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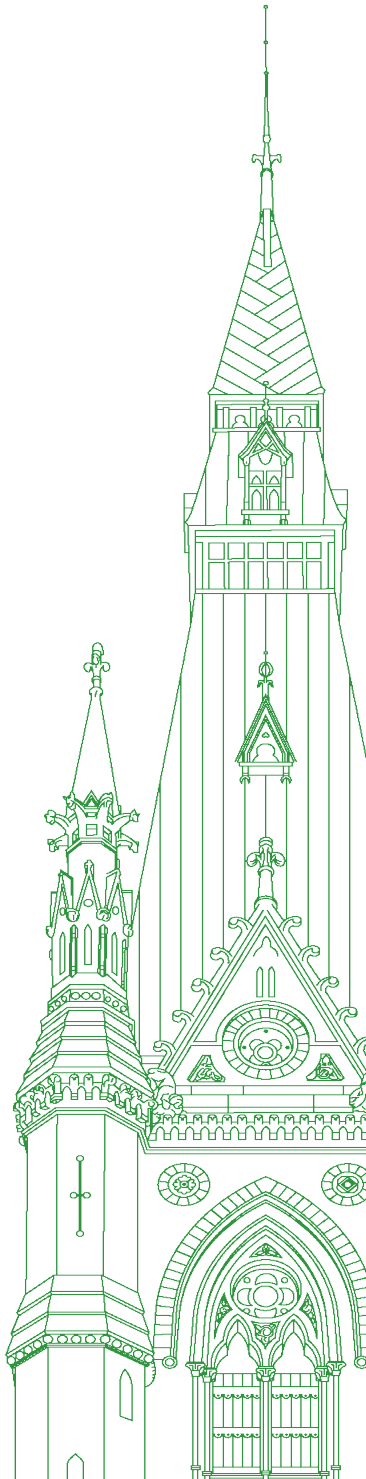

Speaker: The Honourable Francis Scarpaleggia

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, November 24, 2026

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayer

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

● (1000)

[*Translation*]

COMMISSIONER OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Speaker: It is my duty to lay before the House, pursuant to subsection 23(5) of the Auditor General Act, the 2026 reports of the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development.

Pursuant to Standing Order 32(5), these reports are deemed permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development.

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[*English*]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PRIVACY AND ETHICS

John Brassard (Barrie South—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the seventh report of the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics, entitled "Challenges Posed by Artificial Intelligence and its Regulation".

Before I hand over the report, I want to thank all the witnesses who participated in the report. I also want to thank all of our staff, the technicians, the clerk and the analysts for the preparation of the report. I am proud to present the report to the House.

Aaron Gunn (North Island—Powell River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to submit the Conservative dissenting report on artificial intelligence and its regulation. While we do recognize the importance of AI in the modern economy, we also have serious concerns with the main report's recommendations, which we believe do not adequately connect the expansion of AI to enforceable human control, measurable public benefit and accountability for public spending.

We also have significant concerns over the recently announced expenditure of $1.6 billion of taxpayer money to Cohere, a company already valued at more than $36 billion. Some of its existing investors share close ties with the Liberal Party.

Conservatives are adamant that taxpayer funds must not be spent under the guise of supporting AI to unfairly further the private interests of Liberal insiders and also question whether multi-billion-dollar corporations such as Cohere require taxpayer-funded assistance at all.

Canada can develop and use artificial intelligence while preserving human judgment, privacy and democratic accountability. Conservative members dissent from the committee's report because it does not consistently turn those principles into clear conditions for deployment, public support and oversight. A responsible approach should leave Canadians with stronger capability, meaningful control over consequential decisions and evidence that public resources have served the public good.

[*Translation*]

STATUS OF WOMEN

Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the seventh report of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women, entitled "Breaking the Silence: Addressing Abuse, Scams and Financial Insecurity Among Older Women".

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

● (1005)

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the seventh report of the Standing Committee on Official Languages, entitled "Recommendations of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Official Languages on the Proposed Use of French in Federally Regulated Private Businesses Regulations".

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

Joël Godin (Saint-Augustin—Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are calling for more effective protections for French in Quebec and across Canada. The Conservative members of the Standing Committee on Official Languages are tabling a dissenting opinion to raise significant concerns regarding the proposed legislation under the Use of French in Federally Regulated Private Businesses Act.

The Conservatives believe that the protection of the French language requires concrete measures that reflect the reality on the ground. However, the report does not go far enough to ensure that francophone communities, particularly minority communities, fully benefit from the protection provided by law. We cannot allow francophone communities to be ignored simply because they do not meet overly restrictive administrative criteria. The vitality of French cannot be reduced to statistics alone. It is also reflected in the presence of schools, institutions and communities that keep our language alive every day.

The dissenting report sets out two main requests.

First, the Conservatives propose that at least one region with a strong francophone presence be designated in every province and territory. This measure would broaden the scope of language protections, better recognize the realities of francophone communities and ensure that services in French are accessible across the country.

Second, it calls for closer coordination between the federal and Quebec governments to avoid duplicate regulations for federally regulated businesses operating in Quebec, while allowing those businesses to choose the least burdensome system.

The Conservatives believe that the expertise of the Office québécois de la langue française should be fully recognized and given priority. Protecting French should never be dependent on an administrative choice made by a business. We should strive for consistency, reduce unnecessary duplication and recognize the expertise of Quebec institutions. The proliferation of administrative mechanisms must not undermine efforts to promote the French language.

The Conservatives maintain that protecting French is a shared responsibility that requires diligence, collaboration and measurable results. The federal government must ensure that its regulatory approach truly strengthens language protections while respecting the unique realities of Quebec and francophone minority communities.

Protecting French requires concrete action. The Conservatives will continue to champion measures that are coherent, effective and tailored to the needs of francophones across Canada.

The Speaker: The hon. member for La Pointe-de-l'Île would like to table a supplementary opinion. In order to do that, he needs the unanimous consent of the House.

Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Speaker: The hon. member for La Pointe-de-l'Île.

Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois is tabling a dissenting opinion to reiterate its disagreement with the Use of French in Federally Regulated Private Businesses Act, or UFPBA, as it applies in Quebec, because it makes compliance with the Charter of the French Language optional. All workers and businesses in Quebec should benefit from the same language rights. These rights should be those established by Quebec law, in accordance with the democratic will of the National Assembly of Quebec.

As several witnesses pointed out, allowing businesses to choose freely between two linguistic regimes will result in reduced efficiency and costly duplication of administrative structures. In addition, once the regulations come into force, a significant number of reluctant businesses may choose the UFPBA regime, which is less stringent.

Regarding the proposed regulations themselves, two recommendations are particularly important to Quebec. The first calls for a streamlined French-language promotion process for businesses in Quebec with 25 to 99 employees, in parallel with the Charter of the French Language. The second seeks more funding for the Commissioner of Official Languages so it can effectively enforce the UFPBA.

* * *

● (1010)

[*English*]

PETITIONS

ORGANIC CERTIFICATION

Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, according to the Canada Organic Trade Association, Canadian organic sales reached almost $12 billion in 2025, including over $8 billion in food and beverages, demonstrating the sector's significant economic contribution. Despite growing demand, Canada's certified organic acreage declined by 16%, and the number of certified producers fell by 3% from 2024. Canada has over 5,700 certified organic producers and over 1,700 organic processors, yet domestic production and processing are not keeping pace with demand. Strengthening domestic organic production can support rural jobs, expand export opportunities and help Canadian farmers capture a greater share of this growing market.

The petitioners cite that farmers face financial risks during the transition to organic certification, lasting up to three years before accessing certified organic markets and price premiums. They are calling on the Government of Canada to work with the provinces and territories to include dedicated organic transition support in the next agricultural policy framework, including financial incentives to offset farmers' costs and risks through the transition to certified organic production, and to fund advisory and extension services to help farmers adopt organic practices, plan their transition and navigate certified requirements.

Lastly, clear—

The Speaker: Is the hon. member reading the petition? I just want to make sure. Sometimes it is hard to know if someone is summarizing or reading.

I want to remind members that they have to summarize the petitions as opposed to reading them.

I will let the member continue.

Gord Johns: I will finish right here then, Mr. Speaker.

Lastly, petitioners are calling for clear funding commitments and measurable objectives developed with organic producers and sector organizations.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Aaron Gunn (North Island—Powell River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise in this House again on behalf of the great people of Powell River who are calling on the federal government to reject Brookfield's attempts to secure an unprecedented 30-year export licence to send Canadian hydroelectricity out of Powell River to the United States in the middle of a trade war with no benefit to Canadians or the people of the city.

I had an opportunity to chat with many of these petitioners during an export licence hearing. They reiterated the concerns laid out in the petition. If the export licence is approved, the electricity that used to power the local pulp mill and support thousands of jobs would be permanently sent out of the country and with it any hope of bringing industry back to the region. That is why I join these petitioners in demanding this export licence be rejected and that the government put the national interests and the interests of the people of Powell River and B.C. ahead of just another large, well-connected corporation.

* * *

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 ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—IMMIGRATION LEVELS

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

> That, in order to ensure housing, wages, healthcare, jobs and other social services keep pace with the population growth, the House reject the Prime Minister's plan to increase permanent immigration next year to the highest levels in history.

He said: Mr. Speaker, we used to have a saying in Canada: Immigrants could come here, to Canada, to work hard, to contribute to our economy, to be part of our culture and to become truly Canadian first and foremost. As the hon. member for Calgary Nose Hill will explain—I will be sharing my time with her—thanks to our immigration system, Italian and Portuguese people were able to come here to build apartment buildings and streets. Irish people were able to come here to escape poverty and build the manufacturing sector. Punjabi people were able to come here 100 years ago to build the forestry sector in British Columbia. People from Hong Kong could come, fleeing communism in the 1990s, to set up businesses and start families here.

It was the most successful system in the world, until the Liberals came and ruined it in one decade. They massively increased the numbers. A few years ago, the government increased the population three times faster than homebuilding. It deprived Canadians of doctors and jobs. Everyone agreed that the immigration system was out of control. The Prime Minister promised that he would reverse course on this policy in the last election, but it was all an illusion. We can see now that he is heading in the same direction. In fact, he is moving even faster. The Prime Minister buried a plan in the budget to add 665,000 new permanent residents, by far a record number. That is 40% higher than the highest year under Justin Trudeau, and double the average over the past 20 years. At the same time, asylum claims are up 2,500%. The number of temporary foreign workers has doubled. The number already here has quadrupled. The number of permits issued to newly arriving international students is up 50%. On top of that, the Prime Minister wants to increase the number of new permanent residents to a record high.

Why is he doing this? Why is he doing something like this in a time of such scarcity? People cannot even afford to buy a home now. In fact, according to a poll conducted in 22 countries, Canada has the highest number of young people who believe they will never be able to buy a home. Food bank use has surged 117% since 2019, up 8% since last year. We lost 115,000 jobs in three months. Real wages have gone down four months in a row. Housing starts are down 3%, not doubled, as the Prime Minister promised. In terms of economic growth, this year is the worst year in a decade outside of COVID-19. In terms of health, people are dying on waiting lists. In Terrebonne, a man died in a bathroom after waiting in an emergency room for 12 hours without seeing a doctor. On top of that, 6 million Canadians do not have a family doctor.

Why is the government bringing in a record number of people in these circumstances?

This is not for the people who are already here. We have always allowed people who are already here to become permanent residents without having to bring in 165,000 more people. It is to please the big corporations that want more workers at lower wages and more tenants to drive up rents. It is a response to the lobbyists promoting the Century Initiative. All this Prime Minister ever does is concentrate power and money in the hands of a small corporate elite.

Conservatives want the opposite, which is why we are moving a motion in the House of Commons to regain control over immigration. We are asking:

> That, in order to ensure housing, wages, healthcare, jobs and other social services keep pace with the population growth, the House reject the Prime Minister's plan to increase permanent immigration next year to the highest levels in history.

● (1015)

We want an immigration system that puts Canadians first when it comes to health care, jobs and housing. We challenge all members of Parliament to support this plan so that we can establish the best immigration system in the world and put Canada first.

[*English*]

We had a deal in this country for newcomers and people here alike: People come to Canada in numbers we can absorb. They work hard, follow the laws and integrate into our culture and economy. They can have an amazing life building Canada.

The Italians and the Portuguese came here and built apartment complexes and roads that we now all take for granted. The Irish went from starving in the potato fields to thriving in factories across Ontario. My grandfather was one of those Irish immigrants. The Hong Kong refugees who fled the Communist takeover of Hong Kong in the 1990s, came and started businesses. I think our finance critic has lineage back to Hong Kong. He is nodding his head. They started businesses, built families and had tremendous acceptance. The Punjabis came here over 100 years ago to work in our forests and our mills, building incredible businesses in logging for our future.

That was the most successful immigration system in the history of the world, but in one decade, the Liberals have ruined it. All of a sudden and without explanation, they opened the floodgates, massively increasing population growth, threefold in a matter of one year. Population grew at a rate three times faster than homebuilding did, leaving massive shortages. Wages dropped, particularly for working-class youth. Our health care system became overwhelmed. It was so bad that the Prime Minister promised he was going to reverse course in the last election, but it was all an illusion. Since that time, he has unleashed even more immigration chaos.

Let us look at the facts. The number of asylum claims is up 2,500% compared to the last year the Conservatives were in government. The number of temporary foreign workers is double what it was the last year of the Conservatives. The number who are already here as temporary foreign workers, as opposed to newly arriving, is up 320%. The number of international students newly arriving this year is 50% higher than under the previous Conservative government.

On top of that, the Prime Minister snuck into the budget a plan to increase the number of new permanent residents to the highest level in Canadian history, 40% higher than the highest year under Justin Trudeau. That is double the 20-year average. Why on God's green earth would he do something like this in a time of such scarcity? Food bank use has surged 117% since 2019, up 9% since last year. We have lost 115,000 jobs in three months. Wages have gone down four months in a row. Mortgage delinquencies are at a 13-year high, nearing the levels of the financial crisis. Housing starts are down 3%, not doubled as the Prime Minister promised. We have the worst economic growth this year in a decade, outside COVID.

Then there is health care. There was a senior who died in a bathroom after he waited in an emergency room for 12 hours without seeing anyone. Six million Canadians do not have a doctor. The time to get a referral for a specialist is now 68% longer.

In this environment of scarcity, why would the Prime Minister do this? It is not to help Hong Konger, Ukrainian and other refugees. They represent about 50,000 or 60,000 people. They could and should easily be accommodated under the lower immigration levels that were normal for Canada. However, it is not for that reason. It is to bring in more low-wage labour and more renters to profit corporate, private equity landlords and multinational corporations that want to pay less for the workers they have. Instead of hiring Canadians at a fair wage, they want to drive down wages and pay less to foreign workers pouring into the country.

The Prime Minister is interested only in concentrating power and money in the fewest possible hands at the expense of our working class. Conservatives have a motion to stop it. We move:

> That, in order to ensure housing, wages, healthcare, jobs and other social services keep pace with the population growth, the House reject the Prime Minister's plan to increase permanent immigration next year to the highest levels in history.

We ask all members to vote for this. Let us ensure that every Canadian can get a job, a doctor and a home. Let us ensure that we have the best immigration system in the world that is fair to newcomers and people here alike. Let us restore the promise of Canada and seal the deal that brought people here in the first place. Let us make this the richest, the most affordable and the best place in the world to live. Let us put Canadians first.

● (1020)

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for the initiative in proposing something to Parliament for us to vote on, but he failed to do something in his motion. I read the motion a couple of times, and I am trying to understand what exactly he wants us to vote for. He is saying that he wants us to limit the targets, the numbers for immigration levels, but what is he putting forward?

We cannot just cancel out something just to cancel it out. What is he asking Canadians? What is he saying would be the right target levels for immigration? He is talking about housing, health care, etc. These are all challenges that Canadians have been facing for a while. For businesses that need these immigration levels, and we have consulted with them, or for farmers who sit in his caucus, what numbers exactly is he asking us to vote for?

● (1025)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Madam Speaker, we are asking the government to vote for our plan to put Canadians first for housing, wages, health care, jobs and other social services. We are asking for the House to vote in favour of cancelling the Prime Minister's plan to bring in the biggest number of permanent residents in the history of Canada, but the member let the cat out of the bag. She said that corporations have been asking for this. The Liberals want to bring in a maximum number of people to drive wages down and drive rents up so the corporate lobbyists who have been swarming around Parliament Hill ever since the Prime Minister took office can boost their profits, not by enriching Canadians but by making them poorer.

