, it is a safety issue and an economic issue, and it is also quite simply an issue of fairness. This is one piece of excellent news in the budget.

As a former journalist and someone who lives in the regions, I also care deeply about the vitality of our local and regional media. The budget proposes measures to support local media, including one that makes the local journalism initiative permanent. The funding for this initiative, which has increased, is especially beneficial to independent media outlets in regions underserved by the major national media. These outlets provide us with news about our municipal councils and local organizations. These kinds of things never get reported on by La Presse or the Toronto Star, but they can be found in the local media. This initiative has to continue. It is an excellent example of how to support these media outlets.

In my region, there was another request that I kept hearing, namely for the journalism labour tax credit to be expanded to local radio stations. Eligibility will now be extended to all radio organizations. The enhanced credit rate of 35% is also being extended for two years. This is great news. In regions like ours, local media are really the main source of news. This is no abstract matter. In my opinion, it is really a question of democratic infrastructure: People must have access to reliable news to know what is going on in their area. That is what our local media outlets offer.

Regional vitality also depends very much on the entrepreneurs who bring our regions to life. I would therefore like to take a moment to recognize an entrepreneur from my region. Véronique Le Prohon, CEO of leprohon, recently received the regional engagement and development award in the impactful entrepreneurs category at the Quebec business women's network awards gala. This award recognizes contributions to regional vitality, economic development and the advancement of local talent. Véronique and her brother, Guillaume, are the third generation to run this family business, a company that was founded in the Eastern Townships, that grew in the Eastern Townships and that continues to invest in our region. Job-creating businesses like this one are exactly the kind of entrepreneurship we want to encourage and support.

There are many measures for these types of businesses in the budget. The one that stands out to me in particular is the productivity mega deduction, which allows businesses to immediately write off the cost of a number of eligible investments, including assets that allow them to expand. There is also more flexibility for the regional development agencies so they can support our businesses. These measures support the economy of our regions. Those who will ultimately benefit are businesses and business owners, since they will be able to invest more, plus employees, since they will have higher-quality, long-term jobs, as well as suppliers and clients. In short, the community as a whole will benefit.

I could go on talking about the budget for another 20 minutes, but I do not think I will be given that much time. In fact, I see that I am being asked to speed up.

I hope that my colleagues' questions will give me an opportunity to talk more about these measures, particularly those related to agriculture, which is a topic that is very important for my region. I look forward to taking questions from my colleagues.

● (1235)

Mario Simard (Jonquière—Hébertville—Pays-des-Bleuets, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I must admit that I was shocked, shocked to learn that my colleague intends to support the budget. I was not expecting that. What an astounding development.

In her speech, my colleague spoke about the support measures for local media. These measures are in the budget, and we certainly welcome them. That said, I would like to hear her views on one specific measure. As we know, the government dropped the levies on digital services during negotiations, a move that yielded absolutely no result, as the U.S. government made no concessions.

Does my colleague believe the government should reinstate the levies on digital services?

Marianne Dandurand: Mr. Speaker, we need measures that work to support our cultural sector. In fact, shortly after the budget, we announced $600 million in support for Canadian artists. I have never seen this much investment in culture. I would have liked to name many of our local artists who are making a big impact. To me, what really makes an impact is the $4 billion we are investing in culture over the next few years.

One of the truly important measures is the $45,000 tax deduction for artists. It will help artists continue to contribute to the vitality of our communities. Back home, many institutions rely on the involvement of artists to keep going. I look forward to giving another speech to talk about culture in Compton—Stanstead. What we are doing there is incredibly important.

Linda Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to the excellent speech by my colleague from the Sherbrooke region, specifically south of Sherbrooke.

Her speech was very interesting. She spoke about the refundable tax credit for caregivers, but also about the local journalism initiative. She has worked very hard to ensure that the latter becomes a permanent feature.

However, as she said earlier, not much has been said about agriculture. Does she have anything to add regarding agriculture and the next generation of farmers?

Marianne Dandurand: Mr. Speaker, my colleague from Rivière-des-Mille-Îles is quite right to point out that I represent Sherbrooke, among other communities. In fact, my riding covers roughly half the city. It is both urban and rural, and I am proud to represent the communities of Rock Forest-Saint-Élie-Deauville, Bromptonville and Lennoxville, which is home to Bishop's University, as well as the surrounding rural areas, where agriculture plays a vital role.

One of the budget measures I find particularly noteworthy, in addition to the $3.2 billion being invested in the national food security strategy, is the provision allowing intergenerational transfers to nephews and nieces. We previously worked to facilitate intergenerational transfers to children. However, children do not always wish to take over the family farm, and it is important to ensure these farms can remain within the family. Extending these provisions to include nephews and nieces is an excellent measure.

[*English*]

Harb Gill (Windsor West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government is on track to spend roughly $85.5 billion a year in interest by 2030-31. That is money that cannot be used to build a hospital, fix a highway, hire a police officer or improve a community.

What exactly do Canadians get for that cheque? Is the government's plan simply to borrow more money to make moneylenders richer while Canadians are getting poorer by the day?

● (1240)

[*Translation*]

Marianne Dandurand: Mr. Speaker, my colleague talked about health care, but I would like to make another point in that regard. I would like to highlight the 40th anniversary of JEVI, an organization in my riding that works in suicide prevention and mental health. It is celebrating its 40th anniversary this evening, and I wish the team there a wonderful celebration.

Organizations like this one are critically important to our regions. Mental health is a very important issue, and budget 2026 recognizes that. It includes investments to support mental health and various community organizations. We are taking care of folks in need, and we are supporting organizations like JEVI that support the people in our communities. I would also like to take this opportunity to highlight the work of the Au coeur des familles agricoles organization and the farm outreach workers who take care of our farmers.

There are a lot of good things in the budget.

Jason Groleau (Beauce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, over the past few days, I have spoken with families, workers and business owners in Beauce. I listened to them, and their message is clear: The people of Beauce are very disappointed in this Liberal budget. “Disappointed” is too mild a word, actually. I would say they are fed up with this irresponsible Liberal government.

The people of Beauce were expecting relief from the rising cost of living. Small and medium-sized businesses were certainly expecting the U.S. tariff issue to be resolved so they could remain competitive and productive, hold onto their contracts and, above all, keep their workers employed. People wanted the Liberals in Ottawa to be careful with their money. Instead, what the Liberal government has delivered is a generational deficit in excess of $62 billion.

In my view and in the view of most Canadians, this is an inflationary Liberal budget that is completely out of control. Our constituents need some breathing room. The rising cost of living is hurting folks in Beauce. Rising rents hurt. Going to the grocery store hurts. Renewing the mortgage hurts. Paying the power bill hurts. Paycheques, unfortunately, are not keeping up with rising prices.

I am thinking of young people who work full time and wonder whether they will ever be able to buy a home in their neighbourhood. I am thinking of seniors who keep their thermostats turned down low just to make ends meet.

Let us talk about truckers. They also know about the rising costs of transportation and driving. On Tuesday, in Chaudière-Appalaches, the average posted price of diesel was $2.70 a litre. For 500 litres, that amounts to about $1,350. Before the truck even leaves the yard, the price to pay is $1,350.

Suspending the federal excise tax on fuel provided a little relief, but the Liberals in Ottawa are going to reapply a two-cents-per-litre increase on February 1, with another four-cents-per-litre increase to follow at the beginning of April. That means an extra $20 every time a truck is filled up. For a company that operates multiple trucks, that makes a huge difference. Costs add up very quickly. The Liberals can leave that tax at zero.

We need to give people a bit of a break. Today, we are asking the government to maintain the tax relief on diesel. This is important for our transportation companies, our farmers and our business owners, who need to keep their equipment running and deliver their orders every day.

We also need to talk about manufacturing costs in Canada. The Conservatives want to do away with federal industrial carbon pricing. At a time when our manufacturers are struggling to keep their American customers, the Liberals should be trying to give them the means to remain competitive.

For our SMEs that export, the most obvious and immediate pressure comes from U.S. tariffs. I have spoken before in the House about Camnor Steel Group, Beauce Atlas and Garaga. What I am hearing from manufacturers is that they are struggling to keep their customers. It took these companies years to build their customer base. When American customers ask for a price, the Canadian company has to lower its profit margins and sometimes even lose money. If the company raises its prices, then it will lose the contract and we will lose jobs. That means lost hours of work here in Canada. The three companies that I mentioned are paying an additional $4 billion a month in taxes. Let us think about it. Who is going to foot the bill?

What are the Liberals doing to help them? They are asking businesses to fill out one form, followed by another, then yet another and another. Meanwhile, as they fill out these forms, their cash flow is declining and jobs are being lost across Quebec and Canada.

Things are just as dire in the lumber industry. On Tuesday, I raised the issue here of sawmill closures in Quebec, a situation that has led to the loss of more than 500 jobs. When a sawmill closes or scales back its operations, the ripple effects are felt by small-scale loggers, the truck drivers who transport the logs, and the small mills that process them. In our region, these businesses all work together.

The Liberal government has completely let the forestry industry down. Instead of helping our local companies, the government would rather give $500 million to other countries to protect tropical rainforests. When a family cannot make ends meet, when its budget is tight, it has to make choices and sacrifices. Honestly, I think we could have passed on this one. I think we have other priorities than giving $500 million for tropical rainforests.

● (1245)

Quebec's sawmills and small lumber processing businesses are being left to fend for themselves. Businesses in the Beauce region watch every dollar they spend, and they rightly expect the same level of discipline whenever the Liberal government signs an agreement. The government needs to examine it and ask whether it will actually benefit Canadians, especially in these very difficult times. The government is sending $500 million for the Amazon rainforest while hard-working Canadians are losing their jobs. That shows a troubling disconnect from reality.

Talk about Liberal logic. While the government is spending $500 million on foreign forests, it is slashing funding for the cadets and the Snowbirds, a source of Canadian pride that inspires young Canadians. Our cadets are our future military personnel, yet their budget is being cut.

Let us now turn to Telesat, a story that stinks to high heaven. Telesat is headed by Dan Goldberg, a long-time friend of the Prime Minister. In fact, they have been friends for over 20 years. In December, Telesat will have to repay a $2.3-billion debt to its American creditors. What did the Prime Minister do on July 31? He granted Telesat an untendered contract for the same amount, $2.3 billion.

The Prime Minister says that he had no hand in the decision. According to reports, on November 13, more than three months after the contract was awarded, he requested a conflict of interest screen for him and his friend at Telesat. The contract was awarded in July. The conflict screen was requested in November. Why are the Prime Minister's friends always given priority when contracts are awarded, at the expense of other Canadian businesses? What safeguards were in place when Ottawa awarded the contract? The Liberal government has to be transparent and table the relevant documents in Parliament. Canadians have a right to know the truth of the matter.

We should expect this same due diligence throughout the budget. This week, the Parliamentary Budget Officer estimated that, without the new tax measures and spending, this year's deficit would have been $43.8 billion, but the budget projects a deficit of $62.3 billion. That is a difference of $18.5 billion. The Liberals had the opportunity to reduce the deficit, but they chose to use that margin differently by spending money abroad and abandoning Canadian families and Canadian businesses in particular.

Then, there is the yearly bill. As my colleague from Lévis—Lotbinière reminded us, according to the budget, the interest on the debt is projected to cost $60.2 billion this year. The revenue from the goods and services tax does not even cover the interest on the debt, which is costing us approximately $165 million a day. Believe it or not, in 2030-31, the annual bill will have reached $85.5 billion, or $25.3 billion more than today. Every time this amount goes up, it places an ever greater burden on future generations.

The Conservatives are asking the Liberals to clean up their spending, justify their contracts, demonstrate transparency, and cut any programs that do not produce results or generate revenue. When they promise assistance to a small business, they need to eliminate the layers of unnecessary bureaucracy that prevent the business from receiving that assistance in a timely manner. Instead of hindering businesses, we need to simplify the process for them.

I have children, and I want to help them have the same opportunities we had. We have had a good life, a good job, a loving family, and we have lived in our own home. Leaving them with hundreds of billions of dollars in debt is not going to help them.

To the people of Beauce who are watching, I want to say that I hear them. They have talked to me about the cost of living, which keeps going up, and about their deep disappointment in the Liberal budget. They work hard to support their families and to help Beauce move forward. They sent me here to defend their interests, their families and their jobs and to make sure they have more money left in their pockets at the end of the month. That is why I am standing up here today and will continue to stand up for Beauce.

● (1250)

Marianne Dandurand (Compton—Stanstead, Lib.): Mr. Speaker I want to thank my colleague for clapping earlier when I mentioned cellular connectivity in the regions. I think he probably encounters the same problems as we do.

The budget includes measures that support cellular connectivity, and they do not relate to Telesat. These measures concern the spectrum and investments. I wonder if my colleague has read about these measures and whether he is tempted to support the budget in order to support cellular connectivity in his area.

Jason Groleau: Mr. Speaker, there are two good things in the budget, and they are connectivity and ice rinks. The rest is just junk.

All right, we have to admit that there are some good things, but as I said, the spending is out of control. The Liberals need to rein it in. The millions of people watching us today expect the government to manage their money. It is not the Liberals' money. It is not the government's money. It is taxpayers' money.

People work hard to manage their own money. They expect their government to do likewise.

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to hear my colleague's thoughts on one particular aspect of this budget.

Once again, the government is bringing back its "Canada love pass", which gives free admission to parks across Canada. However, it is not just available to Canadians. It is also available to all foreign tourists, including people from the United States. No one has to pay anything to visit Canadian parks. The Liberals are spending tens of millions of dollars on this measure. I believe the number is $87 million. Meanwhile, when it comes to protecting parks, the government intends to cuts hundreds of jobs, including jobs at Forillon National Park, at La Mauricie National Park and on the north shore at the Mingan Archipelago National Park Reserve.

That money could probably be used to keep those employees on, maintaining good jobs and protecting our national parks.

I would like to hear my colleague's thoughts on that.

Jason Groleau: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his excellent question. I always enjoy playing hockey against him.

He asked a good question. Those jobs must be protected. I completely agree with him. These are important issues we have to address. However, there are even more important issues, such as the fact that people are struggling to put food on the table. They are having a hard time. They cannot make ends meet. In Beauce, 6,400 people go to Moisson Beauce every week now. Twenty years ago, Moisson Beauce did not exist.

The priority should therefore be to manage taxpayers' money responsibly.

Joël Godin (Saint-Augustin—Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC): Mr. Speaker, earlier, my Liberal colleague talked about connectivity, but I would like my colleague from Beauce to explain what connectivity has to do with the $500 million invested in tropical forests.

What does he have to say to the people in his riding who are struggling to pay for groceries?

Jason Groleau: Mr. Speaker, that is a very good question.

The government is allocating $560 million to the Amazon rainforest. I really like sloths. They are cute and fun to watch. I really like sloths, but that investment is not going to accomplish anything. It is a waste of money.

As I said earlier, business owners have to manage their money and invest in ways that will bring a return on their investment. The government simply needs to invest in ways that will give Canadians a return on their investment instead of just throwing money out the window and saddling Canadians with more debt.

● (1255)

[*English*]

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member comes with a solid background. We know, whether in business or hockey, that one cannot simply win by criticizing the other team. There needs to be a plan.

I appreciate the member acknowledging some of the good stuff in budget 2026.

I would like to know what the Conservative plan is. What would they cut, what would they keep, and how would they suggest it be paid for?

[*Translation*]

Jason Groleau: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her excellent question. She said that a plan is needed in both sports and business. However, the most important plan is discipline.

In your case, we are talking about budgetary discipline, and you do not have any.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Comments must be addressed to the Chair.

[*English*]

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Calgary East.

Jasraj Hallan (Calgary East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Prime Minister will do the impossible. Believe it or not, he will outspend Justin Trudeau. What Justin Trudeau spent in 10 years, the Prime Minister took as a challenge, saying, "Hold my champagne. I'll do that in half the time." That is exactly what is happening with this costly credit card budget. It might be funny to some, but it is not funny to struggling Canadians. In fact, food bank usage has doubled since 2019 and is only going up. The 2.35 million Canadians who visit a food bank every single month because of bad Liberal policies are not seeing anything that will help them inside this budget, as usual.

This is coming from the Prime Minister who said he would spend less. That was his promise. What did he do right after that? He doubled Justin Trudeau's deficit, which was, we thought, the most impossible thing that could have happened. This, again, is just another costly credit card budget. It is not Canadians who are going to benefit from this. We all know it is the Prime Minister's banker, bondholder and Brookfield buddies who are very happy about this budget because they will benefit the most. The PBO confirmed this. She has a scathing report that came out just days ago to prove, in her own words, that this budget is more spending, more debt and more borrowing, with fewer results.

Let us start off with that first, the debt and deficit that are going up exponentially with this budget. By 2030-31, the budget itself projects, there will be a total federal debt of almost $1.6 trillion. That is an increase in the federal debt by $287 billion over the next five years. Now, a lot of people may not understand or be able to put that into terms, so let us shorten that down to what it means for Canadians. It means that over the next five years with this continued spending, which we know is a minimum for the government because it always blows through its own targets, in 2030, every single Canadian will have to pay $2,000 more just in debt interest costs.

That means money is being taken out of struggling Canadians' pockets and is being sent to the Prime Minister's banker and bondholder buddies sitting on Bay Street. Bay Street is getting the benefits, while Main Street gets the bill. Canadians will have to foot the bill for these expensive experiments that the Prime Minister always runs.

By then, and every year from now until then, believe it or not, there is going to be more money going toward interest on the debt than what goes to health care transfers to the provinces. Again, it is more money to the Prime Minister's banker, bondholder and Brookfield buddies and less money to nurses and doctors and the health care system, which has already been made worse. This does not translate well for the government, as usual.

Under the Liberal government, an average family already pays more in Liberal taxes than they do for food, shelter and clothing combined. That is why insolvencies are up. That is why food bank usage is up. Every Canadian we talk to tells us about their struggles. Things are getting more expensive because the more government spends, the more things get expensive. We do not have to go further than the grocery store to see what bad Liberal policies do to the price of groceries, and yet the government decided it would spend more and make things worse for Canadians.

Another big issue in this country is housing. I will just start off by quoting the PBO again. She proved that the government is spending more on housing with worse results, and that is backed up by the government's own housing agencies. The Liberals are going to quadruple the spending on housing since 2015, yet housing starts will go down. Any youth we talk to in this country will tell us one thing: that the dream of home ownership is dead under the Liberals. Unless someone has the bank of mom and dad, there is no way they can save up for a down payment on a house today. The youth are the ones suffering the most.

● (1300)

Not only have the Liberals driven out jobs and good wages to the U.S. with their bad policies, but they have made housing and home ownership basically impossible. This is the same government, the same Prime Minister who promised two things in the election. He said, number one, that we were going to build at speeds not seen since the Second World War. The second promise was that the government would build 500,000 new homes every single year. The number one thing I noticed that was missing in the entire hundreds of pages of this budget was both of those promises. The Liberals tried to sneakily and quietly get rid of both those promises, which is proven by their own housing agencies.

The housing minister is a failed mayor of Vancouver. In fact, when he was the mayor of Vancouver, Vancouver's housing affordability was the second-worst in the entire world. He promised in 2008 that he would end homelessness by 2015. The Liberals made the former mayor the housing minister. Just yesterday, when he was pushed on this by reporters, he blamed it on Canadians. He said that he can't "force Canadians to build". Why then did the Liberals make the promise in the first place? It is their failed policies that are over and over again leading to young people's not being able to get into new homes.

On top of that, new homes are not being built, because of the amount of red tape. The government is well known for shovelling billions of dollars into new bureaucracies and municipalities that just create more bureaucracies, but it does not tie it to anything, and that is why housing starts are going down in this country. Again, it is always the youth who have to suffer for bad Liberal policies.

With all this spending the government is doing, I do not think Canadians would mind if we were sending money overseas to help our allies or using it for something that would actually benefit Canadians. However, that is not what Canadians are seeing. What they are seeing is really troubling, woke funding going into foreign funding. For example, the government is well known for sending millions of dollars' worth of taxpayer money to Vietnam for something called gender-just rice, which is something I do not think many Canadians have heard of. In fact, I have been asked about it, and people are saying they did not know rice had a gender, yet the government, in all of its woke policies, is sending millions of taxpayer dollars out of this country to support gender-just rice.

Another example is that the government is sending tens of millions of dollars to Congo for a woke project of bean farming. The government is attacking our farmers with higher taxes and putting in policies that would help reduce the amount of fertilizer that can be used. It is making it more expensive to farm here, but woke farming projects abroad are okay with the Liberals.

Just recently, unknown to Canadians because the Liberals did not tell them in the first place, they are going to be sending half a billion dollars to Brazil for its rainforest. They want Canadians to pay so Brazil does not destroy its own rainforest. Maybe we should use that money here for Canadians or give that money back to Canadians so we can lower their costs.

That is exactly what Conservatives asked for and exactly what we would do. Conservatives would cut the wasteful spending, stop the borrowing and make sure that money stays in Canadians' pockets. We would lower the cost of fuel in this country by removing the industrial carbon tax and the Liberals' clean fuel standard, which is just another carbon tax, and we would remove the GST from that. Not only would that make farming and trucking less expensive, but at the pump, Canadians would also feel the relief immediately. Those were the demands from Conservatives. That is what we are going to continue pushing for. Since those demands were not met, as usual, and Canadians will not have more in their pocket, Conservatives will vote against this budget.

● (1305)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would love to hear a Conservative say that they very clearly support the productivity mega deduction. I would argue that is money everyone should be supporting. It supports small businesses, medium-sized businesses and large businesses in terms of technological changes or modernization but also to expand. We are bringing in the deduction for a one-year period. I would think the Conservatives would support that initiative. After all, it is going to create more growth in our economy.

Can the member give a clear indication of whether or not the Conservative Party will endorse the productivity mega deduction?

Jasraj Hallan: Mr. Speaker, what Canadians would want is a mega deduction in the number of words the member collects in the House. He says a lot, but he says nothing at the same time.

What Canadians and businesses really need is for the Liberal government to get out of the way, lower taxes and create a better business environment. It has piled on red tape, more bureaucracy and more spending. That is why, over the last 10 years, $1 trillion of Canadian investment has fled to the U.S., because it easier to invest, and that is where all our jobs are going. Youth is suffering because of bad policies by the Liberal government, which does not understand that we cannot make money by raising taxes and raising the amount of money it borrows. It needs to do the exact opposite so we have a better business environment.

Steven Bonk (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague has such a great grasp of finances and how this country should be run. He mentioned agriculture a lot in his speech. He mentioned the over-regulation of our Canadian agriculture sector. Canadian farmers are facing real pains right now, yet the Liberal government is considering opening up our market to the Mercosur countries, for example. To make it even worse, he mentioned the money that is going to Brazil, to the rainforest. Our Prime Minister was the vice-chair of a company called Brookfield, which levelled 9,000 hectares of rainforest in Brazil.

Does my hon. colleague think the $560 million that is going to Brazil is maybe a way for the Prime Minister to make amends for the disastrous ecological record he has?

Jasraj Hallan: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my great friend from Souris—Moose Mountain for his advocacy for farmers and for struggling Canadians across Canada. He is absolutely right. Any decision that is made by the Prime Minister always makes people think about how Brookfield will benefit from that decision. It happens all the time. Just recently, Telesat was another example of this. It is always his buddies who end up benefiting. I highlighted how when they increase borrowing and spending, that benefits the Prime Minister's banker and bondholder buddies because they get interest payments on the backs of Canadians.

Just now with Telesat, it was our team, our Conservatives, who called out that it was one of his close friends who is going to get that funding. Now all of a sudden, after the fact, he puts a screen on himself so he cannot be investigated further. There are more and more examples of what makes people think about who is benefiting when the Prime Minister makes a decision, and it is always Brookfield.

Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton—Bkejwanong, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite was talking about deficits. Certainly, we are investing in Canada to help it get through a turbulent economic time. In 2008, it was then prime minister Stephen Harper who was working with our current Prime Minister and Jim Flaherty to run deficits to invest in Canada's economy.

Does the member think Prime Minister Harper was wrong to do that at the time?

Jasraj Hallan: Mr. Speaker, I remember a time when the member actually spoke with some common sense and actually cared for Canadians. Now all she has done is cross the floor to one of the most expensive and corrupt governments, but it just shows more of what her character is like.

In fact, it was former prime minister Stephen Harper who said it was not the Prime Minister who helped throughout that time, but it was the decisions made by the common-sense Conservative government that got Canadians out of a bad time during a world recession. Compare that to the current government, which went through the same, but all it did was increase costs for Canadians and made our economy worse. It drove jobs out of this country, and it made Canadians poorer.

There is a stark difference between a common-sense Conservative government and a Liberal government that clearly does not know how to manage the economy, with the Prime Minister, the so-called banker, who has done nothing but run this economy into the ground.

● (1310)

Giovanna Mingarelli (Prescott—Russell—Cumberland, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Vaughan—Woodbridge.

[*Translation*]

I rise today to speak to budget 2026, “Masters of our destiny”, and what it means for the people of Prescott—Russell—Cumberland. I meet regularly with farmers, families, seniors and business owners who are grappling with the challenges of our time. Although their circumstances may differ, they often express concerns about the same things, namely affordability, housing, economic prospects and whether the next generation will be able to stay in our communities and thrive there.

I am proud to say that budget 2026 addresses those priorities by strengthening our rural communities, supporting our families and creating new opportunities for the future.

Agriculture is part of Prescott—Russell—Cumberland's history, identity and pride and has been for generations. It shapes our economy and brings generations together through shared expertise. At a time when tariffs and global market uncertainty continue to create challenges for our farmers, budget 2026 provides for practical support for the agricultural industry. For example, the modernization of the Canadian Agricultural Loans Act will improve access to capital and support intergenerational farm transfers.

Since 2025, the federal government has announced nearly $44 billion in support for workers and businesses impacted by tariffs, including $20.6 billion to help key sectors like agriculture adapt, modernize and access new markets.

[*English*]

For our local farmers and agri-food businesses, the budget provides support through investments in Canada's scientific research and experimental development tax incentive program, the productivity superdeduction and the continuation of the implementation of Canada's $3.2-billion national food security strategy, helping them grow, innovate and expand into new markets.

For agricultural businesses such as Wilson Farms in Vankleek Hill, these investments create new opportunities for growth and resilience.

[*Translation*]

The people of Prescott—Russell—Cumberland are proud Franco-Ontarians. It is the only majority francophone riding in our predominantly English-speaking province. This reality shapes our institutions, our culture and our daily lives, and it is a precious heritage that must be preserved.

The budget includes $134 million over four years to support local media across the country, as well as $20 million over four years to help Canadian creators tell our stories. It also supports the promotion of Canada's francophone community in the lead-up to the 2028 Francophonie summit. For our region, this means more support for the organizations, festivals and community spaces keeping our Franco-Ontarian heritage alive, from Le Chenail to the Richelieu clubs in Hawkesbury and Embrun. It also means help for local newspapers such as Le Reflet, The Review and Vision.

The budget also allocates more than $390 billion to support the arrangements required to host the 2028 Francophonie summit in the national capital region. For Prescott—Russell—Cumberland, this summit represents a unique opportunity to showcase the Canadian francophonie and the Franco-Ontarian community to the 90 member states coming from all over the world.

Together, these measures help to build vibrant communities that are proud of their roots and confident in their future.

[*English*]

Too many young families tell me that they want to stay in the community where they grew up. We are fortunate to live in a region where it is possible to raise a family, build a career and contribute to the community, yet many are wondering whether they will still be able to afford to live here. That is why budget 2026 includes $44.7 billion over 11 years to support housing construction. With these investments, we are building stronger communities, including those in Prescott—Russell—Cumberland.

The budget also provides $2 billion to renovate up to one million homes across Canada. For families in our region, this could mean housing that better meets their needs and remains affordable over the long term. Ultimately, these investments will help young people build their future close to home, help families find affordable housing and help seniors remain in the communities they helped build.

[*Translation*]

In a riding as vast as Prescott—Russell—Cumberland, connectivity is essential. The investments in rural telecommunications will give more residents access to better Internet and cell coverage and provide more choice and more affordable services. These measures will strengthen participation in the modern economy no matter where a person lives.

Budget 2026 invests $1.5 billion in sports and recreation infrastructure, including arenas and skating rinks, which play a vital role in community life. By the way, it was a pleasure to host the Hon. Gregor Robertson and the Hon. Adam van Koeverden in Embrun last week—

● (1315)

[*English*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Order. Members must use titles or riding names.

The hon. member.

[*Translation*]

Giovanna Mingarelli: I apologize, Mr. Speaker.

They were there to make a post-budget announcement highlighting the practical benefits of these investments for families in our region.

[*English*]

Small and medium-sized businesses are at the heart of the economy of Prescott—Russell—Cumberland. The last few years have not been easy and I regularly speak with entrepreneurs across our region who continue to face significant challenges and uncertainty. This summer, I had the pleasure of visiting businesses such as Robinson Greenhouses in Clarence-Rockland, Gibbs Honey in Vankleek Hill, the Fromagerie in St-Albert, La Binerie in Plantagenet, Sunrise Bites in Navan, and the Black Walnut Bakery in Cumberland. They all contribute greatly to our regional economy.

Budget 2026 includes measures such as the regional tariff response initiative to support business innovation, productivity and growth, helping our entrepreneurs invest, adapt and remain competitive. Supporting small businesses means protecting local jobs, preserving services close to home and strengthening our regional economy. With these tools, we are empowering our communities to become masters of their own destiny.