We obviously want business to succeed through low taxes, less red tape and free enterprise, not by artificially driving wages down—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): Questions and comments. The hon. member for Vallée-du-Haut-Saint-Laurent.

[*Translation*]

Claude DeBellefeuille (Vallée-du-Haut-Saint-Laurent, BQ): Madam Speaker, immigration is a polarizing issue. It can cause division, and it can bring people together. It is not an easy subject to debate. Some people may be for immigration, while others may be against it. Immigrants are not a monolithic group. There are different categories of immigrants.

From what I can see, the creators of the Century Initiative, Mr. Barton and Mr. Wiseman, are still close to the Prime Minister. They are there and they hold important positions.

Does the Leader of the Opposition think that these individuals are continuing to point the government in the wrong direction?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Absolutely, Madam Speaker.

One of the two creators of the Century Initiative is the Canadian ambassador to the United States and the other is the chair of the board of directors of Invest in Canada, which is a group that wants to concentrate power and money in its own hands.

It was the same thing with the billions of dollars that were injected into Cohere to provide it with data centre capacity when it was stealing electricity from a community and with the huge handouts that were given to Telesat Canada. Mass immigration is just another example. These things always benefit a small elite close to the Prime Minister to the detriment of the public interest.

We, the Conservatives, want an immigration system and an economic system that benefit hard-working Canadians who contribute to our society and build our country.

[*English*]

Harb Gill (Windsor West, CPC): Madam Speaker, this year we lost seven police officers. Officer Bali from the OPP was a kid born in India who served this country as a police officer. Officer Benredouane, born in Algeria, came here as a teenager, served in Montreal and was killed. Officer Pinizzotto, a kid of Italian heritage, died serving Canadians. I am wondering what their families are thinking today when they look at the government and its system of immigration. It has lost complete control of what is going on today. Are we able to enforce the laws we have, or did these lads die in vain?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Madam Speaker, that is an excellent question. We think of all the lost, the people who put on uniforms as the member did. He was a police officer and served with distinction for many years. We think of the many who came to this country to serve and to contribute to our country. Their families must be appalled to see the Liberals let in Bishnoi gangsters, who are terrorizing the South Asian communities in Brampton, Surrey and elsewhere, and see them bring in the IRGC and other gangsters and terrorists.

We need to get control of our borders. Let us bring in law-abiding, hard-working people as we have always done in this country.

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak in support of our motion to reject the Prime Minister's plan to increase permanent immigration so that housing, health care and jobs can keep up.

Next year the Prime Minister plans to admit more permanent residents than any other government in Canadian history. He announced it while our economy is shedding jobs, while Canadians wait months for basic health care and while a generation of young Canadians gives up on ever owning a home. This is on top of a record number of temporary residents that he is also going to be adding next year. That is not fair to anyone.

For generations, Canada made a promise to the world. If someone comes here legally, works hard and plays by the rules, they can build a better life. Things like a paycheque that covered the bills, a home they could afford and a doctor when their child was sick are all things that used to be accepted as promises, to newcomers and Canadians alike, but the promise that built this country has been broken.

I think about people who came to Canada after the war, like Italian and Portuguese families, who built our suburbs and our subways. Ugandan Asians arrived in 1972 with almost nothing and built businesses that still hire Canadians today. It worked because the pace of immigration matched that of our homes, our doctors, our jobs and our schools. The Prime Minister has broken that balance by bringing in too many people too fast for health care, housing and jobs to keep up.

I think of a young woman in Calgary. I know this person. She has moved three times in two years because every lease renewal comes with a bigger number, and it is getting harder for her to find an affordable place to live. She went through the trouble of starting a savings account labelled "down payment", but she stopped checking the balance because her rent drains it faster than she can fill it. I also think of a family in my same city who arrived last year. They live with their two kids in a small basement apartment with one window. These two families never asked to compete with each other, but the Prime Minister is putting them in the same line for the same apartments because he is bringing in too many people too fast for housing to keep up.

Members can picture a hospital ward in Toronto at 2 a.m. today. Someone's grandfather, who has lived in the same neighbourhood for 40 years, is on a stretcher in the hallway because they cannot find a bed for him. At the same time, downstairs in the emergency room, there is probably a young mother who just arrived here who is holding a feverish toddler, and she has been waiting hours upon hours for care. Both of them were told that Canada would take care of them, but both of them are still waiting for that care, and that is because the Prime Minister's government has allowed the population to grow through immigration almost three times faster than the number of hospital beds. Too many people too fast for hospital beds, for diagnostic imaging, for doctors to keep up means that people die. That is the reality of this situation. This is why the House must accept the motion we put forward today and reject the Prime Minister's proposal to further increase immigration to record levels.

Today, I know, there is a 17-year-old Canadian who has applied for jobs at every coffee shop and every grocery store within bus distance of her house, and nobody has called her back. We have heard stories like this at our immigration committee. That first job used to be a rite of passage. It used to be where a person learned to show up on time, to deal with a difficult customer, and where they earned their first reference. Today, youth unemployment is at record levels. More than one in eight young people, and this is in the best possible situation, cannot find a job right now. There are more than three unemployed Canadians for every open position.

There is also an issue with wages. While the prices of goods we need for everyday life have increased by 3.1% from last year, wages are only up 2.2%, which means workers, on average, are taking a pay cut. When employers do not have to compete for workers, wages go down, and that is why the Prime Minister is increasing immigration levels right now. The Prime Minister is taking away the pressure for wages to increase by setting levels in accordance with his corporate lobbyist friends, not with what would be a fair deal for Canadian workers. Big corporations lobbied the government for a bigger pool of low-wage labour through immigration, and they are getting it in what the Prime Minister is proposing to the House. We are putting this motion forward to reject that.

● (1030)

The temporary foreign worker they are bringing in is tied to a single employer; they cannot easily quit or ask for a raise. The Canadian teenager I just mentioned cannot get hired. Both of them lose, but who wins? The corporate lobbyists who are in front of the immigration minister and the PMO, who have senior appointments now within the government, are the ones who win. That is not fair to anybody. It is not fair to the Canadian teenager or to the newcomer who came here to build a better life. This is why immigration levels must go down, and they must not go up right now.

The immigration system to which the Prime Minister wants to add record numbers is riddled with problems. By the government's own data, there are at least 2.1 million temporary residents with permits that either are expired or will expire this year. There are at least 500,000 undocumented persons in Canada too. The Prime Minister has lost track of many of them, and the Auditor General flagged that many are entering Canada under fraudulent circumstances. None of these folks are accounted for in the Prime Minister's massive immigration increases that he wants Parliament to accept. A prime minister who cannot tell the House how many people are in the country, or how many people have left, has no business setting a new, record-high immigration level target. That is why immigration levels must be reduced and the system must be fixed.

The Liberals will stand up today and say that most of the record numbers of permanent residents they have announced are already here, but that is just not true. Let us do the math together. The Liberals have announced a whopping 660,000 permanent residents next year. The people they promised permanent status to, Hong Kongers and Ukrainians who are already working and raising families here, number about 70,000. Add about 5,000 spots for licensed physicians, and that is about 75,000 people. That leaves roughly 585,000 spots just in the permanent resident stream alone, unaccounted for. Which overcrowded emergency room will that 585,000-person cohort go to? What rental listing will they compete for? What job are they going to take?

Conservatives support keeping the promise to those 75,000 people. We have been advocating for that within existing levels. We are now rejecting that the Liberals are using that cohort of people, whom they should have kept that promise to a long time ago, as a cover to bring in hundreds of thousands of others at the behest of their wage-suppressing, mass immigration-supporting, corporate lobbyist buddies. Keeping our promise to 75,000 people does not require hundreds of thousands of additional new permanent residents and hundreds of thousands of new temporary permits on top of them.

What Canadians need to ask themselves is this. Who wrote this plan that the Prime Minister has proposed to us to increase immigration levels to record highs? Was it Canadians waiting for a family doctor or the lobbyists waiting for cheap labour? I think everyone knows the answer to that, and it is why the Prime Minister must be stopped.

Here is what we are asking for. Levels must be brought down. Levels must be set in accordance with our capacity to build homes, the hospital beds we already have and the jobs that Canada is able to create, and today that means bringing the levels way down. We must abolish the temporary foreign worker program and replace it with a stand-alone program for legitimately hard-to-fill seasonal agriculture labour. The most important thing we need to do, instead of letting these corporate lobbyists continue to use mass immigration to depress the wages of everyone, newcomers and Canadians alike, is to train young Canadians. We need to focus on strategies to get them to where the jobs are.

I am going to close with this. The promise of immigration used to be, as the leader of our party said, to come to Canada to build a better life. It is not what we see now, which is to come to Canada to be an indentured labourer in a coffee shop, to have one's wage suppressed, while a teenager whose family has been here for generations cannot get that entry-level job. It is not fair to the newcomer who is being asked to enter a system that the Liberals are creating, which looks a lot like the Emirati system of labour, and it is not fair to the Canadian who is looking for that entry-level job. At a time when we see mass technological disruption in the labour market through artificial intelligence, there are kids graduating from accounting school or law school who cannot find that job either. We have to push back on the corporate lobby.

I will just say this very briefly. I had a corporate lobbyist on the plane on Sunday just rail against me and say, “Well, Michelle, a painter in Toronto might get paid $150,000,” like a painter in Toronto with three kids could afford to live in Toronto on that amount. The reality is that wages are not keeping pace with inflation. We need to allow workers to have a fair deal, and we need to restore the promise to immigrants.

We can have a partisan discussion on how we do those things, but today, across political stripes and especially on the Liberal backbench, people need to push back on the Prime Minister and say it is too many people, too fast. It needs to stop.

● (1035)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the member's speech was littered with misinformation, I would suggest. The Conservatives' approach on immigration is borderline racist, quite frankly. They try to give the impression that there are literally 600,000 people coming into Canada over the next year. That is just not true, and they know it. They preach it because they believe it feeds into a certain sector of society that will build upon the leadership of the Conservative Party of Canada today. I say shame. I challenged the member the other day to debate the issue of immigration with me in Winnipeg, in Calgary, anywhere in western Canada. I would extend that same challenge today.

Does she or any member of the Conservative Party have the guts to debate me on this issue anywhere in western Canada? Will they stand up and defend their policy, which is misdirected and borderline racist?

● (1040)

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner: Madam Speaker, I kind of feel like saying, “Sir, this is a Wendy's.” We are having a debate on immigration right now, so there is that.

I am going to say that the Parliamentary Budget Officer, a woman of high esteem and respect, said that immigration levels are too high to keep pace with housing and that it is causing real challenges for Canadians. I do not think she is racist. I think she has the best interests of newcomers and Canadians alike.

Here is the thing. We know the Liberals are desperate when they are pulling this out. In the member's own city, the wait time at the hospital I was born in is almost 12 hours to be seen in the emergency room. He should be more concerned that the Prime Minister is bringing in a population the size of Winnipeg, the city that the member represents. When we think about what that means for people in that emergency room, the people he represents, it is unconscionable to add people into that system.

I reject all the words he said, and I am for compassion. We need to bring levels down and fix the system.

[*Translation*]

Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Madam Speaker, the Bloc Québécois believes it is very healthy to debate—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

[*English*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): Order. Will the hon. members allow the hon. member for Calgary Nose Hill to listen to the question?

[*Translation*]

Mario Beaulieu: Madam Speaker, the Bloc Québécois believes it is healthy for a democracy to be able to debate immigration issues. The Liberals should get off their high horse and stop politicizing this issue.

In 2027, the Liberals are proposing to admit more than one million people. That is a massive number. As all stakeholders have said, it will definitely put a strain on housing, the health care system and more. On top of that, in Quebec, it will put a strain on our capacity to integrate immigrants into our French-speaking society. The Liberal government is paying organizations to try to integrate immigrants in English, while at the same time increasing immigration levels. That is completely—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): I have to give the hon. member time to answer the question.

[*English*]

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner: Madam Speaker, I want to talk a bit about something that is happening in my colleague's province of Quebec due to the Liberals' record-setting immigration levels and out-of-control immigration system.

The Supreme Court recently ruled against the Quebec government's sovereign decision to restrict a certain type of social service to a certain class of immigrant, which is bogus asylum claimants, and that has an impact on the availability of day care spaces in the province. Right now, the Province of Quebec is having to make choices beyond what it should have to because the Liberal government is imposing a broken immigration system upon it. It is also the case in every province in the country. This is why this motion is so important today.

The federal government should be respecting the provincial jurisdiction of Quebec, Alberta and others and ensuring that the levels are set in accordance with a province's ability to keep housing, health care, jobs and other social services, like education, in alignment with the capacity to integrate, as he said. I also want to say that the Government of Quebec has a special agreement with the Government of Canada, which is not being respected right now. Again, that is why this motion is so important, and I look forward to the member's support.

● (1045)

Hon. Lena Metlege Diab (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am very honoured to be standing here today as Canada's Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship to speak about this very important issue, which is personal to me but also to many people across the country.

Canadians rightly expect an immigration system that works for them, one that supports a strong economy, creates opportunities, strengthens our public services and responds to the needs of communities of all sizes, right across the country. They also expect responsible decisions that recognize the pressures that population growth can place on housing, health care and other public services.

Getting immigration right is not simply about deciding how many people Canada should welcome. It is about understanding what our country needs. It is about understanding what our communities from one part of the country to another can support and how immigration can contribute to our shared prosperity. It is about building and maintaining a system that is anchored in collaboration, fairness and control. That is the work that began in 2024 and that I have been advancing through the 2027-29 immigration levels plan.

[*Translation*]

Our objective is clear: to build a stable, sustainable immigration system centred on our economy's needs. We want to manage arrivals in Canada effectively, while empowering businesses and communities to succeed. To make that happen, we have to strike the right balance between economic growth and our capacity to accommodate newcomers.

[*English*]

The first thing Canadians should know about our levels plan is that it maintains stable targets for the next three years. There are no surprises. The plan is online. It is in the budget. It is posted. Permanent resident admissions are set at 380,000 annually from 2027 through 2029, exactly where they stood in our previous plan. For context, that is far lower than the 485,000 the previous government targeted for 2024. Our target for new temporary resident arrivals also remains stable at 370,000 a year, which includes 220,000 workers and 150,000 international students. These targets provide the sector with stability.

I just met with representatives from the Canadian international education sector, 1,000 people right here in Ottawa. They need stability and predictability, and this is exactly what we are offering. These targets provide that to them and to the provinces and the territories, which I have had countless meetings with, partnered with and am collaborating with, and which constitutionally are partners in this immigration field. We have joint responsibility, federally and with the provinces and territories. We partner with institutions and communities on their need to plan for the future, while giving housing, infrastructure and public services time to catch up with our growth.

Alongside these regular targets, the government has announced, and this is what the opposition has a big problem with, a time-limited measure for 2027 that was outlined in budget 2026. This comes because I have been partnering with provinces and territories and worked hand in hand with every community in this country. Again, it is transparent, and there is nothing hidden. The measure will provide space for up to 200,000 additional permanent resident admissions in 2027 to retain workers already living in Canada, paying taxes and contributing to Canada, along with their families. Most of them already have applications in for permanent residency through provincial nominee programs, Atlantic immigration, rural immigration, the Francophone pathways and other pathways.

We are also fulfilling our humanitarian commitments. For many, the question is not whether they want to make Canada their home. They have already made that decision. We are helping it become official, by transitioning them to permanent status. We are giving people hope.

● (1050)

[*Translation*]

These additional admissions are distinct from our plan's regular targets.

[*English*]

I am going to explain why they are distinct.

[*Translation*]

This is a temporary measure for 2027 that addresses precise requests.

[*English*]

These are precise requests that we have received.

[*Translation*]

The numbers that have been announced are maximums, not targets to be met. The actual number will depend on eligible applications and the participation of the provinces and territories. We are not creating any new permanent programs, and we will report these admissions separately from the regular targets.

Our immigration levels plan maintains stable targets for the coming years. This temporary measure allows us to process applications that are already pending and to address precise requests.

We are also implementing the measures announced in budget 2025. These measures allow protected persons and eligible temporary workers to become permanent residents through 2027.

[*English*]

These time-limited measure admissions are real and will be reported, but a one-time maximum is not a recurring annual target. Half of these admissions will not happen unless provinces and territories agree that they want them. Provinces have the choice.