[*Translation*]

Budget 2026 also continues to support families through the early learning and child care agreements.

In growing communities like ours, access to affordable child care creates new opportunities for families. The investments in $10-a-day child care and the creation of new spaces will allow more parents to participate in the workforce while supporting children's development.

The budget also recognizes the vital role played by family caregivers. In Canada's many communities, thousands of caregivers support loved ones every day. In a rural region like mine, caregivers play an irreplaceable role. The enhancements to the Canada caregiver credit will provide additional support and recognize the immense contribution that caregivers make to our communities.

[*English*]

A budget is about much more than a series of numbers. It is a reflection of our priorities, our values and the country we want to build together. For Prescott—Russell—Cumberland, this budget is an investment in people. It recognizes the contributions of our families, workers, farmers, businesses and community organizations, while creating new opportunities for future generations.

[*Translation*]

I am proud to support measures that will help Prescott—Russell—Cumberland be strong and resilient and make it a place where people choose to live, work, raise their families and build their futures.

[*English*]

John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague's speech and the fact that she said she visited many businesses over the summer. This budget fast-tracks the construction of the Alto high-speed rail project, which would devastate tens of thousands of acres of prime agriculture land across Ontario and Quebec, including in her riding. I heard first-hand from dozens of farmers and business owners in her riding who are very frustrated by the fact that their Liberal member of Parliament is not listening to their concerns.

Does my colleague support fast-tracking the Alto high-speed rail project in this budget? Does she support that project and the impact it would have on the farmers and businesses in her own riding?

● (1320)

Giovanna Mingarelli: Mr. Speaker, I have also met with dozens of farmers and business owners across Prescott—Russell—Cumberland throughout the year. I have hosted three separate round tables in the riding and have been in an active conversation with all of the constituents. I am deeply compassionate about their concerns. I am well-versed in all of the concerns of the riding, and I do issue regular updates to our community with updates on the project.

I would like to thank you for your questions and also for your compassion for my constituents.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I would just remind the member to address questions and answers through the Chair.

[*Translation*]

The hon. member for Rivière-des-Mille-Îles.

Linda Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague, whom I hold in very high regard. She does excellent work for her riding and represents it very well.

Her speech touched on several positive things, including the Canada caregiver credit.

She also spoke about intergenerational transfers of family farms. I would like her to elaborate on that, given that this issue affects her riding, which has a large rural population.

She is also a proud Franco-Ontarian, and I support her wholeheartedly.

Giovanna Mingarelli: Mr. Speaker, I am very proud that our budget includes support for farmers in Prescott—Russell—Cumberland. This year's budget focuses on workers and natural resources, while providing new funding to support the local economy and all of our communities.

[*English*]

Grant Jackson (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Mr. Speaker, previously the member had been asked about Alto. She did not answer the question about whether she actually supports the fast-tracking of Alto. We also know that there is a huge amount budgeted for it in the government's expenditures, yet the Liberals would be cutting the cadets program in two provinces in this country.

How can that member possibly support this as a good budget, when the budget would be financing Liberal vanity projects like Alto on the backs of kids in our cadets program?

Giovanna Mingarelli: Mr. Speaker, the Alto high-speed rail project is a generational project that that would support a very large portion of the Canadian population through its revenues. It is a project that my riding is deeply affected by, and I am continuing to be in active conversation with constituents, especially with the farming community. It is something that I will continue to be very deeply involved with in the near future.

[*Translation*]

Marianne Dandurand (Compton—Stanstead, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is safe to say that I will be talking about local media. There are two important initiatives in the budget. First, there is the local journalism initiative, which will be made permanent. Second, there is the 35% the Canadian journalism labour tax credit, will be expanded to include private audio and audiovisual news organizations.

I would like my colleague to tell me about the importance of local media in her region. Who is doing good work there?

Giovanna Mingarelli: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for that great question.

Local media outlets are the lifeblood of Prescott—Russell—Cumberland and communities across Canada. Crucially, they draw attention to local issues and support the francophonie, especially in Prescott—Russell—Cumberland, where nearly 60% of the population is Franco-Ontarian. My riding is predominantly francophone. I believe that this new funding will help support both official languages and enable local communities to thrive.

[*English*]

Michael Guglielmin (Vaughan—Woodbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise and speak on the budget in the House of Commons today.

Before I do, I would like to begin by giving a shout-out. I would first like to recognize the 10th anniversary of the Newman Global Initiative, founded a decade ago by Matthew Newman when he was just nine years old. This grassroots effort has grown from our community in Vaughan—Woodbridge into a dedicated network for young leaders. Over the past 10 years, the initiative has contributed over half a million dollars in community support and more than 5,700 hours of community service. From supporting educational and shelter projects internationally in India, Italy and Peru to local food security and youth programs here in Vaughan—Woodbridge, their work addresses real communities' needs through direct action. This milestone is a tribute to our student volunteers, sponsors and supporters. I invite my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Newman Global Initiative on 10 years of service.

The Liberals have titled this budget "Masters of our destiny", but Canadians are not sold on this picture painting by the Liberal government. After reviewing the numbers and seeing what is inside this budget, I think the title masters of fiscal illusion might be a little more appropriate.

Repeatedly we have heard from the Liberals that they are going to spend less and invest more, yet they committed almost all of their new fiscal room. They claim to balance operations using a definition that excludes $135 billion that would not qualify as capital investment in any internationally recognized accounting standards. Behind the headline, deficits sit at nearly $765 billion in new borrowing over the next five years. Members do not have to take my word for it. The Parliamentary Budget Officer delivered her verdict already earlier this week. She said, "This budget spends more, invests more and borrows more." Canadians will pay real interest on this fiscal illusion.

On Tuesday, the Parliamentary Budget Officer released a damning report on the fiscal track and sustainability of the Liberal budget. The PBO identified over $158 billion in new fiscal room that was largely granted to them due to an increase in oil prices over the recent months as a consequence of the war, which gave the Liberals an opportunity to demonstrate that they were actually prudent fiscal managers of our fiscal position. However, instead, what did they do? They went ahead and spent 96% of that newly found revenue on government programs. This, despite many economists urging the government to be cautious, saying that "those revenue increases should not be expected to continue."

According to the PBO, without the Liberals' reckless spending measures, this year's deficit could have fallen to around $43 billion, and in five years, it could have then fallen to $20 billion. They could have actually demonstrated here that we were on some sort of path to deficit recovery, but instead, they chose a path that leaves the deficit at $53 billion five years from now. Oxford economists labelled the Liberals' budget as a "missed opportunity to lower the deficit and save" the future for the people of this country.

This has not come as a surprise to Canadians at this point. We have become so accustomed over the past number of years to successive Liberal governments pushing the absolute limits of the public purse. The last few years have marked the worst fiscal stretch in Canadian history, with seven of the eight highest being the last seven consecutive years.

The Liberals keep redefining their own fiscal anchors to fit their illusion to the Canadian taxpayer. Let us take, for example, that the Liberals dropped the declining debt-to-GDP ratio as their fiscal anchor before proceeding to take on historic levels of debt. The obscene federal debt is now projected to rise to $1.6 trillion in five years. Even the International Monetary Fund has recommended that the Liberal government restore its debt-to-GDP ratio as a primary fiscal anchor for Canada, saying that it would "strengthen discipline, transparency, and credibility" for future borrowing and the finances of this country. The PBO added, "Sustainability is commonly assessed by whether the debt-to-GDP ratio is stable or declining over the long term."

● (1325)

Those are her words. The Liberals instead point to their promise of balancing the operating budget, a term we are becoming more and more accustomed to hearing. That promise depends on what it calls "capital investments". We hear them over and over again say that they are not spending, that they are making capital investments. That is why I use the phrase "fiscal illusion", because that term, capital investment, and the way they are categorizing all of this really does reveal the real illusion that is at play with the budget.

The PBO commented at the finance committee earlier this week that the Liberals list over $135 billion as so-called capital investments that would not qualify as capital investment under internationally recognized standards. If the $135 billion was appropriately treated as operating spending, the operating budget would remain in a deficit every single year for the next five-year forecast, despite the Liberal government's claiming that it has met its fiscal anchor.

That is the problem with the government's marking its own homework. Its apparent success depends on a definition that it itself has chosen. I challenge the finance minister to table both calculations, so that Canadians can see exactly how much of this claimed balance comes from the government's own made-up classifications.

Canadians also deserve the full picture of federal borrowing. Over five years, the budget projects deficits totalling $289 billion. Its borrowing requirements total $765 billion. That is a gap of $476 billion. Neither of the government's fiscal anchors places a ceiling on the cash borrowing requirements.

When it comes to major projects like the Alto project, I had the transport minister at the finance committee. He seemed to suggest there was no ceiling to how much this project could cost. We hear the PBO say it could reach as high as $260 billion or more. It is a total waste of taxpayer dollars.

Parliament should know who receives money, what return is expected and what happens if repayments fall short. Calling something an investment creates an obligation to demonstrate its value to taxpayers. Public debt charges are the fastest-growing expense for the government. This year, debt charges will cost $60.2 billion, reaching $85.5 billion in five years, consuming almost 14¢ of every dollar in federal revenue.

If we remember, a previous governor of the Bank of Canada, David Dodge, came up with what is known as the “David Dodge Rule”, saying that governments should keep debt servicing costs below 10% of government revenues as a fiscal benchmark. This year, debt charges already exceed the Canada health transfer, the largest federal transfer to the provinces and territories. Every dollar committed to servicing debt is a dollar unavailable for another priority without additional taxes or even more borrowing.

We are noticing a theme here. We see record levels of spending from the COVID era. One could make the case that during a time of crisis we needed elevated spending. None of that spending has been reduced. We see more and more layers added on, debt climbing higher and higher and debt-servicing costs growing even larger.

The Prime Minister recently announced a loan of half a billion dollars to a Brazilian-run fund that provides compensation to governments that do not develop their rainforests. Why on earth would the Prime Minister believe that this is a good idea? Every dollar of that is a dollar that could have been used to help our own people, who are facing an ever-increasing need for help from the government. The government cannot demand fiscal discipline from Canadian families while treating scrutiny of its own decisions as a mere inconvenience.

Housing is another primary indication of where we can judge the gap between promises and results. With housing starts declining, the government must explain how its plan to massively increase permanent residence will help the young Canadians I hear from every single day, who are struggling to afford homes and find a place to live. The government throws billions of dollars at housing while making the situation worse. Canadians deserve straight answers.

● (1330)

Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton—Bkejwanong, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there has been a lot of talk about deficits. I know that we are going through very troubled economic times here in Canada. When Stephen Harper was the prime minister, he, the current Prime Minister and Jim Flaherty decided they would spend heavily on infrastructure to try to keep the economy going, and it worked. Does the member think what Stephen Harper did was wrong?

Michael Guglielmin: Mr. Speaker, I would remind the member opposite that prime minister Harper left the fiscal position of this country in fantastic shape. We had the strongest middle class in the G7. After 10 years of her current party holding government, we have the most indebted citizens in this country. We are sitting here at a time when we need to borrow $765 billion. We are going to be paying $85.5 billion in interest, more than we pay in health care transfer payments. We are robbing the next generation. We are robbing my kids, members' kids and our grandchildren of future opportunity. We need fiscal discipline.

I thought the Prime Minister was a financial wizard. What we are seeing here is not just more of the same, but worse fiscal discipline than we have ever seen before.

● (1335)

[*Translation*]

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my colleague spoke at length about the deficit and fiscal discipline. We proposed a measure that, unfortunately, was rejected once again. I would note that we were not the only ones proposing it. It was very simple: eliminate the subsidies for oil and gas companies.

Last week, the Secretary-General of the United Nations was very clear: Polluters must pay, not be rewarded. Our measure would bring in $25 billion over five years. That money could be invested in improving the lives of Quebeckers, improving our hospitals, improving people's quality of life and addressing the rising cost of living.

Does my colleague agree that subsidizing oil and gas to the tune of $25 billion is a waste of money? Does he agree that this money should be invested elsewhere?

[*English*]

Michael Guglielmin: Mr. Speaker, what would really improve the fiscal position of Canadians all across this country, including in the great province of Quebec, would be if we developed our oil and gas industry as quickly as possible, built pipelines and refineries coast to coast, and took advantage of the geopolitical position we find ourselves in today, where people want more Canadian oil and gas. That would add to the government coffers so it could do things like real tax reform. It could make personal income tax and business taxes more competitive. It could even give people in Quebec a break on their taxes, because they are certainly overtaxed by the actions of the government.

Harb Gill (Windsor West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians go to the grocery store and experience shock when they see the bill. If the government's policies are making life more expensive, how does handing people another temporary benefit solve the problem? At some point, we have to put out the inflationary arson that is happening today in our economy. We cannot keep handing a homeowner a coupon for a fire extinguisher.

I would ask my colleague this: Should we not come up with a better plan?

Michael Guglielmin: Mr. Speaker, one of the things I am noticing more is that the measure of success for the Liberal government far too often is how much money it spends. Really what we need to be measuring our success on is what conditions we create for new jobs to flourish, new companies to open and workers to make more money. How do we do that? It is by making the structural changes required in order to foster growth in this country, things like regulatory reform and tax reform, which are long overdue, both on the personal tax and the business tax side, so we can attract businesses and have them open here.

Government cannot always pick winners and losers. What we need to do is create the conditions for businesses to want to invest, open, prosper and thrive. This could be the most competitive place to do business on planet earth. We have the resources we need. We really need to start putting our foot to the pedal here and making sure Canada can thrive.

[*Translation*]

Jacques Ramsay (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Elgin—St. Thomas—London South.

I am rising today on behalf of the people of La Prairie, Candiac, Sainte-Catherine, Saint-Constant, Delson, Saint-Philippe and Saint-Mathieu, as well as the members of the Kahnawake community.

In recent months, I have been hearing the same questions in my riding. How is our country really doing? What is the government doing to help those who are struggling to make ends meet? Is the government planning for the future or just managing what is going on right now?

Budget 2026 answers those three questions. I will explain why, starting with some facts.

The Canadian economy is standing strong, despite the U.S. tariffs and global uncertainty. The OECD forecasts that Canada will have the second-strongest growth in the G7. What is more, this year's deficit is $3 billion less than what was projected in the spring. We have the lowest net debt-to-GDP ratio in the G7. It is 10 times lower than the G7 average.

However, that is not the most important figure. Starting next year, our operating budget will be balanced, a full year ahead of schedule. We are even projecting an operating surplus of $11 billion. In practical terms, this means the government will be covering its day-to-day expenses from its own revenues and will no longer be borrowing to finance its operating costs.

That is why we can remain optimistic, even as we make significant investments. When the government borrows money, it is to build infrastructure, power stations, housing, factories and mines. Two-thirds of the new measures in this budget are targeting growth and investment. By investing, among other things, we are positioning Canada as an energy superpower. A country that wants to be in control of its own destiny, master of its own destiny, must have control over its energy supply.

The budget earmarks $52 billion to double Canada's electricity capacity by 2050. Whether it is Churchill Falls with Hydro-Québec, Wind West in Nova Scotia or the Darlington nuclear reactors in Ontario, we are building the clean energy of tomorrow.

This budget also supports our entrepreneurs, with measures such as the new Canada growth incentive and the productivity mega deduction, which has been confirmed and expanded and will now allow businesses to write off investments in equipment and buildings more quickly.

The message is clear: Invest here, create jobs here and export from here. This budget was not designed to make headlines for a day. It was designed to serve the next generation. We are training the people who will build the country of tomorrow. Our federal skilled trades program aims to recruit, train and hire between 80,000 and 100,000 new skilled trades workers such as electricians, crane operators and welders. The program includes more than 100 well-paid trades.

I am thinking of the young people in La Prairie—Atateken who are wondering where they will fit into the economy of tomorrow. Well, this budget provides the answer. Their place is here, and we are going to empower them to take it.

While we are investing in the future, we must not forget the challenges we face today. As the economy regains momentum, people need a bridge to get through this transitional period, and the budget builds that bridge.

First, let us think of the Canada groceries and essentials benefit, which will be enhanced with a one-time 50% top-up this year. This will provide a $600 boost for families and will lift 120,000 people out of poverty. Second, the budget will enhance the build Canada workers benefit and lift 240,000 people out of poverty. The message is simple: People who are working should not have to live in poverty. Third, the Canada caregiver credit will become fully refundable, providing up to $1,260 per year. This will help 585,000 caregivers and lift 15,000 people out of poverty. In my riding, many people are caring for a spouse or an older family member. They deserve to be recognized.

With these three measures alone, the government will lift 400,000 people out of poverty.

● (1340)

Thanks to Build Canada Homes, we have been able to influence the real estate market and reduce rent in La Prairie—Atateken by 2% since 2024. That puts about $500 more a year in renters' pockets, and we are continuing our work. Just this morning, I spoke about affordable housing with the mayor of Delson, Christian Ouellette.

Finally, the federal government will automatically file tax returns for low-income Canadians to ensure that they finally get the benefits that they have been missing out on simply because they were not filing a tax return. As a result, I am very proud of this budget, which truly prioritizes those who are struggling to make ends meet.

This brings me to a simple question: How can a country as wealthy as ours tolerate people sleeping on the streets? Homelessness is no longer just a big-city phenomenon. We are now seeing it in my south shore riding. The people at L'estrade work on the front line in my community, and their mission is to reach vulnerable people wherever they are. They tell me that demand is growing faster than resources. We have heard them. That is why this budget now puts Canada on a path to ending homelessness within 10 years. It provides $30 billion over 10 years. That is a lot of money, but we need to make massive investments if we truly want to tackle the root of the problem through affordable housing, social housing and, when necessary, support services. Most of us know a friend, a family member or a former colleague whose life was suddenly turned upside down. They deserve a second chance. We are doing this for them, of course, but we are also doing it for our society because we recognize the value of living in a just society in which no one has to beg. Ending homelessness is not a luxury. Ultimately, it is about dignity, about who we are.

I also want to talk about the environment, because for the people back home, it is not some abstract concept. It is the heating bill. It is the car we choose. It is the air we breathe. When it comes to transportation, this budget will fund more than 55,000 new charging stations across the country, which will literally give electric vehicle owners the freedom to travel anywhere in the country without fear of running out of charge. This budget for new charging stations adds to the $5,000 rebate for the purchase of an electric vehicle, which was reinstated earlier this year. Now more than ever, buying an electric vehicle makes sense. As for heating, our government has announced a $2-billion program to install heat pumps. Low-income households will be eligible to receive up to $10,000 for any heat pump purchased after November 1, not to mention the savings they will see on their heating bills afterward—about $500 for a home using electric baseboard heaters and up to $2,000 when switching from oil heating.

This budget puts our finances back on track by balancing our operating expenditures as soon as next year. It invests in making Canada an energy superpower. It offers a helping hand to people who are struggling, and it finally tackles homelessness. It also provides $4 billion in support for arts and culture, a budget to save CBC/Radio-Canada and a budget of $40 million a year for local journalism, which matters a great deal in my riding. To preserve culture is to preserve our language. The budget will also benefit all the generations that come after the next generation, since people of my generation know that it takes decades, not quarters, to properly judge the impact of major decisions.

On behalf of the people of La Prairie—Atateken, I firmly support this budget and urge my colleagues to do the same.

● (1345)

Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank my Liberal colleague for his speech.

Now, here is another reality. This government is being heavily criticized for the choices it is making at the moment. It decided to give Brazil $560 million to protect trees. At the same time, we are learning that the cadets are facing severe budget restrictions that are preventing them from taking part in weekend activities. In my riding, this affects the optimist clubs, the optimist cadets of L'Ancienne-Lorette, the Richelieu cadets of L'Ancienne-Lorette, the Kondiaronk cadets of Loretteville and the cadets of Haute-Saint-Charles.

What does the Liberal member have to say to the cadets?

Jacques Ramsay: Mr. Speaker, I am very concerned by the issue raised by my hon. colleague.

I agree that the cadets' budget should absolutely not be cut. I fully intend to raise this issue. I am reassured by my colleague from Longueuil—Charles-LeMoyne—Greenfield Park, who has also confirmed to me that she is lobbying for this decision to be reversed.

As for the $560 million, I would remind my hon. colleague that this is a loan, that Canada is acting in conjunction with other countries and that other countries are contributing far more than us.

The initiative involves one billion hectares of forest. I believe this is an initiative that should be welcomed. I will leave it at that.

● (1350)

Alexis Deschênes (Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Listuguj, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to follow up on my colleague's question. I, too, was contacted today, by the mayor of Haute-Gaspésie, Ms. Bélanger, regarding the cuts to funding for cadet training.

Could my colleague be more specific? If I understand him correctly, he, a Liberal member of the government, would like to see this decision reversed.

How many of his colleagues share his view? What steps will he take to ensure this is reversed? When will this happen?

Jacques Ramsay: Mr. Speaker, unfortunately for my colleague, I must remind him that I am the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety. However, I can confirm that I am making the necessary representations. I do believe that funding for cadets, among other things, should be maintained.

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

I would like him to comment on the new measure for caregivers. I would like to know a little more about that.

Jacques Ramsay: Mr. Speaker, the Canada caregiver credit already existed, but it was not refundable. The people who needed it the most, those without sufficient income, did not have access to it. The government is changing that. The people who need this credit the most will get it.

As I mentioned in my speech, this credit will lift 15,000 people out of poverty. That is no small thing. The government has understood what people need. When someone is living with a loved one who is ill or elderly, financial worries are the last thing they need.

[*English*]

Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the government found a way to make national parks free, but at the same time, it decided to cut the workers who are there to protect the national parks, like at the Pacific Rim National Park Reserve.

Now, we know Pacific Rim National Park is critical, as are all parks across the country, in protecting nature, but this requires people on the ground. It is actually a law that its ecological integrity is the minister's first priority.

We support affordable access to our national parks. I think everybody does. However, inviting more visitors while cutting staff puts conservation, visitor safety and rural livelihoods at risk. Will the government reverse these cuts?

[*Translation*]

Jacques Ramsay: Mr. Speaker, I will simply reiterate what was said during question period yesterday. While a number of individuals have received letters, that does not mean that they will lose their jobs or that their positions will be eliminated, far from it. We will have to wait and see what happens once details of the measures have been announced and clarified.

[*English*]

Andrew Lawton (Elgin—St. Thomas—London South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I wish you would be as generous with your time as the Liberal government is with taxpayer money in this budget.

My goodness, this is a government that talks about being a new government, but it is amazing how much we see the old ways of spending. Actually, that is not fair. Justin Trudeau, believe it or not, looks like a fiscal conservative stacked up against the Liberal government's budget now. This is a budget that could be termed "the young and the reckless". It is forecasting deficits of nearly $300 billion over the next five years. This is not an abstract number when we realize what the real implications are of these deficits.

Every dollar the government spends has to come from the taxpayer in some way. We know that. We all, as Canadians, accept that there is a balance. We pay a little in tax, and we get a little in services. Sometimes that balance is a lot more lopsided. Canadians now are paying more and more but getting less and less. When government chooses to spend outside of its means, as this government is, when governments choose to spend more than they are taxing Canadians, we end up with deficits that require the government to incur greater and greater levels of debt. That is what we are seeing here.

Anyone who has ever taken out a mortgage or made a purchase on a credit card, things that ordinary Canadians are doing, knows debt is not free. Oftentimes, depending on a number of calculations, people end up spending more on interest than they did on the thing itself that required them to incur the debt.

I would be remiss not to point out that the Liberal government's reckless budget is resulting in more and more money being spent each year on nothing, on debt payments and interest. In this particular budget, the interest payments are $58 billion. That is more than one-tenth of the overall amount the government is spending, more than 10%.

An hon. member: Billions, billions.

Andrew Lawton: Mr. Speaker, it is interesting that I am being heckled by a former cabinet minister to Kathleen Wynne's government in Ontario, who should really stay quiet right now when we are talking about debt and deficits and government spending.

What could that $58 million—

An hon. member: We were the only government to ever balance a budget. The former Conservatives never did that.

● (1355)

The Speaker: Order.

The hon. member does not have the floor, so we will go back to the hon. member for Elgin—St. Thomas—London South.

Andrew Lawton: Mr. Speaker, that $58.7 billion could buy 50 new hospitals every single year. That money could double the entire federal health transfer, money the federal government gives to provinces to fund health care services. That amount could cut income taxes in this country by 25%. That money could eliminate the GST. These are all decisions a government could make if it had this money back in its coffers, or it could simply return the money to Canadians.

This is why we have to talk about the recklessness of it. Every dollar spent in debt interest is a dollar spent enriching bankers and bondholders. It does not go to government services. It does not go to middle-class families. It does not go back into the pockets of Canadians who were taxed in the first place for the government to take that money. This is why when governments try to make big, flashy promises and pay for things they cannot afford, they end up loading more and more debt and more taxes onto future generations. The government claims this budget is called "Masters of our destiny", but what it has mastered is indebtedness for future generations. It has mastered the illusion that governments can spend money recklessly, with abandon, and bear no consequences.

It is not just the spending that is reckless. In this budget, the government has also put forward the most massive increase to immigration by way of increasing the number of permanent residents this country has ever seen. While housing is out of reach, health care resources are overstrained and unemployment is at record levels, the Liberals are planning to add 654,000 permanent residents in a single year, despite claiming that they are taking seriously the immigration crisis they have created. This number is 35% higher than the previous all-time record, which was set by Justin Trudeau.

Yes, it is a new government, but new does not mean improved. There are new levels of debt, new levels of deficits, the same member for Winnipeg North and new levels of immigration, all of which continue to make life less affordable for Canadians, to make government less responsible and to aggravate and exacerbate the problems that Canadians have been grappling with and demanding that the government act on. This is a reckless budget that is putting reckless debt and deficits onto Canadians, which they cannot afford. The Liberal government would do well to acknowledge the harms this is going to cause for generations to come.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

● (1400)

[*English*]

SYNERGY AWARD FOR INNOVATION

Sima Acan (Oakville West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Balazs Tolnai of Oakville West and his colleagues at Kruger for their award-winning research partnership.

[*Translation*]

On November 4, Kruger and Innofibre, from the Cégep de Trois-Rivières and the Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières, received a 2026 Synergy Award for Innovation.

[*English*]

Their team is developing packaging from renewable forest resources that could replace some single-use plastics. Their work shows how Canadian colleges, universities and businesses can reduce plastic waste while creating higher-value products for our forest sector. This is how Canadian research strengthens our forest sector and turns renewable resources into higher-value products.

[*Translation*]

I invite members to join me in congratulating Mr. Tolnai and the whole team on this achievement.

* * *

[*English*]

HOUSING

Kelly DeRidder (Kitchener Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government has said that it will end homelessness in the 2026 budget, and I can understand why. Behind that promise are people. It is a son living in a tent or a mother struggling with addiction. It is a senior or a veteran who has fallen through the cracks. Grand promises that we will end homelessness, though, are not the same as actually changing those lives.

We need results. How many treatment beds immediately? How many affordable homes? What prevention measures are being put in place? Feel-good mission statements like “because in Canada, we take care of one another” mean very little if the person on the street today is still there tomorrow. Taking care of one another is more than just words, because Canadians living on our streets do not need fancy promises, fancy slogans or better words. What they need is for us to do better.

BURNABY ASSOCIATION FOR COMMUNITY INCLUSION

Wade Chang (Burnaby Central, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, 70 years ago, some parents in Burnaby believed their children deserved every opportunity to reach their full potential. They came together to fight for a brighter future for their children with disabilities, and that was how BACI began.

I rise to recognize the 70th anniversary of the Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion. Since 1956, BACI has helped people with disabilities live more independently, find meaningful work and establish a place of belonging. This work would not be possible without BACI's board of directors, staff, volunteers and the families who have been part of this journey over the past 70 years. Today, BACI continues to support people with disabilities and their families across Burnaby, helping them build more fulfilling lives.

On behalf of the House, I want to thank everyone at BACI for all they do, especially co-executive directors Tanya Sather and Richard Faucher for their leadership and commitment.

May BACI continue to lead, inspire and make a greater impact.

* * *

THE BUDGET

Burton Bailey (Red Deer, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government's costly credit card budget does not put Canadians first.

According to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, debt interest is the fastest-growing expense and will soon hit $85 billion a year, or 26% more than federal health care spending. Housing is out of reach, jobs go to temporary workers and health care is inaccessible. Emergency rooms are overcrowded, and it is not always Canadians receiving the care they pay for.

New data from Second Street suggests that in the last five years, health care bodies wrote off over half a billion dollars in losses from non-Canadian residents who never paid. Meanwhile, the government will bring in over 650,000 permanent immigrants in one year, adding more pressure to a crumbling health care infrastructure.

Canadians should not be made to compete for jobs, housing and health care in their own country because of Liberal mass immigration. The federal government should put Canadians first. The Conservatives know this. The Liberals need to learn it.

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160TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LORNE SCOTS

Amandeep Sodhi (Brampton Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 160th anniversary of the Lorne Scots of Peel, Dufferin and Halton Regiment. I was honoured to join the regiment, veterans and community members at Garden Square in my riding for a drumhead service marking this important milestone earlier this month. For 160 years, generations of Lorne Scots have demonstrated courage, dedication, sacrifice and a deep commitment to serving Canada. Their contributions both at home and abroad have helped shape our military history, communities and country.

I would also like to recognize the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 15 and Branch 609 for their continued work in supporting veterans and keeping the memory of those who served alive.

To all serving members, veterans and their families, I thank them for their service, sacrifice and commitment.

On behalf of the people of Brampton Centre, congratulations to the Lorne Scots on 160 years of distinguished service. May this proud legacy continue for generations to come.

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● (1405)

RETIREMENT CONGRATULATIONS

Andrew Lawton (Elgin—St. Thomas—London South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Joe Preston on the occasion of his much-deserved retirement. First elected to this House in 2004, Joe dutifully served the people of Elgin—Middlesex—London for 11 years, but retirement did not suit him the first time around. He later went on to serve two terms as mayor of St. Thomas, wrapping up his eight years just earlier this week.

Joe is a leader, an entrepreneur, a volunteer, a mentor and a friend. In every role he has taken, he has brought people together and turned aspiration into action. His tireless work to end homelessness in St. Thomas reflects a deep belief that a strong community leaves no one behind. This commitment earned him the Municipal Leadership Award from the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness earlier this month.

From Parliament Hill to city hall to the counter at his Wendy's, Joe has spent decades leading by example, not for the accolades, but to help people and to make a difference.

I thank Joe and his wife, Stephanie, for all they have given to the community. He may be retiring from public life once again, but I know his legacy of service will live on.

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SANDRA BAGGS

Paul Connors (Avalon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honour the life and legacy of a remarkable community leader, Mrs. Sandra Baggs. Sandra dedicated her life serving the people of Conception Bay South. She was a devoted mother, a passionate volunteer and a respected leader, whose contributions left a lasting mark on her community.

After the loss of her husband, George, at a very young age, Sandra showed amazing strength and raised three young sons while continuing to give back to the community she loved. For many years, she managed the stadium in Conception Bay South, making it a welcoming home for generations of athletes and families. She later served three terms on council, including two terms as deputy mayor, becoming a trailblazer for women in municipal leadership in our community.

Sandra will be deeply missed by her three sons, Derick, Scott and Roy; her grandchildren; extended family and friends; and all those whose lives she has touched. May her memory continue to inspire and serve our communities with the same generosity and compassion that defined Sandra Baggs.

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THE BUDGET

Leslyn Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this budget was an opportunity for the government to show Canadians that it understands the financial pressures that families are facing. Instead, it added nearly $765 billion in borrowing over five years. The Parliamentary Budget Officer says that the interest on the federal debt is “the fastest-growing expense”. Soon, Canadians will be paying more to service the debt than they spend on health care transfers.

These numbers hit home, because families are struggling with groceries and housing. In rural communities, like Dunnville, food bank demand has increased by over 80% in the last six years. Entire families are reliant on food banks.

Canadians deserve a government that is going to respect their tax dollars, and I am not going to stop fighting for financial accountability and affordability in Canada.

[*Translation*]

L'ASSOMPTION CHRISTMAS MARKET

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, 18 years ago, Agathe Sauriol and Émile Laporte had a dream: to bring the magic of the large European Christmas markets to L'Assomption. From this idea was born what I consider the most wonderful Christmas market in Quebec. Since its launch in 2009, this magical event has welcomed over one million visitors and evolved into a genuine Lanaudière tradition.

Beyond the lights and wood cabins, the market is a magnificent showcase for our craftspeople, creators and local producers. It is also a space for connection and discovery, where the magic of the holiday season combines with the richness of our culture. Choosing to “buy Quebec” also means supporting our know-how, our economy and our identity.

As Agathe and Émile get ready to pass on the torch, I want to thank them and acknowledge their 18 years of passion, determination and dedication. They created a lot more than a Christmas market. They have given the entire community a proud tradition.

I thank Agathe and Émile, and wish long life to L'Assomption Christmas market.

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● (1410)

[*English*]

SEBASTIAN NATHAN

Juanita Nathan (Pickering—Brooklin, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I rise, with a heavy heart, to pay tribute to my beloved brother, Sebastian Nathan, affectionately known as Vasi, who sadly passed away on October 23.

Vasi was known for his warmth and kindness. He touched the lives of everyone who knew him, especially his two sons, Austin and Zane, who meant the world to him. However, Vasi fought a courageous battle with mental health due to alcohol addiction. He sought help through rehab, showing real strength facing his struggles.

This Movember, as we shine a light on men's mental health, I share Vasi's story with one hope: that no other family endures this heartbreak. To any man silently struggling, please know they are not alone. Reaching out for help is an act of bravery and not a weakness.

Rest in peace, my little brother.

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THE BUDGET

Colin Reynolds (Elmwood—Transcona, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians expect the government to make life more affordable and put an end to wasteful spending. Instead, this costly Liberal credit card budget has added $765 billion in new debt and an increase of $92.3 billion since the spring economic statement. The Liberals have said they want a target of 100,000 new Red Seal workers by 2031. Despite adding $5.5 billion to team Canada strong, they provided no update on whether they are on track to meet their own targets. As a tradesperson myself, I am concerned that there will be 100,000 potentially new trained tradespeople without jobs or work to go to.

The government continues to add to the burden of Canadians with more spending and more debt without providing a plan or even a clear explanation of where taxpayer money is going. Families are losing jobs, struggling to keep food on the table and barely making ends meet. The government's priority should be to address these challenges and save money for Canadians.

* * *

JANE AND FINCH NEIGHBOURHOOD

Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an inspiring group of young filmmakers from Fanshawe College, whose work shines a positive light on the people and communities of Humber River—Black Creek. Through their documentary *More Than Its Name*, these students have chosen to tell the story of the people of Jane and Finch through the voices of the people who live, work and lead there every day. Their film reminds us that, behind every assumption, lies a story waiting to be heard. By highlighting lived experiences, community leadership and the rich diversity that defines our neighbourhood, they challenge the stereotypes and showcase the true spirit of our Jane and Finch neighbourhood.

I invite all members of the House to join me in congratulating filmmakers Alia Ostella Meneses, Lily Aziz, Trinity Skinner and Gabrielle Truchon for their dedication and creativity, and in wishing them every continued success.

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HOUSING

Jonathan Rowe (The Eastern Peninsulas, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government keeps making promises, but their promises are not matching reality. The promise was that they would build more houses than we have since the Second World War, but the reality is that the CMHC just reported a 2% decline in housing starts. Year-to-date housing starts in Nova Scotia are down 34%. Despite having almost doubled the population, we now build fewer homes than we did in 1972.

From 2020 to 2025, mass immigration numbers grew our population by 3.5 million people. Where are Canadians and these hard-working, ambitious newcomers going to live? The Liberals promised to build 500,000 homes. The reality is that they are only building half of that.

People cannot raise a family based on a Liberal promise. Instead of having a top-down bureaucratic approach, Conservatives want to reduce red tape to build more houses. Conservatives want an immigration policy that is tied to housing, health care and jobs, so our country can have the houses and services needed for the people who call this place home.

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[*Translation*]

COLLÈGE LA CITÉ

Bienvenu-Olivier Ntumba (Mont-Saint-Bruno—L'Acadie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to draw the attention of the House to the presence on Parliament Hill today of students from Collège La Cité.

I am very proud to welcome them, as I attended that school myself. It is where I went to college, and I have fond memories of my time there. It was where I was first elected, beginning my journey in politics. It was a turning point that sparked my commitment to civic engagement. Collège La Cité is essential to the francophonie, and it makes a significant contribution to our solidarity.

I want to thank the entire team, the professors, the students and everyone else for being with us today.

I am proud of them and of the school.

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● (1415)

[*English*]

THE BUDGET

Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC): Mr. Speaker, according to the Parliamentary Budget Officer and her most recent report on budget 2026, the government is hooked on spending. When a government gets addicted to spending, it is Canadians who suffer the consequences, and Canadians are about to get the bill.

Over the next five years, the Liberal government will add $765 billion to our national debt. That is $476 billion more than the deficits that it is admitting to. That nearly $500 billion is not tied to a single project, and Canadians want to know where the money is. The interest alone will be $85 billion annually, which is 26% more than is spent on the Canada health transfer. That is $2,000 per person every year, just in interest charges.

In housing, starts are down 4%. The promise to double homebuilding has quietly vanished, and the government is adding 200,000 more permanent residents than it did last year. The reality is that, as the Liberal government spends more and borrows more, it delivers less.

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CHILDHOOD CANCER

Anita Vandenbeld (Ottawa West—Nepean, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada needs a national childhood cancer strategy. Children's cancers are biologically different from those of adults, yet inadequate research leaves children dependent on older, less effective treatments. About 1,500 children and adolescents are diagnosed annually, and one in five will die. Dedicated pediatric research is essential.

Eight years ago, I met Helena Kirk, an 11-year-old cancer survivor. Her advocacy helped secure federal funding, leading to a new network called ACCESS.

ACCESS has supported 66 research projects and five clinical trials, but its five-year funding is soon expiring. Meanwhile, children with cancer, like eight-year-old Lily in my riding, are still fighting to get their medication covered because it is not indicated for children. That is why we need sustained research funding and a national strategy, so we can build healthier futures for children like Lily.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[*English*]

HOUSING

Jasraj Hallan (Calgary East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are like the Toronto Maple Leafs. They spend more, deliver nothing and repeat the same thing every single year, and the PBO has confirmed this. She said spending is up, borrowing is up and housing results are down. The Liberals quadrupled the spending on housing over the last 10 years just to have housing starts go down. Home affordability in Vancouver was the second worst in the entire world when the housing minister was the mayor.

If Vancouver could not afford this guy as the mayor, why should the rest of Canada have to?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are totally focused on scaling up housing across the country and on affordability. The Conservatives seem to have missed that, for 25 months in a row, rents have come down across Canada. It is a big achievement for us. That is thanks to an unprecedented boom in rental housing. That is thanks to programs that the government is implementing right now to get more housing built.

We will do that in partnership with provinces and cities, unlike Conservative governments of the past that preyed upon local governments and did not support building affordable housing. We are focused on those partnerships. We are focused on building.

Jasraj Hallan (Calgary East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is hard to believe this guy when he promised people in Vancouver he would end homelessness by—

The Speaker: I think it takes something away from our debates when we do not refer to our colleagues as hon. members.

The hon. member may continue.

Jasraj Hallan: Mr. Speaker, it is hard to believe the minister when he had promised the people of Vancouver that he would end homelessness by 2015. How is that going?

The Prime Minister will do the impossible. He will outspend Trudeau in just six years. By 2030, every Canadian will have to pay $2,000 more in debt interest alone. The Prime Minister is taking money out of hard-working Canadians' pockets and giving it to his banker and bondholder buddies. Bay Street gets the interest; Main Street gets the bill.

Why are the interests of the Prime Minister's banker buddies more important than those of Canadians?

● (1420)

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, to go back in time to the years when I was a mayor trying to solve homelessness in my city, that was when there was a Conservative prime minister who never lifted a finger to end homelessness in this country. It made it very difficult for cities, provinces and territories across the country to do anything.

Homelessness has scaled up ever since that time. We have a Prime Minister who is taking a stand for the most vulnerable Canadians. The government is focused on ending homelessness. We are working with provinces, territories, cities and indigenous partners. We are going to achieve that goal, and we expect their support.

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FINANCE

Sandra Cobena (Newmarket—Aurora, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the rise of oil and gas prices handed the government an unexpected revenue windfall. The Parliamentary Budget Officer says that this year's deficit could have fallen to $44 billion, but instead, the Liberal government decided to spend 96% of this revenue, so the deficit is back up to $62 billion. Not only does this put additional upward pressure on inflation, but it is completely contradictory to the Prime Minister's promise to spend less.

Canadian families are forced to live within their means. Why does the Prime Minister refuse to do the same?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have enormous respect for my colleague, but let us talk about the facts. First of all, deficits are down. That is a fact. Secondly, if we look at direct program expenses, we are going from 8% to less than 2% in this country. In addition, we are going to balance the operating spending with revenues one year ahead of schedule.

Canada has the strongest fiscal position of the G7. We are going to build Canada strong. We are going to invest in our industries and our workers. Tonight, the Conservatives can show Canadians their support. Tonight, we are voting for the budget. We are bringing Canada forward.

Sandra Cobena (Newmarket—Aurora, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the budget is not balanced. The Liberals invented an accounting scheme to move expenses to investments, and then magically, the operating budget is balanced, but it is not, in fact, true.

Oxford Economics, Bank of Montreal and Scotiabank have all warned that the Liberal government's spending could further fuel inflation. Who pays the price when the Prime Minister continues to ignore these warnings? It is parents putting groceries back at the checkout and families struggling to pay their mortgages.

When is the Prime Minister going to present a credible plan to balance the budget, or does he also believe that the budget will balance itself?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let us hear from a voice of reason. Let me quote the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. I am sure my colleague would love that. It said this is a radical shift in that the government is now focusing on "the kind of business investment and reinvestment Canada needs."

That is how Canadians see this budget. It is a budget that is bringing this country forward, a budget that is presenting a mega deduction for productivity in this country, tackling affordability and building on our sovereignty. We are going to be masters of our destiny. We are going to build Canada strong.

[*Translation*]

Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals pompously titled their budget "Masters of our destiny".

However, the Parliamentary Budget Officer just reminded them who the real master is. It is the debt.

New borrowing over the next five years will total nearly $750 billion, and new operating expenditures will be $331 billion. The Liberal Prime Minister claims to be master of his destiny, but even the big banker cannot get his spending under control.

While families are tightening their belts to put food on the table, the Liberals continue to live on credit.

Are they not ashamed to call it "Masters of our destiny" when the real master here is the debt?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I know my colleague would like to hear what someone from Quebec City has to say.

That someone is Bruno Marchand, the mayor of Quebec City. He had this to say about the budget: "Today's federal budget combines bold ambition with unprecedented investments." That is the mayor of Quebec City's take on it. That should give them something to think about.

In this budget, we are investing in our future. We are helping Canadians with affordability. We are defending our economic and cultural sovereignty. We are making record investments in culture.

This evening, we will see whether the Conservatives are prepared to support the budget.

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STEEL AND ALUMINUM INDUSTRY

Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this budget will surely go down in history as a budget that put Canada's back against the wall because of the sheer size of the debt. That is the finance minister's historic budget.

Let us talk about something else. The Prime Minister was proud to announce that he made concessions to China at the expense of the Canadian steel and aluminum industries. The United Steelworkers says these concessions will weaken protections for workers. Several steel producers are criticizing this agreement.

Why is the Prime Minister opening up our market to Chinese products when he cannot even protect our jobs here in Canada?

● (1425)

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have no lessons to learn from those Conservatives. My colleague, the industry minister, and the Minister responsible for Canada-U.S. Trade, Intergovernmental Affairs and One Canadian Economy have always been there to defend our workers, our industries, our steel sector, our automotive sector, and our aluminum sector.

We have invested $44 billion to help our businesses and workers. Together, we will build Canada strong.

I hope the Conservatives will rise tonight and vote in favour of the budget. That way, we can help our workers across the country.

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THE ENVIRONMENT

Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, as we saw last week at the Conference of the Parties, or COP, Canada is a rogue state when it comes to the environment. That is why the Bloc Québécois just introduced a bill prohibiting climate change backtracking. The bill would force the government to subject any regulatory changes affecting the environment to an independent review and, most importantly, a vote in the House.

Will the government work with us to end environmental backtracking?

Hon. Julie Dabrusin (Minister of the Environment, Climate Change and Nature, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are ahead of the curve. We talk about how we have strengthened our methane commitments and regulations. Methane is an extremely important super pollutant. When we were at COP, people recognized our leadership on methane reduction. As for electricity, our grid is among the cleanest in the world. In this budget, we are investing to double the size of that grid.

That is what we need to do to get to net zero. We are getting the job done.

Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I cannot believe the government actually believes its own rhetoric.

Canada has never met its greenhouse gas reduction targets, but every government since the 1990s has been saying that everything is fine.

Let us put an end to decades of sheer hypocrisy. The Bloc Québécois's Bill C-296 would require the government to be transparent when its actions affect the climate. If it refuses to do so, Canada would need to explain itself to Quebeckers.

Instead of standing up for the right to do worse, and in order to do better and better instead of worse and worse, can Quebec count on the government's support?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, can the government count on the support of the Bloc Québécois to reduce greenhouse gases in Quebec by electrifying transportation with a high-speed train that would take people from Quebec City to Trois-Rivières, to Laval, to Montreal and to Gatineau? Will the Bloc Québécois support us in this major national project to electrify our railways, electrify our transportation and thereby build Quebec's economy?

Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have never understood that fixing one mistake with another does not work.

Bill C-296 will not prevent Canada from passing laws, but it will prevent it from doing so behind closed doors when those decisions affect the environment. Indeed, it is the people of Quebec who bear the brunt of these decisions. Forest fires, floods, the expansion of flood zones, tornadoes, extreme weather, and the rising cost of living are examples of this.

This legislation requires the government not to back down on climate issues, but rather to move forward. To refuse it is to reserve the right to keep moving backward.

How can the government be against this legislation?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me tell the leader of the Bloc Québécois about the energy study conducted by the Trottier Family Foundation. Electrification has the potential to generate significant gains for Quebec's economy. If the supply of electricity increases in step with demand, without any rate shocks, the electrification of Quebec's economy is a win-win scenario. When households, businesses and government agencies use more electricity, produced in Quebec, it stimulates economic activity.

The Bloc Québécois should rise and vote in favour of the Alto project.

[*English*]

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Costas Menegakis (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have lost total control of immigration to our country. Now they are planning a staggering 662,000 new permanent residents in the coming year. That is an all-time Canadian record at a time when young Canadians are locked out of the housing market, youth unemployment is surging and hospital wait times, listen to this, are nearly 30.7 weeks long.

Why is the Prime Minister hiding a record 662,000 permanent residents in the budget instead of fixing the problems he created in housing, in jobs and in health care?

● (1430)

Hon. Lena Metlege Diab (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am proud of our immigration plan, which keeps our levels stable, predictable, sustainable and growing our economy. All the other side wants to do is oppose. The Conservatives want to oppose giving provinces more freedom to retain valuable workers. They want to oppose doing the right thing for Ukrainians and Hong Kongers. They want to oppose welcoming doctors and top researchers. They want to oppose giving rural communities the flexibility to thrive. Immigration policy is economic policy, and the other side does not get it.

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Statistics Canada data shows that young men aged 18 to 34 now vastly outnumber young women in 40 of Canada's 41 biggest cities. In Windsor, it is 127 men for every 100 women. That ratio is worse than China's gender imbalance after their one-child policy. Meanwhile, youth unemployment is at record high levels. Immigration data confirms how it happened. The Prime Minister has invited far more young men than women to Canada.

Can the immigration minister explain why she has allowed this massive gender imbalance to happen?

Hon. Lena Metlege Diab (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my department looks at gender balance analysis. Let me tell the House this: Our immigration levels plan is predictable, sustainable, balanced and right for Canada. If the member opposite does not want to believe me, and I know she does not, why does she not believe the business council of her own province, which said it "welcomes the Government of Canada continued focus on strengthening Canada's economy...including through economic immigration and reforms to better align...programs with local labour market [needs]."

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, to recap, the Prime Minister has just announced the biggest permanent resident increase in Canadian history. Statistics Canada data shows his immigration selection process has already created a massive gender imbalance among youth. Youth unemployment is at record highs, and today The Globe and Mail warned, "it can be a toxic combination when those thousands of 'extra', unattached men also struggle to find well-paying jobs".

What is the plan to address this gender imbalance and unemployment rate among youth in Canada?

Hon. Lena Metlege Diab (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our budget has a number of initiatives for young Canadians. Young Canadians and all Canadians are the first—

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I would like to call the member for Vernon—Lake Country—Monashee to order, please. We can hear him. I can hear him from all the way over here.

The hon. minister may begin from the beginning.

Hon. Lena Metlege Diab: Mr. Speaker, our budget 2026 has a number of initiatives for young Canadians. We also have many initiatives for employment and all people who are Canadians in the country. Conservatives want Canadians to see record arrivals. We know that is not true. Let me tell the House what lawyer Rick Lamanna is saying. He says, "These people...have been here for quite a while". Daniel Bernhard of the Institute for Canadian Citizenship, says, "They're already housed. They're already working." RBC Economics is saying these will create no housing affordability risk from modest population growth.

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PUBLIC SAFETY

Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, under the Liberals, violent crime is up 55%, sexual assaults are up 76%, human trafficking is up 85% and extortion is up a colossal 330%.

We have TV ads from the Liberals telling us that we have never had it so good, and it is like the Liberals are buying their own spin. When will the Liberals stop buying their own spin, recognize there is a problem and keep Canadians safe at home?

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this government is taking action at a pace that has not been seen before with respect to the criminal justice system.

We have a number of pieces of legislation that have already been passed, including reforming bail and sentencing. We have invested with the RCMP, 1,000 new RCMP officers, as well as 1,000 CBSA officers. We will continue to ensure the safety and security of Canadians. I would just invite the member opposite to speak to the chief of the Toronto Police Service and to look at the numbers in Toronto, which demonstrate that our plan is actually working.

● (1435)

Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I believe the minister just said that they are taking action at a pace that has never been seen before. I think the pace is a bit slower than he might want to acknowledge, because we have never seen so much inaction from a government as we are under the Liberals.

Take sexual offences against children, up 121%, and offences related to child sexual abuse and exploitation material, up 195%. While the Prime Minister globe-trots, Canadian children at home are vulnerable. Will this government acknowledge the problem and take action now?

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when we do take action, for example, with Bill C-22, the party opposite slow-walks it.

The Canadian Centre for Child Protection spoke at the Senate this week, confirming the need for lawful access. If my friend opposite is serious about addressing crimes such as childhood sexual exploitation, he and his party would support the fast passage of Bill C-22.

Connie Cody (Cambridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, 911 is there for emergencies, but when that line gets cut, lives are at risk.

Bell Canada has already recorded 116 incidents of copper theft in Cambridge this year. Thieves are damaging fibre lines bundled with copper wire, cutting families and businesses off from 911, Internet and wireless services. This is not petty theft; it is a threat to public safety. Stolen copper does not just vanish; it is sold for cash.

When will the Liberal government go after the thieves, sellers and buyers who keep this crime paying?

Hon. Ruby Sahota (Secretary of State (Combatting Crime), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are on top of this issue. That is why we included the theft of copper in Bill C-14, which has passed and became law in this country on July 15.

We are seeing good results from the passage of many pieces of legislation, like our hate crime bill and the bail and sentencing reform bill. Police across the country are laying charges under these new pieces of legislation and combatting crime at the same time.

Kelly DeRidder (Kitchener Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the deflection in here today is absolutely unreal. The Liberals say, "Conservatives, Conservatives", but I think they forgot that they have a majority government.

Money laundering is not a victimless crime. It is the business model that keeps—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: The member may continue.

Kelly DeRidder: Mr. Speaker, money laundering is not a victimless crime. It is a business model that allows drug traffickers to turn human misery into profit, with $113 billion laundered through Canada annually. Meanwhile, FINTRAC cannot show any tangible outcomes.

Can the finance minister please stand and share how many dollars are taken away from criminals and how many—

The Speaker: The hon. Secretary of State for Combatting Crime.

Hon. Ruby Sahota (Secretary of State (Combatting Crime), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are not deflecting anything. We are tackling these issues head-on by creating the financial crimes agency and by making sure all the bills that we have passed address money laundering.

Actually, we put forward money laundering provisions in Bill C-2, a bill that the Conservatives would not allow to pass. Many of those initiatives that we have put forward have been delayed by the Conservative Party of Canada. It has been perplexing throughout this whole Parliament, because they have not been on the side of Canadians. We have been making sure that we implement laws that will protect—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères.

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[*Translation*]

THE ECONOMY

Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are using Bill C-39 to gaslight Canadians. They want people to think that they are giving themselves special powers to address the tariff crisis. On Tuesday, however, they rejected an amendment that would have limited these powers to five years, long after Donald Trump leaves office. That shows that these powers are permanent. They have nothing to do with the crisis. They are designed to circumvent environmental laws, limit workers' rights and violate the rights of indigenous peoples.

We are witnessing a historic shift toward federal authoritarianism. How can Quebec Liberals defend that?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Bill C-39 seeks to establish a favourable investment climate, particularly for renewable energy and grid electrification, through projects like Gull Island and Churchill Falls. The Bloc Québécois should support Bill C-39 to create certainty for investments that are creating training, employment and investment opportunities across the country.

● (1440)

Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals say that Bill C-39 is about building Canada. With this bill, they are demonstrating that building Canada means building oil projects that circumvent environmental impact assessments and will destroy nature. It means rolling back the right to strike to the way it used to be for factory workers a long time ago. It means sidelining indigenous people and steamrolling Parliament by rejecting all amendments from unions and civil society.

If building Canada means bringing the country back to 1850, is it not obvious why Quebeckers want no part of this?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as a member from Quebec, I can say that Quebeckers in my riding and across Quebec want opportunities and investments in the regions. They want investments in the electrification of transportation and in electrification in general. They want to build major projects and think big for Quebec. That is what the Quebeckers I speak with are telling me. The government intends to continue to build using the tools provided by Bill C-39.

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[*English*]

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, inflationary spending in the Liberal budget is driving up input costs and Canadian farmers are struggling. While farmers are struggling, the agriculture minister is lavishing more than $40 million on external consultants. In fact, over the last decade, he has lavished more than $500 million on Liberal consultants. At the same time, he is dismantling the very heart of Canadian agriculture, shutting down research centres across the country. The minister had a choice to give consultants more than $500 million or to keep these seven research centres operating for decades.

Why did he choose Liberal lobbyists over Canadian farmers?

Hon. Heath MacDonald (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadian farmers are at the forefront of everything that is happening around the world today. In our budget, we are doing intergenerational rollover for farmers. We are doing amendments to the Canadian Agricultural Loans Act. We are renewing the local food infrastructure fund.

Most importantly, which I have been told by many organizations across the country, the productivity mega deduction is so important to move agriculture forward. We will keep investing in agriculture.

John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when it mattered most, the agriculture minister decided to give his Liberal friends $500 million rather than fund agricultural research. The Liberals chose to give them another $40 million and cut almost 700 jobs in agricultural science and research. The Liberals chose to shut down seven research centres across the country. We are losing our best and brightest and decades of institutional knowledge are being lost.

Why did the minister close these research centres and fire frontline scientists? Was it just to ensure that his Liberal lobbyists got paid?

Hon. Heath MacDonald (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it has been known that we are doing as much research now as we have done in the past. We are doing research in every province in the country and we are going to continue to do research. We are doing more precise research. We have signed an MOU with Saskatchewan. We have been in talks with his home province. We have been in talks with Université Laval. We have been in talks with Guelph University. We are making changes. We are coming into a time when we need more research, not less. That is what we are going to do.

Dave Epp (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal budget excludes key sectors of our economy. Budget 2026 introduces the new capital gains exemption for up to $15 million for qualifying businesses through the Canada growth incentive and the much-touted productivity mega deduction. These incentives are largely excluding agriculture, fishing and forestry, and they are the backbones of our economy and our major GDP drivers.

Can the minister please explain why these sectors were excluded from these incentives despite their importance to Canada's food sovereignty, food security and our rural economy?

Hon. Heath MacDonald (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I suggest the hon. member read the budget, because the productivity mega tax deduction is directly an incentive for farmers, whether it is buying a combine, buying a sprayer or buying a tractor. I am not sure what he is talking about. We just invested $3.2 billion in the national food security strategy, the largest investment in agriculture and agri-food in our history.

We are moving agriculture forward, and we are diversifying our trade. We are going to keep on going, and we are not going to take any lessons from over there.

● (1445)

[*Translation*]

Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, media reports are saying that the Prime Minister is spending money like a psychopath. Canadians, however, never see a penny of that money, and especially not farmers. Last year alone, the Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food spent $40.5 million on outside consultants.

When will the Liberal government take some of these exorbitant amounts and use them to help Canadian farmers?

[*English*]

Hon. Heath MacDonald (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, again, I hope the hon. member has an opportunity to read the budget and really figure out what the benefits are to agriculture.

I remember that their platform in the last election did not have anything in it about agriculture. I think it is really important that we call a spade a spade in the House of Commons. If they want to learn more, and if I can get them briefing notes for the budget, I will do that.

[*Translation*]

Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, beyond the spending on agricultural consultants, last year alone the Liberal government spent $19 billion on outside consultants. The Parliamentary Budget Officer confirmed that the bill for the Alto high-speed rail project could skyrocket to $243 billion. While this Liberal government acts as though money has no value, farmers are being thrown scraps and face the prospect of having their land expropriated.

When will the Liberals start making real investments in Canadian agriculture?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to share with the member how passionate I am about Canadian agriculture. I love Canadian agriculture too. We will passionately support the agricultural community and show great sensitivity as we develop and build the high-speed train project. It is a 60-metre corridor that will cross Quebec and Ontario and provide transportation services to 40% of Canada's population. We will be there for the agricultural community.

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[*English*]

STEEL AND ALUMINUM INDUSTRY

John-Paul Danko (Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, President Trump's illegal and unnecessary tariffs target the livelihood of Canadian steelworkers and their families. When Cleveland-Cliffs, the American owners of Stelco, announced its planned layoffs, hundreds of hard-working union steelworkers were suddenly forced out of a job.

Can the Minister of Industry share the actions she took to hold Cleveland-Cliffs accountable and to get all Stelco steelworkers back on the job?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas for his effort in this fight.

Working with Marty Warren, Ron Wells and the union, we held the company accountable, and it brought workers back. This is a win for 500 workers, for Hamilton and for Canada.