What is equally important to remember is that permanent resident admissions are not the same as new arrivals, as the other side will have us believe. The opposition has perhaps forgotten that. When someone is already living in Canada and becomes a permanent resident, that counts as an admission. They are not a new person arriving in our country. This distinction is essential when we consider the effects of immigration on population growth, on housing and on services. Behind these numbers are real people: a nurse caring for patients in a Canadian hospital, a construction worker helping build homes or an employee whose experience has become essential to a small business.

[*Translation*]

These are our colleagues, our neighbours and our friends.

Consider a family that has been living here for several years on a temporary basis. The parents work, and the children go to school. When this family obtains permanent residence, they do not move to a new house. They can continue their lives in Canada with more stability.

[*English*]

Some select eligible family members will be able to join their relatives from abroad, but most people covered by this measure are already established in Canada. Their transition to permanent residence is not expected to create significant pressures like the arrivals of new people coming in would. Permanent residence transition is something we have been doing for years and years. This is not new. It is just that these people could be waiting for decades. A permanent resident transition for someone already living here does not by itself require another home, another hospital bed or another place in the classroom. This is an important difference, and it cannot be ignored in service of scoring political points.

The truth is we have taken decisive action to bring new arrivals down. That progress is what allows us to move forward with these targeted transitions. Beginning in 2024, we reduced international student intake, tightened access to temporary worker programs and strengthened program integrity, and we are seeing the results. I heard some fake numbers from the other side, but here are the real numbers. In 2026, compared with the same period in 2024, arrivals of international students fell by 67%. New arrivals are down 167,425 people.

● (1055)

We are seeing more graduate students. In fact, because of attracting students in higher-level programs, 20% of the arriving students in 2026 are masters and Ph.D.s. For the arrivals of temporary foreign workers, it has fallen by 56%. The asylum claims have declined by 68%. According to the latest data, Canada's population is growing at the slowest annual rate since World War I, a century ago.

[*Translation*]

According to Statistics Canada, annual population growth fell from 2.8% in 2024 to just 0.5% in 2026. The share of non-permanent residents in the Canadian population also declined.

[*English*]

In fact, under this government, Canada recorded the largest reduction in the non-permanent resident population since the early 1970s, half a century ago.

[*Translation*]

These results show that our approach is paying off. We are continuing to work to bring their share of the population below 5%. We know that Canadians will still face challenges, particularly in finding housing and accessing public services, but we are moving in the right direction.

[*English*]

To be clear, we are demonstrating progress. Better managing population growth gives us more room to plan, build and respond to Canadians' needs. While immigration is part of the solution, it is not going to solve housing affordability on its own or solve the health care challenges on its own. It requires housing construction, infrastructure investments and other investments. At the same time, the communities working to build more homes and strengthen essential services also need people with the right skills. That is exactly why our plan targets critical skill gaps and helps communities deliver the services people rely on.

Let us face the facts. Canada's workforce is aging. One in five Canadians is 65 or older. As more people approach retirement, maintaining a strong workforce becomes increasingly important. Our first priority, naturally, is to invest in Canadian workers through training, skills development and opportunities for young people. Immigration must complement those efforts, not replace them. In some specialized occupations, an unfilled position can affect an entire business and the Canadians it employs.

Consider a manufacturer with 20 employees that has an opportunity to take on a major contract but cannot find a specialized technician needed to operate the equipment. Without that expertise, the company may have to delay the project, leaving the existing workers without the opportunities that expansion could bring. With the right person in place, it can move forward and create more opportunities for Canadians. A single vacancy may seem small, but to a business and the people whose livelihoods depend on it, filling that role makes a real difference. That is the role of targeted immigration. It is helping businesses fill genuine gaps so they protect and create Canadian jobs.

[*Translation*]

The same principle applies to the skilled workers who build our homes, the health care professionals who care for patients and the experts who help our industries innovate.

That is also why more than 64% of permanent resident admissions under our immigration levels plan will be in the economic category.

[*English*]

That is the highest proportion that we have had in over a decade: 64% of permanent resident admissions will be in the economic category.

[*Translation*]

For this approach to work, we must recognize that needs vary across the country.

[*English*]

Again, one size does not fit all. We have heard that loud and clear. As a provincial minister for eight years previously, I know how much provinces and territories need that.

[*Translation*]

Our plan gives them an important role to play in addressing this.

[*English*]

● (1100)

Under the workforce retention component, the one-time limited measure provides the opportunity to choose if and how much additional space would be used to retain up to a combined total of 100,000 workers with their families in 2027. That is beyond the provincial nominee program and other programs. They can identify eligible people already in their communities who still respond to their priorities, providing greater stability to workers and businesses. That partnership goes beyond the 2027 measure. At the request of provinces and territories, we are also increasing planned admissions through the provincial nominee program, the Atlantic immigration program, and, I am very proud to say, the now permanent rural community immigration program.

[*Translation*]

We are also continuing to increase francophone immigration. We must always keep in mind that francophone immigration is very important outside Quebec. We have a target of 12% by 2029. Our goal is to meet the needs of the regions, while maintaining a consistent approach across the country.

Economic growth is important, but our system also needs to be fair to those who have followed the rules and are still waiting for an answer. This includes the spouses, partners and children of Canadian citizens or permanent residents who are already living here.

[*English*]

That also includes keeping our promise to the Hong Kongers and Ukrainians who applied through our special immigration pathways and have been patiently waiting for their permanent residency.

[*Translation*]

It includes people already in Canada whose applications on humanitarian grounds have been approved in principle.

[*English*]

We are using the 2027 measure to move long-standing applications forward and honour humanitarian commitments already made. We are not reopening closed pathways. We are not creating any new permanent ones. For the families affected, this means a chance to move beyond uncertainty and to plan their futures. It also helps these individuals maximize their contributions to Canada. That is critical to restoring confidence in the immigration system.

I know what it means for a family to find security, opportunity and a chance to build a future here. I think most of us in the House do. I really believe that. My father loved construction and took pride in watching homes and communities take shape. He knew the value of the people who do that work and the importance of giving them the chance to contribute. Preserving those opportunities for the next generation requires responsible decisions today. That means supporting Canadians who need good jobs, homes and reliable public services, while ensuring the people we welcome have a fair opportunity to succeed. These responsibilities are not in conflict. A well-managed immigration system meets those together.

[*Translation*]

Canada has always been a country where people from around the world have been able to build new lives.

We want to preserve that tradition, but we also need to ensure that immigration meets the needs of our economy while respecting the capacity of our communities.

That is how we will build a fairer, more stable and more efficient system.

[*English*]

A figure in a headline cannot tell Canadians who is arriving for the first time, who has already built a life here or how immigration can enrich Canada. I am happy to give those examples when I answer questions.

We owe Canadians today and the generations to follow a country where people can find good jobs, access essential services and be part of building Canada's bright future. Each and every day, I will continue to work to deliver an immigration system that helps make that obligation a reality.

Jeff Kibble (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, CPC): Madam Speaker, we kept hearing in debate this morning the Liberal members ask what immigration numbers the Conservatives recommend. I remind the minister and the party opposite that it is her job and her department. She should know the numbers. She is in a majority government. If the Liberals want our plan so much, perhaps they should step aside and let Conservatives fix their mess.

Considering the Liberals' abysmal failure to meet their housing numbers, as well as the overwhelmed medical system, does the minister believe immigration should match or, as they have it right now, wildly exceed available housing and available hospital beds in Canada?

● (1105)

Hon. Lena Metlege Diab: Madam Speaker, I knew I would get a chance to respond to these questions.

I do know. That is exactly why I tabled the 2027-29 plan the way it is. I exactly know. For 18 months, I have been going across the country from one coast to another, listening to Canadians; the provinces, each and every one of them; the three territories; and the small regional communities about their rural needs. I know exactly what we need, and we have tabled the right plan.

People realize, and the stats are clear, that immigrants make up more than one in three doctors and one in four registered nurses. Nearly one in four residential builders and general contractors is an immigrant. I could go on.

[*Translation*]

Alexis Deschênes (Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Listuguj, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank the minister for being here and contributing to this debate. I would like her to comment on one thing in particular, namely, the way this matter was presented.

In the budget, the permanent immigration target is set at 380,000 people. Then, in another paragraph, we are told that there is an additional target of 200,000 people. That leaves us with more questions than answers. Digging deeper, we see that there is yet another target of 80,000 people, which brings the total to 662,000 people.

There may be an explanation for this, but why did the minister choose to be less than honest and forthright in presenting it?

Hon. Lena Metlege Diab: Madam Speaker, our goal in presenting this plan was to be honest with Canadians. The numbers are clearly set out in the plan, and anyone can check them online. As I said in my speech, these additional targets are temporary measures for 2027 and will apply only if the provinces and territories choose to accept them.

My colleague and I have spoken a number of times, and I enjoy speaking with him. As he already knows, Quebec sets and fully controls its own targets. That said, I will always be here to answer his questions.

[*English*]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to acknowledge the Minister of Immigration's efforts in my home province of Manitoba, which she has visited on several occasions. She has been to the Manitoba legislature and visited with the minister of immigration there, and she has been to my local restaurant. She has met with immigrants, our Ukrainian community, and many other communities, such as our Punjabi and Filipino heritage communities, and so forth.

Recognizing there are regional differences regarding needs in Canada, Manitoba has been desperately trying to retain as many international workers as it could because of our economy. I know the province has been putting a great deal of pressure on the federal minister.

I would like her to provide a comment on the fact there are regional differences, that there are even rural versus municipal differences. Could the minister highlight that aspect?

Hon. Lena Metlege Diab: Madam Speaker, first, let me thank this particular colleague for not only all his hard work on the immigration file but also all he does for the Government of Canada. His constituents should be very proud of him.

I, indeed, was in Manitoba a number of times, as I have been in every province and territory of this country since I became a minister. I have directly contacted all the provinces and territories, and I am working in collaboration and joint partnership with them. This plan reflects what I have been hearing and what they have sent me in writing. I have the documents to prove this. It is in writing. It is also on videotape, because when we do our federal-provincial ministerial meetings, it is all videotaped.

It is clear. It is transparent. It is the right one for the people in the country, Canadians and our economy.

● (1110)

[*Translation*]

Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am proud to declare my conflict of interest: I am the son of immigrants, and I am very proud of that fact. In my view, immigration is essential, and I believe every member of this House, regardless of political affiliation, would agree. Where we differ is on the question of our capacity to welcome newcomers. For immigration to be successful, we must have the capacity to accommodate them. That is a fact.

Let us consider a source that is neutral and objective. She is not a Liberal, a Conservative, a Bloc Québécois or anything else. I am talking about the Parliamentary Budget Officer.

Less than two weeks ago, she tabled a report on the capacity to accommodate immigrants, particularly with respect to housing. She said:

> Housing starts are down. Funding is up. And the government is falling behind on its promise to double homebuilding. It also seems to have stepped away from its earlier commitment to build 500,000 new homes per year, yet proposes to approve an additional 200,000 permanent residents to Canada in Budget 2026.

Conservatives are not the ones saying this; it is the Parliamentary Budget Officer.

Is the Parliamentary Budget Officer wrong, or is she giving the real figures, which demonstrate that we do not have the capacity to fulfill the Liberals' policies?

Hon. Lena Metlege Diab: Madam Speaker, I really appreciate my colleague. Like him, I am also a proud immigrant.

As I said before, our plan is transparent. It sets out stable and predictable figures. We have worked extensively with the provinces and territories to assess their capacity.

Our government has worked hard to build homes, support municipalities and help builders here in Canada.

[*English*]

We are reducing red tape. There would be low-tax incentives for first-time buyers.

[*Translation*]

When it comes to health care, we have worked extensively with the provinces, and we have invested a lot of money in this budget. I have reserved spots for doctors.

As a government, we have done many things, and I agree with my colleague: Capacity is very important. I think that we are well positioned for these levels.

Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Madam Speaker, the government often says that Quebec has full control over its economic immigration and that it also has authority over all matters related to temporary workers in Quebec.

However, the federal government has exclusive control over the international mobility program, and most temporary foreign workers fall under this program.

I would like the minister to tell me whether the government is mistaken when it says that Quebec has full authority over matters related to foreign workers, or whether we are the ones who are mistaken about the international mobility program.

Hon. Lena Metlege Diab: Madam Speaker, it is true that, since the accord signed with Quebec 25 years ago, the Government of Quebec is completely responsible for setting its own permanent immigration targets. It also has the option of accepting the 100,000 people that are in this plan. Quebec also controls the arrival of temporary workers because they need to get a Quebec acceptance certificate, the CAQ, which is also necessary for access.

Alexis Deschênes (Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Listuguj, BQ): Madam Speaker, the Bloc Québécois supports the motion moved today by the Conservative Party to reject the government's plan, which was proposed in the budget on November 5, for a number of reasons.

The first reason is that there has not been, even though that is what it says—

● (1115)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): Does the hon. member have to share his time?

Alexis Deschênes: Madam Speaker, yes, I will be sharing my time with my hon. colleague, the member for Jonquière—Hébertville—Pays-des-Bleuets.

Getting back to why we oppose the Liberal immigration plan, the first reason is that there have been no extensive consultations, despite what is stated in the annual immigration report. Quebec's concerns must be taken into account, and the federal government needs to do just that when setting thresholds. This is actually a legal obligation under the Canada-Quebec accord. It must take those concerns into account, and it must carry out consultations. I looked into this, and the consultation that took place was a sham. It was not a real consultation. Some letters were exchanged over the summer, including a long letter from a deputy minister sent to Quebec City containing no scenarios whatsoever. No scenarios were put forward to the Quebec government. No one said that 662 permanent residents would be accepted, and no one asked what Quebec's concerns were. Only fairly general comments were shared regarding what has already been done. That is a major problem, which is why we oppose the Liberal immigration plan.

The second problem is that immigration is a polarizing and sensitive issue, and this plan was not presented in an honest and transparent way. We are talking about human beings and societal harmony. This needs to be handled in an exemplary manner, which is clearly not the case.

This is how it was presented. It is in the budget, on page 216. We start reading, we try to follow along, but we do not understand, and we have questions. The budget says there will be 380,000 permanent residents; then it says 200,000 more residents will be added, but we do not know if they are included in the 380,000 permanent residents. We start asking questions and learn that no, they are not included. Then we find out that there are 80,000 more residents. Naturally, people are surprised, even a bit stunned. They realize they thought the targets were the same, but in the end, the number is 662,000 residents. No wonder people are astonished, because 662,000 new residents is a very large number. To my knowledge, this is the largest intake of permanent residents in Canadian history.

The facts should have presented transparently and honestly. The government should have set the record straight so that we could have the debate we are having today, thanks to our Conservative colleagues. If not for them, we would not be having this debate here, even though there are figures that need to be shared and things that could be explained. It is not my job to do that for the government, but when we look at temporary newcomers, something has definitely changed in recent years. In 2025, 115,000 new international students arrived in Canada. The target was 300,000 new international students. This was the lowest number of new international students in Canada since 2019, and I stopped looking after that. The year 2025 marked the first time in seven years that we had welcomed so few international students. As for foreign workers, both those arriving under the international mobility program and those arriving under the temporary foreign worker program, the target was 367,000. However, 208,000 new temporary foreign workers arrived in 2025. This is the lowest number of foreign workers to arrive in the past seven years. Looking back, in 2020, the number was 326,000 workers, and, in 2024, that number stood at 900,000 new foreign workers. In 2023, there were 949,000 new foreign workers. The government should have presented the full picture. It should have taken responsibility instead of trying to rush things through. That is another reason why we oppose the Liberals' immigration plan.

A third reason is that this immigration plan does not meet Quebec's traditional immigration demands. These are legitimate, well-founded, reasonable demands that were made in a bid for better social harmony. The first demand is to reimburse Quebec for the costs associated with taking in the asylum seekers who arrived en masse at Roxham Road, because the government never managed to negotiate an agreement that included the different scenarioes.

● (1120)

The Government of Quebec is rightfully demanding $689 million in compensation for all the social services it had to provide to these asylum seekers, given their precarious circumstances on arrival. There is not one line in this big 532-page budget about this demand. That is another reason why we object to the proposed plan.