When Canadian jobs are on the line, we will not back down. This is a country of the rule of law, and Canada is the best place to invest with the best workers, but when one has a contract with the government, one needs to follow it.

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PUBLIC SAFETY

Adam Chambers (Simcoe North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it has been a year since the Liberal government gave the Minister of Industry the power to order the removal of Huawei and ZTE technology from Canada's telecommunications network. In that year, the minister has, again, failed to act, and whistle-blowers now say she has no intention of acting.

Will that order be made, or is the minister putting the national security and sovereignty of Canadians at risk to appease Beijing in trade talks?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when it comes to our national security, it is always our utmost priority, and we will make sure that is the case in every single case.

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AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Adam Chambers (Simcoe North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am not sure I heard when that order would be made, but let us move on.

In the deal that we now know between Stellantis and Roshel, it has been reported that it was supposed to be a Chinese electric vehicle maker sharing space with the Canadian defence contractor. This is the deal that the government has known about for some time, including the Prime Minister's Office, the Minister of Defence and four Liberal MPs. Have they forgotten about the espionage that brought down Nortel, or does the minister really want a Canadian defence manufacturer to share space with a Chinese company that answers to Beijing?

● (1450)

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are really into conspiracy theory reality right now.

I would like to say to my colleague that, no, that was never the case. That was never on the table. There was always one company the government was negotiating with. That was Stellantis. It needs to protect the jobs. If not, we will go after the money, hundreds of millions of dollars to the government. I have already sent a letter of demand and a notice of default. It now has 25 days to come back to us.

Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals gave hundreds of millions of dollars to Stellantis. Ten months ago, it defaulted on the agreement. The minister said she was going to sue. She did nothing. In July, four Liberal MPs toured the plant with Roshel. It told them it was going to buy the plant from Stellantis. She did nothing. In September, Roshel announced it was going to buy the plant. She did nothing.

She lost the money. She lost the jobs. Why does she still have her job?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my colleague likes to engage in theatrics, but it does not really work.

[*English*]

The reality is there is a fact my colleague never alludes to, which is the American tariffs that are having an impact on American automakers working also, of course, in Canada, and all our auto workers. Meanwhile, while they are not alluding to the trade war, which is affecting Stellantis, which has affected jobs in Brampton, we will continue to help and work with the Ontario government and Unifor, of course, to make sure we can protect the jobs.

We will be meeting on Friday.

Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am focused on her failure to keep her own word. She said she was going to sue. She has not sued. Guess what. Stellantis does not believe she is going to sue. The Stellantis workers do not believe she is going to sue. There is probably not a single person in this entire chamber who believes she is going to sue. In fact, if she was going to sue, she would have done it already.

Why does she not just step aside? They can appoint another Trudeau-era minister who can stand in this House, pretend to be outraged that the plant is sold and pretend they are going to sue.

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I know my colleague seems to love coming back with his oldies and classics, but that is exactly what he was saying on Stelco. Do members know what is going on right now? Five hundred workers are back and will be able to have a job before Christmas. That is first.

Second, when it comes to facts, my colleague also mentioned that the contracts the Government of Canada has with Stellantis have clear protections and clear job guarantees. Go back to your CTV interview. Then come back and ask me questions.

The Speaker: I have not given any interviews to CTV in a long time.

The hon. member for Barrie South—Innisfil.

John Brassard (Barrie South—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for all the public chest-puffing, condemnation, indignation and denial of the news that Stellantis was selling its plant to Roshel, the plan to betray Stellantis workers and their families has been known for months by the Prime Minister, the industry minister and Liberal MPs. On July 14, four Liberal MPs from Brampton met with Roshel and were told of the plan to buy the plant. They knew it was happening, the Prime Minister knew, so did the industry minister, yet they still went months without blocking it.

Why did they deceive the workers and families until the point they got caught?

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, it is clear, as the Minister of Industry has said, that Stellantis is in default and it either hires the workers or we get our money back. Why? Because we stand by our workers. What is the proof? Whether it is federal economic development, where we have over 540 different projects, many in that member's riding, to support industries or the 500 workers at Stelco who are back at work, we stand with our workers.

John Brassard (Barrie South—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, they say they stand with those workers, but those workers have not been at work since 2023.

For months, the Prime Minister did nothing to stop the sale of the plant. The tough act and threats toward Stellantis only started after it became public that, behind the scenes, they were quietly endorsing a plan that would leave thousands of Brampton Stellantis workers and their families without jobs.

I have two questions: How many jobs will be saved with the sale? How many billions of Canadian tax dollars does the government expect to shell out this time for what has become a pattern of failed Liberal investments?

● (1455)

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, it would be wonderful if the opposition would just once condemn the tariffs that are hurting Canadian workers, just once speak out against the tariffs and fight for workers. Whether we are fighting for workers in the case of Stellantis is clear. We stand with the workers. Stellantis will be in default. If it does not pay back the money, Stellantis is in default. It will be sued. We are standing with workers. Whether it is the steelworkers at Stelco, the tool and die makers or the auto parts manufacturers, we will always stand with our workers. We would love the opposition to do—

[*Translation*]

The Speaker: The hon. member for Beauce.

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PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Jason Groleau (Beauce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals awarded a $2.3-billion contract to Telesat without a competitive bidding process. I just want to remind the house that the CEO of Telesat is a close friend of the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister asked to recuse himself from the file after awarding the contract. Canadians have a right to know what happened before that.

Before awarding the contract, did the Prime Minister discuss the file with a minister, a member of his staff or a senior official, yes or no?

That is illegal.

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada has the strictest ethical standards in the world, and every member of the House, including the Prime Minister, adheres to them rigorously.

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AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Jason Groleau (Beauce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there is something fishy about the Stellantis affair.

The Liberal government owes Brampton workers full transparency regarding the Stellantis deal, which has cost thousands of jobs. On Tuesday, at the Standing Committee on Industry and Technology, Conservatives tabled a very reasonable motion calling on the Minister of Industry to appear before the committee for two hours within the next 14 days to explain herself.

My question for the Minister for Industry is very simple. Will she agree to talk to us, yes or no?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Industry has been travelling across the country, including throughout southern Ontario. We recently secured a major win for steel workers at Stelco, where all employees will be returning to work. When it comes to Stellantis and our automotive industry, there is no better ally in this country than the Minister of Industry. She will stand up for jobs in the auto sector and hold that company to account to ensure it respects and honours its commitments to the workers of Brampton.

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[*English*]

GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, British Columbians are concerned that the government's priorities are backward. The Liberals can find $560 million for a rainforest fund in Brazil, yet five years after the most costly natural disaster in all of Canada, my community and many others are still waiting for flood protection infrastructure they were promised.

Why is the government choosing foreign projects over protecting Canadian families, farms and our national supply chains, which are essential to our national interests and the government's own export objectives?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while these people are against working with forests—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Speaker, while the members opposite are against protecting forests around the world, I am going to give them an opportunity to be for something. This government is putting forward the first-ever national forestry strategy, something that would help that member's province: $6.5 billion for the forestry industry. I sure hope they will vote for the budget.

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INFRASTRUCTURE

Philip Earle (Labrador, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in the north, vast distance is a daily reality. From the Mackenzie Valley in the Northwest Territories to Labrador, highways connect remote northern communities, provide access to essential services, support indigenous people and open new opportunities for economic growth. Budget 2026 makes important investments in Canada's north.

Can the member of Parliament for the Northwest Territories and the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations tell this House how budget 2026 will help critical developments in northern transportation infrastructure?

Hon. Rebecca Alty (Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for decades, communities across the Northwest Territories have called for an all-season highway. Budget 2026 commits $3 billion to build the Mackenzie Valley highway. From Wrigley to Inuvik, the road will connect communities, people and economic development.

Just like the late Cece McCauley said, let us build the dang highway.

* * *

● (1500)

THE ENVIRONMENT

Steven Bonk (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, just a few years ago, Global Witness reported that Brookfield, led by the Prime Minister, tore down thousands of football fields' worth of tropical rainforest. Now the Prime Minister is writing a half-billion-dollar cheque to the Brazilian government to protect the rainforest, but from what, himself?

Will the Prime Minister admit that if he had not spent a decade tearing down the rainforest, Canadians would not be on the hook for half a billion dollars to protect the rainforests from people like the Prime Minister?

Hon. Randeep Sarai (Secretary of State (International Development), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while our government works to build a stronger and more affordable Canada, we are also taking action to safeguard our planet for future generations. Tropical forests are among the world's most vital ecosystems, and Canada's loan will help protect over one billion hectares of forests across more than 70 countries. We are joining Brazil, Norway, France, Germany, the U.K. and many other contributors in a global partnership that will use investment returns to finance long-term forest conservation.

GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

Steven Bonk (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as bad as that was, it gets so much worse. The same Global Witness report detailed horrifying slave labour abuses, for which Brookfield was charged, was convicted and had to pay huge fines. All of this is true, and this conviction happened while the Prime Minister was the vice-chair of Brookfield. This is a very expensive record of hypocrisy.

At a time when Canadians cannot afford to eat, why is the Prime Minister sending the money of good, hard-working Canadians to fix his own horrible legacy in Brazil?

Hon. Randeep Sarai (Secretary of State (International Development), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would have thought conservation was something Conservatives could get behind.

Tropical forests are among the world's most vital ecosystems, and protecting them delivers environmental benefits—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: We have to get the noise level down a bit.

The hon. secretary of state may continue.

Hon. Randeep Sarai: Mr. Speaker, tropical forests are among the world's most vital ecosystems, and protecting them delivers environmental benefits that extend around the world, including here in Canada. Our loan for this facility is part of a global partnership that will help protect over one billion hectares of tropical forests across more than 70 countries. Climate change does not stop at our national borders, and—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith.

Tamara Kronis (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister found half a billion dollars for tropical rainforests in Brazil, but budget constraints for cadets here in Canada are costing our kids life skills like maritime knowledge, first aid and orienteering. Switch the kids to baseball instead, one might say? Well, those kids will have to pay a brand new membership fee next season after federal cuts to Baseball Canada. The Prime Minister may say he speaks for the trees, but who is going to speak for our kids?

Why can the Liberals find hundreds of millions of dollars for a foreign fund while youth programs in Canada are being scaled back?

Sherry Romanado (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I know first-hand the importance of the cadet program. In fact, before I was elected, I was on the civilian committee of my local cadet corps, and I have even been advocating since I was elected to increase funding for the Canadian corps of cadets. Through the 2026 spring economic statement, our government announced $195 million over five years beginning in 2026-27 and $45 million annually thereafter.

If the members opposite would listen, they would hear me say we will continue to support the cadets.

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Jean Yip (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for thousands of Hong Kongers across the country, Canada represents hope. In 2021, when we opened the Hong Kong immigration pathways, we made a promise that those who had already given so much to Canada would be able to stay and continue contributing. However, strong demand for these pathways led to long wait times, turning hope to uncertainty.

Can the immigration minister please share how our new immigration levels plan will keep our word to Hong Kongers and benefit all Canadians?

● (1505)

Hon. Lena Metlege Diab (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her strong advocacy.

I am very proud of our immigration plan that will finalize all Hong Kong pathway applications in 2027. We met members from the community, heard their stories and saw first-hand what this commitment means to them and their families. These are highly skilled individuals, physicians, engineers and entrepreneurs, who are already contributing to our economy and strengthening our communities.

Our commitment recognizes their contributions and gives them the certainty to continue building the future. That is the right thing to do.

* * *

FINANCE

Kurt Holman (London—Fanshawe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister promised fiscal responsibility, but his own budget lays out massive deficits and a total cash gap of $765 billion. By then, the Liberals will spend more than $85 billion a year just on debt interest alone. That is $18 billion more that could have gone to health care. Canadians are already spending 47% of their income on taxes.

How much more does the Prime Minister expect Canadians to pay to cover his out-of-control spending?

Hon. Wayne Long (Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians see chaos on that side of the House. On this side of the House, it is confidence and competence. We have the strongest fiscal position in the G7, the best credit rating in the G7 and the best net debt to GDP in the G7. We are balancing our operational budget one year ahead of schedule. We are coming from a position of strength, which is something the Conservative leader knows nothing about, given his last week.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, two former Liberal environment ministers, Catherine McKenna and Steven Guilbeault, accused the government of misleading Canadians about meeting its Paris climate commitments. The Liberals are pushing through Bill C-39, weakening environmental safeguards and indigenous and labour rights to fast-track megaprojects for the corporate class. The once UN special envoy for climate action and finance is now fully in the pocket of corporate interests.

Why should Canadians believe the Prime Minister when even Newsweek landed him at number two, ahead of Donald Trump, for being a "climate heretic"?

Hon. Julie Dabrusin (Minister of the Environment, Climate Change and Nature, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me be clear. We absolutely support our Paris Agreement targets, and we are continuing to do the work. In fact, if we look at the budget that we released just recently, it has the investments we need to put in place the electricity grid, helping Canadians make the switch to electrification, to increase energy efficiency and to fund the innovation to help us to get to be fully net zero. We are doing the hard work, and I hope the members opposite will support us in it.

* * *

INDUSTRY

Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, that must be why Steven Guilbeault quit.

The Liberals are letting the Quebecor Telus takeover threaten jobs and raise phone bills. They are brokering secret backroom deals on the Stellantis plant, leaving workers betrayed. To top it off, they are giving away Canada's four largest airports to private operators to turn a profit at the expense of Canadians. Canadians pay more, workers lose jobs, and investors cash in. This is not public service. It is a banker mentality.

Is this why the Prime Minister will always let the corporate class cut in front of the line at the expense of everyday Canadians?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I fundamentally disagree with what my colleague just mentioned. Why? It is because affordability is the top priority of this government, and of course, we will always act in pursuit of the best interest of Canadians.

We take note of Quebecor's announcement, and this transaction will be subject to rigorous independent review by the Competition Bureau and by the CRTC should this transaction go ahead. This is in addition to the processes under the Telecommunications Act and the Radiocommunication Act.

[*Translation*]

The Speaker: That brings question period to an end for today.

The hon. member for Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford is rising on a point of order.

[*English*]

Brad Vis: Mr. Speaker, earlier in question period, you chastised the member for Calgary East for referring to another member of

Parliament as "this guy." When the Minister of Natural Resources, the member for Markham—Thornhill, used the exact same language in QP, you said nothing.

● (1510)

The Speaker: I gave him a look.

* * *

[*Translation*]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am sure you glanced his way but did not give him a look.

This Thursday, my colleague, the House leader, is currently at a location I cannot name. He may be right here with me.

Today's Thursday question is very important. Since I know that the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons cares deeply about facts and the truth, I would like to ask him whether, during next week and the upcoming proceedings, he will have the opportunity to tell his colleagues that, on November 26, 2024, the Leader of the Opposition described Donald Trump's proposed tariffs as unfair and unprovoked, that on February 1, 2025, he condemned the U.S. tariffs and called for a Canadian response, that on February 2, 2025, he publicly denounced the tariffs and proposed emergency economic measures, and that on March 4, 2025, he held a press conference opposing Donald Trump's 25% tariffs.

I dare to hope that, during next week's proceedings, there will be an opportunity each day for the House leader to rise and state, in fact, that the official opposition has repeatedly expressed its opposition to the U.S. tariffs.

With that, I will turn it over to the government's deputy House leader to tell us what is on the agenda for tomorrow and next week.

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am delighted that the member wants to go on the record in the House with the Conservatives' position on the tariffs foisted on Canadians for the past two years. Too bad it took them two years to arrive at that position, but we are pleased nonetheless.

This afternoon, they will get an opportunity to support Canadians by voting for a budget that supports Canadians and our small and medium-sized businesses across the country, helping them rise to the challenges of inflation and the tariffs imposed on us by our American neighbours.

The Budget

[*English*]

This afternoon, we will continue with the last day of budget debate. As all members know, the final vote will take place this evening.

Tomorrow, the House will debate Bill C-42, an act respecting certain measures related to affordability and housing, according to the terms of the motion adopted by unanimous consent yesterday.

[*Translation*]

On Monday and Wednesday next week, we are going to study Bill C-31, a second act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on November 4, 2025. Tuesday November 24 will be an allotted day, and on Thursday, we will begin debate at report stage and third reading of Bill C-39, the building Canada strong act.

I also want to inform the House that the Minister of Women and Gender Equality will deliver a ministerial statement on Wednesday, November 25, which marks the first day of the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

THE BUDGET

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF MINISTER OF FINANCE

The House resumed consideration of the motion that this House approve in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Andrew Lawton (Elgin—St. Thomas—London South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I spoke earlier in my remarks about the recklessness that is ingrained in the entirety of this budget, not just in the debt and deficits, which is money that has to be repaid one way or another and compounds over time, which adds more to future generations. I also acknowledged the recklessness of the immigration number: 654,000 new permanent residents in Canada in a single year, at a time when all Canadians and newcomers to this country are seeing the consequences of reckless Liberal immigration.

I cannot stress enough that the issue is not one for which the immigrants are to blame. I do not blame anyone for wanting to live in this wonderful, bountiful country. I blame the Liberal government, which holds the keys to the country, the government that has the right and obligation to set the number of immigrants who can come to this country.

Let us look at the consequences of this. I want to point out that I live in and represent a region that has among the highest unemployment rates in Canada right now. The London area, which includes London, St. Thomas and Elgin county, has frequently had the highest over the last year. A large part of that is because of the disruption to the manufacturing sector, another area where, in this budget, we do not see something that will solve the problem and truly protect jobs.

Youth unemployment has reached nearly 20%. It was 19.9% in the month of October. This is a rate that we can see as very heavily influenced by Liberal immigration policy, particularly when it comes to temporary residents. The proliferation of temporary foreign workers in the service sector is notably displacing jobs that would normally be taken by youth. Now, one in five youth in my region who are looking for work cannot find it, and that number does not take into consideration the number who have given up hope on looking for employment, which is a larger and larger share, as I learn when I speak to people, especially high school students.

I will bring this back to a common thread. The recklessness of the Liberal budget, reckless spending, reckless debt, reckless deficits and reckless immigration, all hurt ordinary Canadians, the very people we are sent here to represent and serve. When someone all of a sudden cannot find a job, and if they do, they are paying more in their taxes for a greater share of that to go toward paying down debt, they as an individual and we collectively as a country are only getting further and further behind.

We hear in question period time and time again that the Liberal government measures its success by the number of government programs it has and by the number of people using those programs. We should all be measuring success by the number of people who do not need to rely on government, especially for the basics, things such as groceries and food. We should not have a society in which government must be the answer to these fundamental questions.

I will be voting against this budget. We have put forward and will continue to put forward concrete suggestions on the way to fix the fiscal recklessness the Liberals have caused and the fiscal problems they are putting on this country.

I want to close by pointing out that it is not and should not be a question of politics; it is a question of safeguarding this country. A sovereign nation cannot be a nation that is indebted to itself and to others over and over. A sovereign nation is one that must stand on its own two feet in terms of security, liberty, prosperity and the economy. That is not what this budget does. This budget mortgages the future of the next generation, and we cannot stand for it.

● (1515)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to pick up on the issue of how the Conservatives try to paint a false narrative in regard to our immigration today, and on what he said about youth. He talked about youth unemployment, which is at 13.7%, and then he went on to imply that it is because of immigration. If we take a look back to 2012, when the member's party was in government, we see that the unemployment rate for youth was actually higher. At the time, they never said anything about immigration.

I am wondering if the member would reflect on his comments and see that there is no correlation between youth unemployment and immigration, because if there were, the same principle would have applied in 2012.

Andrew Lawton: Mr. Speaker, the member actually understated the severity of the problem. In my region, youth unemployment is actually 19.9%. Also, I did not say that immigration is the only cause. I said that it is a cause.

At the tail end of the Harper government, temporary residency in Canada was at 2.2%. It is, I believe, two and a half times that right now. Therefore, the immigration problem is a problem created by the Liberal government, and absolutely it is displacing jobs, but that is not the only reason for the youth unemployment rate. I can give the laundry list of other Liberal policies that are making it harder for businesses to get by, from taxes to regulation and inflation, which goes back to rising debt and deficit. The Liberals have caused this problem not only by immigration. They have screwed up a number of other things too.

● (1520)

[*Translation*]

Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Quebec has taken in far more than its share of asylum seekers, which has cost the Quebec government an estimated $733 million. However, the federal government has paid only $43 million in compensation. The Quebec government estimates that the federal government still owes Quebec nearly $700 million. However, there is nothing about that in the budget. I would like to hear my colleague's thoughts on that.

[*English*]

Andrew Lawton: Mr. Speaker, I am happy to look into the specific numbers, but I will say that the problem I was raising with the debt is one that affects Quebeckers and all Canadians because it forces the government to become larger and larger.

I will reiterate the point I raised earlier, which is that now, more than one-tenth of all federal expenditures is just paying interest on debt. That is money that cannot go towards anything of value or towards any service. It is just enriching the bankers and bondholders on the backs of Canadians.

Pat Kelly (Calgary Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the member can comment further on the role that debt is increasingly playing across government. We have a nominal deficit of, I think, $62.3 billion, which is double the amount that Chrystia Freeland resigned over, yet it grossly understates the scale of borrowing. The true fiscal borrowing requirement for this year alone is $149.5 billion, and over the budget horizon, it is going to be $765 billion. Can the member comment on the impacts this may have in years to come?

Andrew Lawton: Mr. Speaker, it is crazy. Just recently, there was an interest rate increase.

We do not know what the future holds, but we know that the creative accounting the Prime Minister and his finance minister are employing is meant to present and project an image that is fundamentally not true. My colleague from Calgary very eloquently laid out the issue, which is that we are always going to be dealing with the consequences of this spending. We are talking about three-quarters of a trillion dollars in new debt over the next five years. Nobody can say that this will not have consequences that will last for generations.

The Budget

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, how can the member say what he says about the debt? Canada has the lowest net debt of the G7 countries, and we are also one of two countries in the G7 that have the AAA credit rating. Seriously, how can he say that Canada is any worse than the other G7 countries?

Andrew Lawton: Mr. Speaker, it would take a lot more time to answer that properly.

First, I do not care about benchmarking to some countries around the world when we can look at Canadian standards, Canadian costs, Canadian taxes and Canadian regulations, all of which are driving businesses out, and the government is not providing a plan to fix that.

[*Translation*]

Daniel Gobeil (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by saying that I will be sharing my time with the member for South Shore—St. Margarets.

Budget 2026 was tabled in the House last Thursday. It presents a clear vision and concrete investments to respond to today's realities and to prepare for the future of our communities and our economy. Our strategy is based on a realistic assessment of these challenges, but above all, it is based on unshakeable confidence in our ability to chart our own course. That is why we are taking concrete action to be masters of our own destiny.

Today I would like to highlight some key investments that directly affect our daily lives and, of course, my riding. The first thing I would like to highlight is the one issue I heard the most about during the election campaign, and that is the cost of living and affordability for families. Budget 2026 commits nearly $22 billion over five years to new affordability measures, building on $100 billion in national benefits already offered to Canadians every year.

Families are under significant pressure, particularly because of the rising cost of groceries and other essential services. That is why, starting in 2027, more than 12 million Canadians will see their Canada groceries and essentials benefit increase by 50%. A family of four could receive up to $2,570 as a result of this increase.

In addition to improving affordability, this budget takes meaningful steps to tackle food prices by strengthening Canada's food security. It includes a $3.2-billion investment in the national food security strategy to boost Canadian production, support food processors and stimulate competition among independent grocers.

One initiative that I am particularly pleased to see will support the year-round production of fruits and vegetables. Backed by a $750-million investment in greenhouses and vertical farming, this measure will help attract investment across Canada.

Through the affordable housing fund, we are taking action to build the homes Canadians need with a $44.7-billion investment. We are laying the groundwork to end homelessness. This is exceptionally ambitious. It is important to take care of the people around us.

We are increasing investments through Build Canada Homes to accelerate residential construction, and we are modernizing the sector by establishing common standards. We hear a lot about affordability, particularly when it comes to grocery prices, but housing affordability is also very important. That is why our government continues to invest in this area.

Among the many measures the government is proposing is the build communities strong fund, which will support 42,000 jobs a year over the next decade. It is important to invest in infrastructure, as well as in trained and skilled workers.

One measure that will have an impact on our children and grandchildren is the removal of the GST on newly built homes, saving buyers up to $50,000. Once again, this is an excellent measure that resonates with younger generations.

I want to highlight another important aspect for a northern region like mine, and that is winter heating. We are investing $2 billion to retrofit one million homes through the national heat pump rebate program. Up to 820,000 households will reduce their energy bills by reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This is still a good measure for the pocketbooks of consumers and voters, and it is clearly a good measure for the environment and for energy consumption.

Prosperity is another important element. For our regions to prosper in the long term, we need to invest in our businesses, our manufacturers and, of course, our small and medium-sized businesses. These businesses need to be able to invest, innovate and compete with the best in the world. That is why we launched Canada's investment supercycle, backed by $500 billion in commitments and mobilized and private sector investments to give us the key tools we need to invest in Canada.

● (1525)

We have implemented unprecedented tax measures for businesses of all sizes. Thanks to the new productivity mega deduction, in effect since September 15, 2026, businesses can now immediately deduct the full cost of the vast majority of their numerous capital investments. This may include investments by large companies, but farmers can also benefit from accelerated depreciation for combine harvesters and various types of farm equipment, as can processors of all sizes and small and medium-sized businesses across various industries, which are present in every region. This measure truly strikes at the heart of our regional economy.

In Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean, we understand the importance of natural resources, particularly hydroelectric power. The historic investments to double the supply of renewable energy under the national electricity strategy is very good news. An additional $2.3 billion is being allocated to the critical minerals strategy, of course.

I cannot talk about major economic sectors without talking about the forestry sector. Once again, our government has listened to our businesses. It is important to invest in our businesses and in our economy, which we are doing through our $6.5-billion forest sector transformation strategy. It is direct support for a key sector that employs 200,000 Canadians, building on $2.9 billion in support announced since August 2025 to strengthen our competitiveness, modernize our facilities and expand our markets.

In my riding, forests are not just about numbers. We are talking about entire families, forestry workers, truckers, carriers, operators and factory workers. We are talking about the face of the rural municipalities of Chicoutimi—Le Fjord. It is important to look after the health of our industries. In order to cope with the new tariffs, we need to diversify the economy, and we will continue to innovate and adopt new technologies.

Another aspect I was able to highlight in my riding was the importance of investing in our communities. In a region like mine, ice rinks and community centres are a big part of any community. They are wonderful places to gather and spend time with family or friends. They are part of our regional history and identity, part of what makes our regions so vibrant. An arena is not just a building. It is a place where volunteers get involved and where parents and grandparents gather every week. I am very proud of the new $1.5-billion sports infrastructure program that will provide $750 million for ice rinks and $750 million for community recreation facilities. These are some of the measures that we are extremely proud of.

I briefly touched on what this budget means for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord. I mentioned all the investments to combat homelessness. I also talked about everything that is being done for culture, including a $4-billion investment that is really important for people in my riding because it represents meaningful recognition of both Quebec culture and Canadian culture.

A strong and united Canada starts here. It starts with our regions and the people who take care of our communities. At the end of the day, building a strong economy means supporting our workers, our industries, our families, our consumers and our constituents. It also means helping to diversify our economy.

That brings me to the end of my speech, but I would like to say that I am very proud of the budget presented by the Government of Canada. Being masters of our destiny means following through on everything we put forward last week.

● (1530)

Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois had called for the health transfer escalator to be set at 6%, yet this budget budget contains no such commitment. In fact, starting in 2028, the increase in transfers would will drop from 5% to 3%. Quebec's health care system simply cannot absorb such cuts.

Does my colleague believe that the Liberal government will eventually commit to restoring the health transfer escalator to at least 5%? Ideally, it would be 6% by 2028.

Daniel Gobeil: Mr. Speaker, I also noted the commitment in the budget to maintain a 5% escalator through 2027-28. I would also point out that health transfers stood at $36 billion in 2016-17. In 2026-27, they will amount to $57.4 billion, and by 2030-31 they are projected to reach $67.7 billion. That represents an 89% increase in health transfers over the past 10 years. Those are significant amounts. Beyond the 3% floor, there is also the escalator tied to Canada's consumer price index, or CPI, which could result in a higher increase.

● (1535)

Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I listened to my new colleague's speech and would like to welcome him to the House of Commons.

That said, I heard something in his remarks suggesting that he supports the expansion of Canada's debt. We are not just talking about debt. We are talking about borrowing $765 billion from foreign banks over the next four and a half years, yet he seems to support that because his riding will get skating rink.

Did I hear that right?

Daniel Gobeil: Mr. Speaker, the budget is a package of tax measures, investment measures and support measures. It does indeed contain measures that will allow us to continue investing in people, communities and organizations while improving affordability. It is a combination of decisions designed to ensure the sound management of the country's finances.

Louis Villeneuve (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my colleague has a lot of experience in agriculture, so I would like to ask him about taxation. Agriculture is a major industry in Brome—Missisquoi, and many farmers are beginning to think about retirement. The taxation of farms is always an issue when it comes to transferring farms.

Can my colleague tell me how the changes announced in budget 2026 will help our farmers in this regard?

Daniel Gobeil: Mr. Speaker, indeed, my colleague from Brome—Missisquoi has a keen eye. We also recognize the importance of the capital gains exemption in intergenerational transfers for the people of Chicoutimi—Le Fjord. The agricultural sector has long been calling for these measures. As we know, this exemption was previously available to the children of the farm operator and his or her spouse, as well as to grandchildren. In the new budget, we are now extending this same exemption to nephews, nieces, grandnephews and grandnieces.

Clearly, farms are becoming increasingly important. More and more families are making their living on our farms in rural areas. It is important to recognize this, to be flexible, and to adopt tax measures that will truly meet the needs of the agricultural sector.

Given the current rise in economic indicators, these decisions are important.

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MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

The Deputy Speaker: It is my duty to inform the House that a message has been received from the Senate informing this House that the Senate has passed the following bill: Bill C-10, An Act respecting the Commissioner for Modern Treaty Implementation.

* * *

[*English*]

THE BUDGET

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF MINISTER OF FINANCE

The House resumed consideration of the motion that this House approve in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Jessica Fancy (South Shore—St. Margarets, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will start my speech on the budget today by mentioning that the last Monday of this month is what is called dumping day back home in South Shore—St. Margarets, weather permitting. I am going to talk today about why days like this are so important to our budget.

For anyone who has not had the pleasure—

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: I have to interrupt the member.

The member for Mirabel has a point of order.

Jean-Denis Garon: Mr. Speaker, with all due respect for our colleague, I must report that there is a problem with the interpretation.

The Deputy Speaker: Apparently the interpretation is not working at all. I will keep talking until it is back up and running.

[*English*]

Oh, I'm sorry. It is the English version. Sometimes it is difficult to know which of the interpretations is not working, because I do not have the hearing piece.

It seems to be working perfectly now.

I invite the member for South Shore—St. Margarets to start from the beginning, so we can catch all of her comments.

Jessica Fancy: Mr. Speaker, the last Monday of this month is what we call dumping day back in South Shore—St. Margarets, weather permitting. I want to talk today on how that correlates with the budget.

For anyone who has not had the pleasure of experiencing the first day of lobster season along Nova Scotia’s south shore and along our southwest coast, it is the biggest lobster season in Canada. Before the sun is up, hundreds of boats will leave the wharves from St. Margarets to Cape Sable Island, stacked high with traps. Search and rescue will be standing by on the water and in the air. For a lot of families, that is the day the year's paycheque starts.

When I read the budget, I ask what they would ask: What does it do to the kitchen table? What does it do for the wharf, the woodlot or the farm in my riding? Let us start at the kitchen table. The budget puts more than $22 billion over five years into making everyday life more affordable. Let me take members to three kitchen tables back home.

First, let us talk about groceries, as every family back home knows what has happened to the grocery bill. We do not need a study to know that. We just need a grocery receipt. Early next year, the Canada groceries and essentials benefit gets a one-time 50% boost. For a family of four, that can bring upwards of $700, and that is a couple of big grocery runs. To their credit, members opposite helped pass the first version of this benefit. I really hope they remember that when they vote on our budget today.

Secondly, I would like to talk about caregivers. In 2021, Statistics Canada's census found that three in 10 people in my riding of South Shore—St. Margarets are seniors. This puts us among the oldest ridings in the country. A lot of my neighbours are looking after a mom, a dad, a spouse or a grown child with a disability. Here is the problem: Until now, the caregiver credit helped someone only if they earned enough to actually owe tax, so the people giving up the most got the least. This budget makes the Canada caregiver credit refundable. It is worth up to $1,260 a year. One hundred and eighty thousand caregivers who get nothing from it today will now finally get something. If people are caring for someone else, they are working, and it is about time the tax system noticed.

Thirdly, on our kitchen table, we have the people who make our main streets worth the drive. If we walk down a main street in Mahone Bay, Lunenburg or Shelburne county, we will see a potter, a painter or a woodworker, and that is all before lunch. A lot of them are small businesses of one. There is a new Canada creative credit. Artists will not pay federal income tax up to the $45,000 mark of what they earn from their creative work. This means that when a visitor buys a painting in Chester, that money will stay in Chester.

Let us move on to the wharf, the woodlot and the farm. Many members in the House know I chair the Liberal rural caucus, so I spend a lot of time in this place making one argument: Rural is not the backdrop; rural is the backbone. This budget puts money behind that. Here are three examples. My grandfather grew up growing Christmas trees in Lunenburg county, which is the balsam fir capital of the world, by the way. It takes about 10 years to grow a Christmas tree. On a farm like that, we do not plan year to year. We plan for the next generation.

The same goes for the boat and the licence. Today, a farmer or a fisher can pass the operation to a son, a daughter or a grandchild, without a tax bill, the day it changes hands.

● (1540)

However, not every captain has a son or daughter who wants the boat. Sometimes it is a niece. Sometimes it is the nephew, who has been on deck since he was 14. For transfers starting January 1, the budget opens that door to nieces and nephews, grandnieces and grandnephews. Out here, where I am from, the family does not stop at one's own kids. Now, the tax code will not either.

Second, with regard to the tools needed to do the work, the new productivity mega deduction lets a business write off the full cost of new equipment right away. The budget's own list of what qualifies includes things like fishing vessels, so the fisher replacing a boat, the plant adding a processing line or the boat yard in Lunenburg buying new equipment can write those off in year one. That is a tax break that can be seen on the wharf. It is tangible. That is what the budget is about.

Let us talk about the woods. There is $6.5 billion over six years, six by six, to modernize our mills, strengthen the wood supply and make new products from Canadian wood. I grew up in Queens County, and I know first-hand, we know, what happens when the mill closes. Nova Scotia has more than 30,000 private woodlot owners. For a small province, we have some of the highest numbers of woodlot owners in the country. When a mill closes, they lose a market too. The budget is about building the next one.

Third, let us talk about the hands that do the work, hiring local first, always. The budget puts up to $10,000 toward an apprentice's first-year wages, so that the next welder in Liverpool, in my riding, can learn the trade at home and stay at home.

Ask any plant manager back home what it means when the boats come in and the lines are short-handed. The lobster does not wait. The budget sets aside money to reform a regional temporary foreign worker program around what each region actually needs, tailored to that region. We heard from tremendous numbers of local stakeholders, and they talked about labour. We are trying to answer that consultation. It is not a one-size-fits-all approach. No size fits nobody.

Let us now talk about volunteers. They have some of the most important hands out there. When that pager goes off, they leave their supper. They sometimes leave their sleep. This budget keeps their tax credit doubled and makes one simple credit for volunteer firefighters and search and rescue workers alike.

As a former principal, I will say this plainly. A first nations kid should know from year to year who their teaching assistant is going to be. I talk about this because the budget also gives some money to Jordan's principle: $6 billion over six years as part of more than $50 billion over 10 years for a reconciliation plan. That is not a one-year promise. It is a generational plan.

One more thing that rural Canada cannot afford to lose is local news. Since 2008, more than 600 local news outlets have closed in Canada. When the local paper closes, the fourth estate is absent from any council meeting. The budget makes permanent the program that puts independent reporters in small towns, with over $134 million over four years. It puts $501 million over five years into the Canadian journalism labour tax credit, which is now open to private radio and private television. I am proud that our rural caucus worked so hard on both of those measures. I would like to give a shout-out to the Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture for his advocacy.

Members opposite have moved to reject the budget. They have even suggested a new title for it. As a former teacher, I will give them some marks for creativity, but let us go with the facts. The government's day-to-day spending is on track to balance next year, a year ahead of schedule, and Canada still has the lowest debt in the G7 for the size of its economy. Their amendment says fishing, farming and forestry were left out of a tax break for start-ups, but fishers and farmers already have their own tax—

● (1545)

The Deputy Speaker: The member's time has elapsed. I did give the member extra time because of the problems with interpretation.

Before we go to questions and comments, I just want to remind members of something.

● (1550)

[*Translation*]

I will say this in French. A member crossed the line of sight between the member who was speaking and the Chair. I want to remind members that they cannot walk in front of a member who is speaking, giving a speech or asking a question during House proceedings. That is in Standing Order 16(2). It is very clear that members must not do that.

I said that in French because I believe the member in question was a francophone. I wanted to make sure he heard me.

[*English*]

The hon. member for Yellowhead.

William Stevenson (Yellowhead, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there was a lot, as I have gone through the budget, that I would say the member opposite gave an accurate description of, except for one thing. I am wondering if the member knows anything about AMT, alternative minimum tax. Every one of the fishermen and farmers that you are saying will not be subject to a capital gains tax is going to be subject to it.

Is the member aware of that?

The Deputy Speaker: Before I let the member give her response, I did not say anything. Again, this is a reminder to members to speak through the Chair, not directly to other members.

The hon. member for South Shore—St. Margarets.

Jessica Fancy: Mr. Speaker, I am aware of the AMT and what it means for different local fishers and farmers. This is a budget for Main Street and not Bay Street. There are a lot of really good grassroots programs that are going to have effects around the kitchen table. With a budget of this size, sometimes we do not get it all for everybody, but I really am excited to vote for this budget because of all these grassroots, innovative measures that are going to have direct effects.

[*Translation*]

Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my colleague's speech certainly makes me want to eat lobster from the Magdalen Islands, no doubt about it.

The Liberals say this is a budget for Main Street, not Bay Street. They gave it the title "Masters of our destiny". In this budget, they say they are going to privatize operations at our airports, including Aéroports de Montréal, as well as the Mirabel component, which came about as the result of a criminal expropriation. It is one of the biggest crimes in Canadian history, for which they still have not apologized. Now they are calling it "Masters of our destiny".

Quebec was not consulted. The Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec was not consulted. We have no idea whether it would be interested.

We found out that the Liberals are in the process of selling our strategic infrastructure to an Australian pension fund that has already acquired airports in Europe, where it significantly increased the cost of air travel for passengers.

Is that what Main Street would want? Is that what being "masters of our destiny" means? Does it mean selling off an airport that is a public infrastructure asset, specifically the Mirabel airport, to an Australian pension fund without any consultation or transparency? Is that what they think being masters of our destiny means?

[*English*]

Jessica Fancy: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague from Mirabel for that. I would love to have some Mirabel lobster as well, but I will duly note that some of the best-quality lobster comes from South Shore—St. Margarets.

Sometimes it is really easy to sit on the sidelines and throw stones, but at some point, we really have to invest in Canada's future, and that is what this budget would do. I want to share a quote from John Ruffolo, who is the co-founder of the Council of Canadian Innovators. He said, "This is the clearest signal in years that Ottawa wants Canadian companies to scale here, not sell early or leave." He said that we are investing in some of our own.

I would also like to talk about Josh Earls, president of the Norman Wells and District Chamber of Commerce. He said, "It's unbelievable. Literally, my phone has not stopped blowing up for the past hour since they announced it". He also said, "It's a little bit surprising because we weren't sure if it was ever going to happen", and, "People are pretty excited" about the budget.

Braedon Clark (Sackville—Bedford—Preston, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend and colleague from South Shore—St. Margarets. It is certainly one of the most beautiful ridings in the country.

She mentioned in her comments some of the grassroots initiatives that are in this budget. I think of the caregiver's benefit. I think of support for artists. Arts and culture are certainly a major industry along the south shore of Nova Scotia and across the country.

Can my colleague share her thoughts on some of those initiatives and the impact they will have in her riding, my riding and across the country?

● (1555)

Jessica Fancy: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Sackville—Bedford—Preston has been a huge advocate for a lot of the items in this budget when we talk about these grassroots programs.

I want to loop back, first, to local media programming in grassroots media. It is $134 million and $501 million for some of these local taxations and for helping us try to bolster. We talk about misinformation and disinformation. As a former teacher who used to teach citizenship and what misinformation and disinformation is, I think it is very important that we are helping our local media, so they can be a direct source for the information we are trying to put out to our communities.

* * *

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

Hon. Ruby Sahota (Secretary of State (Combatting Crime), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to designate Tuesday, November 24, as an opposition day.

The Deputy Speaker: It is so noted.

* * *

THE BUDGET

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF MINISTER OF FINANCE

The House resumed consideration of the motion that this House approve in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Shelby Kramp-Neuman (Hastings—Lennox and Addington—Tyendinaga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Hastings—Lennox and Addington—Tyendinaga is home to some of Ontario's most productive farmland, much of it worked by families for generations. It is home to small businesses that support our local economies and sustain our towns and villages. It is home to the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte, whose history and perspectives I continue to learn from.

The people I represent understand the importance of hard work and of responsible decisions. They expect the same from their government. They expect respect for their hard-earned tax dollars, a willingness to listen and accountability for the decisions that affect their lives. These are not unreasonable expectations, yet across my riding, families are struggling to make ends meet. Seniors on fixed incomes are watching their purchasing power shrink. Food banks are seeing working Canadians who never imagined they would need assistance.

In rural Canada, affordability comes with challenges that, too often, Ottawa overlooks. For my constituents, driving is not a luxury. It is a necessity. It is how people get to work, attend doctor's appointments and buy groceries. It is how farmers operate equipment and get their products to market. When fuel costs rise, those costs ripple through our economy, affecting transportation, agriculture, small businesses and ultimately the price Canadians pay for everyday necessities.

When Canadians are already stretching every dollar, every additional cost matters. Those dollars matter just as much when the government decides how to spend them. Among the many concerns surrounding the government's priorities is the Alto high-speed rail project. Residents fear losing land held by their families for generations, farmers worry about divided farmland and rural communities face disrupted access routes and lasting impacts. These are people's homes, livelihoods and legacies.

Who is listening to the people expected to make the greatest sacrifices? For the communities I represent, the Alto initiative will take rather than give. Major infrastructure projects may often offer economic opportunities but those opportunities do not excuse a government from thorough consultation, fiscal accountability or respecting the communities directly affected. The Parliamentary Budget Officer has estimated Alto's construction costs at between $75 billion and $113 billion-plus. That is an extraordinary financial commitment, deserving extraordinary scrutiny.

This brings us to the federal budget. Budget 2026 projects a $62.3-billion deficit, with federal debt approaching $1.37 trillion and $60.2 billion in annual debt-servicing costs. That is more than $60 billion going toward interest on the debt rather than directly delivering new services to Canadians. Those annual debt charges are projected to climb to $85.5 billion by 2030–31. The families, farmers and small businesses I know and represent understand that borrowing sometimes has its place, but they also understand that every borrowed dollar must be justified.

As we examine budget 2026, I believe the House must answer one crucial question. Are we making decisions that strengthen the lives of Canadians or are we asking them to carry an ever-growing financial burden without demonstrating the value they receive in return? That is the standard the people of Hastings—Lennox and Addington—Tyendinaga and all Canadians deserve.

Next, I would like to turn to what I consider, beyond the extraordinary spending increases, the most historically significant issue in the budget, which is transparency.

The manner in which the government is doing things leaves much to be desired. Only after sustained criticism did questions surrounding the Prime Minister's relationship with Telesat receive greater scrutiny. Only after months of demands did the government disclose the companies lending employees to its Major Projects Office. Transparency should be standard operating procedure, not a crisis management strategy. Canadians are all too familiar with the government's history on transparency, such as with WE Charity, ArriveCAN and SNC-Lavalin, names familiar to anyone who has followed politics. SNC-Lavalin was extremely troubling. The former prime minister and senior officials were found to have improperly pressured the attorney general over a prosecutorial decision, raising fundamental questions about the independence of that office and the Shawcross principle.

● (1600)

This was hardly the first time a Liberal government faced questions about the administration of justice. In 1965, Justice Minister Guy Favreau left that portfolio following the Rivard affair after an inquiry criticized his handling of allegations involving attempted bribery and political interference. Favreau's departure was followed by Lester B. Pearson's recruitment of three prominent Quebec candidates, the "three wise men": Gérard Pelletier, Jean Marchand and Pierre Elliott Trudeau. Interestingly, Favreau represented Montreal's Papineau, a riding later represented by Pierre Trudeau's son, Justin Trudeau, some 41 years later.

Other names in Liberal Party history must not be forgotten. Groupaction Marketing, Coffin Communications, Lafleur Communication Marketing, Groupe Everest and Cockfield, Brown are names unfamiliar to newer members, perhaps, but not to those who remember the sponsorship scandal and the Gomery commission. I am sure my colleague from Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel—Alnôbak remembers extremely well, and the member for Vancouver Centre probably wishes that she could forget.

The sponsorship scandal remains one of the most consequential failures of public accountability in modern Canadian political history. In a remarkable coincidence, the Gomery hearings were held in Montreal's Complexe Guy-Favreau. The Gomery commission's report contained salient points that remain relevant today, which is why I am going to read a small portion of it to the House.

It reads:

> One message has been continually emphasized in the consultations conducted by the Commission: there is a need to rebalance the relationship between Parliament and the Government. The capacity of Parliament to hold the Government to account needs to be restored and strengthened.... If the present Report succeeds in launching a public debate that leads to a rebalancing between Parliament and Government, the Commission, for that reason alone, may be considered a success.
>
> A reinforcement of the traditional role of parliamentarians would tend to restore public trust and the confidence that Canadians should have in their political and administrative institutions. That confidence is currently at a low ebb. It would contribute to a renewal of the self-esteem and sense of worth that should be felt by Members of Parliament. It would also restore the public's respect for them.

The commission's recommendations helped shape the Federal Accountability Act introduced by the nascent Conservative government as its first piece of legislation. This legislation was not perfect, nor was the government that introduced it. As that government approached the end of its mandate, it too faced criticism over accountability and failures of communication.

The institutional rot, intentional or not, is colour-blind. That is a lesson every member of the House should remember. Anyone who has walked through these halls over the past 25 years should understand the dangers that fester behind closed doors. As legislators, if we are not comfortable explaining our decisions to the Canadians we serve, we should question whether those decisions ought to be made at all.

When legitimate criticism is dismissed, when accountability is avoided and when governments stop listening, the result is predictable: a culture of complacency, indifference and arrogance every single time. Ultimately, the people who pay the price are not the politicians, political staff or public servants involved. It is the taxpayer. We must never forget that everything we do in the House, every decision we make, every budget we pass and every dollar that we ultimately spend must be for them, the taxpayer, not for ourselves

● (1605)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have not had the time to go through all the history of former Conservative prime ministers, but I do happen to have one of the booklets, which is "Harper, Serial Abuser of Power: The Evidence Compiled." There are a lot of pages to it. The one I thought was the biggest, of course, was the contempt of Parliament.

However, that is not the reason I stood up to ask a question. The member made reference to seniors and the issue of affordability. I just want to remind the member opposite about one question I brought up in the past, and that is about the dental program, which is there to support seniors on fixed incomes who need to get dental work done. Unfortunately, her colleagues in her party are in opposition to that program.

I am wondering if, for the sake of the seniors on fixed incomes who have used the program in her constituency, she would say she supports it?

Shelby Kramp-Neuman: Mr. Speaker, in response to the hon. member's question, I am going to acknowledge a few things. The debt in our country is currently $1.37 trillion. More than $165 million is spent every single day to service the federal debt. To answer the member's question specifically, I would have to go back, but I think it is two in 10 Canadians who are able to access the federal dental plan, so I know that our local constituency offices have a number of concerns, questions and inquiries every single week about this. Realistically, Canada needs to be financially fit, and right now we are not.

[*Translation*]

Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, at the Standing Committee on Finance this week, a Conservative member asked the Parliamentary Budget Officer whether the current government was the biggest spender ever and whether it had run up the biggest deficit in history. She replied that the answer was yes, in peacetime. One of my colleagues here was with us.

To conceal its deficits, the government is inventing bogus investments. These are not investments, and this expenditure does not meet any definition, accounting standard or framework seen in other countries, not even in Singapore or the United Kingdom.

It is becoming clear that not only is this a way to conceal a massive deficit, but some other bizarre things seem to be happening. Last year, it was security expenses for FIFA. This year, it is CSIS spies that the government passed it off as capital.

I would like to know whether my colleague thinks that counts as capital. If so, how many years do spies take to depreciate?

[*English*]

Shelby Kramp-Neuman: Mr. Speaker, by all means, as Conservatives we welcome investment that ultimately will make Canada more competitive, but there is some confusion with how things are being labelled. Calling an expenditure an investment does not make it productive; the test really is whether it is creating lasting value and not just fitting under a creative accounting scheme.

Pat Kelly (Calgary Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for drawing a straight line from the Rivard affair of the Pearson era through to present Liberal corruption and the culture within that party. However, I do want to focus in my question on the Alto rail project. The member said that the PBO says it will cost probably $113 billion. I am just doing a quick bit of math. I know the project even said $90 billion. I am sure it will be much more than that, but even $90 billion at 4% interest, divided by 12 million passengers, is $300 per ticket. That is from a study from the University of Montreal. If the interest alone is $300 one way, without operating costs and without recouping capital, how could this program ever make any sense whatsoever, when it is so clearly and obviously going to be a financial boondoggle?

● (1610)

Shelby Kramp-Neuman: Mr. Speaker, the government 100% cannot afford it. Canadians at large do not want the Alto project. Ambition without discipline is not a national strategy, and it is an expensive promise. This Alto nonsense is an expensive promise. Canadians cannot afford a mega project built on optimistic projections with uncertain costs and completely questionable priorities. Before this government continues to bankroll the idea of Alto, I think it needs to explain to Canadians, in real dollars, about affordability, what it costs to fill one's tank and what it costs to go to the grocery store.

Alto is a non-stop, full-stop as far as I am concerned.

Lianne Rood (Middlesex—London, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is always a privilege to rise in this House on behalf of the residents of Middlesex—London. Every day, I hear from small business owners and families across Middlesex—London who are doing everything right and still falling behind. These people run shops, show up for the early shift and are raising kids. They keep their heads down, stay out of politics, pay their taxes without complaint, and wonder why their lives keep getting harder and why they are left with less each paycheque.

Another federal budget with a multi-billion-dollar deficit has arrived and, once again, the Liberals tell us that the record spending is an investment in the future. The numbers tell a different story. This is a costly credit card budget. It is dominated by debt, and ordinary Canadians are the ones left holding the bill. The Prime Minister told Canadians that he would spend less. He said he would cut the cost of consultants. However, the reality is the exact opposite. This budget would have us broke, and spending on consultants is booming.

The Prime Minister has himself warned, “A country that cannot feed itself, fuel itself, or defend itself has few options.” As record numbers of Canadians line up at food banks and families struggle with grocery bills, the Liberals are cutting Canada's domestic agricultural research capacity. Decades of research, knowledge and ingenuity that keep food affordable and secure will be gone forever. What the Liberals are doing is not responsible. It is short-sighted and downright dangerous.

As we talk about responsibility or the lack thereof, the Liberal government debt numbers are even more alarming. This budget has the government borrowing a record-smashing $765 billion over the next five years. That works out to roughly $44,000 for every household in Canada. The federal debt is already climbing to $1.37 trillion. Interest payments alone will consume $60 billion this year. That is more money than the entire Canada health transfer. That is correct. We now pay more in interest on the debt than we do to keep our crumbling health care system afloat.

Let me break this down. A family of four will pay nearly $6,000 in federal debt interest costs this year alone. By 2031, that annual burden rises to $8,100 per family of four, and the total interest climbs to $85.5 billion. Every dollar spent on interest is a dollar that cannot go to nurses, doctors, defence or tax relief. The cost of putting a failed banker in charge of cooking the books in Canada is that debt servicing is no longer a footnote in the budget. It is one of the single largest items in the budget, and it keeps growing faster than almost anything else. Every additional dollar borrowed today is a burden paid through tomorrow's taxes. The Parliamentary Budget Officer has flagged the risks. The debt-to-GDP ratio is not falling the way the Prime Minister promised during the election. It remains stuck near 40%, yet the government treats new borrowing as if it costs nothing.

At the kitchen table, families are already choosing between groceries and other necessities. On the farm, higher fuel input costs, fertilizer costs and equipment costs make it harder to get food from the field to the table affordably.

The lives of Canadians are not an abstract accounting exercise. The mistakes of the Liberal government drive up the costs that show up in the grocery cart and in the longer lines and empty shelves at food banks. Food prices have risen roughly 30% in the past five years. Food Banks Canada reports that monthly visits now exceed 2.3 million. That is an increase of 117% since 2019. Nearly one in five of those clients is employed. One-third of those visits are by children. Working families who never imagined needing to use a food bank are lining up. When households are already stretched thin, higher taxes and higher interest rates driven by Liberal borrowing leave them with even less room to breathe.

In this budget, Canadians are also paying the price for immigration levels that far exceed our capacity to absorb them. The government's own immigration levels plan sets a headline target of 380,000 new permanent residents. Only when the hidden side programs buried elsewhere in the budget documents are included does the real total approach 650,000. That is the highest permanent immigration level in Canadian history. That is roughly 35% above the previous record and is the equivalent of adding a city the size of Mississauga in a single year.

These numbers were deliberately buried because they are indefensible. A Nanos poll found that 52% of Canadians want fewer permanent immigrants and temporary residents.

● (1615)

High immigration makes work pay less by flooding the labour market so corporations do not have to compete for workers or raise wages. It drives up rent, which is why the CMHC expects only about 223,000 housing starts this year. It also sends more people to food banks. Newcomers now make up 31% of clients, and that is not fair to them. It pushes a broken health care system further past the breaking point, where the median wait for treatment is already 28.6 weeks. Over 23,000 Canadians died waiting for care last year. This is not compassionate immigration.

Conservatives will keep fighting to bring those numbers down and in line with actual housing, health care and job capacity, so that wages can rise, rents can fall and our hospitals can recover.

The government repeatedly claims its spending is an investment that will eventually pay for itself. That claim is pure fantasy in the short term and a dangerous gamble in the long term. Most of the programs being financed have not even started. They come with no clear, measurable returns. The debt costs more for those programs than what they are worth in the first place.

We have become an unproductive nation. Under the Liberals it is getting worse. Investment is fleeing Canada. The promised gains in housing, clean technology and child care have not shown up at the scale or speed required to justify this borrowing.

On the farm, red tape and rising costs make it harder to produce the affordable food Canadians need. If we do not support the people who grow our food, we will have less of it and pay more. Just to make this simple enough for the Liberals to understand: no farms, no food, full stop.

What we continue to see from the Liberal government is more debt, higher carrying costs, endless photo opportunities and talking points that make bold claims only to be rolled back after the headlines have gone out. What the Liberal government is doing with this budget is the equivalent of someone maxing out the family credit card to buy lottery tickets and then calling it an investment strategy. Then, when they get caught, the spouse gets gaslit. There is zero accountability. A household that did that would face serious consequences quickly. The government does it and then pays the media to praise it for having ambition.

Canadians cannot function on the Prime Minister's delusions of grandeur. Good policy requires evidence that a project will make money. The evidence is missing.

The accounting in this budget makes the problems Canada is experiencing worse. The Prime Minister has split spending across three separate credit cards, operational, capital and Crown corporations, with no clear, consistent rules that decide which expense belongs where.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer has confirmed the absence of a defining standard. By parking billions of dollars in the capital or Crown corporation columns, the Liberals get to play pretend, so that the full cost of the borrowing does not appear in the headline deficit. If a private company did this to its investors and workers, it would face serious questions about misleading them. Taxpayers will still pay the interest, whether the government puts the borrowing on the official books or hides it off to the side. Canadians deserve transparency. They do not deserve financial engineering designed to conceal the true cost of inflationary spending.

Conservatives have asked for three things to be fixed in the budget: Cut the price of gas by 20¢ a litre and by eliminating all federal taxes at the pump, cut waste, and keep the election promise to lower the debt-to-GDP ratio so that it no longer crowds out health care and other basic services.

Conservatives have also put forward a practical alternative. Roughly $200 billion in savings can be found by cutting bureaucracy, consultants, foreign aid, corporate welfare and wasteful projects, such as the Alto high-speed rail boondoggle, which only enriches well-connected Liberal Party insiders.

The government could bring immigration numbers back in line with the growth in housing and the availability of doctors and jobs, so that both new Canadians and those born here can succeed. It could prioritize debt reduction so the interest stops consuming more than we spend on the military or on health transfers.

This cannot be said enough. To get Canada back on track, we need to focus our resources on proven measures that lower the cost of living, lower taxes, reduce red tape and bring real economic growth that creates opportunity.

Hard-working families, farmers and small businesses deserve better than a budget that borrows heavily to finance claims rather than results. Conservatives will keep fighting for outcomes that benefit Canadian families.

Canadians are out of money. It is time the Liberal government stopped being out of touch.

● (1620)

Hon. Ruby Sahota (Secretary of State (Combatting Crime), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I keep hearing this notion of hospitals being overburdened and filled with immigrants, all due to immigrants coming to this country. If we were to look at the numbers from 2016 to approximately the present, we would see that new immigrants to this country make up about 3% to 4% of the whole population.

Are we to believe that somehow this percentage of the entire Canadian population is to blame for overburdening our hospitals? That is completely false, and it is putting the blame for a system that, sure, maybe needs some work and over which the provinces need to take control, on the backs on new immigrants. We cannot do that.

Lianne Rood: Mr. Speaker, the reality is that the policies of the Liberal government over the last 10 years have created the mess we have here right now. The federal debt payments are more than what we are transferring to the provinces for health care, and we are letting in more people than we have capacity for in our own hospitals right now.

Len, a senior in London, says that he has watched emergency wait rooms, clinic delays and the shortage of affordable housing and senior care spaces get worse. He tells me that the cost of everyday living keeps climbing, and he worries that the quality of life that he has and that his family has built has eroded.

Hubert is writing on behalf of people with disabilities and their families. He has described how the lack of timely support shows up in emergency room visits, homelessness and family breakdowns.

An hon. member: Why are you blaming immigrants?

Lianne Rood: Mr. Speaker, I am not blaming immigrants whatsoever. I am blaming the policies of the Liberal government and its misspending instead of focusing on Canadians.