Furthermore, the plan makes no mention of an equitable distribution of asylum seekers. This is another of Quebec's legitimate and reasonable long-standing demands. Quebeckers currently make up 22% of Canada's population. Based on figures from April 2026, Quebec is taking in 39% of asylum seekers. That represents almost twice our demographic weight, and it comes at a cost for social services. These newcomers want to work and contribute to Quebec society. Distributing them equally across the country would make things easier and create some fairness or justice in Canada. However, nothing along these lines was mentioned in the immigration plan.

Here is the fourth reason why the Bloc Québécois supports the Conservative motion and opposes the immigration levels plan: This plan will reduce Quebec's demographic weight within the Canadian federation.

It is important to note that 95% of the 662,000 new permanent residents who will be admitted this year will likely settle outside Quebec. That will impact the other provinces' intake capacity. Quebec has full control over its permanent immigration under the 1991 accord, which enables the Quebec government to set its own permanent immigration thresholds. According to the plan that was tabled by the CAQ government, the target for 2025 was between 48,000 and 51,500 new permanent residents. Quebec's new Parti Québécois government will announce its intentions shortly, but during the election campaign, it proposed welcoming 35,000 new permanent residents.

If nothing changes, what will happen is that there will be 662,000 new permanent residents in Canada by the end of 2027, but only 35,000 of them will settle in Quebec. Quebec will be taking in about 5% of the new permanent residents when it has a demographic weight of 22%, which means that Quebec's demographic weight will shrink in the coming months. This gradual shift toward the quiet marginalization of Quebec will happen right before our very eyes. This immigration plan will no doubt have an impact on Quebec's political weight when electoral boundaries are adjusted and may also impact equalization payments and health transfers. These permanent immigration thresholds will therefore have repercussions on Quebec within the Canadian federation, even though Canada did not really consult with Quebec when determining those thresholds.

Faced with this prospect for Quebec within Canada, where the risk of marginalization is very real, we are putting forward an alternative vision: Quebec independence. Quebec would be able to manage immigration effectively and set its own immigration targets based on its capacity to welcome immigrants. Quebec would no longer be sidelined by unilateral decisions made by another government without its consent.

Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC): Madam Speaker, I wish to point out that, in accordance with Standing Order 43(2)(a), the Conservative Party's remaining speaking time will be divided in two.

I congratulate my colleague on his very logical speech. As always, he did a good job preparing and presenting his remarks. Aside from the conclusion, I found it extremely interesting.

As we know, a successful and responsible immigration system rests on a number of key pillars: the availability of jobs, the availability of housing, and the availability of health care and education. If anyone understands this reality, it is those who witnessed first-hand what happened in recent years at Roxham Road and the challenges associated with mass immigration. It happened in Quebec.

I would like my colleague to share his thoughts on the following. Everyone disagreed with the way Justin Trudeau was handling immigration, but things do not seem to be improving under the current Prime Minister.

● (1125)

Alexis Deschênes: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question. Perhaps one day we will convince him to join us in embracing the exciting prospect of Quebec sovereignty. Just like that, so much duplication will be eliminated and we will have greater control over our own future so we can achieve our full potential.

As for the way this Liberal government manages immigration, there were flaws in the past, and there are flaws now. I mentioned those flaws in my speech, and I think they must be taken into account.

During the Trudeau years, the reports did not even mention temporary immigration. It was not accounted for. Nobody paid attention to it. Now, however, it is included, and it appears that temporary immigration is declining dramatically. Current levels are less than half of last year's targets. Now there is essentially a bottleneck.

I think this government is trying to transition people to permanent residence. A year or two from now, the situation will probably look very different.

[*English*]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is a bit confusing. On the one hand, the Bloc party says that it would like to see more immigration being determined, much like in the province of Quebec since the early nineties.

What we are proposing here is that provinces would actually have more opportunity to determine those individuals who would ultimately be able to become permanent residents, whether it is through the nominee program or the 200,000 permanent resident potential option for provinces that want to buy into it.

It seems to me that the Bloc should be supporting that, because it gives more support to our provinces. I am wondering if the member could just provide some clarity on that.

[*Translation*]

Alexis Deschênes: Madam Speaker, Quebec does not have enough control over temporary immigration. That is an important point because, over the past few years, this same government, under a different prime minister, threw the doors to temporary immigration wide open, leading to unprecedented numbers.

In 2023 alone, Canada admitted nearly 1 million foreign workers. In 2023, it admitted 682,000 international students. That adds up to 1.7 million people. Today, it is asking the provinces to focus more on granting permanent residence to temporary residents when, in the vast majority of cases, they had no say in the situation.

That is what we are criticizing.

Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his eloquent speech.

First, there is something rather absurd about the fact that the thresholds were announced in a budget. The lack of transparency is clear. Everyone is getting lost in the numbers, and no one can figure them out. Unfortunately, I also feel obliged to point out the blatant lack of competence on the minister's part.

I asked the minister earlier whether Quebec had any powers in relation to the international mobility program. She replied in the affirmative, because people need to get a Quebec acceptance certificate, known as a CAQ, to be eligible for the program, but that is not true. Unfortunately, a CAQ is not required to take part in the international mobility program. That program falls exclusively under federal jurisdiction.

I wonder if my colleague could explain to me why the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship does not know something as simple as that.

Alexis Deschênes: Madam Speaker, I honestly cannot say why the minister was mistaken in her reply, but I can confirm my colleague's interpretation.

The federal government manages the international mobility program, and Quebec has no say in the matter.

To give my colleagues an idea, there are currently 530,000 temporary residents in Quebec. Of these, 190,000 are asylum seekers or refugees, which is an issue managed by the federal government. There are 273,000 foreign workers, but the vast majority, roughly 200,000 out of 273,000, fall under the international mobility program and are therefore the federal government's responsibility. Quebec only has control over the—

● (1130)

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

The hon. member for Jonquière—Hébertville—Pays-des-Bleuets.

Mario Simard (Jonquière—Hébertville—Pays-des-Bleuets, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would like to begin with a word of caution. I have been a member of this House since 2019. We have discussed immigration many times, and I remember when my colleague from Lac-Saint-Jean was our immigration critic. Whenever he asked a question in the House about Roxham Road, our Liberal colleagues hurled insults at us. They practically called us racists and accused us of being intolerant, narrow-minded and anti-immigration.

Why am I bringing this up? I am bringing it up because I frequently got the impression that my Liberal colleagues were using immigration as an ideological weapon against Quebec without necessarily understanding most of the issues involved. I think we are seeing that once again during conversations about immigration thresholds. Many Liberals seem to think that merely talking about immigration thresholds means we are opposed to to diversity and people from other countries coming here, which is not at all the case.

We need to have a serious conversation about immigration. We have struggled to do so in the past, unfortunately. I just want to point out that many stakeholders told us at the time that Roxham Road was a place of misery that made things so much worse for newcomers. Interestingly, it seems that people are finally admitting we were right.

I also want to point out that some Liberal members have been quite candid in acknowledging that they had lost control over immigration in the past. I remember a debate in the riding of Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, where the Liberal candidate, who has since become the member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, candidly admitted that the Liberals had gotten immigration back under control. If they are admitting that they have taken back control, then it means that they lost control in the past. I get the feeling that they are losing control again with what the government has put in the budget.

With that context established, I believe my colleague from Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Listuguj did an excellent job of outlining some of the key issues. I will come back to them very briefly. Population growth goes hand in hand with rising housing costs. This has been well documented by the Bank of Canada, which has identified it as a direct corollary. The more the population grows, the greater the increase in housing costs. The same is true for all social services, which are provided primarily by Quebec. The same is true for health care. We know just how meagre health care transfers are. The same is true for the child care system. The same is true for all the government services that are provided by Quebec. This creates pressure. The government needs to be aware of this, and it needs to address these kinds of issues.

However, for my part, I would like to focus on one very important element, which is what is in the hands of the federal government that is too often overlooked, and that is its management of immigration at an administrative level. Everyone in the House has experienced issues with the immigration system, which is a complete mess. We all know that. There seems to be a pattern. When international students arrive, our offices are overwhelmed. The federal government does a poor job of managing applications from international students, and so they come through our offices. We even have dedicated staff for that. At the Bloc Québécois, we have gone so far as to set up a system for pooling resources and services to compensate for the federal government's shortcomings in immigration matters. If the federal government wants to tackle a problem, it should start by making sure it is capable of delivering the service. That would already be a good start.

However, that is not where I am going with my speech. When the government talks to me about immigration and immigration levels, as a sovereigntist, I immediately think that Quebec should be the one to decide that and to set its immigration levels. That said, there is a question that has been nagging at me. I spoke earlier about using the immigration issue for ideological purposes. The federal government has been doing that since Confederation. Let us take an example a little closer to home. When it comes to integrating newcomers, that is where the problem arises for Quebec, because immigration is ultimately a question of survival. The federal government has never accepted that Quebec alone, in all of Canada, is a national minority. Quebec should not have the same status as the others. Quebec has a distinct culture, a distinct language and a distinct political destiny. The national minority issue is something that the government has never accepted.

● (1135)

That is why I want to talk about integration. This goes all the way back to 1962. In 1962, Trudeau senior wrote a short article entitled “New Treason of the Intellectuals”. The article raised the same problems we are seeing now. In it, Trudeau senior said that Quebec was a nationalist province, closed-minded and intolerant of difference.

Trudeau senior made those claims as far back as 1962. Hubert Aquin penned a magnificent rebuttal entitled “La fatigue culturelle du Canada français”, in which he argued that Quebec has always been and will always be a multi-ethnic society made up of people from diverse backgrounds. He said that what distinguished the people of Quebec was that they found a common culture, unlike English Canadians who never had a shared culture.

The dispute between Hubert Aquin and Trudeau senior took place in 1962. Almost at the same time, in 1963, the federal government launched the Laurendeau-Dunton commission, which was supposed to focus on bilingualism and biculturalism. It was supposed to offer Quebec some kind of recognition by saying that Canada was a bilingual and bicultural country. What happened? Members likely know as well as I do that, in the end, it was determined that that to say Canada is a bicultural country would grant Quebec too great a status. The government decided to call it a multicultural country instead. By recognizing all cultures, we are ultimately recognizing none. Quebec was at that point deprived of a tool that would have been essential to its development and its ability to integrate migrants if Canada had been declared a bicultural country.

Ottawa has been clinging to this ever since that committee on biculturalism and bilingualism came to an end. Canada is a bilingual country, not a bicultural one. Still to this day, as we will see on Friday, when it comes to integrating migrants, we are dealing with two systems. One of the systems is the multiculturalism model established in the Canadian context that recognizes Canada as a multiethnic country but does not recognize any national minorities.

In fact, it was in this very place that I heard former prime minister Justin Trudeau refer to Canada as a postnational country. I wonder whether Mr. Trudeau even understood the meaning of the word "postnational", since it would imply not even recognizing indigenous nations. Canada is not a postnational country. Canada is made up of various nations, including many indigenous nations, the Quebec nation and the Canadian nation. However, the government has never been willing to extend that recognition to Quebec, which would have given us the freedom to choose our own integration model. Quebec has put forward a number of proposals over the years. One approach that is particularly well suited to ethnocultural minorities is Quebec's model of interculturalism, which recognizes that Quebec society is built on a common foundation. What does that foundation involve? It involves integrating people in French and always upholding societal standards like gender equality. The third component of this foundation, as members will have guessed, is secularism.

On Friday, we will see what the Supreme Court decides. However, the government has never been willing to let Quebec make its own choices when it comes to integrating newcomers and determining its own system. Today, we are being presented with immigration levels that would weaken Quebec's position within Canada, and we are expected to accept that on the grounds that anyone who objects is somehow narrow-minded and opposed to diversity. As I have explained, this notion of Quebeckers as intolerant and closed to difference has been around since the 1960s, and it is still with us today.

The solution, as my colleague said earlier, is for Quebec to become independent.

● (1140)

Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech, which highlighted our experience as members. I am certain that all members of the House agree. All of us, all the members, and the people we work with, are overwhelmed by these applications and Canadians' issues with immigration. Unfortunately, that is what members have been experiencing over the past 11 years of Liberal management.

My colleague talked about history. Let us not forget that the first agreements between the federal government and Quebec were signed in 1971. Even in 1978, under the sovereignist government of René Lévesque, there was an agreement with the government of Pierre Elliott Trudeau. Indeed, we can agree on things.

My question for my colleague is this. Is he surprised that the current Prime Minister, who is doing a worse job than the former Liberal prime minister on taxation, is also doing a worse job on immigration?

Mario Simard: Madam Speaker, I cannot say I am entirely surprised. After all, he is a typical Liberal. We have grown accustomed to Liberals encroaching on areas of provincial jurisdiction and disregarding Quebec's interests. Still, to see it laid out so plainly in a budget is quite astonishing.

I would also like to come back to a point my colleague raised in his introduction. The serious administrative problems at Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada are putting enormous pressure on MPs' offices. I have never seen anything quite like it. An official even told us to avoid submitting paper forms because they are processed last, and the delays are simply unacceptable. The government should sort this out and focus on fixing how it manages the immigration system instead of interfering with levels, particularly for Quebec. Quebec must manage its own immigration.

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I rise today as an Acadian MP, and I would like to point out that francophone immigration has always been considered an important way of ensuring the long-term vitality of Canada's francophone and Acadian communities. In fact, increasing francophone immigration targets and providing the resources needed to deliver settlement services in French has long been a priority for French-speaking Acadian civil society organizations

The most recent immigration levels plan sets a target of 9.5%, which will increase to 12% in 2029. It certainly took some time to get to this point. We had very low levels of francophone immigration for a long time. Now, we are in a situation where we are really looking to put francophone communities on a path toward demographic growth.

I would like to hear my colleague's thoughts on the key role that immigration can play in the vitality of the French language in Canada.

Mario Simard: Madam Speaker, I am a big sports fan and, in sports, we often talk about batting averages. The federal government only managed to meet its targets in one of the last 12 years. I would not be very proud of that, if I were my colleague.

Francophone immigration targets aside, what I was explaining in my speech is that the federal government fails to recognize that Quebec is a national minority and that it should be allowed to have its own integration system. That way, Quebec could control its own destiny and ensure its survival. That is why we are so upset about the fact that the government increased immigration levels without first consulting Quebec and the provinces.

Claude DeBellefeuille (Vallée-du-Haut-Saint-Laurent, BQ): Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to listen to my colleague, both because he is eloquent and because he knows his history. Too often in this House, we debate issues without fully understanding the historical context and what led to certain decisions being made. As we know, Quebec has some jurisdiction over immigration that other provinces do not have. Unfortunately, the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship still needs to learn that. She is still struggling to grasp the differences between Quebec's jurisdiction and that of the other provinces. It seems she does not understand. She appears to believe that Quebec has full jurisdiction, which is simply not the case.

Can my colleague help enlighten the Liberal MPs and tell them what powers Quebec has in the area of immigration?

Mario Simard: Madam Speaker, the solution is very simple. Throughout every round of constitutional negotiations, Quebec has consistently sought full jurisdiction over immigration. There may be room for discussion when it comes to refugee status, but on immigration itself, Quebec is calling for full jurisdiction. This is a matter of survival for Quebec. No government, whether Conservative or Liberal, has ever been prepared to go that far.

In our view, the solution is very simple: We need a party like the Bloc Québécois to defend Quebec's interests here, without compromise. We also need a government in Quebec City that is prepared to stand up for Quebeckers without compromise. Until a satisfactory solution is achieved, we will continue to do what we have always done, and that is defend the interests of Quebeckers.

● (1145)

Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak to our motion.

I want to begin by stating a fundamental and crystal clear truth: Newcomers who choose Canada and Quebec are not the problem. These are people who come here to work, contribute to our society and build a better life for their families. The real problem, the one and only source of the current chaos, is the government's decisions over the past 11 years and its irresponsible and out-of-control management of immigration.

The promise of Canada has always been a simple one: If someone works hard, they should be able to have a home, put food on the table for their family, find a good job and have access to a doctor.

After more than a decade of Liberal rule, that promise is completely broken. Today, we are discussing an extremely serious issue: the Prime Minister's plan to increase permanent immigration thresholds to a record 650,000 people. That is 40% higher than the peak reached during the Justin Trudeau years. In our opinion, it is completely irresponsible. That is why, this week, the Conservatives are calling on the House of Commons to reverse this devastating policy.

Even the Government of Quebec is sounding the alarm, citing figures that expose the flaws in the Liberal government's reckless approach. According to official Government of Quebec data, the number of temporary immigrants in Quebec has more than doubled in three years to more than 616,500 people, while the number of asylum claimants has tripled. Although Quebec accounts for about 21.7% of Canada's population, it has had to absorb up to 34% of the country's asylum claimants. That number jumped to 46% at the height of the crisis.