[*Translation*]

Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech, in which she spoke about agriculture.

The riding of Shefford is heavily reliant on agriculture, and its agri-tourism industry is very important. This week, at the German embassy, I had the pleasure of seeing Zacharie Cloutier cheese from the Fromagerie Nouvelle-France in my riding of Shefford. I was very proud that the German ambassador found it to his liking.

I tip my hat to Marie-Chantal.

That said, the agricultural industry is vital to our economy. The budget includes some measures to support the industry, but we are still far from the 2% of the federal budget that the UPA recommends be set aside for agriculture. Marie-Chantal mentions that to me every time I stop at her cheese factory.

Canada provides less public support for agriculture than other countries. It currently stands at 1%, which represents 0.3. That is not enough.

What does my colleague think about the importance of investing more in agriculture?

[*English*]

Lianne Rood: Mr. Speaker, I am in the business of agriculture, and my family has been in the business of producing food for generations. I come from a family of immigrants. I am a second-generation Canadian and a third-generation farmer. My grandparents came to this country to work hard for that promise of the Canadian dream. They worked in the tobacco fields for less than 10¢ an hour when they came to this country with nothing. Both my sets of grandparents worked their way through those tobacco fields to build the life they had, to have my parents, to have a business here in Canada and to be successful in the agriculture industry, providing food for Canadians.

Unfortunately, the policies of the Liberal government for the last 10 years have done nothing but hurt farmers. The cost of production is high because of policies of the Liberal government, the cost of fuel and fertilizer and putting taxes and tariffs on fertilizer, making food less affordable to produce for Canadians. Farmers can absorb only so much of the cost, and they need to be supported by the government by lowering taxes and having better policies to help farmers.

● (1625)

Costas Menegakis (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I could impose on my colleague to give her thoughts as to why this budget is being presented in the House seven months after the fiscal year has started. Seven months of the money has already been spent, and the Liberals are bringing it in as if it were something new. I wonder if she could share with us whether businesses in her riding operate that way.

Lianne Rood: Mr. Speaker, when the Liberals dropped this budget on a Thursday afternoon, going right into a constituency week, it was that bad that they had to hide this budget for an entire week from Canadians. They are overspending, and they know it is going to cost Canadians more.

As a business owner myself, there is no way I would have a budget this far down in my fiscal year. The government is doing nothing to help Canadians in my—

[*Translation*]

Carlos Leitão (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by saying that I will be sharing my time with the member for Vancouver Granville.

It is my turn to share my thoughts on the budget. In the 10 minutes that I have, I will try to structure my remarks into three parts. First, I will talk a little bit about the situation that we are currently in and that the budget seeks to address. Second, I will talk about the numbers and ratios that are found in the budget. Third, I will close by explaining why we are doing what we are doing and why we are taking this approach.

The context we are in is extremely important because it presents very serious challenges for Canada. We are witnessing a direct assault on the global trading system, a system that has served both Canada and our U.S. neighbours well for the past 30 or 40 years. During that period of accelerated globalization, Canada and the United States became more economically integrated. Now, in 2025-26, our economy is far more closely intertwined with that of the United States than it was 20 or 30 years ago. What is more, the rules governing trade and integration used to be understood, predictable and stable. Those rules have been upended in ways that are unpredictable, unstable and highly chaotic.

This is where we find ourselves. As if that were not enough, since 2020, the world has been hit by a series of shocks that have caused profound disruptions to the global economy. Of course, the pandemic springs to mind. Yes, I am going back to that again. Its effects on the global economy were enormous. The post-pandemic recovery in 2021-22, plus the major supply chain disruptions, triggered a powerful global surge in inflation, and it has proven difficult to bring it back within a more reasonable range.

As if that were not enough, we then witnessed the start of the war in Ukraine in 2022. This war has been ongoing for almost five years now. Who would have thought that in late 2026 and soon 2027 we would still be talking about the war in Ukraine or, rather, Russia's attack on Ukraine? It also triggered increases in the cost of raw materials, energy and more, which have further fuelled this much harder to control inflationary episode.

As if all that were not enough, we then witnessed the start of another war this year, in late February of 2026. The war against Iran also disrupted the production and supply of crude oil. The cost of gasoline very quickly increased, and crude oil soon passed the $100-a-barrel mark. In Canada, or at least in Quebec, in my riding of Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, the price of gas went just over $2 a litre for a time. It has been quite an oil shock.

That was the backdrop against which our budget was drafted and tabled in early November. The budget promotes and provides the means to transform Canada's economy, diversify our markets and truly become masters of our destiny, as the title says.

● (1630)

The goal is to make sure we fully understand that, even if the political landscape among our neighbours changes, as we all saw in the mid-term elections, the protectionist stance of the current administration will persist. That is not going to change. We have to be ready for it. We have to keep diversifying. We have to do whatever we can to protect our jobs and businesses. That is the context in which we found ourselves, and that is how we acted.

Now, back to the budget itself. Because of the sharp rise in energy prices, the Government of Canada brought in revenue that was much higher than projected. At this point in time and for years to come, that will create fiscal room in excess of $20 billion a year. Additional annual revenue may even reach $30 billion or $35 billion thanks to higher energy prices and the revenue they generate for the Canadian government.

We chose to reinvest this additional revenue in the Canadian economy on a massive scale. As a rough estimate, I would say that about two-thirds of that additional revenue has been invested in the economy and one-third has gone toward measures to support Canadians, families and individuals. Naturally, our Conservative friends described these actions as catastrophic, an unmitigated disaster. Canada's economy was the biggest basket case in the world. The thing is, we still have a AAA credit rating. That is not bad for a basket case, for a collapsing economy.

Our borrowing costs remain among the lowest in the world. They are certainly lower than those of our American neighbours and are not far off from those of Germany and other developed G7 countries, for example. Canada continues to enjoy a AAA credit rating, and our borrowing costs are under control and highly favourable. That said, there is a deficit. There is no point pretending otherwise. The budget clearly projects deficits of $62 billion in 2026-2027, $62.5 billion the following year, and $57 billion the year after, and so on. That is less than 2% of GDP.

When we talk about deficits and debt, it is essential to consider them in relation to the size of the economy. The size of the economy determines the government's ability to carry that debt and manage these deficits. Deficits of less than 2% of GDP are entirely and completely manageable. It is not a disaster. A public debt burden of roughly 45% of GDP is entirely manageable. What our friends often neglect to mention is that Canada's economy, Canada's GDP, is growing as well. Canada's economy will be worth $4 trillion by 2030-31.

● (1635)

[*English*]

When we talk about debt and deficits, it always has to be in relation to that size.

We are doing what we are doing because we chose to do it, because we can do it, because we have the fiscal space to do it and because we must do it. It is now that we have to address these issues, not five years from now, maybe waiting and doing nothing. No, it is now that we have to act, and it is now that we have chosen to act.

ROYAL ASSENT

[*English*]

The Deputy Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that a communication has been received as follows:

Rideau Hall

Ottawa

November 19, 2026

Mr. Speaker,

I have the honour to inform you that Mr. Ryan McAdam, Deputy of the Governor General of Canada, signified royal assent by written declaration to the bills listed in the Schedule to this letter on the 19th day of November, 2026, at 3:32 p.m.

Yours sincerely,

Eduardo Rivas

Manager

Office of the Secretary to the Governor General

The schedule indicates the bills assented to were Bill C-234, An Act respecting the establishment and award of a Living Donor Recognition Medal, and Bill C-10, An Act respecting the Commissioner for Modern Treaty Implementation.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

The Deputy Speaker: It is my duty to inform the House that a message has been received from the Senate informing the House that the Senate has passed the following bill to which the concurrence of the House is desired: Bill S-239, an act to amend the Competition Act.

It is also 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 Similkameen—South Okanagan—West Kootenay, Health; the hon. member for Calgary Crowfoot, the Economy; and the hon. member for Riding Mountain, Health.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

THE BUDGET

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE MINISTER OF FINANCE

The House resumed consideration of the motion that this House approve in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I paid a lot of attention to my colleague's speech, particularly at the end where he talked about how we have all kinds of fiscal capacity. Let me remind him of the guardrails his government set during these last 10 years, which were broken.

On debt to GDP, as the member referred to that, opposed to breaking a guardrail this time, the Prime Minister, and he is complicit, changed the definitions of what goes into those ratios. Now, that is worse than breaking the guardrails. That is breaking the rules.

The member is a former minister of finance from Quebec. Can he tell us what he thinks about changing the input models to get the ratio one wants at the end of the day, and if anybody is looking at that as a transparent mechanism? Would he have looked at that as transparent when he was the minister of finance in Quebec?

Carlos Leitão (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, well, the deficit is a deficit. Nothing is hidden. It is spelled out right there in big numbers. We can see it. It is very clear for everybody to see. There is nothing that changes that. It is the same thing with the debt. The debt is indicated very clearly. When I refer to the deficit-to-GDP ratio being under 2% and the debt-to-GDP ratio at 45% or 46%, that is what they are. That is what they are in comparison to other countries, and that is perfectly manageable.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if my colleague could provide his thoughts regarding the productivity mega deduction. That is one of the ways, and it is something that has been consistent from day one when we first took office with the new Prime Minister, of building that stronger economy by being able to write off certain types of equipment and more. We are going to see more investment, and ultimately, whether it is upgrades, expansions, whatever it might be, it will lead to more jobs, and jobs do matter. It complements things like the work we are doing to secure investments from outside of Canada and within Canada, not to mention the increase in export opportunities through all the different trade agreements and so forth that we are striving for.

● (1640)

Carlos Leitão: Mr. Speaker, yes, this budget is an investment budget. As I said in my remarks, we were able to have some additional funds, and we chose to put two-thirds of those funds back in the economy.

One of the major measures is the mega deduction to make sure that private investment is happening. Our ability to grow the economy depends on our ability to attract investment. This fiscal measure will give Canada one of the lowest effective tax rates on new investment, and we think it is in that way we are going to trigger a super cycle of investment in our economy, which will lead us to a $4-trillion economy by 2030.

[*Translation*]

Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the budget does not reimburse Quebec for the costs associated with asylum seekers, which are estimated at roughly $700 million. To date, the government has only reimbursed a portion of that amount, roughly $43 million.

Does my colleague not think it would be appropriate to reimburse Quebec, particularly as it has received a disproportionate share of asylum seekers?

Carlos Leitão: Mr. Speaker, we have been dealing with this subject for some time now, and conversations with the Quebec government are ongoing. Towards the end of the mandate of the previous Quebec government, we managed to resolve a number of issues. We signed some very important agreements, including a $10-billion investment in residential construction, for example. We will continue our discussions and negotiations with the new Quebec government. We hope to find common ground on this issue and others.

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

[*English*]

The hon. member for Courtenay—Alberni.

Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the member talked about an investment budget. What about youth? What about climate change? The government promised $40 million for a youth climate corps, something that New Democrats and young people fought for, but it has not rolled out that program. Young people could be working, restoring watersheds, doing work that could help Canadians, tackle climate change and protect our environment—

The Deputy Speaker: I did say a brief question or comment.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Carlos Leitão: Mr. Speaker, as I said in my remarks, one-third of the new funds that we are able to use go-to measures for families and individuals. A large portion of that goes to tackling homelessness. We think that is a major issue and the federal government has a role to play. We intend to play that role and contribute to a greater solution to eliminate homelessness in 10 years.

Taleeb Noormohamed (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to share with my colleagues the importance of why budget 2026 is a watershed moment in our history. I think we all know that we are now faced with a more turbulent global environment than we have ever seen. There are the arrival of technologies that will transform the very fabric of our economy and how we deal with one another. We have aggressive state and non-state actors who seek to undermine our nation's sovereignty and our autonomy.

This budget rises to respond to each of these challenges. We are making strategic investments, as well as regulatory and structural reforms to cut red tape, and making life more affordable for all Canadians, especially those who need it the most. The notion of Canada strong and the notion of being the masters of our own destiny are not just hyperbolic or rhetorical. They refer to an achievable vision for our country, one that unlocks prosperity for Canadians now and secures that prosperity for generations to come.

Let us talk about innovation and economic growth. Before I came to politics, I built tech companies. We built leading innovative technology companies. We built cutting-edge products. We created jobs. We innovated. Many of the creators, many of the innovators and many of the entrepreneurs in the world that I worked in always expressed this frustration that building in Canada came at too high a cost. This budget would respond to that. It speaks to making Canada a more attractive destination for researchers, entrepreneurs and investors to ideate, commercialize and grow their businesses here in Canada.

The Canada growth incentive is the perfect example of that. It is a new tax incentive that allows Canadian entrepreneurs who have built Canadian businesses to ensure that the first $15 million after an exit is considered tax-exempt from capital gains, so long as they do the thing that we all want them to do, which is to reinvest in building another Canadian business, creating more jobs here at home and ensuring prosperity for another group of Canadians.

That step of creating that $15-million capital gains exemption would allow more Canadians to not only build at home, but also stay at home and build new companies here, where we would continue to build others thereafter. That is how the innovation cycle works. If somebody had an exit, they would reinvest the proceeds of that exit where they have networks, where they have connections and where they know they can build future prosperity. That is why this would be such an important step for the innovation economy in this country and for the start-up entrepreneurs in this country who want to be able to build and continue to build here in Canada and not elsewhere. Overall, the Canada growth incentive would provide $750 million in tax relief over the next five years, incentivizing investors to direct their capital toward Canada.

● (1645)

[*Translation*]

In addition, we are expanding the scope and coverage of the scientific research and experimental development tax incentive program to cover the costs associated with bringing a new product or process to market. This investment, worth $930 million over five years, with $235 million ongoing, will also encourage entrepreneurs to build and keep their high-value businesses right here in Canada.

[*English*]

These effects would be bolstered by our $750-million boost to the early and growth stage investment strategy. Mobilized by the Business Development Bank of Canada, $75 million and $675 million in domestic private capital would be allocated to early-stage innovations and skill-ready companies respectively, ensuring that our inventors and trailblazers do not have to look to the United States or abroad to find the capital they need.

These measures would catalyze an investment supercycle that would a strong business ecosystem here at home. This would create new jobs and support a strong sovereign Canadian economy where no other country can decide our economic future.

A growing national economy requires its workforce to feel secure, and in particular, to count on having a roof over their heads. To help achieve this, we are launching a 10-year plan to end homelessness, collaborating with provinces, municipalities and the nonprofit sector to mobilize over $11 billion over the next six years, and an additional $17.8 billion in future years, to support those facing homelessness to find permanent homes. We would also provide $2 billion for the health infrastructure fund to help address the mental health and substance use challenges that often contribute to homelessness and the destabilizing pressures faced by communities across this country.

[*Translation*]

We are not just launching new initiatives. We are also strengthening federal programs with proven track records. More specifically, we are proposing to invest $2.1 billion over the next three years and an additional $4.4 billion in future years to renew the Reaching Home initiative and the veterans homelessness program for an additional 10 years.

We are also proposing to extend the Canada housing benefit for 10 years to give the provinces and territories the critical support they need to provide affordable housing for low-income Canadians.

[*English*]

Ending homelessness is part of addressing housing issues. This government also recognizes the deficiency of housing solutions for working families and our younger workforce. To make this category of housing more affordable, we are extending the ban on foreign purchases of existing residential properties for the next two years. We are proposing the productivity mega deduction to help builders invest in state-of-the-art equipment and machinery, so they can build more with the same number of employees, and we are leveraging the strategic response fund to earmark half a billion dollars to build and expand industrial capacity and accelerate the adoption of cost-effective methods in the construction sector.

Addressing the cost of housing is just one aspect of dealing with the broader affordability crisis facing communities across the country. This government knows that any good affordability strategy must take a holistic approach. Taking care of those who take care of our most vulnerable is a critical part of building a society that is truly just. This is why we are making the Canada caregiver credit fully refundable. This change means the thousands and thousands of unpaid caregivers in this country will receive up to $1,260 annually. Nearly 600,000 caregivers will benefit from this change, including 180,000 today who receive no benefit, and we expect this credit to help lift an additional 15,000 people out of poverty. In my riding of Vancouver Granville, for those who take care of their elderly parents, sick children or others in the community, this will make a meaningful difference.

Affordability is not the only metric by which we address a community's well-being. We address it by the vibrancy of our culture, the ability of our people to access and engage with that culture and the safety of our public and digital spaces, which connect and bring us all together. In Vancouver Granville in particular, when we think about the arts and culture, this is something that hits close to home. Whether we are on Granville Island or in Sunset, the spaces and places that allow us to celebrate who we are and come together are critically important.

This is why we are investing $4 billion into the Canadian arts and culture sector over the next five years. Whether it is $300 million for strengthening the CBC to tell Canada's stories, $325 million for celebrating our upcoming 160th anniversary, $680 million for revitalizing recreational facilities and ice rinks, or even $843 million for our national cultural institutions and national engagement, we are making investments to help Canadians feel proud of who they are, connecting us to the stories we all share from coast to coast to coast, learning about one another and being proud of the things that make us Canadian.

Just as we invest in the safety and vitality of the physical spaces that foster community, we must also invest in protecting our families, our seniors and our youth in the digital town square. To achieve this, we are investing $176 million for the establishment of the new digital safety and data protection commission of Canada and an additional $29.3 million in ongoing funding to Canadian Heritage to help with the enforcement of Bill C-34, the safe social media act.

Of these investments in a more innovative and sovereign Canadian economy, safer and more affordable communities and increased cultural engagement, none are possible without the strict, responsible and astute management of the public purse. This is why fiscal discipline is at the heart of budget 2026. It has been structured and designed to balance day-to-day government operating spending with revenues by 2027-28, which is a year ahead of schedule, keeping our deficit-to-GDP ratio on a declining path. Furthermore, budget 2026 shifts us away from a trajectory of ballooning program expenses and puts us on a more sustainable path. Over the horizon, we will be able to lower direct program expense growth to an average of 2% annually from what was 8% average annual growth rate in program expenses over the last decade.

The opposition presents a false choice. The members insist we have to pick between our nation-building investments and balancing the books, that we cannot invest in our future without risking our foundations. Canadians have elected us to be able to do many things at once. They expect us to be able to walk and chew gum at the same time. They expect us to be able to be fiscally disciplined and to invest in the things that matter to Canadians and the places and the innovations Canadians want to be proud of. This is what Canadians expect of us.

● (1650)

This budget shows us we can be fiscally responsible while championing investments in making Canada more competitive, more affordable, safer and more culturally relevant.

Helena Konanz (Similkameen—South Okanagan—West Kootenay, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the 10-minute speech explaining the budget by my colleague across the floor, but this budget brings us into massive debt. I think almost everyone agrees in the House. There are some things that are missing that I am hearing from my constituents. For example, one thing in the budget that we have been talking about is the half a billion dollars spent on Brazil for their forests. My riding and the communities around us just went through massive wildfires.

Would that money not be better spent in managing our own forests?

● (1655)

Taleeb Noormohamed: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for raising this issue. As British Columbians, we care about making sure our communities are safe and protected. That is why we have been making investments in ensuring those communities are protected. It is disappointing for me to hear this question, because it is an admission on the part of the opposition that its members actually voted against every single one of those measures, which would protect the very communities they now speak of, the last opportunity they had. The opposition voted against all of the measures that would protect communities from fires and ensure there was response mitigation available, and that is too bad, not just for British Columbians but for all Canadians.

[*Translation*]

Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, for my question, I want to pick up on what my colleague said about homelessness.

Homelessness is major concern in Shefford. It is something that is happening in my riding. I was talking recently with the new MNA, and he told me exactly how this is going to work and how the riding will get this funding. We are hoping for an unconditional transfer to Quebec. We already made that request. Quebec and the municipalities have already taken the lead on this issue, and I would like to commend them for that. It was a request made by Ms. Marois, the former premier of Quebec.

Here is my question. The government has been talking about renewing the Reaching Home program, but Granby is not recognized as a designated community, so it will not get a share of the money.

Is the government open to making municipalities like Granby, which are experiencing homelessness issues, designated communities so that all the money does not go to other parts of the Eastern Townships?

Taleeb Noormohamed: Mr. Speaker, working with the provinces and municipalities is essential.

If we want to transform people's lives when it comes to homelessness, we need to do so in partnership with the Province of Quebec. Of course, we have solutions that can easily be applied in Quebec and even in the other provinces. We have strategies that have led to solutions and things that we know worked well.

We need to work together on these issues.

[*English*]

Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton—Bkejwanong, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am interested to know more about what the priorities are in his riding and how budget 2026 addresses them.

Taleeb Noormohamed: Mr. Speaker, in my riding of Vancouver Granville, there are three critical issues. One is, how do we make sure we are making life more affordable? This is why I am so proud of what this budget represents in terms of caregivers and in terms of putting more money, with the groceries and essentials benefit program, into the hands of my constituents. It is about making sure we are dealing with issues around supporting arts and culture, which is a big part of my community and my riding. It is also about making sure we are investing in the things that matter for the future, such as the places we gather, like community centres and so on and so forth, so that we can build vibrant communities in places where infrastructure has been challenged for so very long.

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

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Courtenay—Alberni.

Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we keep hearing about nation building. I live on Vancouver Island, and we saw in this budget $1.3 billion earmarked for Atlantic Canada for its ferry services, which we support, but what did we get for BC Ferries? We got a loan of $1 billion.

To my colleague, when is the government going to start supporting British Columbia's ferry system? He knows full well the injustice that is—

The Deputy Speaker: I did say a short question or comment.

The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Artificial Intelligence.

Taleeb Noormohamed: Mr. Speaker, my friend from British Columbia and I have worked together closely on issues related to advocacy for British Columbia, and this is something we are going to work on together. It is clear there is a history of why Atlantic ferries have been supported, and the member opposite knows that. It does not mean we cannot do more things for British Columbia, and I am looking forward to working with him and a new government, our government, to make sure that we solve this problem for—

The Deputy Speaker: Resuming debate, the hon. member for Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill.

Costas Menegakis (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to stand today on behalf of the hard-working families and businesses in my constituency of Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill. I am deeply honoured and humbled that they have given me the enormous honour of representing them here in Canada's Parliament.

Today, I will speak on what the government has billed as "Budget 2026".

I would like to begin my remarks by talking about the reality facing millions of Canadians across this country, today and every day, who are not sitting in corporate boardrooms, not drawing government pension indices and certainly not flying off to international summits to hand out other people's money. Instead, they are standing in grocery aisles, looking at prices that have risen by 30% over the last few years, trying to decide whether they can afford the milk and the fresh vegetables or if they should start putting items back on the shelf. They are walking into community food banks that are no longer just filling a gap, but overflowing with working families who never imagined they would have to ask for charity.

How did the government respond to the nation in crisis? With a 511-page monster of an omnibus bill dropped on this House a disgraceful seven months late into the fiscal year. Halfway through the fiscal cycle, it finally rolled out a massive, unreadable, unaccountable book of fiscal wreckage, expecting us to rubber-stamp hundreds of billions of dollars in new debt without asking questions. We are going to ask questions, because Canadians demand answers.

Let us look at the staggering numbers hidden in this late, bloated document.

This year alone the deficit sits at a staggering $62.3 billion. It does not stop there. Over the next five years, the government is locking our children and grandchildren into hundreds of billions of dollars in red ink, with total deficits projected next year of $62.5 billion and $57.5 billion the year after that. The total borrowing projections are soaring past three-quarters of a trillion dollars over its tenure.

Where is all that money going? Will it build hospitals? Will it hire doctors? Will it lower taxes for working families? No. A shameful, staggering chunk of it is going straight to international bondholders and bankers who service the mountain of debt the government has accumulated. Let that sink in for every single member in this House. This year the federal government will spend more money paying interest on the national debt than it transfers to the provinces in health care. The Liberals do not seem to care about that. They fly over it any time we bring it up. Let us think about that the next time we sit in an emergency room for six hours. Let us think about that when an elderly Canadian cannot find a family doctor. Let us think about that when a cancer patient is told there is a backlog. The government is prioritizing payments to global debt markets over the health, well-being and surgical care of the Canadian people. Every single dollar thrown at that servicing is a dollar stolen from our health care system.

Let us talk about who is suffering out there. In March of this year, Canada's food banks recorded 2,355,075 visits in a single month. That is the highest number ever recorded in our nation's history. That is up nearly 9% from last year and a horrifying 117% higher than before the pandemic. Who is lining up at these food banks? It is not just the chronically poor anymore. It is working people. Nearly 18% of food bank users have employment earnings. They have jobs. They work hard 40 hours a week, yet they still cannot afford to feed their families. Most heartbreaking of all is that over 775,000 of those visits were made by children. One-third of the people turning to charity for a basic meal are kids. Today, while we sit in this House, 24,000 children are walking into a food bank hoping to find something on the shelf to eat because they are hungry. Empty shelves, empty bellies and exhausted parents: that is the legacy of the government's economic management.

● (1700)

What do we find when we flip through the pages of this 511-page omnibus bill? Do we find emergency relief for starving families? Do we find a plan to lower grocery prices? No, we find that while Canadian seniors are skipping meals to pay their heating bills, the Prime Minister found $510 million to hand over to a foreign fund in Brazil. Let us be entirely clear about this. Half a billion dollars of Canadian taxpayers' hard-earned money will be shipped overseas to Brazil while our own citizens are rationing groceries. Canadians are paying some of the highest taxes in the G7 and facing a cost of living crisis of historic proportions, and the government treats the federal treasury like an international ATM. Charity, I would argue, begins at home.

When single mothers in Toronto, Calgary, Halifax, Vancouver, Kingston and other places around the country are watering down soup to make it last another day, sending half a billion dollars to foreign governments is an insult to every taxpayer in this country, every Canadian and every family.

As if a crashing standard of living, runaway debt and bizarre foreign aid priorities were not enough, this government has completely broken our demographic and economic capacity through reckless, unmanaged population growth. I look at the immigration projections. We are facing a projected intake of an additional 662,000 new permanent residents in a single upcoming year.

Let us look at what that means on the ground. Communities across Canada are already at a complete breaking point. We do not have houses for them. We do not have hospital beds for them. We do not have classrooms for them. The job market cannot absorb our young people. Young Canadians are entering the workforce and competing against hundreds of thousands of newcomers for entry-level jobs. This is driving youth unemployment up and wages down.

Immigration has always been part of our country's identity. It is part of our strength, our diversity and our promise. My family were immigrants to this country. I was born here, but my parents came here in the fifties. However, immigration must be sustainable. It must be reasonable. It must be matched with housing construction, infrastructure development and health care capacity. Instead, the government turned immigration into a reckless numbers game completely detached from reality. It has brought in millions of people without building a single hospital or ensuring a single extra doctor was trained to handle the surge.

The result is a housing crisis, where a medium home is completely out of reach for all young people, and a health care system buckling under the pressure.

This 511-page omnibus bill is not a budget; it is a confession. It is a 511-page confession that this government has lost control of spending, lost touch with reality and completely abandoned the working people. The budget was introduced seven months late, because the government is trying to hide the scale of its fiscal failure. The deficit is locked at over $62 billion, mortgaging our kids' futures. Debt interest payments now outstrip what we send to the provinces for health care. Food bank usage has shattered records at over 2.3 million visits per month. Half a billion dollars has flown off to Brazil, while seniors freeze and starve at home, and immigration is forced upward by an additional 662,000 people, crushing our social infrastructure.

Canadians deserve better than this. They deserve better than a 511-page omnibus bill, which should be titled “masters of debt”, because that is what this is. It is the masters of debt budget 2026. Canadians deserve a government that lives within its means, respects the taxpayers, protects the vulnerable and focuses on fixing the broken foundations of our country before trying to fix everyone else's. It is time to vote down this omnibus bill. It is time to restore fiscal sanity, common sense and hope for Canada.

● (1705)

The Deputy Speaker: Before I go to questions and comments, I just want to remind members not to use props, make references to documents in their hands or make an example by thrusting out documents. The Speaker in the past has found members cannot do that, so members should desist from doing so.

Questions and comments, the hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I find it interesting, how the Conservatives like to talk about debts and deficits, yet when I take a look at the last 19 years that there were Conservatives in government, for 16 of those, there were deficits. When we take a look at the difference between that and Liberal governments, in particular this government, we find that the money being used is to build a stronger Canada by investing in major projects or individuals for affordability by putting money in their pockets, or it is providing benefits to small businesses to expand their companies and to grow their companies. By doing that, we are creating more economic opportunity and more jobs. What do the Conservatives have against jobs?

● (1710)

Costas Menegakis: Mr. Speaker, I find that question quite comical, quite frankly. The member was sitting in the House when we passed the budget that balanced Canada's finances in 2015. When we had a deficit, I would remind the member, in 2014, the deficit was $1.4 billion. There are members sitting over there comparing a deficit of $1.4 billion to deficits that are at a third of a trillion dollars over the next five years. It is comical. One cannot hide behind the numbers. The numbers are real. They are there.

[*Translation*]

Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, one of the Bloc Québécois's demands for the budget was to increase the health transfer escalator to 6% to try to cover the natural increase in health costs. That is not in the budget at all. Starting in 2028, transfers will drop from 5% to 3%, which would be absolutely untenable for Quebec, for the provinces and for health care systems everywhere. In fact, we know that the deficit will exceed the cost of the health transfer starting next year.

What does my colleague think about that?

[*English*]

Costas Menegakis: Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is too busy being Santa Claus, going around the world and handing out Canadians' money.