Quebec's former immigration minister even pointed out that this population surge cost half a billion dollars a year in last-resort financial assistance alone. That is not including hundreds of millions of dollars to set up welcoming classes and sustain an already overstretched health care system.

In response to this untenable pressure on public services and on the French language, the previous Quebec government lowered its permanent immigration targets to 45,000 people per year and urged Ottawa to drastically reduce the number of non-permanent residents, particularly in Montreal and Laval. The new government that just took office is even talking about lowering the target to 35,000.

Despite all this, the Prime Minister is turning a deaf ear.

The imbalance is significant, with Canada getting 650,000 permanent residents. Under the Canada-Quebec agreement, the former Quebec government was prepared to take in a maximum of 45,000, and the new government is talking about 35,000. Imagine the demographic imbalance this amount of immigration to the country will cause and the impact it will have on the status of French in Canada. This aspect is never factored into the equation. I never hear the Liberals on the other side talk about that. Quebec has had this agreement since 1991, as the member for Louis-Hébert and minister of state often reminds me. I am aware of that. The agreement is there to ensure that Quebec has control over its immigration, but the current government's approach is creating an imbalance in how that immigration is managed.

When he took office, the Prime Minister decided to do some repairs, fix the immigration system, fix defence, fix this and fix that. Now, however, we have more problems than ever. As the member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, I can confirm that not a day goes by without an immigrant calling my office for help, because nothing is working right. Everything is late. The paperwork is late. One problem keeps leading to another. That is what we mean by getting things under control. However, granting permanent residency to 650,000 people—a decision that was buried deep in the budget, I might add—is not the way to do it.

Instead of introducing a plan, instead of having the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship conscientiously present her plan for immigration to Canada, the government stuck it in the budget and left everyone to figure it out for themselves. Instead of doing things properly, the government is tearing apart Canada's social fabric and raising the cost of living. Housing is getting harder to access, and crime is on the rise. As I said, the immigration system is out of control.

● (1150)

This is having an impact on society. According to Food Banks Canada, demand jumped by 9% last year and is up 117% since 2019. There are 2.35 million visits to food banks every month. These impacts need to be calculated and taken into consideration. These days, one in three Canadians is skipping meals because they cannot afford to buy food.

As for housing, figures from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, or CMHC, confirm that the rise in rents has accelerated again in Montreal, while Quebec's vacancy rate remains below the break-even point of 3%. The Prime Minister promised to double housing construction, but the Parliamentary Budget Officer confirmed that that promise has been broken. Housing starts are even lower today than they were under Justin Trudeau. We have the lowest ratio of housing per capita in the entire G7.

Despite the vastness of the country, how can the government claim to be able to accommodate 650,000 new permanent residents a year when it is not even building enough homes to house those who already live here?

Incidentally, the government says that these people are already here. We are talking about 75,000 people from Hong Kong, Ukraine, and newly licensed doctors who are already in the country. If we do the math, 650,000 people minus 75,000 people, that leaves 585,000 people who are not here. That is why we are talking about this. We are hearing all sorts of nonsense from members opposite.

I mentioned food banks earlier, but there are also repercussions for the health care system. According to the Canadian Institute for Health Information, when the Liberals took office in 2015, Canada had 2.58 hospital beds per 1,000 people. Since then, Canada's population has grown by 13% as a result of immigration policies. Today, hospital capacity has fallen to 2.4 beds per 1,000 people, well below the OECD average of 4 beds per 1,000.

The situation is just as alarming when it comes to physicians. Despite the surge in population growth, the ratio has remained stuck at 2.4 physicians per 1,000 people.

Clearly, population growth must correspond with adequate capacity in housing, health care and education. That is where the management of Canada's immigration system is currently falling short. We have seen the consequences in recent years, particularly with the arrival of asylum seekers, mainly via Roxham Road in Quebec. Thousands of those individuals are still in Canada today. What is even more concerning is that the government knows that there are 2.1 million people here in Canada whose permits have expired; we no longer know what their status is, but they are still here.

When the government is talking about adding 650,000 permanent residents while it still does not have a handle on the files of more than two million people, we have a serious problem. It is only making matters worse. I have figures and statistics, but I will not go through them all. I could speak about this at length. I have data on the impact on health care, particularly in Quebec, and the effects are very significant.

As I said, immigrants are not to blame. Some people might be tempted to use that argument against us politically. People who come to this country expect to get a job, to be able to visit to the hospital if they get sick and to send their children to school. That is what they expect because the country tells them that Canada will welcome them.

It calls to mind Justin Trudeau's major gaffe in January 2017, when he wrote a tweet telling everyone to come to Canada, that they would be welcomed.

What did people do? They read the message and came to cross the border into Canada. That was where the problems began, because we cannot take in that many people.

Add to that the permits granted to people who should never have received one in the first place, and we end up with two million people who no longer have a permit but are still here. On top of that, we have a government that says it is going to take in 650,000 permanent residents, when in reality only 75,000 people should qualify.

Quebec says that 35,000 new permanent residents is enough, that it cannot accommodate any more. Then we end up with 35,000 new permanent residents, in addition to asylum claimants whose applications are approved. Quebec is therefore justified in raising concerns, just as the other provinces are.

● (1155)

Earlier, I heard my colleague from New Brunswick speak about the importance of the francophone dimension in that province. We must never forget the francophonie.

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would remind my colleague that the 200,000 people with temporary resident status, whom we want to help transition to permanent resident status, are already here. They have put down roots in our communities. In many cases, their children attend our schools. They have jobs. They make a positive contribution to society. They will not put pressure on housing or services because they are already in our communities. They contribute to the economy.

We are being asked to hit the brakes. Can my colleague tell me exactly who is being targeted? Is it the personal support workers who take care of seniors in care homes? Is it the people who work in agri-food? Is he going to go tell businesses in the tourism sector that they have to eliminate jobs because the government will not let them keep the workers who have been with them for years? I am trying to understand.

Does my colleague really understand the impact of what he is proposing today?

Pierre Paul-Hus: Mr. Speaker, I do not think that my colleague has the correct information. The problem with the management of immigration in Canada is that there are several different categories of immigrants and immigration statuses. When my colleague talks about the 200,000 immigrants who will receive permanent residence and who are already workers, he is leaving out the other 360,000 the government wants to make permanent residents. Who are these people?

Let us not forget the 75,000 people who should get permanent residence too, since we had an agreement to take in Ukrainians and Hong Kong residents. There are numbers everywhere. Unfortunately, my colleague is being misled by his government, which is telling him that these people are already here, that we are keeping them and that we want them. That is not what the numbers show.

Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my colleague on his speech. I would like his opinion. Does he think the federal government would be justified in establishing a mechanism for the equitable distribution of asylum seekers among Quebec and the provinces? At Roxham Road, for example, there was a huge influx of asylum seekers into Quebec. Normally, this is a federal responsibility. The provinces participate by taking in their fair share of asylum seekers or by covering all the costs incurred as a result. As we know, Quebec is seeking $690 million to cover the costs resulting from the influx of asylum seekers. What are my colleague's thoughts on this?

Pierre Paul-Hus: Mr. Speaker, I was the public safety critic at the time, and my colleague was responsible for immigration. Quebec was dealing with a major problem, as people were entering at Roxham Road in droves. Eventually these people began to split up more, meaning that some went to Ontario and some to Quebec, but it was still a problem. That is why we are calling on the government to fix how immigration is managed.

For years, we asked the government to review the safe third country agreement. This finally happened after several years, but it could have been resolved very quickly. We called for it month after month. The reason we are facing this problem today is that the Liberals were incompetent, and they are still incompetent.

Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, before the Liberals, before Justin Trudeau, we had a reliable and relatively functional immigration system that allowed immigrants who came to Canada to make a place for themselves, build a life, dream, hope, live their lives and raise their families in Canada, all while having access to necessary services. Since the Justin Trudeau government in particular, our immigration system has been in chaos. People are no longer getting answers. They are waiting on two departments, with one department waiting on answers from another. They cannot get any answers.

They were promised a good life in Canada, but when they get here, they are disappointed. Many of them think about leaving because Canada is not living up to the promises that it made to them.

Does my colleague think that we will improve Canada's immigration situation by bringing in even more people and by allowing more permanent residents to settle in Canada, when we know that services are not keeping pace?

Pierre Paul-Hus: Mr. Speaker, the simple answer to my colleague's question is that this is precisely why a motion is being debated today. This motion calls on the government to scrap its completely ridiculous plan to grant permanent residence to 650,000 people. We have a backlog of cases in the queue. We are talking about 2.1 million people in Canada whose status is unknown.

I think the government should work with immigration services to review and verify the files. Adding hundreds of thousands of people is not the way to go.

● (1200)

Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when immigration is the topic of discussion here, in the House of Commons, we often talk in terms of numbers, percentages, thresholds, permits, programs and forms. In my offices in Thetford Mines, Plessisville, Lac-Mégantic and Laurier-Station, however, what I hear most often are the stories of business owners, workers, fathers and mothers, as well as immigrants themselves, who come to speak to me about the challenges they are facing. Those are the people we meet with. Those are the people living with the consequences of the decisions being made here in Ottawa by this tired Liberal government, and it is on their behalf that I rise to speak today.

The motion we are moving today calls on the government to take into account our capacity to house people, offer them jobs, give them access to health care and provide them with the services they need. It seems to me that taking this capacity into account is simply common sense. There should be broad agreement on that point here in the House of Commons. We must be able to properly welcome the people who choose to come live here. That is a responsibility we owe both to Canadians and to newcomers themselves. Let me give just one example. How is it that, in Canada, a woman who has left her husband because she was the victim of domestic violence can be denied permission to remain in the country a little longer? That is the kind of situation our system is producing. It is so overburdened that it no longer has the capacity to properly consider genuine humanitarian cases. That is the result of 11 years of Liberal rule.

In the budget, the Liberal government announced a target of 360,000 new permanent residents for 2027, but that is not all. One has to read the fine print. One has to go through every page and dig into the annexes to discover that the Liberals also intend to grant permanent residency to an additional 200,000 people. Added to that are admissions stemming from the exceptional measures announced last year. Based on our reading of the figures, that would bring the total to 650,000 permanent resident admissions. This is unprecedented in Canadian history. That is not all. We also anticipate the arrival of 370,000 new temporary residents in 2027. How can the government claim to have regained control of immigration without providing Canadians with a complete, clear and transparent picture of its admission numbers and without demonstrating that we have the housing, jobs and services needed to welcome them? That is what today's motion is addressing.

Business owners in Mégantic—L'Érable—Lotbinière often talk to me about how hard it is for them to retain workers. I have spoken out publicly several times about delays in processing labour market impact assessments, or LMIAs. At one point, over 30 businesses contacted my office for help with this. It was total chaos. Members cannot even imagine. I am thinking, in particular of CIF Metal and its general director Claude Blanchet, who is speaking out against this at every opportunity. He is all over the media talking about how the government needs to better manage the immigration system. For example, CIF Metal may lose an employee who is extremely important to the company because of a single check box on a form. As a result, Claude Blanchet is saying that the next time he expands his business, he will not do so in Thetford Mines, in Quebec or in Canada. He is saying that he will have to go somewhere else where he is better received and where the systems are better managed. That is what is happening after all these years under the Liberals.

Because the Chaudière-Appalaches region in my riding has an unemployment rate of about 2%, companies can spend months looking for someone who knows the trade. When they find the right person, they hire them. They hire Canadians first, young people who are just out of school. However, when they go four or five months without getting any résumés, they have to look at other options. They have to consider temporary foreign workers, but they do not want them to just be there temporarily. They want them brought in under the economic immigration stream, obviously. They are putting time and money into training these workers, and sometimes, these workers are the ones who will teach others, young Canadians, how to do their job. They will be the ones who train the new workers.

Temporary foreign workers come here to work. They pay their taxes, their families are settled here and their children are going to school. They are learning French and everything is going well. Then, all of a sudden, because the Liberals are unable to properly manage their programs, these workers are having issues renewing their status, which puts all of that in jeopardy. What does the government have to say to that business owner, to their family, to the family of the temporary foreign worker and to their co-workers? In regions with low unemployment, it is just as important to retain workers as it is to recruit them. The company and the worker are doing their part, but the government has to do its part as well.

● (1205)

The Conservatives proposed a five-year transition period to allow workers in regions with an unemployment rate of less than 5.5% to remain on the job and to give businesses the time they need to adjust. However, the government is doing the opposite. It is doing everything it can to make life difficult for businesses and individuals who were welcomed here with the promise that they could make a change in their lives. We want to give workers and businesses predictability. To do that, we do not need to increase the number of permanent residents. We do not need to bring in more.

With the targets we had before, that is, 250,000 new permanent residents per year, we were able to meet the needs. I am not even talking about Justin Trudeau's record numbers, let alone the current government's all-time record of 650,000 new permanent residents proposed. By simply going back to the targets we had before, we can fix the situation for all these people and restore some order to the immigration system.

They are trying to do two things at once. On the one hand, they are trying to fix the mistakes of the past that did not work. On the other hand, they want to increase the levels even more. What will happen then? It will be even harder to keep the promise that Canada made to these people. It will be even harder to provide them with health care. The entire Canadian population will have to absorb the impact.

Another issue comes into play at this point in time: our ability to provide care. Last week, the National Post published an in-depth article. The first page was shocking. In 1985, Canada had 6.75 hospital beds per 1,000 people. In 2023, it had only 2.5 per 1,000 people. That is 63% less. The OECD average was 4.2 beds per 1,000 people. Now our ratio is close to 2.5, and it will continue to decline because, judging from the Liberal-backed Century Initiative, the population will continue to grow at breakneck speed for years to come. Yes, this decline has taken decades, but the Liberals are speeding things up. Ten years from now, the numbers will be even more dismal.

When we increase our population, we also need to increase our capacity to care for people. We need more doctors, nurses, health care workers and infrastructure. It does not happen overnight and, unfortunately, that has consequences. For example, in Thetford Mines, the psychiatry unit may be closing its doors. Why? It is because psychiatrists are going to major centres rather than the regions. Demand in major centres is huge, and more and more people are living in major centres. What is the result of that? It is that there are no resources in regional hospitals, like the Thetford Mines hospital. The obstetrics unit in Lac-Mégantic nearly closed for the same reasons.

The government is governing with more than blinders on. It is governing with a blindfold over its eyes. It is incapable of managing immigration. It is incapable of managing the people who are already here. It cannot tell us how many people there are, and it still wants to continue to increase the number of people coming to Canada. This needs to stop. It is time to clean up the immigration system that the Liberals created. Now is the time to answer people's questions, not six weeks from now.

When it gets to the point that members of Parliament have to set up dedicated phone lines to do the work that the system and immigration officials should normally do, it means there is a serious operational problem. The Liberal government has brought us to this point.

The Liberals have been in charge of the federal immigration system for 11 years. They have completely destroyed a system that was working quite well overall. Businesses need predictability. Workers and their families need certainty. Canadians need access to housing, jobs and health care. That is why we want immigration levels to be set based on our integration capacity. The Liberal plan is not working. It does not hold water and will only create more chaos. We need to plan immigration based on the resources and services we are actually able to provide, bearing in mind that newcomers will also need those services. Promises were made to them, and those promises must be kept, not to mention the promises made to Canadians.

● (1210)

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I recently met with the Canadian Construction Association. I also met with the Canadian association that represents various restaurants a little earlier. I have with various chambers of commerce, and the message is clear. There is a labour shortage in Canada, especially in rural areas.

I know my colleague also represents a rural area. In fact, I have seen press releases from his local chambers of commerce mentioning these labour issues there. They point out that they need immigration to fill these labour shortages.

I would like to ask the member whether he is in contact with these businesses. Do they also have significant labour needs? If so, why is he asking us to lower the immigration thresholds?

I do not understand, and I invite him to consult the businesses in his region.

Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, he should stop listening to lobbyists and start listening to what we have to say today. It is fairly straightforward and makes perfect sense. I said this in my speech. He should have heard it. I said we need workers in the regions. What I am saying is that, under the immigration levels that existed previously, there was more than enough room to grant permanent residency to those individuals.

The Liberals talk about bringing in 5,000 physicians, but out of 650,000 people, that amounts to less than 1%. What they are proposing will not change Canadians' lives. On the contrary, by increasing the numbers in this way and allowing additional newcomers to join those already here, they will not even be able to process the cases my colleague is talking about.

It is too much. They cannot even handle the numbers they already have. How are they supposed to handle a record increase in the number of permanent residents in a single year?

Marilène Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my colleague talked about Thetford Mines and the hospital and the health care needs there. We tend to think of certain files in isolation, but everything is connected.

Let us talk about health. In the latest budget, the federal government cut health transfers by billion of dollars. There will be a $14-billion shortfall. I am thinking of Quebec. What else does my colleague have to say to the government?

We have been talking about government, about health care and about housing. We are being told that we need to take in more people, but we have responsibilities. Quebec has to take people in and integrate immigrants. What does my colleague have to say to the government?

Something clearly is not adding up.

Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, with tongue in cheek, I wish to say to my colleague that the Liberals are liberal with their inconsistency. Given all the time she has spent here opposite the Liberal government, she surely understands that inconsistent decisions are a daily occurrence for this government.

It opened the door to a lot of immigration. Roxham Road put an enormous strain on Quebec's public finances. Today, everyone in Quebec, from immigrants to long-time residents, is suffering because they cannot access services or housing that they can afford, all because the Liberal government cannot walk and chew gum at the same time. Not only is there a lack of consistency, there is also a lack of competence.

[*English*]

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, earlier this year, I had the honour of being in my colleague's riding where I heard from businesses. The region has, I believe, has 2.3% unemployment, which is one of the lowest areas in the country, which means they need workers, skilled workers. However, instead of the government addressing the challenges in their region, the government has been setting out-of-control levels of bogus asylum claimants, which has been discussed here, and out-of-control numbers of temporary foreign workers in urban areas where there is high unemployment.

It seems to me like the system used to work. Under the previous Conservative government, we never had the challenges we saw in his region. We would be matching immigration levels to where there are legitimate labour needs. We would make sure there was enough housing, health care and jobs to match the intake levels.

How does he feel about the broken immigration system?

● (1215)

Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague who did indeed came to my riding. She saw that we were in kind of a mess. The government is able to fix the actual immigration system to allow those workers to work in our region with a low unemployment rate. Now the Liberals say they will create more chaos by admitting more people for permanent residency. This is just not right, not right for our region, not right for those people who try to work and try to make a good life in Canada and not right for all the people who cannot access services right now because the Liberals have been so bad at this immigration part.

Taleeb Noormohamed (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle. I want to begin by talking a bit about my own family, because when we talk about immigrants in the abstract, when we talk about people overrunning our streets, as some members opposite would say, we are talking about human beings, the vast majority of whom came to this country looking for a better life, to take care of their families. They had faith in what this country stands for and belief in building a better life for their families, finding freedom for the things that they care most deeply about, and being able to live safely and build prosperity.

My own family came to this country to build the Canadian dream. They came with very little, and for my parents to now be able to sit in this chamber when they often come to Ottawa to see their son in this place is a testament to what this Canadian story can be for immigrants who come here looking to help us build the kind of country that we want for ourselves and for our children. When we are talking about this, let us not make this abstract. Let us make this about the people whose lives we are talking about and those people in this country who have built businesses and who have built their families working alongside and depending on immigrants to this country.

I was glad to see the member for Calgary Nose Hill in the chamber. She is somebody who has been working hard to talk about intelligent ways that we can all improve immigration policy in this country. I would hope we are all working for the same goal, which is to make sure that our policies work well. For a very long time in this country, there had been a consensus on immigration, a consensus view that immigrants are good for this country, and making sure that we have people who come to this country who want to build a better life, want to contribute and want to do things that make Canada stronger and better. That is what we all believe in.

Regrettably, what we see of late is a narrative that basically says, let us blame all the problems that we have in this country on immigrants. I do not think that is the right approach for any of us. It is not the right approach for those of us who believe that responsible immigration policy is good for all of us, those who believe that a strong economy benefits all of us, or those of us who believe in both.

Let us talk about this motion for what it is. In this motion, we ignore one simple fact, that it rejects the idea that many of those that these immigration levels seek to address are people who are already in this country and already doing important work in our businesses, in our families, in our homes and across our communities. I want to talk a little about what this looks like in Vancouver Granville and the people who are among the 200,000 who are already in the country and will be regularized.

Let us talk about who those people are. They are people who work at Vancouver General Hospital, BC Women's Hospital or BC Children's Hospital. They are people who take care of seniors in their homes, young people at schools and toddlers at day cares when parents are out working. They are the folks who are helping to build our homes. They are the folks who are helping to make sure that when we go to a restaurant, somebody is there to take care of us and to serve us. They are working in every industry imaginable, and they are filling jobs that we need filled.

Whether it is in a rural riding in Alberta or Saskatchewan or an urban riding in Ontario or British Columbia, more and more people are saying to us that they need workers. They have people who are already here and already working, and they need them to be able to stay. They are trained in their positions. They are trained in the jobs that they are doing here. We need them to stay to do important work.

I will give some tangible examples. Solly’s Bagelry in my riding is an institution. The owner of Solly's Bagelry came to my office several weeks ago and said they were very concerned that the people who are already working for them are going to be sent back. These are people they have taken time and effort to teach how to make the best bagels in Vancouver, and every time they lose a person like that, it costs them money to train and retrain people. He said they want to be able to stay in this country, and they are all here legally and paying taxes, so why were we trying to send them back.

We think about George, a 93-year-old man who lives in my riding, who has dementia. He has had the same Filipina caregiver taking care of him for the last number of years. She was hoping for a pathway to be able to stay in this country. To disrupt that man's life is not just an inconvenience. It is to cause him harm in ways that we would never want inflicted on members of our families.

● (1220)

It is about Sam, the toddler whose nanny's work permit is about to expire. They are about to be sent home. It is about Ava, who came to this country to take care of families in our communities so that one day she might be able to stay here and take care of her own family.

The labour market tells us the same things. We are not able to find new people in this country to do the jobs that people already in this country are doing. This is not about bringing new people to Canada. This is about ensuring that those who are already here are able to do the work that we desperately need them to do, that where both parents are working, a caregiver can take care of a child; that where both parents are working, somebody is there to take care of an elderly parent and give them the care they need. It is about making sure that there are people to build the homes that we need built and making sure that restaurants and other service businesses can keep the staff they already have and have them continue to work.

That is what businesses are telling us. That is what industry associations are telling us. That is what Conservative members of Parliament are telling us quietly. We are being asked to please make sure that the workers who are already serving in critical roles in our communities are able to stay. That is what we are hearing from coast to coast to coast. From rural Nova Scotia to British Columbia, that is what we are hearing.

Let us talk a bit about principles. Let us talk directly about the things that actually matter. I want to speak directly to the Filipino community here, many of whom have written to me and felt targeted. I want to talk about the principles of faith, of family and of freedom. On the principle of faith, these are people who come to this country with faith in two things: faith in God and faith in the fact that Canada is going to help them build the kind of life they need by doing what they are doing, which is helping to take care of our families.

They are taking care of our families as caregivers. They are taking care of our families by caring for seniors in our hospitals and in our homes, and by caring for our children. They came on the principle of faith, their deep faith and conviction in Canada and Canadians and their deep faith in God. They came here to take care of our families so they could take care of their own families. They came here because this country could give them the freedom and ability to support their families at home while they worked for hours here, so they might one day bring their God-fearing families to this country.

When we talk about faith, family and freedom, let us be clear. The motion ignores and, in fact, targets the types of workers in this country who want to become Canadian and who want to be part of the fabric of this country. It targets the very people who are already here, working hard, taking care of our communities, taking care of our families and taking care of our kids. They are making sure that there is food on the table. They are doing all of the heavy lifting that we all know needs to be done.

It is the quiet work that is often unseen. These are the workers who are part of the fabric of our families, of our churches, of our mosques, of our gurdwaras, of our synagogues and of our communities. They are here because they want to build a life in this country. They want to do it ethically. They want to do it responsibly. They pay taxes. They are not a burden on our system. They are not taking away housing from Canadians. It is quite the opposite. They are helping make sure that our economy runs well and that our families are taken care of. They are here and filling the roles that we need them to fill.

If we are going to be real about this conversation, let us ask ourselves something. Are we prepared to look people in the eye who are taking care of the folks who have dementia, who are taking care of elderly seniors, who are taking care of kids, who are helping businesses grow and thrive and who are building our homes, and ask all of them to get out? Is that what we are prepared to do?

I bet the answer, if we talked to Conservative members of Parliament quietly, would be no. They know exactly what we know on this side of the House. Vilifying immigrants and vilifying people in this country who are helping build Canada strong is not a strategy for success. It is not a winning strategy when it comes to trying to unify a country and bring Canadians together. It is not a winning strategy when someone is trying to build a strong business. It certainly is not a winning strategy when building strong communities.

Let us all steel our spines and stand up against the demagoguery coming from the other side. Let us do what we all need to do, which is to build a responsible, stable immigration plan for this country, which our immigration plan does. Let us make sure the people in this country who are helping to build this country strong, who are doing it with dedication and commitment to faith, family and freedom, are able to do it in the best way.

● (1225)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Before we go to questions and comments, I am just going to remind the hon. member not to make note of the presence or absence of hon. members in the chamber, as he did near the beginning of his comments.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the approach in that speech is sadly typical of the Liberals' rhetoric on immigration, which is trying to be completely all or nothing. Either one is in favour of their existing approach or, somehow, one is in favour of nothing at all.

We have been advocating a responsible system that takes into consideration the realities, limitations and opportunities here in Canada. Specifically, the member talked in his speech about letting people who are already here stay, but he did not explain why we cannot accommodate those people within existing levels. The government is proposing a radical increase in levels instead of accommodating those who are already here through existing levels.

Why can the folks he talked about not be accommodated without the radical increases the government has proposed?

Taleeb Noormohamed: Mr. Speaker, here we see it. First of all, if the hon. member had heard the beginning of my speech, he would have heard that I think we are all trying to find a consensus position on building a strong immigration policy. In fact, I commended one member in particular—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan is rising on a point of order.

Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, the Speaker cautioned the member not 30 seconds ago about referencing the presence or absence of members. I was here, in fact—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): That is debate once again.

I will caution members not to note the absence and presence of members. I think the member did it indirectly, but we are going to just leave it there. Let us keep it between the rhubarb.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Taleeb Noormohamed: Mr. Speaker, just to be clear, perhaps he was not listening to what I was saying. Had he heard what I said, he would have heard that, in fact, I commended one of his colleagues for actually being there to try to build strong policies and to share them. I think it is important for us to take good ideas from all and to build things together, particularly when it comes to building a consensus position on immigration.

There we have it, the fact that he talks about not being able to accommodate. He talks about all these things. I do not know the word that he used, but the reality is that we are talking about people who are already in the country and about making sure that there is a pathway for them, to ensure that they can keep doing the critical work that is necessary. That is what that member should be focused on.

[*Translation*]

Marilène Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, a little earlier, I talked about the federal government's inconsistency. I would also like to talk about accountability. As we know, a budget was recently tabled.

I am going to speak to the immigration issue in general. Quebec made a request concerning the asylum seekers it has taken in. We are talking about a debt owed not only by the federal government, because it was supposed to support Quebec, but also by the provinces. The government is avoiding its responsibilities. It is all well and good to show an interest in taking people in and allowing others who are already here to become permanent residents or citizens, but the government is not doing its job.

I would like to know whether my colleague agrees that Quebec should be reimbursed for the federal government's portion of the costs related to the asylum seekers.

Taleeb Noormohamed: Mr. Speaker, Canada's immigration framework already provides for collaboration between the federal government and the Government of Quebec. Quebec's immigration policy is clear: It is developed by the Government of Quebec in partnership with the Government of Canada.

● (1230)

[*English*]

I want to be clear that, as we build that relationship, as these conversations happen, we are making sure that governments work together to take care of those who are coming to the country, particularly asylum seekers, that it is done in a way that is respectful of the asylum seeker, respectful of the process and the rule of law, while also ensuring that the fiscal picture is looked at. That is part of the conversations that are happening and will happen between the Minister of Immigration and her counterparts in Quebec. I think those are important conversations for us to continue to have.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the member could provide his thoughts in regard to why it is so disheartening to hear the official opposition actually reinforce indirectly, if not directly, many attitudes that, quite frankly, racists have, people who are anti-immigrant, and how—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I am just going to caution the hon. member. One cannot do indirectly what one cannot do directly. I think the member is very much bordering on that and causing a bit of disorder. I am going to caution him in terms of how he words things. I will let him quickly conclude his comments, but I am just going to caution him.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, how do the actions of the Conservatives cause discourse in the broader community and, in particular, among those who would like to cause harm to our minority groups?

Taleeb Noormohamed: Mr. Speaker, I want to be clear that it is not all but certainly some. There are those on the other side who choose to rage-bait on this issue. That feeds into the narrative that immigrants are bad. It feeds into the narrative that immigrants do not contribute. It feeds into a series of stereotypes. One need only look at the comments on social media. When any person of colour or any immigrant from either side, who may have an accent, makes a speech, look at the comments about remigration. Look at the comments such as "Go back where you came from." Those comments are a direct reflection of when politicians refuse to be held to a standard of ethics, responsibility and decency when it comes to public discourse.

[*Translation*]

Anju Dhillon (Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in the motion before us today, the Conservative opposition is calling on the House to reject the government's immigration plan for next year. However, we need to start by asking a question that the motion overlooks: What does the data on permanent resident admissions actually tell us about the number of people coming to Canada?

There is a difference between admitting someone as a permanent resident and welcoming someone as a newcomer. Many permanent resident admissions involve people who are already settled here. In fact, most of the permanent resident admissions this year involved people who were already in Canada, not newcomers. When it comes to the pressure this puts on communities, this is not a technicality. It is essential to understand what will change on the ground.

The 2027-29 immigration levels plan maintains the regular annual permanent residence target at 380,000, which is the same as it was in our previous plan. The plan also provides for up to 200,000 spots in 2027 as part of a time-limited measure, whereas previous one-time initiatives are currently being implemented. These are actual admissions that must be reported transparently. That is why we included them in the 2026 budget.

However, these extra spots do not constitute a new permanent annual level. Their purpose is to allow the provinces and territories to keep needed eligible workers who are already settled in Canada and to expedite existing applications for humanitarian and family reasons. The maximums are not automatic admissions. The real numbers will depend on eligibility, processing and, in the case of workforce retention, the participation of the provinces and territories.

Why is it important to make that distinction? It is because a change in immigration status does not necessarily mean that another person has arrived in Canada. The Parliamentary Budget Officer made an important observation earlier this year. According to the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada data quoted in her February report, 48% of new permanent residents admitted in 2025 were previously international students or temporary workers. That is almost half, and that number has gone up even more. From January to September 2026, 59% of new permanent residents were former temporary residents.

Let us consider what this means for housing and public services. Someone who is already living in Canada is already part of a community. They can rent a home, use public transit or send their children to a local school. Granting permanent residence to that person does not suddenly create a new household in need of housing or another child requiring a spot in a classroom. Those pressures were already taken into account before the decision was made. That is why permanent resident admissions should not be viewed as a direct driver of new population growth or additional housing demand.

The most relevant questions are how many new arrivals there are, where they are settling and whether communities have the capacity to accommodate that growth. There is another question worth asking: Why set aside an admissions spot for applications already in the system? In that context, I want to review the humanitarian and family reunification components of the 2027 measure.

● (1235)

This measure is intended to advance existing applications filed by spouses, common-law partners and dependent children in Canada of Canadian citizens and permanent residents, people who applied under the permanent residence pathways for Hong Kongers or Ukrainians, for example, as well as certain applicants already approved in principle on humanitarian grounds.

These are not new pathways we have opened. In some cases, no new applications are being accepted. People who applied to these pathways while they were open are still awaiting a decision.

Closing a pathway does not make the existing applications disappear. The government still has a responsibility to deal with them. There is also a practical reason for processing these applications using a separate, time-limited measure.

The immigration levels plan for regular immigration must continue to reflect Canada's current priorities, particularly economic immigration, family reunification and refugee protection.

At the same time, thousands of applications remain in the system under existing commitments, including under pathways that are no longer open to new applicants. The time-limited measure in 2027 will move these pending applications forward without permanently increasing regular immigration levels. It will allow the government to process applications that have been in the system for a long time while maintaining a predictable framework for years to come.