The hon. member correctly points out that we should be looking at putting more money in health care and less money in interest payments, spending more money on the health of Canadians and less money on sending it around the world to places that, really, Canadians do not want their money going to. I would agree with the member. There should be a bigger investment in health care in the country. It is the number one priority that we should have, looking after the health and welfare of our Canadian citizens.

[*Translation*]

Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend my colleague on his speech. He was quite clear about this government's inability to maintain a balanced budget.

What does he think the consequences will be for future generations of young Canadians if we pass a budget like the one before us this evening?

[*English*]

Costas Menegakis: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's question speaks to the core of the problem. Sadly, our Canadian youth, our young people, are losing hope. They are looking for places to live outside of Canada. They cannot buy a home or live in the area in which they grew up. They cannot find a job. They are in a competitive market. Youth unemployment today is at 14% across the country, hovering closer to 18% or 19% in the greater Toronto area, where I am. Young people look to the budget to see that there is some relief for them. There is absolutely no relief whatsoever for them. They are looking for hope. They are not getting it. It is called "Masters of our destiny". It really should be called "masters of debt", because that is what the Liberal government is. It is a master of debt.

[*Translation*]

Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this budget is misleading. The title of this budget, "Masters of our destiny," is completely misleading. We cannot be masters of our destiny if we do not master our debt.

Unfortunately, ever since this internationally renowned banker became Prime Minister, the debt has skyrocketed. Who would have thought that this internationally renowned banker would do worse than the drama teacher? Back in 2015, when the Conservatives were in power, there was a zero deficit. How much was the debt? It stood at $616 billion. Under Justin Trudeau, what happened? We ended up with a $40-billion deficit, and the debt stood at $1.3 trillion. We thought that a world-renowned banker would be able to get things under control, but no, it is even worse. Today, we are left with $1.5 trillion in debt and a $60-billion deficit. Three years from now, we will be paying $85 billion in interest annually because of the Liberals' mismanagement.

Now more than ever, we need to get our act together, because when we live beyond our means and run up deficits, we are passing the bill on to our children, our grandchildren, and our great-grandchildren.

● (1715)

The Deputy Speaker: It being 5:15 p.m., it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of Ways and Means Motion No. 12.

The question is on the motion.

[*English*]

If a member participating in person wishes that the motion be carried or carried on division, or if a member of a recognized party participating in person wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, as tempting as it is to get it carried on division, I suspect the will may not be there, so I would ask to have a recorded division.

The Deputy Speaker: Call in the members.

● (1800)

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

(Division No. 196)

YEAS

Members

Acan
Ali
Anandasangaree
Bains
Bardeesy
Beech
Belanger (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River)
Bittle
Carr
Chagger
Chang
Chatel
Chi
Clark
Cormier
Dabrusin
Danko
Deschênes-Thériault
Dhaliwal
Diab
Duguid
Ehsassi
Eyolfson
Fanjoy
Fonseca
Fragiskatos
Fry
Gaheer
Gasparro
Gladu
Gould
Greaves
Gull-Masty
Hanley
Hepfner
Hodgson
Housefather
Iacono
Jeneroux
Joseph
Kelloway
Klassen
Lalonde
Lamoureux
Lapointe (Sudbury)
Lauzon
Lavoie
Leitão
Long
Ma
MacDonald (Cardigan)
Malette (Bay of Quinte)
Martin
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLean (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke)
Mendès
Miedema
Mingarelli
Myles
Nathan
Noormohamed
Oliphant
O'Rourke
Petitpas Taylor
Provost
Rana
Rochefort
Al Soud
Alty
Auguste
Baker
Battiste
Begum
Bendayan
Caley
Casey
Champagne
Chartrand
Chenette
Church
Connors
Coteau
Dandurand
d'Entremont
Desrochers
Dhillon
Duclos
Earle
El-Khoury
Fancy
Fergus
Fortier
Fraser
Fuhr
Gainey
Gerretsen
Gobeil
Grant
Guay
Hajdu
Harrison
Hirtle
Hogan
Hussen
Jaczek
Joly
Kayabaga
Khalid
Koutrakis
Lambropoulos
Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles)
Lattanzio
Lavack
LeBlanc
Lightbound
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maloney
McKelvie
McKnight
Ménard
Michel
Miller
Morrissey
Naqvi
Nguyen
Ntumba
Olszewski
Osborne
Powlowski
Ramsay
Robertson
Romanado
Sahota
Sarai
Sawatzky
Sgro
Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Solomon
St-Pierre
Tesser Derksen
Turnbull
van Koeverden
Villeneuve
Yip
Zerucelli
Saini
Sari
Schiefke
Shahnawaz
Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sodhi
Sousa
Sudds
Thompson
Valdez
Vandenbeld
Weiler
Zahid
Zuberi– — 162

NAYS

Members

Aboultaif
Albas
Anderson
Arnold
Bailey
Barrett
Beaulieu
Berthold
Bezan
Blanchette-Joncas
Bonk
Bragdon
Brunelle-Duceppe
Caputo
Champoux
Cobena
Cooper
Davidson
Dawson
Deltell
Deschênes
Doherty
Epp
Falk (Provencher)
Garon
Gazan
Gill (Calgary Skyview)
Gill (Windsor West)
Gill (Abbotsford—South Langley)
Goodridge
Groleau
Gunn
Ho
Holman
Jansen
Johns
Khanna
Kirkland
Konanz
Kramp-Neuman
Kuruc
Kwan
Lantsman
Lawrence
Lemire
Lewis (Essex)
Lloyd
Mahal
Malette (Kapuskasing—Timmins—Mushkegowuk)
May
McCauley
McLean (Calgary Centre)
Melillo
Aitchison
Allison
Anstey
Baber
Barlow
Barsalou-Duval
Bélanger (Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt)
Bexte
Blanchet
Bonin
Borrelli
Brassard
Calkins
Chambers
Chong
Cody
Dancho
Davies (Niagara South)
DeBellefeuille
DeRidder
Diotte
Dowdall
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster—Meadow Lake)
Fortin
Gaudreau
Genuis
Gill (Brampton West)
Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan)
Godin
Gourde
Guglielmin
Hallan
Hoback
Jackson
Jivani
Kelly
Kibble
Kmiec
Kram
Kronis
Kusie
Lake
Larouche
Lawton
Leslie
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Lobb
Majumdar
Mantle
Mazier
McKenzie
McPherson
Menegakis

Moore	Morin
Morrison	Motz
Muys	Nater
Normandin	Patzer
Paul-Hus	Perron
Poilievre	Redekopp
Reid	Rempel Garner
Reynolds	Richards
Roberts	Rood
Ross	Rowe
Ruff	Scheer
Schmale	Seeback
Shipley	Simard
Small	Steinley
Ste-Marie	Stevenson
Strahl	Strauss
Stubbs	Thériault
Thomas	Tochor
Tolmie	Uppal
Van Popta	Vien
Vis	Warkentin
Waugh	Williamson
Zimmer– — 151	

PAIRED

Members

Anand	Au
Baldinelli	Block
Blois	Dalton
Duncan	Dzerowicz
Fisher	Gallant
Hardy	Idlout
McGuinty	Plamondon
Royer	Watchorn– — 16

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*English*]

STAND ON GUARD ACT

Sandra Cobena (Newmarket—Aurora, CPC) moved that Bill C-270, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (defence of person), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

She said: Mr. Speaker, since I was elected to the House, I have had the privilege of speaking with so many Canadians. They speak about the cost of living, about their children and about the future of this country, but they consistently speak about something more fundamental. They speak about the fear that the place they have always considered their safe place may no longer be as secure. That place is their home.

There are certain things in life that should not require explanation. A family should be able to sleep peacefully at night. A person should be able to close the door of their home and know that within those walls, they have a right to protect the people they love. However, across our country, Canadians have seen enough cases where a homeowner is dragged through the justice system only to prove that they had been protecting their family from a criminal breaking into their home.

Canadians are reasonably asking whether our laws adequately protect them in the place where they should feel the safest. That is why I introduced my private member's bill, the stand on guard act. It would give special legal recognition to something Canadians have always understood: Our home is our safe place. It is, after all, what we teach our children, that there is nowhere else in the world where they are safer than at home in the arms of mom and dad. This same home deserves special protection under our laws. The legislation before us would strengthen protection for law-abiding Canadians who are forced to defend themselves or their family during a home invasion.

Consider a mother asleep in her home. It is 2 a.m., and her children are sleeping down the hall. Suddenly she hears glass breaking. She hears footsteps. Someone is inside her home. She does not know who he is. She does not know if he is armed. She does not know what he intends to do. She knows only one thing: Her children are in danger. She has seconds, not minutes and not hours, to decide what to do. In those seconds, she must act.

Now consider what happens afterwards. It is bed time again. What does she say to a child who wants to know why locking the door will keep them safe tonight when it did not last night? The legal process rolls. Statements are taken, and the police reports are submitted.

In York region, 43 home invasions took place in 2025 alone. Under our current laws, whether the force the mother used was reasonable may be judged against a long list of circumstances: the size and physical ability of the people involved, the presence of weapons, the nature of the threat and the alternatives that may have been available. These considerations have their place in the law, but there is something profoundly unreasonable about asking a frightened mother, awakened in the darkness, to make judgements that lawyers and judges may spend hours examining in the calm of the light of day.

The criminal had the luxury of choosing his actions. The mother had no choice but to defend her children. That difference matters, and our laws should recognize it. We want to change the law so Canadians can act with certainty when their loved ones are put in danger.

Our amendment to the Criminal Code would protect the innocent in three ways. First, if a violent intruder breaks into somebody's home and threatens their family, the law would finally be on their side, not on the intruder's side. Second, it would presume reasonableness. The force used to stop a home invader who poses a threat would be deemed reasonable. There would be no more second-guessing after the fact. Third, it would end legal limbo. Canadians defending themselves should not spend years in court, while criminals walk free. This proposed law would give clarity to citizens, police and prosecutors.

The stand on guard act recognizes the difference and would establish two important legal presumptions. First, when someone knowingly and unlawfully enters an occupied home, the law should presume that the intruder intends to use force against the people inside unless the evidence establishes otherwise. Second, when a person uses force to defend themselves or their loved one in those circumstances, the force would be presumed reasonable unless the evidence establishes otherwise. This would extend to lethal force as it may be needed in self-defence.

● (1805)

It is important to understand what this means. It is not a licence for violence. It is not an unlimited right to use force. The presumption can be rebutted. Evidence still matters.

Courts retain the responsibility to examine the facts, but the law would begin by recognizing a fundamental difference: One person chose to violate the security of another's home. The other was forced to respond. The law should stand with those forced to defend themselves or a loved one in those circumstances. That force should be presumed reasonable unless the evidence shows otherwise.

This is about restoring common sense to our justice system. A person's home is their safe place and deserves special legal protection under Canadian law. The bill would send an unequivocal message to police, prosecutors and judges that our homes benefit from unique legal standing. A home invasion terrorizes not only the victims but also the entire community, who also feel less safe. Equally, it would send a message to criminals that the law stands with the person who is forced to defend themselves and their family.

Canadians want the natural truth set out clearly in our Criminal Code. If someone knowingly and unlawfully enters my home, the force used to protect me or my family is presumed to be reasonable, full stop.

This bill is simply in recognition of the truth we already know. A person's home is not a sidewalk. It is not a bar. It is not a workplace. A home is something altogether different. It is where people build a life, where children take their first steps, where families gather around the dinner table, where parents sit at the edge of a child's bed and whisper good night. It is where we are the most vulnerable.

We trust that the walls around us mean something and that the door we close at night marks a boundary the law will respect. When someone knowingly and unlawfully crosses that boundary, the law should recognize the gravity of what has happened.

That is the principle at the heart of the bill. A person's home is their safe place, and it deserves special protection under Canadian law. Right now, a person's home does not have special legal protection under our laws. The stand on guard act would change that and enshrine it in the Criminal Code. Yes, we know this deep inside. A home is special. It is our human right to defend it. It is our place.

Until recently, Canadians never had to even think about home invasions, but after a decade of bad Liberal policies, now we do. We need to enshrine rights that are so deeply human that they are written in our conscience and our laws. We need our Criminal Code to actually say clearly what we all know is true.

When I introduced this bill on March 12, I was overwhelmed by the attention it received. Five days later, there was a home invasion in Vaughan. What was the headline? “No charges against Ontario resident who shot and injured alleged home invader: police”. It was almost like a sigh of relief that this time, the homeowner was not charged. It was also a reflection that Canadians are particularly interested and concerned with self-defence in the context of a home invasion. That article went on to state that, “Ari Goldkind, a criminal defence lawyer, said he finds it 'refreshing' that the police did not charge the homeowner.” The article also recounts, “Last month, prosecutors withdrew charges against a man in Lindsay, Ont., who had been accused of assaulting an alleged home intruder in August 2025.” In this case, the home intruder came into his home with a crossbow, and the victim needed to defend himself with a knife.

Canadians have had enough of laws that leave them uncertain of their rights when they are most vulnerable. They want to know that when a criminal violates the safety of their home, the law recognizes the difference between the person who created the danger and the family forced to confront it.

● (1810)

That is why I am bringing forward the stand on guard act. It is to give a family defending their home a clear legal presumption of reasonableness, while preserving the ability of courts to consider evidence to the contrary. Someone's home is their safe place and it deserves special legal protection under our laws. This legislation would not create a blanket immunity and would not import U.S.-style “stand your ground” laws. It would be a targeted Canadian clarification anchored in the existing section 34 reasonableness standard.

The stand on guard principle would affirm the home is a unique protected space; make it clear in the law that when a violent intruder breaks into someone's home and threatens their family, the law is on their side, not the intruder's side; if someone uses force to stop a home invader who poses a threat, that force will be presumed reasonable; it would be an unequivocal message to police, prosecutors and judges that a home benefits from a unique legal standing; it would signal legal certainty that protects families and discourages offenders; it would preserve safeguards or proportionality and individualized assessment; and it would improve transparency and public understanding of self-defence in the home, reinforcing confidence in the administration of justice.

Canadians are calling for stronger self-defence laws in a home. Conservatives have heard that and know that our self-defence laws need to treat a home differently and uniquely. The stand on guard act is not about right or left. It is about whether we hear the call from Canadians to strengthen self-defence laws in the unique context of a home invasion. The question confronting us is simple: Do we believe that a home is a safe place that deserves special legal protection under our laws, yes or no? I hope the answer from every member of this House is yes. A vote for yes means this bill goes to committee to be studied and refined. A vote no means the government does not even hear the call of Canadians to strengthen self-defence laws.

Someone's home should be their safe place, not the place where the law turns against them for protecting the people they love.

● (1815)

Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton—Bkejwanong, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for bringing this bill forward. I am interested to know a couple of things. She talked about the incident where someone shot somebody who was trying to invade their home and they did not get arrested. Does the existing legal framework protect us in that way? What kind of stakeholder engagement has there been? What do the police think? What have you heard?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I remind members to direct questions through the Chair.

The hon. member for Newmarket—Aurora.

Sandra Cobena: Mr. Speaker, there is a difference between the current self-defence laws and what the bill is proposing. The difference is that there is a clear presumption up front. If someone defends themselves or their family inside of their own home, it is presumed that the force they use is reasonable.

In terms of stakeholders and feedback from the broader community and police officers, it has been nothing but positive. In my speech, I mentioned how popular this was. I think it is because it is such a priority for the community.

[*Translation*]

Alexis Deschênes (Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Listuguj, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her contribution to the debate. In her speech, she mentioned the case in Ontario. An individual is the victim of a home invasion, grabs a gun, shoots the intruder, and seriously injures them. That person pleads self-defence and is acquitted. This example demonstrates that the Criminal Code currently provides people with the necessary certainty and security to defend their property.

Has my colleague looked into the impact of what she is proposing? This type of law was implemented in Florida, and it was found to have increased the rate of gun-related homicides, because the argument is that as soon as someone enters without permission, the homeowner can shoot them in the head and be cleared of any wrongdoing.

[*English*]

Sandra Cobena: Mr. Speaker, the case in the example the member cited ignores one fact. When a person is charged, even if the charges are eventually dropped, they are dragged through the justice system. There are cases where someone had been in jail for six months but the charges were not dropped until two years later. They lost their job, and, of course, they had to spend thousands of dollars in legal fees only to prove that they had been defending themselves.

That is what this law would prevent. It would prevent lawful Canadians from having to be dragged through the justice system only to prove that they had been defending themselves and their family.

Michael Guglielmin (Vaughan—Woodbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague comes from the area in York region in which I reside. There has been an increase in home invasions in this region. More importantly, we are starting to see a trend in which citizens who live there do not feel safe in their own home.

There have been countless examples in victim impact statements after home invasions of the trauma that is inflicted on the family. There is a calling by many of citizens for the need to feel they can defend themselves without facing undue process or being dragged through very complicated and expensive legal proceedings simply for having defended themselves.

Could the member speak about the need for this clarity in the law, and what that would signal to individuals in their own home if they happen to face a circumstance where some intruders enter their home with weapons that may be concealed, as they are in a lot of cases?

Sandra Cobena: Mr. Speaker, the member is entirely right. When a home invasion happens, there is a ripple effect in terms of the impact. It is not just the family whose home is invaded. It is also the broader community that is frightened. There have been a number of cases within the GTA, the riding the member represents.

This bill would confirm that a home deserves special protections under the law. A home is not the same as a bar. It is not the same as a public park or even a commercial property. The home is different. It is where families are most vulnerable, and they deserve the clarity that they can defend themselves when an intruder comes in.

● (1820)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is very important, in debating this issue, that we look at the issue in its simplest form. Our laws today already guarantee and provide the right to defend oneself when there is someone in one's home. It already exists today.

An hon. member: Not true.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Yes, it is true.

Mr. Speaker, if we look at the types of legislation the government has brought in to date, we see there are all kinds of ways the government has proactively dealt with making our communities safe. I want to go through a number of those initiatives, so that we can clearly demonstrate that we understand what the concerns of Canadians are, as a whole, when it comes to the issue of safety.

That is why I want to start off by making it perfectly clear that Canadians have the right to self-defence in their homes. I will go through some of the criteria that enable them to have that level of confidence. In the interim, I want to pick up on the other point, in terms of legislation we have dealt with. We have even passed private members' bills, and even opposition private members' bills, on the issue of crime and our communities and how we can make them safer.

This is not a bill in which the member has clearly demonstrated whether there are any provinces that are onside. We need to recognize that it is a joint responsibility.

In our judicial system, it is the police who actually look for the charges to be laid, supported by the Crown. It is our courts and our judges who have the discretionary authority to ultimately make the determination. We already have the criminal law today that provides that right, so I do not see why the legislation is actually warranted.

We can look at how seriously the government has taken the issue of crime and making our communities safer. All we need to do is look at the legislative agenda. I would challenge the member who is proposing the bill to tell me of another prime minister in generations who has brought forward such a legislative agenda to improve and make our communities safer.

I could talk about Bill C-16, for example. It recognizes, for the first time, the issue of femicide. It deals with coercive behaviour in relationships. For me, personally, I like that it reinstates many mandatory minimums. That is Bill C-16 in a nutshell. I believe that at the end of the day, we will see a direct benefit from Bill C-16.

Again, with Bill C-270, which we have before us, I will continue to reflect on the fact that it is just not required. It makes a powerful statement, yes, but is it actually required? I would say no.

We could talk about my favourite piece of legislation, which we had to fight extensively to get through the House. That was the bail reform legislation.

● (1825)

As an example, the member asked me to tell him what provinces are onside. They asked if the chiefs of police and law enforcement in general are onside, and if stakeholders are onside. We can contrast that to Bill C-14, the bail reform legislation, which was widely supported. Provinces and municipalities, including my home province of Manitoba, were calling for that legislation, and we brought it forward. The legislation was of a substantial nature, and interestingly enough, yesterday, on November 18, there was a report on CBC. The headline included a quote from a Newfoundland and Labrador judge who denied bail to a man who bragged about Canada's easy release. The quote was, “Not anymore”, and it continued, “Justice Vikas Khaladkar cites new law in denying bail for repeat offender”.

As a member of the government, I can assure the member opposite that every member of the Liberal caucus wants to make our communities safer. That is why the government was very frustrated with the official opposition standing in the way of passing Bill C-14. It took a great deal of effort from the government to get it through. That was the comment made by the judge just yesterday, talking about how that bill has made a difference. This was legislation for a change that was widely supported, not only by our constituents but also by the many different stakeholders. There was no misleading information going into it. We had the confidence of our judicial system, whether it was judges, law enforcement or Crowns, but we recognized there was a need to change. All of the different groups made the case for it. The government recognized it, and we have brought forward a number of pieces of legislation to the legislature, or the House, for passage.

There were others. One bill is still in the Senate, Bill C-22, on lawful access. I do not know how many times I have heard, not only on this bill but also on other pieces of legislation, the minister responsible for crime talking about how important this legislation was to all of Canada in making our communities safer and that we need to see it pass. It is still in the Senate. We would like to see it pass in a timely fashion, and hopefully, it will.

Bill C-9 and Bill C-12 are to make our communities safer. As I pointed out at the beginning of my speech, we have had private member's bills, some from the opposition benches, all dealing with crime. We supported them and got them through or pushed to get them through. If we look at the current law in place, it is very easy to make the statement that Canadians already have the right to defend themselves in their homes. We believe and have confidence in our judiciary system administering that law appropriately. We are not going to interfere and challenge them to the degree Conservatives do based on raising money for their party. That seems to be the motivating factor far too often when it comes to crime.

● (1830)

[*Translation*]

Alexis Deschênes (Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Listuguj, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am going to tell two fictional stories. They will help everyone better understand what is being proposed in Bill C-270.

Here is the first scenario. I am at home, and someone opens the door and enters uninvited. He is armed and approaches me. He appears threatening and, to protect myself, I punch him. He falls and dies. I could be charged, but I think I have a good chance of being acquitted under the current concept of self-defence in the Criminal Code. The conditions set out in section 34 of the Criminal Code must be met. First, I believed on reasonable grounds that a threat of force was being made against me. Second, I acted to defend or protect myself, not to get revenge. Third, I acted reasonably in the circumstances, that is, I threw a punch to overcome the threat. I think I would be acquitted.

Now for the second scenario. I am incredibly fortunate to have three extraordinary, wonderful boys. They are great kids and have lots of friends. In my village of Carleton-sur-Mer, my house is always full because my sons are constantly inviting their friends over to eat, study or spend the night. When there is a party somewhere in the village, it always ends up at our house. There is a steady stream of people coming and going. Let us say that one of my sons' friends forgets his shoes and decides to come back and get them at 9:30 p.m. Since he is used to stopping in, he opens the door without knocking and comes in to get his shoes. It just so happens that I have a gun and I shoot him, because this young man entered my home knowingly and without having the legal right to do so.

If Bill C-270 is passed, I think I would be acquitted. What Bill C-270 states is that, when someone knowingly enters a house without being entitled by law to do so, it can be presumed that the person entered with intent to use force against me. The presumption referred to in Bill C-270 is what will allow me to use lethal force against anyone who, without having the legal right to do so, has entered a residential property in which I am lawfully present. Is that what we want? Of course not.

Basically, Bill C-270 gives people permission to kill anyone who enters their home uninvited. It is a bit like the wild west. As I said in the beginning, people have the right to defend themselves under the self-defence provisions of the Criminal Code. However, I think that it is worrisome to go so far as to presume that there is an intent to use force and justifying the use of lethal force without taking into account the context. That is not going to solve any real problems and will mainly lead to tragic mistakes or deaths, which is not what we want. The purpose of criminal law is to keep people safe. Telling people that they can use lethal force against anyone who enters their home uninvited will not make our society safer. It will do the opposite.

Other countries, including the United States, have tried this approach. If we do a little research, we find that the only state where this is still legal is Texas. Florida tried implementing this type of legislation and found that it led to a significant increase in the rate of firearm-related homicides. In 57% of cases, there was clear evidence that the person claiming self-defence could have retreated to safety without attacking.

● (1835)

What is dangerous about this bill is that it opens the door to homicides.

If we look at the law as it currently stands, a contextual analysis is already carried out. That is why I do not think this bill solves anything. Currently, there is the defence of the person, but there is also the defence of property. This defence is also allowed in the Criminal Code. If we think that someone is going to damage our property, we can also use force to stop the threat.

However, the Criminal Code provides certain safeguards. My colleague spoke about the uncertainty surrounding all this, but I would not call it uncertainty. On the contrary, the objective is simply to ensure that people are not permitted to go too far and seek revenge by using disproportionate force.

The purpose of self-defence or the defence of property is to stop the threat, to stop the use of force. The Criminal Code provides for a way to determine self-defence. As I said, there are three criteria: the person must believe that force will be used against them or that there is a threat; the person must act for the purpose of defending or protecting themselves; and the act committed is reasonable.

For a determination of whether a person acted reasonably, the Criminal Code already sets out a number of factors that can be used to contextualize the behaviour. For example, the person's gender can be taken into consideration. Certain subjective criteria can be used for contextualization purposes. If a person experiences fear when someone else might not, the nature of the force or threat would be examined, along with the extent to which the use of force was imminent. The judge would also consider the history of any relationship between the parties to the incident to determine whether the use of force was reasonable. For example, if the person reacted very quickly but there was a history of violence or intimidation, the reaction could be considered reasonable in the circumstances. The judge will also examine any history of interaction, as well as the nature and proportionality of the person's response, along with whether the person was acting in response to a use or threat of force that they knew was lawful. If so, that complicates the matter.

Nothing is perfect, but the Criminal Code does currently allow someone who is the victim of a home invasion, which is the type of case our colleague mentioned, to defend themselves if they have a reasonable fear, and to put a stop to that threat.

What more could we want?

I think that the status quo is fine, but when we look at Bill C-270, there really is a presumption of intent that changes the legal analysis and sends a message that, in my view, should not exist.

That is why the Bloc Québécois is voting against this bill.

[*English*]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it was a night like any other for the Morton family, sound asleep in their beds, assuming they were safe. Then, shortly after 4 a.m., the door smashed open. Masked and armed criminals jolted them awake by forcing themselves in with a hammer. They shot the father, David Morton, and his two daughters. They attacked everyone in the house with hammers. In mere minutes, the place where the family should have felt most at home, quite literally, and most safe turned into a crime scene.

No family should have to wake up to this kind of horrifying nightmare, but this is the reality after 11 years of Liberal laws and the resulting chaos. Since 2015, violent crime is up in Canada by 57%, sexual assault by 77%, human trafficking by 119%, and extortion, which, by the way, is a home invasion-related offence, by 297%. Canadians deserve to be safe in their homes and on the streets. Instead, they worry about the sound of breaking glass in the middle of the night.

How did we get here? Law after law after law that Liberals have passed siding with criminals and turning them loose on our streets have awakened a monster. Bill C-75, regarding Liberal bail, which requires judges to release repeat offenders at the earliest opportunity under the least onerous conditions, which is quoted right out of the act, often allows the same offender to be released hundreds of times and rearrested in between those releases, punctuating our society with endless crime.

Bill C-5 removed mandatory jail time for serious offences and allowed serious criminals to serve their sentences in their living room. The present Prime Minister put forward Bill C-16, allowing judges to ignore almost all mandatory prison sentences in the Criminal Code, including those for extortion, firearms, human trafficking and aggravated sexual assault with a gun. Even the Liberals' so-called bail reform, Bill C-14, continues to allow repeat offenders to be released onto our streets again and again.

The law is not on our side. Let us be clear. The law is not defending the Canadian people, and it does not let them defend themselves. The current laws related to self-defence and home defence are too vague, leave too much discretion and risk dragging law-abiding people through a devastating and expensive legal process and potentially sending them to jail for the mere offence of protecting themselves and their property. Courts will decide if self-defence was justified, whether the person acted on "reasonable grounds", but, of course, no one has time to think about the legal definition of reasonable grounds when someone has smashed through a window and crawled with a weapon into their children's bedroom. Their priority in that circumstance is to protect themselves and their family.

However, when we raised the issue, the Liberal justice minister said we were trying to create what he called the Wild West. He should tell that to the family in Vaughan who watched as their father and husband was taken from them. In August of last year, three armed robbers forced their way into the family's home, the place where they celebrate birthdays and where they sit around the dinner table, where they are supposed to feel safe. One intruder held the daughter at gunpoint. The father did what any parent would do. He stepped in between the gunman and his daughter, and for that, he was shot and killed. His daughter watched as he was murdered. They saw him lose his life. The primary suspect was there because he was out on bail. Of course he was out on bail. Who is not out on bail that is committing crimes? In fact, he had been released on bail not once, but four times.

After 11 years, Minister, this is the Wild West. The Wild West is everywhere in our streets. Just this month, at a grocery store in Prince George, British Columbia, three criminals tried to leave the store with $2,000 of unpaid groceries. An ordinary workday quickly turned violent. When employees stood up to them, they were attacked. One employee and a 20-year-old manager were attacked. That young manager showed up to work to do his job and earn a paycheque. Instead, he went to the hospital with multiple injuries. One of the men charged was a repeat offender, again released under the Liberal catch-and-release system.

● (1840)

That is why Conservatives have put forward concrete solutions to keep people safe in their homes and on the streets.

I am so proud of the hon. member for Newmarket—Aurora for putting forward this castle law so that people can stand their ground and keep their families safe. Her proposed bill would change subsection 34(2) of the Criminal Code regarding the use of force, including lethal force. If it is used against someone who has illegally and knowingly entered one's home, it is presumed that someone is acting lawfully in applying a counterforce, including a lethal counterforce. Simply put, if someone knowingly and unlawfully enters someone's home, they should be allowed to use any force that they deem necessary to protect their family.