Leaving a claim unresolved does not create another home or make a health clinic bigger. The person is already here. For someone who is already settled here, an unresolved claim may mean more time not knowing if they can make long-term plans for work, for their family or for their future in Canada.

These measures provide individuals with certainty while helping the immigration system reduce long-standing backlogs. Of course, these transitions can have impacts over time. Eligible family members may come from abroad, and permanent resident status may affect how long a person can stay in Canada and their access to certain services.

However, these considerations are different from those that assume that every person granted permanent residence is another person moving to Canada and immediately putting pressure on housing.

The plan also addresses the other side of the equation: managing the flow of newcomers.

Since 2024, the government has taken steps to reduce temporary immigration following a period of exceptionally rapid growth. These measures are yielding results. The number of newcomers has decreased, and population growth has slowed.

The 2027-29 plan builds on this progress by maintaining an annual target of 370,000 new temporary residents over the next three years, including foreign workers and students.

These two parts of the plan have different objectives: to reduce the number of newcomers in order to ease demographic pressures, while using a separate, time-limited measure to address existing applications and commitments. Both parts are essential to responsible management of immigration.

The pressures facing Canadian communities will never be resolved by conflating a change in immigration status with a newcomer. They will not be resolved by leaving people waiting for decisions on commitments that have already been made, either. We must manage the flow of newcomers. We must honour our current commitments. It is not about just honouring the numbers. We have been clear when it comes to the numbers. We need to fully understand what they represent, recognize their real impact on communities, and make responsible decisions accordingly. That is what Canadians should expect from their immigration system.

● (1240)

[*English*]

Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to my colleague's remarks. We are discussing appropriate levels, what levels in terms of immigration the country can accommodate. The Liberal argument as I understand it is that these increased levels are going to actually come from people who are already here. That explanation does not really hold water, insofar as they are proposing higher levels overall. Why could they not accommodate the people who are already here, at least within the existing levels they have proposed?

Additionally, it is their policy to have significantly higher numbers of temporary foreign workers coming in. It is their choice to bring people in temporarily, far beyond what our country can accommodate, while we are talking, actually, about the need to eliminate the temporary foreign worker program.

Why make this disingenuous argument, claiming it is about people who are already here, when in fact they are significantly increasing the number of people coming from outside the country?

Anju Dhillon: Mr. Speaker, as I cited with statistics and very clearly explained, the Conservatives, there they go again, are saying it is all new immigrants, it is new people and nothing is reduced.

I am talking about the changing of status for somebody who is already here as a temporary foreign worker and obtains permanent residence. The Conservatives are calculating them as a new person, just to inflame the rhetoric and cause harm to the hard-working immigrants who are here. This is unacceptable on their part. I do not even know what the motion is all about. It makes no sense other than to spew hatred towards the other.

[*Translation*]

Claude DeBellefeuille (Vallée-du-Haut-Saint-Laurent, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my colleague is a member from Quebec. She is very familiar with Quebec's demands.

Both the previous CAQ government and the current PQ government have informed the federal government of their interests, as well as their immigration targets. However, the numbers in the budget do not really correspond to what Quebec is asking for. I do not want the member to think that this request is coming solely from the PQ, since the CAQ government had also called for lower thresholds.

Can she explain why there are immigration thresholds in a budget and why provinces like Quebec were not consulted beforehand?

Anju Dhillon: Mr. Speaker, I thank my esteemed colleague for her really important question.

The Quebec government and the Canadian government are still working together on areas of the international mobility program, particularly on the issue of foreign workers. It is really important to maintain certain thresholds because there is a labour shortage, especially in rural areas. There is a shortage of staff, and producers and farmers are being forced to scale back production. There have also been unfortunate situations where businesses have had to reduce their opening hours and, in some cases, sadly, have shut down.

● (1245)

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my colleague agrees with me about today's motion, because the Conservatives' rhetoric on immigration is harmful.

It stigmatizes people by making them scapegoats for much more complex problems, and this has an impact on social cohesion. It fuels prejudice and social division. Just look at the rage-baiting clips posted online and the kinds of comments they generate.

I would like to ask my colleague for her opinion. What impact is the Conservatives' rhetoric on immigration having?

Anju Dhillon: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for having the courage to speak the truth. This rhetoric is nothing but hate-mongering.

As elected members, whether in Ottawa or in the provinces, we have a duty to protect people and keep them safe from harm. Our duty to Canadians is—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): We need to be a little more careful with the statements we make in this House. There is often a degree of nuance in debates of this nature, but we should be mindful of our words and avoid attributing motives to the people in this Chamber.

We will resume debate.

The hon. member for Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill.

[*English*]

Costas Menegakis (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, immigrants helped build the Canada we know and love today. They worked hard, built businesses and raised the families who became the backbone of this country. My own family is part of that story, and so are millions of others in every corner of our beautiful nation.

After 11 years of the Liberal government, the immigration consensus those generations built is crumbling. Back in 2015, Canada had an immigration system that was respected and the envy around the world. Canadians supported it because it was reasonable, it was measured and it worked. Newcomers arrived at homes they could rent, jobs they could fill and doctors who could see them. Then, the Liberal government took office. It blew the doors off. Millions and millions of newcomers came to Canada without housing, without health care and without jobs, and no infrastructure to keep up. It was an absolute disaster. A system that took generations to build was wrecked in a matter of years. All it took was the mass migration policies of the Liberal government.

The Prime Minister now walks around telling Canadians that the Liberals finally have immigration under control. That rhetoric does not match reality. The planned intake by the Liberals for permanent residents is 380,000 people. Only once before 2019 had that number been higher in Canadian history. Levels are already high by historical standards, but it gets worse. The actual planned intake for permanent residents is a staggering 662,000 people. This is the highest number in Canadian history. Members should let that sink in.

The Liberals' answer is not to worry and that these are one-time measures. Last year's budget, budget 2025, had one-time measures too, and now budget 2026 has even bigger one-time measures. Two budgets from the Prime Minister and two rounds of one-time measures, each bigger than the last. When something happens every single year, it is not a one-time measure. It is a policy.

Let us talk about who is paying the price for this chaos, because it is newcomers just as much as it is Canadians. Newcomers who came here with hopes and dreams are lining up at food banks just to eat. Just today, 24,000 children are walking into food banks hoping to find something to eat because their bellies are empty and they are hungry. International students are crammed into houses and, in some cases, with up to 13 other people. Asylum claimants are sleeping in shelters and taxpayer-funded hotels. Temporary foreign workers are being exploited as cheap labour by large corporations. At one point, the abuse of the temporary foreign worker program was so bad that the immigration department had essentially become the human resources department for Tim Hortons. Is that compassion? No, it is not. It is exploitation dressed up as compassion.

For Canadians, the damage is just as real. Six million Canadians cannot even find a family doctor. Adding more people to the wait-list does not shorten the wait-list. Young Canadians entering the workforce are competing against hundreds of thousands of newcomers simply for entry-level jobs. Youth unemployment in the greater Toronto area sits at around 17%. Wages are being pushed down while rent is being pushed up.

It is not just entry-level jobs. KPMG is trying to hire foreign worker accountants in Toronto, paying anywhere from $80,000 to $95,000 a year. It is also applying for LMIAs to get them through the immigration department into Canada, when we have accountants and students graduating from accountancy in very top-notch universities in Canada who are looking for those jobs. KPMG wants to bring people from the outside into Canada because the Liberal government has given it an opportunity to do that and take the jobs Canadians should really be getting.

● (1250)

The Liberals removed the labour market impact assessment requirement for certain high-wage jobs, so employers no longer have to prove that they even looked first for Canadians for those jobs. The Prime Minister has handed his corporate friends a cheap-labour pipeline to pad their bottom line.

I am happy that some people who have been stuck in immigration uncertainty for years by these Liberals are finally getting a resolution. More than 30,000 people in the Hong Kong pathways backlog will finally get a permanent residency. That is a good thing, but let us remember how we got here.

In 2021, the Liberals invited tens of thousands of Hong Kongers to Canada. They came because Canada made them a promise, but when they arrived, they had years of stressful, unfair immigration uncertainty. There was a backlog of more than 60,000 people in the humanitarian and compassionate streams, including the Hong Kong pathways. The previous levels plan admitted only 5,000 per year from that backlog. At that pace, people who Canada personally invited would wait well over a decade just for an answer. That is unacceptable and fundamentally unfair.

I have seen it in my own riding. Two married doctors from Hong Kong were working at a local hospital, saving lives and filling exactly the kinds of roles Liberals keep saying that we desperately need people for. They came here, got those jobs, paid their taxes and invested in a home, but because their status dragged on with no answer for years, they were let go from the hospital, forcing them to sell a home for $200,000 less than what they purchased it for.

They did everything right: They were invited, got jobs, paid their taxes and bought a home. They had a life, but they lost their jobs because the government was not giving them the permanent residency that it had promised they were going to get. Let me say that again: Trained health care workers who were already here, already working and already caring for Canadians were pushed out of their jobs by Liberal immigration incompetence.

The same story repeats for Ukrainians, who were welcomed on temporary measures only to be left wondering whether they could stay. It also repeats for refugees fleeing genuine persecution who have been left waiting behind a system clogged with Liberals' own mismanagement. Behind every one of these files is a family, a story and a life on hold. The Liberals do not seem to understand that immigration decisions are not to be taken lightly, and their incompetence hurts real people.

Here is the point the Liberals do not want Canadians to hear: It did not have to be this way. They could have made a carve-out inside the existing 380,000 permanent resident admissions in the levels plan. They could have accommodated all of those people. They could have prioritized the Hong Kongers who were invited and the Ukrainians who were sheltered. Every one of them could have been made a permanent resident without bringing in a large new cohort on top of what was promised in the levels plan. Keeping the promises made to those coming to Canada is what a responsible government looks like.

For example, a family that came to see me came here 12 years ago. The mother, father and sons got jobs, started working, were on temporary work permits and renewed year after year, only to receive a letter saying that they are not going to be renewed and they would have to leave the country. The problem is, in those 12 years, they had three other children, born right here in Canada, and they do not know what to do with their lives. These are real people.

The Liberals did not consider youth unemployment, which is at 17% in the GTA. They did not consider where people were going to live. Instead, they created the second one-time measure.

The Liberals have let so many people into Canada that they have no idea how many are already here. Statistics Canada recently found about 300,000 more people in Canada than previously counted, including roughly 240,000 more temporary residents. The Liberals cannot even tell Canadians how many people are here, and their answer is to let more people in.

Canadians are generous and very welcoming people, but Canadians are not naive. They know the difference between keeping a promise and breaking a system. That is why Conservatives have brought forward a motion that names this for what it is, a fundamental unfairness, both to the newcomers who were promised a fair shot and to the people already here.

At a time when Canadians are struggling to find jobs, homes and doctors, the Prime Minister has chosen to push next year's permanent immigration levels to the highest point in our history. Our motion asks—

● (1255)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I am afraid the time has expired.

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, Canada's population growth is at the lowest rate. We would have to go back to World War I to see a lower rate than what we have, yet the Conservatives try to give this false, mythical impression that Canada is going to let in 600,000 people next year. They completely ignore reality. At the end of the day, there are those in society who spew nothing but negativity and misinformation about immigrants. That is damaging to our society.

Would the member, at the very least, recognize that there are those in society who try to portray immigrants in a negative light and that it is not healthy?

Costas Menegakis: Mr. Speaker, the member could not be more wrong. There are 662,000 people in this levels plan. Immigrants and people who come to this country were made a promise, and we cannot fulfill that promise. They cannot find a house, a doctor or a job, and the Liberals are bringing in astronomical numbers.

The member says that population growth is at the lowest it has been. He does not know that because they do not know how many people are in the country. Statistics Canada says there are more people in the country than are recorded. The Liberals have no control over immigration. They have no control over Canada's population. That is not a realistic question.

[*Translation*]

Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, according to our calculations, Canada will welcome 1,032,000 people by 2027: 370,000 temporary residents and 662,000 permanent residents. Those figures include 380,000 admissions under the regular targets, as well as 200,000 additional admissions, including 82,000 carried over from last year's programs. There is a real lack of transparency on the government's part. It is quick to accuse others of sowing division, yet I would argue that this lack of transparency does exactly that, particularly when dealing with an issue as sensitive as immigration.

What does my colleague think?

● (1300)

[*English*]

Costas Menegakis: Mr. Speaker, the member is absolutely correct. The Liberals are trying to sort of blur the real picture of what is happening out there. We are talking about historic numbers they want to bring into the country. They have no control and no semblance of organization in the immigration department.

They have had no fewer than seven different immigration ministers in the last 11 years. They do not know how to manage the department. The Liberals are looking left and right for who can take the job next. When one fails, the Prime Minister appoints them to another ministry and brings another person in. All these failed policies over the last 11 years get rewarded on that side with other cabinet posts. It makes no sense whatsoever. We need to look at our population and what is good for both newcomers and Canadians alike.

Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it seems that Canada's Parliament is precisely the right place to have a reasoned, substantial discussion about what is appropriate in terms of immigration levels, yet what we see from the government is an effort to shut down and delegitimize that substantive conversation by suggesting that somehow any proposed level other than their preferred levels is somehow illegitimate.

Could my colleague reinforce the importance of having a democratic debate about what numbers are appropriate without the kind of effort to shut it down that we see from the other side?

Costas Menegakis: Mr. Speaker, that is a great question. We put forward recommendations and amendments to the immigration committee quite often and the government votes them down. Ever since the Liberals manufactured their majority, they vote everything down, one after another. It is totally unreasonable.

Their total disrespect for this Parliament has never been done before in Canadian history. Today, because we dared to ask questions in this House and make valid points, the member for Winnipeg North uttered the word “racist”, which is disgraceful.

Vincent Ho (Richmond Hill South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of our Conservative motion to reject the Liberal Prime Minister's immigration plan and bring immigration levels and population growth back in line with the pace of the growth of homes, jobs and services that Canadians and newcomers need.

The Liberals advertised a target of 380,000 permanent residents before 2027, but if we read the fine print, we see that the total could reach over 650,000. It is the highest in Canadian history. Let us think about that. Ottawa has cited estimates of up to 500,000 people who are living in Canada without status.

The immigration department also reported that nearly 1.9 million temporary visas and permits were due to expire in 2026. The government found that it had lost count of the population by as many as 300,000 people. The Liberal immigration minister owes Canadians an answer to a simple question: Who is really benefiting from the broken Liberal immigration system and the out-of-control levels of immigration?

Canada's immigration consensus rested on a practical understanding. People would come here to work, raise a family and build a life. Canada would give them a fair shot at a home, a decent job and a place in the community. That understanding earned the support of generations of Canadians, including generations of immigrants. In Richmond Hill South, families who came here decades ago are now watching their children who were born here struggle to afford a place of their own. Families who arrived more recently can spend months looking for work, maybe years in the field they trained for, and both can spend years looking for a family doctor. Six million Canadians lack a regular primary care provider.

Before the Liberal government sets this target, it should ask the provinces how many more patients their primary care teams can actually take on. It should ask families whether government services have kept up with their lives. On the other hand, Liberals have subsidized gold-plated health care benefits, including services such as vision care and urgent dental care for bogus asylum seekers and refugees, while many hard-working Canadians have to pay out of pocket for those very same services. The government's own figures show that it has spent more than $275 million over roughly a decade on health coverage for people whose asylum claims are rejected and who have no legal right to be here in Canada in the first place.

Scarcity changes how people see their neighbours. When every rental viewing feels like an audition and every day care list seems to go on forever, people start to wonder whether the system is fair. That is what happens when the Liberal government makes promises to more people than it has planned to serve.

The Liberals listened to corporate power brokers asking for a bigger labour pool to suppress the wages of Canadians. They should have listened just as closely to the workers asking for a raise and the mayors asking where everyone was going to live. The biggest employers got the ear of the Liberal Prime Minister. Families got the bill. The government can help rebuild that consensus by setting levels the country can support and showing Canadians the work behind those numbers.

A housing announcement cannot take a family off the waiting list. A finished home can. The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation estimates that Canada needs between 417,000 and 469,000 housing starts every year to restore pre-pandemic affordability by 2036. However, the government's own parliamentary budget watchdog stated that housing starts will drop to just 200,000 units a year. It also expects construction to slow faster than demand. That shortfall should be on the Liberal Immigration Minister's desk before a single target goes to cabinet.