Liberals and others in the House might say, "Does that not put someone's life in danger, if the homeowner potentially overreacts?" I have a solution for that. If someone does not want to be harmed by someone in their house, they should not break in. It is that simple. We want to ensure that, if somebody stands up in the middle of the night and makes the split-second judgment that is potentially necessary to protect their home against someone who has invaded it, they will not face the grind of our legal system and potentially jail time.

I should also point out that this bill would add to the stand-alone Criminal Code offence that the safe at home act would add to. That is another Conservative bill that would make more penalties apply to people who invade homes. We have a double approach to protecting homes. One approach is to give people the power to defend themselves. The second is to make sure that anyone who invades faces a minimum sentence of five years and a maximum sentence of life in prison with a reverse onus bail provision.

We call on Liberals and all members of Parliament to support these bills in addition to the jail not bail act, which the Liberals voted against. We asked them to revive that bill. It would crack down on repeat violent offenders and strengthen bail laws. It would repeal Liberal bail. This is the so-called "principle of restraint" that requires judges to release accused "at the earliest opportunity under the least onerous conditions". We should repeal that and allow judges to put public safety first when assessing whether the accused is a danger to society.

We also ask the government to revive the bill it defeated, the one law for all bill. It would ensure that judges could no longer give a discount sentence to someone on the basis that they are visiting Canada and applying for immigration. Right now, judges are lowering sentences for visiting foreign nationals who are not permanent residents or citizens so that they will not jeopardize their immigration application or, in other words, to keep them in Canada. If a foreign national visiting our country commits a serious crime, they should do the full sentence and be immediately deported from our country. Foreign nationals who commit crimes should not get lollipop sentences just because they are not Canadian citizens or permanent residents.

While Conservatives continue to put law-abiding Canadians first, the Liberals are putting criminals first, and enough is enough. Canadians deserve an end to the revolving door. They deserve to know that criminals will go behind bars. The law-abiding, decent, honourable people who work hard, pay their taxes and play by the rules should expect to live in safety and tranquility. If, God forbid that moment ever comes, someone invades their most sacred place for their family, they should also know that they can defend themselves using any force necessary. We would empower Canadians to defend themselves, their families and their homes, using any force they deem necessary to stop criminals, because it is time for the government and the country to stand on the side of law-abiding, innocent Canadians, especially in their homes.

● (1845)

Doug Eyolfson (Winnipeg West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to rise to speak to this private member's bill, Bill C-270, an act to amend the Criminal Code in relation to defence of person. Bill C-270 was introduced by the member for Newmarket—Aurora, and it proposes to reform Canada's self-defence law. The intended objective of the bill, as I understand it, is to prevent victims of home invasions who act in defence of themselves, their family and their property from being criminally charged.

While I believe this is a well-intentioned attempt to strengthen protection for victims of home invasions, which are terrifying crimes that can have long-lasting and profound effects on victims, I cannot support the bill.

Criminal law is made up of offences and defences. Offences are prohibited acts, done with the required mental state, that carry criminal consequences, including jail time. These include, among many others, assault, manslaughter and murder. Defences, on the other hand, are legal justifications that can block criminal liability for the commission of an offence. This includes self-defence.

Our existing self-defence law shields people who use reasonable defensive force, including lethal force, from criminal liability. More specifically, it permits people to use force if they had a reasonable belief in a threat of harm, they responded defensively and their response was reasonable considering all the circumstances. In assessing whether the use of force was reasonable, the courts will consider a wide range of factors, including the nature and imminence of the threat, whether weapons were involved, the relative physical capabilities of the people involved, and any prior relationship or communication between the parties.

Importantly, the current law favours accused persons in self-defence cases. This is because the prosecutor must not only prove beyond a reasonable doubt that a criminal offence was committed but must also disprove self-defence beyond a reasonable doubt. Put differently, in order to secure a conviction, the prosecutor must prove not only that the person committed an offence but also that they did not do so in self-defence. The burden on the prosecution to secure a conviction is, rightly, very high.

Canada's self-defence law is, in my view, operating effectively and as intended. I am not aware of any case where someone has been convicted of an offence when acting in self-defence. The issue of charging practices is an important but separate issue from the Criminal Code laws that apply to self-defence.

Take, for example, the 2025 home invasion in Lindsay, Ontario, that resulted in a violent altercation between the tenant, Jeremy McDonald, and the intruder, Michael Kyle Breen. Mr. McDonald used a knife to defend himself and left Mr. Breen with serious, life-threatening injuries. While Mr. McDonald was initially charged with aggravated assault and assault with a weapon, the prosecutors ultimately withdrew the charges against him after reviewing all the evidence. The charges against Mr. Breen, including for breaking and entering, were not dropped, and in April 2026 he pleaded guilty.

There was also the 2019 home invasion in Collingwood, Ontario, in which the homeowner, Cameron Gardiner, killed Dean Copkov and Donovan Bass, two masked and armed intruders who broke into his house. This was the result of a struggle between Mr. Gardiner and one of the intruders over a shotgun. While Mr. Gardiner was originally charged with two counts of manslaughter, the charges against him were eventually withdrawn.

In Canada, police lay charges when they have reasonable and probable grounds to believe that a criminal offence has been committed. Defences, such as self-defence, are legal justifications that must be disproved by prosecutors in court. Thorough prosecutorial screening prior to charges being laid reduces the likelihood of charges being improperly laid in self-defence cases, rather than having them withdrawn after the fact and after the damage is done. Being charged with an offence, especially a serious offence such as aggravated assault or manslaughter, can have devastating impacts on a person. In the context of violent home invasions, this can also be retraumatizing for the victims.

Some provinces and territories already require prosecutors to evaluate police evidence to, among other things, determine before criminal charges are laid whether there is a substantial likelihood of conviction. These practices are in constant evolution by law enforcement at the provincial and territorial level.

● (1850)

Bill C-270 proposes to change the existing self-defence law by creating a presumption that the mere fact that a person unlawfully entered house is proof that they intended to use force against someone in that house, and that force used against that person was used in self-defence.

This would make it more difficult to hold those who do not act in self-defence criminally liable for violence committed against a person who unlawfully enters their home. This would capture a broad set of circumstances that would not be limited to violent home invasions, like the ones I just discussed.

Take, for example, a situation where a senior accidentally enters the wrong apartment after getting off the elevator on the wrong floor and is assaulted by the resident, or, in the intimate partner violence context, a situation where a woman goes to her boyfriend's house, an argument breaks out, and he assaults or, worse, kills her but claims that she was there unlawfully since he did not invite her over and she does not live there.

These are two examples of situations where the "intruder" did not pose any threat of harm, yet under Bill C-270, the proposed self-defence law, the violence committed against them would be presumed to be legally justified. Surely this is not the sponsor's intent.

I would like to remind hon. members that the existing self-defence law came to be in 2013, following Parliament's enactment of Bill C-26, an act to amend the Criminal Code, citizen's arrest and the defences of property and persons. This bill was introduced by the Conservative government at the time.

As I stated at the outset of my remarks, a person will, under the current law, be shielded from criminal liability if they acted in self-defence, meaning that they had a reasonable belief in a threat of harm, they responded defensively and their response was reasonable considering all of the circumstances.

I strongly believe that the existing self-defence law strikes the right balance between recognizing that people need to defend themselves in dangerous situations, while ensuring that appropriate limits are placed on the use of force, and particularly on the use of lethal force.

Our self-defence law does not, and should not, permit violence to be committed against someone merely because they trespass. This is why I oppose this bill.

● (1855)

Tamara Kronis (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a home invasion is a truly terrifying thing. Someone has broken into the place where a family is supposed to be safe. A parent may have seconds to decide what to do. They grab whatever blunt object is handy and protect their family as best they can. Afterwards, because of the way our criminal law works, that parent may spend months or years, and thousands of dollars, answering for that decision in court.

Bill C-270 is about presumptions. Under the current law, the court looks at whether someone reasonably believed force was being used or threatened, whether they acted to protect themself or someone else, and whether their response was reasonable in the circumstances. Once there is evidence to support self-defence, the Crown has to disprove it beyond a reasonable doubt, but that does not prevent an investigation, a charge or a costly legal fight.

This bill would change that. It would change subsection 34(2) of the Criminal Code to create two presumptions for unlawful entry into a home. If someone knowingly and unlawfully enters, the law would presume they intended to use force unless there is evidence to the contrary. That is kind of a match for hearing breaking glass in the middle of the night in one's home and hearing someone moving around.

If a resident uses force against someone who has unlawfully entered, the conditions for self-defence would be presumed to be met. That changes the starting point for a court reviewing a frightening, split-second event, and it changes what officers are able to do when they arrive on the scene. It changes the way the whole situation is approached.

The reason that is important is that the legal cost of defending oneself in a self-defence situation can be substantial. One man reported that it cost about $60,000 in legal costs over a two-and-a-half-year fight after men had firebombed his Ontario home and he fired warning shots. He was eventually acquitted of firearms-related charges, and much of his legal bill was covered by supporters. That is one case that shows how costly a legal fight arising from a home attack can become.

I lived through this myself with a friend when I was practising law. It is a terrible experience. In that case, it was someone in my local community. It was 18 months before he even got his cellphone back because the RCMP were investigating whether or not charges would be laid against him.

A person who has just lived through a crime should not have to face years of uncertainty over whether a court will consider that their split-second response was reasonable. What Bill C-270 would do is give clearer recognition in the law and set the presumption where we naturally think it should be. When someone breaks into our home, when someone invades our space, when we are scared, it is natural to do whatever it takes to defend ourselves. It is natural to reach for whatever is at hand. It is natural to act in any way that is open to us, especially if it is a place where we have family who are sleeping.

What this bill would do, and Canadians are behind this, is help bring the law toward the place where a reasonable person would believe it should be. It would make life more secure for people who face uncertainty. It would make it easier for police and our society to act.

I see that I am reaching the end of my time, so I will leave it there. I am thankful for the opportunity to speak to this bill today.

● (1900)

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.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

[*English*]

HEALTH

Helena Konanz (Similkameen—South Okanagan—West Kootenay, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for Canadians, access to health care should never depend on where they live, how old they are or how long they are willing to wait, yet across this country, more Canadians are struggling to access even basic medical care.

I hear from constituents frustrated by the difficulty of finding a family doctor, lengthy delays for specialist appointments, and uncertainty about whether essential services will be available in their communities. The numbers reflect these concerns. A 2025 comparative study by the Fraser Institute found that Canada ranked third in health care spending as a share of its economy among 31 high-income countries with universal health care, yet Canada ranked 27th for doctor availability, 25th for hospital beds, 27th for MRI machines and 28th for CAT scans.

Governments are spending more, but that spending is not translating into timely access to care. In 2023, more than one in four Canadians aged 18 to 34 did not have a regular health care provider, and among those aged 35 to 49, nearly one in five were in the same position.

For those who do not have a family doctor, accessing specialists and diagnostic testing can mean waiting months. A 2025 analysis by the C.D. Howe Institute found that Canada ranked last among 10 comparable countries for timely access to care, with 47% of Canadians waiting at least two months for a specialist appointment.

These delays have real consequences. For someone living with chronic pain or waiting for surgery, months without treatment can mean lost income, reduced mobility and a lower quality of life.

These challenges are particularly pronounced in rural communities, including many in my riding, Similkameen—South Okanagan—West Kootenay. Anyone from my riding who is watching me speak tonight is not surprised. We have received letters from numerous citizens about this.

Penticton Regional Hospital has recently lost its entire team of neurologists, leaving patients with fewer local options for specialized care. Seniors and others requiring ongoing neurological assessments may now have to travel outside their communities to receive treatment. In Oliver, the hospital's emergency department experienced more than 40 unexpected closures in a single year. This leaves residents uncertain about whether emergency care will be available when they need it most.

We cannot continue to accept a high-cost health care system where Canadians still go without a family doctor, wait months without essential treatment or are left wondering whether their local emergency department will be open.

The Liberal government's role in health care recruitment has left too many on the sidelines. With still no sign of promised action, how can the Liberal government justify its federal role in our system, which far too often is leaving Canadians without the care they need when they need it most?

● (1905)

Maggie Chi (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first, I want to thank my fellow HESA member for her question. I always appreciate our collaboration on committee and her thoughtful input on various topics on behalf of her constituents. I really appreciate our work together. We have had good discussions, especially during this fall session, and have had helpful testimonies on the pressures on systems across our provinces and territories. I appreciate her question because it is important.

We are seeing pressures on our system. The Asian population has a complexity of diseases, and access is generally an issue. My friend across the way sees it in her own community. I see it in Ontario as well, where I represent as a member.

In budget 2025, we made a generational investment for building health care infrastructure, with $5 billion committed to work with the provinces and territories. We are having great conversations to see where some of the gaps are. We are working with them collaboratively to see where investment should happen. In this budget, we have also extended mental health services and home care support with the provinces and territories, with $1.2 billion, as we examine the system as a whole.

We have also had discussions in committee on foreign credentialing. We have seen good results from the provinces and different regions. We have heard from the Medical Council of Canada about its efforts in physician registry, on how it is trying to have a good line of sight on physicians across Canada, and how we can have those workforce planning pieces, which are very important.

I also want to mention that, last week, students from the Canadian Federation of Medical Students were on the Hill advocating for issues that matter to them. We heard unique perspectives from students in training, residents in training, on where they see improvements could happen, where they are seeing the access points and the policies we should have non-partisan collaboration on. One of the pieces they advocated for was having connected health data.

Bill S-5, which is going through the House now, and the member opposite spoke very thoughtfully to the bill, would enable a lot of the data connectivity piece for the visibility of our health data and make sure people have the autonomy to access it. It would unlock innovation. Having automated, good-quality data would enable researchers to conduct research that would benefit our population. It would attract companies to invest in Canada. It would also give a boost to our modernization effort in the system. To support provinces and territories in this effort, we are in constant discussion with them, and there are different pressures. Different provinces experience different complexities and pressure points. As with the member's community, Ontario and a number of provinces, there are different experiences.

There are also efforts to make sure we have a good health care work force with the investments in TMU and York University to build out the medical schools with a focus on providing primary care at a community level.

Helena Konanz: Mr. Speaker, in my riding, people are struggling to find family doctors, waiting months for specialist appointments and travelling long distances just to receive basic medical care. There could be lots of excuses, but it is getting worse and worse. In many communities, even access to emergency services is uncertain, with hospitals facing repeated closures and shortages of medical staff.

We need to do something now. Health care should not simply exist in principle. It should be available in practice. Canadians deserve timely, reliable care, regardless of where they live or their circumstances. A health care system cannot truly be universal if the people it is meant to serve cannot access it.

● (1910)

Maggie Chi: Mr. Speaker, health care delivery is a provincial and territorial responsibility, but patients experience it as a whole. It is so important that we coordinate all our efforts, from the federal government, from provincial and territorial governments, and at the community level, so that there is service provided, regardless of where one's entry point or access point is. As well, rural and remote communities have very unique challenges, such as connectivity and transportation, and we have to be also mindful of that. There are multiple levels of effort to improve on that.

I look forward to continuing to work with my colleague across the way on this very timely and important issue.

THE ECONOMY

Pat Kelly (Calgary Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am back here for an adjournment debate, having received an unsatisfactory response to my question in question period, which was regarding affordability. Before Thanksgiving, I asked the government about affordability. I brought to its attention the rising price of Thanksgiving ingredients such as turkey. The government has made so many different claims about affordability and its response over the last number of years, yet the prices continue to go up and to put pressure on Canadians.

It was, I do not know how many, perhaps three or four years ago, at Thanksgiving, when the finance minister, who was then the industry minister, was going to rein in the grocery stores and give them a stern talking to. He was blaming big grocery at the time for the high prices of groceries.

We have heard the Prime Minister ask Canadians to judge him by the prices at the grocery store. The price at the grocery store for turkey had gone up 10% the year before that, and it also went up 10% year over year. If the Prime Minister truly wished to be judged by the prices at the grocery stores, well, the judgment is in, and it is not good.

The response talked about external factors, but we in Canada have seen over such a long, sustained period of time the financial mismanagement of the government and the inflationary pressures that this puts on the economy. Since I put this question, we of course have had the budget, and this budget offers nothing to alleviate the financial stresses on our economy. It piles on a staggering amount of debt. The government projects $765 billion in additional borrowing over the budget horizon. It is staggering: $150 billion in new borrowing this year, the year ending March 2027, the year that we are already almost all the way through.

It used to be that we would get the deficit figure. The deficit figure is bad enough at $62.3 billion. It is double the deficit that the last finance minister actually resigned over rather than preside over tabling an economic statement containing such a high deficit. We have doubled that deficit. We have seen that the commitment of the Prime Minister during the election, to spend less, has been broken. We have a $62.3-billion deficit. However, that is only part of the story. The government is actually going to borrow $150 billion this year.

We have never seen such a divergence between the raw deficit, which is bad enough, and all this other off-balance-sheet borrowing. Where have we heard that phrase before, where we borrow over here and create liability off the books? Bankers did that to the financial system in the run-up to the collapse in 2008. Now we are seeing this again, where the government can try to trick Canadians into not realizing how much debt the government is taking on.

What is going to happen if the off-balance-sheet entities that are adding to the borrowing requirements of the government cannot service debt? I mean, it all ends up coming back as a draw on the consolidated revenue of the Government of Canada, which is already spending more on debt service than it does on health transfers.

● (1915)

Tom Osborne (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are concerned about the cost of living for Canadians across the country. Canadians continue to worry about the cost of living. The government recognizes that these are pressures on Canadians. It is not isolated to Canada. These problems are global. We have recently seen it in the midterms in the United States, based on the cost of living.

We are making meaningful progress to try to improve affordability and build a stronger economy and build a stronger country that will provide the opportunities for Canadians so that they can plan for their future. People should not have to worry about rent or groceries or transportation or energy costs, but those are the realities today globally.

Let me discuss some of the measures in budget 2026 that aim to make life more affordable and to help us bridge to a better tomorrow. This means providing immediate help to ease pressures on households and budgets while building a stronger economy, so that Canadians have a better future. This includes measures such as additional support for the Canada groceries and essentials benefit, which will ease the financial pressure for hundreds of thousands of people in 2027, roughly 12 million Canadians, through a 50% increase in the Canada groceries and essentials benefit and $4.1 billion in extra aid to Canadians.

We also looked at the investment of more than $610 million to strengthen nutrition north Canada, making food more affordable across the north and supporting local harvesting and distribution across the north. To support workers, the build Canada workers benefit will increase support for 1.9 million workers, including 180,000 additional recipients. The Canada caregiver credit, fully refundable, is another $1,260 a year to almost 600,000 caregivers, including almost 200,000 who will benefit for the first time.

We are looking to make energy more efficient by building the energy infrastructure across the country, which will meet the growing demand.

This is just some of what we have done in this year's budget, to reflect the balanced approach of tackling the immediate cost and immediate pressures for Canadians as well as being prudent with the government's management of the public purse. With budget 2026, this government is striving to make life more affordable for Canadians while building the economy and strengthening the economy. In the geopolitical climate and in the trade climate, we are building a stronger economy and more jobs for Canadians, so that we have a stronger and better future in Canada.

Pat Kelly: Mr. Speaker, repeating the words “building a stronger economy” is not the same thing as actually building a stronger economy. We have had nothing but words from the government.

What do these words mean? The Liberals have abandoned all of the fiscal anchors that they have ever adopted, smashed through every fiscal guardrail and ignored their own promises, especially when it comes to groceries. They said to judge them by the prices at the grocery store. The judgment is terrible. They have failed to address the ever-increasing cost of groceries. They have just continued to blame outside factors. The budget that the member spoke about is just doubling down on 11 years of failed economic policy. What would really help Canadians out is a more productive economy that produces better, higher-paying jobs for Canadians. They have failed to do so for 11 years running.

Tom Osborne: Mr. Speaker, we have the strongest fiscal position in the G7. In today's climate, today's geopolitical climate and trade climate, we have to invest in the economy in Canada to build a stronger country. Canadians know this. We know this.

Saying that they are concerned about affordability and being concerned about affordability are different, I would say to the member opposite. Did he vote for the Canada child benefit? Did he vote for the national school food program? Did he vote for the Canada disability benefit or the $10-a-day early learning and child care benefit? Did he vote for the Canadian dental care plan? Did he vote for the federal fuel excise tax suspension? Saying that one is concerned about affordability and practising it are two different things.

● (1920)

HEALTH

Dan Mazier (Riding Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in June, the health minister promised an independent third party audit into the $300-million PrescribeIT scandal. My question is simple.

Who did the minister hire to conduct the audit and when will it be done?

Maggie Chi (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for his question. I have appreciated working with him on HESA over the past few sessions. I congratulate him on his new role. I hear he is doing good work on the new committee as well.

The minister has said on multiple occasions that we are committed to getting value for taxpayer dollars. The minister launched a multi-phase review of Infoway. KPMG is currently conducting a review of Infoway, covering everything from its governance to its organizational structure and its mandate. We are in the process of hiring an auditor to review Infoway's most recent contribution agreement.

We are committed to sharing the results of the review and audit as soon as they are available, and of course we will share that with the member opposite as well. We know it is important work, and we are making sure we get it right.

Dan Mazier: Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are in the process of hiring an auditor. That is fantastic.

Who is in the running? When will it be complete?

Maggie Chi: Mr. Speaker, here are the facts. The minister announced a multiphase review. The work is under way now. We will share the findings as soon as they are available. Once we have the auditor hiring available, we will share that with the member.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 7:22 p.m.)

CONTENTS

Thursday, November 19, 2026

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Government Response to Petitions
Lamoureux ... 11653

Non-regression of Environmental Protection Laws Act
Bonin ... 11653
Bill C-296. Introduction and first reading ... 11653
Adoption des motions; première lecture et impression du projet de loi ... 11653

Federal Law–Civil Law Harmonization Act, No. 4
Fraser ... 11653
Bill S-6. Introduction and first reading ... 11653
(Motion agreed to and bill read the first time) ... 11653

National Framework on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Act
Genuis ... 11653
Bill S-234. Introduction and first reading ... 11653
(Motion agreed to and bill read the first time) ... 11654

Petitions

Trans-Canada Highway
Malette (Kapuskasing—Timmins—Mushkegowuk) ... 11654

Falun Gong
Genuis ... 11654

Questions on the Order Paper
Lamoureux ... 11654

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

The Budget

Financial Statement of Minister of Finance
Motion ... 11654
Sudds ... 11654
Kelly ... 11656
Simard ... 11656
Chagger ... 11656
Gerretsen ... 11656
Lamoureux ... 11658
Kirkland ... 11658
Simard ... 11658
Kirkland ... 11659
Lamoureux ... 11660
Johns ... 11661
Konanz ... 11661
Small ... 11661
Lamoureux ... 11662
Bonin ... 11662
Johns ... 11663
Weiler ... 11663
Jackson ... 11665
Simard ... 11665
Bardeesy ... 11665
Johns ... 11666
Lamoureux ... 11666
Gill (Windsor West) ... 11667
Thériault ... 11667
Kronis ... 11667
Gill (Abbotsford—South Langley) ... 11668
Lamoureux ... 11669
Kronis ... 11669
Johns ... 11670
Cobena ... 11670
Bardeesy ... 11671
Thériault ... 11671
Kronis ... 11672
Casey ... 11672
Gill (Windsor West) ... 11673
Petitpas Taylor ... 11673
Bonk ... 11674
Dandurand ... 11674
Simard ... 11675
Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles) ... 11675
Gill (Windsor West) ... 11676
Groleau ... 11676
Dandurand ... 11677
Bonin ... 11677
Godin ... 11678
Chagger ... 11678
Hallan ... 11678
Lamoureux ... 11680
Bonk ... 11680
Gladu ... 11680
Mingarelli ... 11680
Barlow ... 11682
Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles) ... 11682
Jackson ... 11682
Dandurand ... 11682
Guglielmin ... 11683
Gladu ... 11684
Bonin ... 11684
Gill (Windsor West) ... 11685
Ramsay ... 11685
Deltell ... 11686
Deschênes ... 11686
Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles) ... 11686
Johns ... 11687
Lawton ... 11687

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Synergy Award for Innovation
Acan ... 11688

Housing
DeRidder ... 11688

Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion
Chang ... 11688

The Budget
Bailey ... 11688

160th Anniversary of the Lorne Scots
Sodhi ... 11689

Retirement Congratulations
Lawton ... 11689

Sandra Baggs
Connors ... 11689

The Budget
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk) ... 11689

L'Assomption Christmas Market
Bonin ... 11690

Sebastian Nathan
Nathan ... 11690

The Budget
Reynolds ... 11690

Jane and Finch Neighbourhood
Sgro ... 11690

Housing
Rowe ... 11690

Collège La Cité
Ntumba ... 11691

The Budget
Falk (Provencher) ... 11691

Childhood Cancer
Vandenbeld ... 11691

ORAL QUESTIONS

Housing
Hallan ... 11691
Robertson ... 11691
Hallan ... 11691
Robertson ... 11692

Finance
Cobena ... 11692
Champagne ... 11692
Cobena ... 11692
Champagne ... 11692
Berthold ... 11692
Champagne ... 11692

Steel and Aluminum Industry
Berthold ... 11693
Champagne ... 11693

The Environment
Blanchet ... 11693
Dabrusin ... 11693
Blanchet ... 11693
MacKinnon ... 11693
Blanchet ... 11693
MacKinnon ... 11693

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship
Menegakis ... 11694
Diab ... 11694
Rempel Garner ... 11694
Diab ... 11694
Rempel Garner ... 11694
Diab ... 11694

Public Safety
Caputo ... 11694
Anandasangaree ... 11694
Caputo ... 11695
Anandasangaree ... 11695
Cody ... 11695
Sahota ... 11695
DeRidder ... 11695
Sahota ... 11695

The Economy
Barsalou-Duval ... 11695
MacKinnon ... 11695
Barsalou-Duval ... 11696
MacKinnon ... 11696

Agriculture and Agri-Food
Barlow ... 11696
MacDonald (Malpeque) ... 11696
Barlow ... 11696
MacDonald (Malpeque) ... 11696
Epp ... 11696
MacDonald (Malpeque) ... 11696
Gourde ... 11696
MacDonald (Malpeque) ... 11697
Gourde ... 11697
MacKinnon ... 11697

Steel and Aluminum Industry
Danko ... 11697
Joly ... 11697

Public Safety
Chambers ... 11697
Joly ... 11697

Automotive Industry
Chambers ... 11697
Joly ... 11697
Seeback ... 11697
Joly ... 11698
Seeback ... 11698
Joly ... 11698
Brassard ... 11698
Solomon ... 11698

Brassard ... 11698
Solomon ... 11698

Public Services and Procurement
Groleau ... 11698
MacKinnon ... 11699

Automotive Industry
Groleau ... 11699
MacKinnon ... 11699

Government Priorities
Vis ... 11699
Hodgson ... 11699

Infrastructure
Earle ... 11699
Alty ... 11699

The Environment
Bonk ... 11699
Sarai ... 11699

Government Priorities
Bonk ... 11700
Sarai ... 11700
Kronis ... 11700
Romanado ... 11700

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship
Yip ... 11700
Diab ... 11700

Finance
Holman ... 11700
Long ... 11700

Climate Change
Kwan ... 11701
Dabrusin ... 11701

Industry
Kwan ... 11701
Joly ... 11701

Business of the House
Berthold ... 11701
Kayabaga ... 11701

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

The Budget

Financial Statement of Minister of Finance
Motion ... 11702
Lawton ... 11702
Lamoureux ... 11702
Beaulieu ... 11703
Kelly ... 11703
Gobeil ... 11703
Beaulieu ... 11704
McLean (Calgary Centre) ... 11705
Villeneuve ... 11705

Message from the Senate
The Deputy Speaker ... 11705

The Budget

Financial Statement of Minister of Finance
Motion ... 11705
Fancy ... 11705
Stevenson ... 11707
Garon ... 11707
Clark ... 11708

Business of Supply
Sahota ... 11708

The Budget

Financial Statement of Minister of Finance
Motion ... 11708
Kramp-Neuman ... 11708
Lamoureux ... 11709
Garon ... 11710
Kelly ... 11710
Rood ... 11710
Sahota ... 11712
Larouche ... 11712
Menegakis ... 11713
Leitão ... 11713

ROYAL ASSENT
The Deputy Speaker ... 11714

Message from the Senate
The Deputy Speaker ... 11714

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

The Budget

Financial Statement of the Minister of Finance
Motion ... 11714
McLean (Calgary Centre) ... 11714
Leitão ... 11714
Lamoureux ... 11715
Beaulieu ... 11715
Johns ... 11715
Noormohamed ... 11715
Konanz ... 11717
Larouche ... 11717
Gladu ... 11717
Johns ... 11718
Menegakis ... 11718
Lamoureux ... 11720
Beaulieu ... 11720
Berthold ... 11720
Deltell ... 11720
Motion agreed to ... 11722

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Stand on Guard Act

Cobena 11722
Bill C-270. Second reading 11722
Gladu 11724
Deschênes 11724
Guglielmin 11724
Lamoureux 11724
Deschênes 11725
Poilievre 11726
Eyolfson 11728
Kronis 11729

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

Health

Konanz 11730
Chi 11730

The Economy

Kelly 11731
Osborne 11732

Health

Mazier 11732
Chi 11732

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