The people who have the least room in their budget feel the shortage first. The young couple saving for a down payment spends another year handing it over in rent. The newcomer without a Canadian credit history has fewer landlords willing to take a chance. A parent who finally finds a place within budget may have to move an hour farther away from work or pull a child out of school.

For years now, Conservatives have been calling on Liberals to tie immigration levels to actual housing completions, rental vacancies and the ability for cities to service new homes, and to count the apartments families can afford and the places they can find work. When construction falls short, the government should have to revisit its assumptions in public. The mortgage payments and rent are due every month, and families cannot pay for them with these unsustainable immigration levels.

In October, youth unemployment hit 13.7%. That is more than one in eight young people in the labour force. Behind that number is a teenager who cannot get a summer job working in retail or serving coffee, a graduate sending out another round of applications and a parent wondering how much longer the child who lives in their basement can afford to wait for a start.

Now add artificial intelligence. No member of the House can say with certainty how many entry-level jobs AI will change or eliminate. Let us think about the work a new hire used to learn, such as drafting a new memo, answering routine customer questions or checking a spreadsheet. If employers automate more of that work, where does the next generation get experience?

● (1305)

When the lobbyist of a big corporation tells the Liberal government it cannot find workers, the first question should be, at what wage? Did it raise the pay? Did it offer steadier hours? Did it give a young person a chance to learn and train on the job? The Liberals are making it too easy for powerful employers to sidestep those questions. When a temporary worker's permit ties them to one employer, that same company also has more leverage over the newcomer, and it makes it uncompetitive to hire a Canadian. The young Canadian looking for their first job and the newcomer looking for a fair wage have every reason to demand better.

When a Liberal minister sets immigration levels, they should look at youth unemployment, entry-level vacancies and whether wages are rising faster than prices. A first paycheque is how we get a reference, learn what we are good at and start making career plans of our own. A country that sacrifices its young people's future and makes them wait indefinitely for their first chance will pay for it long after the unemployment rate falls.

Although granting permanent residence can end years of uncertainty, an approval letter is not integration. Then comes the work of building a life here in Canada. It takes time to learn English or French, get a qualification recognized, find steady work and become part of a community while learning our culture and customs. It takes time to learn how our institutions work, take part in our civic life and come to feel that Canada is home.

I grew up in Richmond Hill, where I saw what that looks like. It is parents getting to know each other at the school gate. It is newcomers getting a first job in their field and, a few years later, helping someone else get that same start. Those relationships grow through ordinary encounters repeated over months and years. They are how people learn to trust one another and take responsibility for the places they call home.

When the Liberals bring in too many people in too short a time, they make that work harder for everyone. A parent working irregular shifts may wait months for a language class. An engineer can spend years trying to get licensed while working a job that barely pays the rent. As those delays pile up, newcomers lose years they could have spent building a career, and Canada loses the benefit of the skills it invited them to contribute in the first place.

Integration also means knowing what we owe one another. In Canada, we are free to worship, speak our mind and disagree peacefully. Our neighbour has those same freedoms. When anyone resorts to intimidation, vandalism or violence, police should enforce the law, and everyone should be able to count on its equal protection.

Before the Liberals set another target, they should ask how long people are waiting for language classes, whether licensing bodies can process applications and whether local employers have jobs that match the skills Canada is recruiting. Those answers should help determine how many people we invite and how quickly. The Liberals can issue an approval letter in a day, but it takes years to build a life around it. Immigration levels need to be set in a place that gives newcomers and the communities welcoming them a fair chance to do their work.

In Richmond Hill South, the question I hear from people waiting on an immigration decision is simple: When will I know? When will the Liberal government fulfill the promise it made to newcomers?

Let us think of the family that came through a pathway for Hong Kong residents and has spent years waiting for a decision. I have met with hundreds and hundreds of Hong Kongers at my office. Some have told me they are down to their last couple of thousands of dollars of their life savings. Some have trained in one of the best medical schools in the world but could not get recertified, because the Liberal government put their status in limbo. Some have told me that had they chosen the United Kingdom, they believe they would be approaching citizenship by now, not still waiting for a decision on permanent residence.

These families are already working, paying taxes, sending their kids to school and putting down roots. Every extra year in limbo means another year of decisions they will have to make without knowing what comes next. Do they take on a new job? Do they sign another lease? Can they make plans to be with family? Those are ordinary decisions, and the Liberal government has made every one of them more difficult.

Conservatives have called on the government to deal with the eligible backlogged cases within the overall immigration numbers without exceeding existing annual immigration levels. That also means setting clear timelines, publishing transparent processing progress and giving people a decision they can plan their life around.

The Liberals created this pathway and asked people to trust it. Families made life-changing decisions on the strength of that promise. They have kept up their end; it is time the Liberal government kept up its own.

● (1310)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have mentioned, the population growth is at 0.5%, which is the lowest rate since World War I. In fact, every province's population has had some increase, but at the same time, vacancy rates have gone up. When it comes to health care, I would invite members opposite to come any Friday or Saturday to the city of Winnipeg, go to our largest emergency department, at the Health Sciences Centre, and try to tell me it is immigrants who are taking those positions. It is balderdash.

The impression the Conservatives are trying to give Canadians is that immigrants are causing all the problems in Canadian society. That is just wrong, and the Conservatives know it, yet they still preach it. That is very damaging and calls into question the ethical standards within the Conservative Party today.

Does the member not agree that demonizing immigrants is the wrong way—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The hon. member for Richmond Hill South.

Vincent Ho: Mr. Speaker, I cannot believe the noise pollution that came out of the Liberal mouthpiece over the last minute. I could not disagree more with every single thing that came out of his mouth.

I have the honour of representing the constituents of Richmond Hill South. A majority of the people in my riding were born outside this country. A majority of the people in my riding are immigrants. They are the ones who have to face the wait-lists for finding a family doctor or a primary care provider. They are the ones facing wait-lists for day cares. Oftentimes, they have to wait years. Families have come to me who have said that before they even think about conceiving a child, they have to start putting their child on a wait-list for day care. That is how bad it has gotten.

This is a problem caused by the Liberal government. It is not immigrants who should be blamed.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): I am just going to caution members in terms of the language they use, especially when referring to other hon. members in this place. Let us keep things above board.

[*Translation*]

The hon. member for Vallée-du-Haut-Saint-Laurent.

Claude DeBellefeuille (Vallée-du-Haut-Saint-Laurent, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the House that it is possible to discuss and debate the issue of immigration without insulting anyone and without being insulted or told that we are pro- or anti-immigration. I think that it is healthy to debate and to bring forward all of our ideas here in the House. I think that this is an important democratic exercise. I am a bit irritated with those who think that debating the subject of immigration means we are against it.

I have a question for my colleague. I completely disagree with the idea that immigrants are the cause of all of our problems. That is not what I think at all. However, there is something that is important here that I would like to get his opinion on.

Does he think that immigration thresholds should be discussed with the provinces? It is true that the situation is not the same everywhere and that there are different needs.

Should there be better consultation with the provinces?

● (1315)

[*English*]

Vincent Ho: Mr. Speaker, I do believe we need to have some healthy debate about immigration. Of course, this being the House of Commons, we should be able to debate those issues, but the Liberals have proven that they are using weaponizing, divisive language, at every turn. It is certainly not helpful to a healthy debate that we are trying to have on immigration.

The question we have to ask is, who does this really benefit? It is our corporate power brokers who have the Liberal Prime Minister's ear.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Vincent Ho: Mr. Speaker, I really feel bad for the Liberal members who are chuckling and heckling right now and being so rude, because they have to defend a Liberal immigration plan they do not even believe in because they cannot even get into a meeting with the Liberal Prime Minister.

Grant Jackson (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I just want to put this on the record very quickly. The Liberal lines today are utterly ridiculous. The member for Winnipeg North just said that we should visit a major hospital in Manitoba in his riding. Apparently, according to him, we will not find a single person who is an immigrant in that entire hospital. We know, of course, that immigrants, like everyone else, are human beings and require health care from time to time. They require primary medicine. They require emergency care when emergencies happen. The Liberals are trying to claim they do not.

Does my colleague from Richmond Hill not agree that is completely ridiculous?

Vincent Ho: Mr. Speaker, that is not the first time I have heard a ridiculous thing come out of the mouths of Liberal members in the chamber. It is clear they are not listening to everyday Canadians. I do not even think they are listening to immigrants and newcomers in this country. They are listening only to corporate power brokers. Everything coming out of the other side of the House has just been talking points furnished by corporate lobbyists cycling through every single Liberal cabinet minister, day in and day out for the past 11 years.

Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am splitting my time with my colleague, the member for Kingston and the Islands.

I rise today to speak against the motion put forward by the leader of the Conservative Party. Let us be clear about what this motion represents. It is an attempt to take the very real anxieties Canadians are experiencing, such as the housing crisis, the cost of living, overcrowded hospitals, underfunded public services and an increasingly precarious job market, the very legacy of successive Liberal and Conservative governments, and to direct their frustrations towards immigrants.

Will the Conservative Party never learn that dog-whistling antics never work? Rather than offering serious solutions, the Conservatives approach once again centres around the politics of division. They want Canadians to believe that newcomers are responsible for their struggles. They want workers to blame immigrants for stagnant wages, they want renters to blame immigrants for unaffordable housing and they want patients to blame immigrants for hospital wait times.

Canadians see through the hollowness of this maple MAGA rhetoric of the leader of the official opposition. This is not leadership; this is scapegoating. The Conservatives are exploiting a crisis that the Liberal government has helped create and helped politicize—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Let us pause for a second. I will remind members to keep the crosstalk down while the member is speaking.

The hon. member has the floor.

Jenny Kwan: The truth is that the Liberals have treated immigration policy as a political instrument, and they are constantly adjusting the rules and targets without providing stability, transparency or forward planning. The Minister of Immigration has demonstrated a remarkable inability to manage the consequences of these decisions. The result is a system of chaos.

The Liberal government encouraged international students to come to Canada. Colleges and universities expanded programs and built their financial models around international enrolment. Students paid enormous tuition fees, made plans for their future and came here believing in the opportunities Canada had promised. Then suddenly, the government imposed a student study permit cap, tightened eligibility requirements and restricted access to post-graduation and spousal work permits. The consequences have been enormous.

The government's own departmental results report shows that new international student arrivals fell by 61% in 2025-26, which is 177,790 fewer permits, while the study permit holder population declined by 25%. Members can think about the consequences for students who had already made commitments to educational institutions facing financial uncertainty and for communities whose local economies depend on these institutions.

Did the government properly plan this transition? Did it provide adequate predictability? Did it work with institutions and students to manage the consequences? The government made sweeping policy changes and left people to deal with the fallout, and it did not do the proper consultation that was required.

These are not isolated administrative problems. The government's own 2026 immigration consultations identified frequent policy changes, processing delays, backlogs and difficulties transitioning from temporary to permanent status as major concerns raised by stakeholders. Even the government's own consultations confirmed what applicants, advocates and communities have been saying, which is that this is what happens when immigration becomes a political file rather than a public policy responsibility. The Liberals and the Conservatives are to blame for the politicization of this file. The government appears to be making decisions based on political pressures and polling rather than a coherent, long-term vision for Canada's immigration system, and the Conservatives are happy to exploit that dysfunction.

Did immigrants create Canada's housing crisis? Did immigrants decide to let housing become an investment vehicle for wealthy speculators, financial institutions and corporate landlords? Did immigrants make successive governments fail to build enough affordable and non-market housing? Did immigrants underfund our health care system or leave communities without enough family doctors? The answer is no. These are the consequences of political decisions, and the solution is to build public, co-operative and non-market housing, invest in health care, train and retain workers and protect people from corporate exploitation.

If the Conservatives are genuinely concerned about the downward pressure on wages, they should be fighting wage theft, strengthening employment standards, supporting unions and holding employers accountable for the exploitation of migrant workers. The answer is not to demonize migrant workers. It is to protect them.

If the Conservatives are concerned about immigration planning, they should understand the numbers. They have repeatedly presented a projected 662,000 permanent resident admissions in 2027 as though every one of those people will be arriving in Canada for the first time. The additional one-time measures include pathways for people already living, working and contributing in Canada, including the humanitarian and compassionate cases. Moving someone who is already here from temporary to permanent status does not mean that person is suddenly creating a new demand for a home or a hospital bed.

We can have a serious debate about immigration levels and infrastructure capacity without distorting the numbers and kicking down at vulnerable people. Speaking of kicking down vulnerable people, the Conservatives wanted the government to take the levels plan number from the refugee stream for Hong Kongers. Talk about politics of division.

● (1320)

There is something else that must be said. When political leaders repeatedly portray immigrants as a threat to housing, jobs, health care and public safety, they contribute to an environment where racism, xenophobia and discrimination become more acceptable. All the populism that the Conservatives' sock puppet media accounts send into the atmosphere to foment anger is irresponsible. The real divide in the country is not between newcomers and people born here. It is between those who have power and wealth and those who are struggling to get by.

A nurse who immigrated to Canada and a nurse born here both want safe staffing levels and decent working conditions. A young person who arrived last year and a young person whose family has lived here for generations both want an affordable place to live and a decent job. Their interests are not in conflict. They are often confronting the same corporate interests and political decisions that have weakened workers' bargaining power and hollowed out public services.

The Conservatives would rather have working people fighting each other than questioning why so much wealth and power is concentrated in the hands of so few. The NDP rejects those politics, and I also reject the Liberal government's approach to immigration that has caused chaos and has left vulnerable people in limbo. Canada needs an immigration system that is fair, predictable, transparent and humane. It needs a government that plans responsibly, invests in public infrastructure and respects the people who have built their lives here. We need to stop treating people as numbers to be adjusted whenever the political winds change.

We used to have an immigration system that was the envy of the world. Canada can welcome newcomers and build affordable housing. Canada can welcome refugees and invest in health care. Canada can protect migrant workers and ensure decent wages. Canada can reunite families and strengthen public services. These are not mutually exclusive goals. The answer to Canada's problems is not fewer people to blame. It is better policies, stronger public services, fair wages and an economy that puts people before profits.

I will oppose the Conservative motion because it offers no solutions. It simply directs Canadians' anger toward some of the most vulnerable members of our communities. Canada is a country built on immigration and values that bring us together. Immigrants, newcomers, refugees and all of us contribute to building Canada's social, economic and cultural fabric. Canadians deserve better than the Conservatives' politics of scapegoating and the Liberals' politics of incompetence. They deserve leadership that brings people together in new forms of solidarity and that builds a country where everyone can live with dignity.

● (1325)

Hon. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I agree with much of what my colleague is saying.

I listened to the Leader of the Opposition's speech this morning, and he seemed to hearken back to a day when immigration policies, many years ago, produced great immigrants, as if to suggest that there were no problems. The reality is that many immigrants who came to this country, whether they were Europeans after the Second World War, later or even earlier than that, continually faced discrimination and policies that made it very difficult to be accepted by people who were already living in Canada, yet the Leader of the Opposition seems to hearken back to it as though it were a time when racism did not exist and Canada was overly welcoming to everybody.

I am wondering if the member could provide some comment on that.

Jenny Kwan: Mr. Speaker, Canada's immigration policies have had years of discriminatory and systemic racism embedded into them. We do not have to think that far back, really, but if we think about how the country was built, Chinese people were brought to build Canada, to connect the railway from coast to coast. They had the most dangerous jobs and the lowest pay. Many people died. After that job was done, what happened? An exclusion law was brought in to reject Chinese people from being able to bring their families here.

I can go on with the litany of racist policies that have been brought in. Today, the migrant workers policy, in many ways, imitates exactly those points of view, where abuse is being levied against migrant workers and the government knows it and has done very little to address it.

What I am saying, and what the NDP has said all along, is that, if one is good enough to work here, one is good enough to stay. We should have landed status on arrival.

Brad Redekopp (Saskatoon West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there are so many things that could be said here, but quite honestly, if we remove the anger and the political vitriol from that speech, there is a lot that I would agree with. I want to draw attention particularly to one section of the member's speech where she asked some questions. She asked if it was immigrants' fault that our health care system is the way it is today. No. Is it immigrants' fault that housing is unavailable? No. She pointed to the policies of the government, the Liberal government, and that is what all of us are saying today. We all acknowledge that it is not the fault of the immigrants who came to this country, who were invited here by the government. It was the fact that the government did not set up policies and did not actually make that work.

My question to the member is simple: In an environment where the policies of the government do not work for hospitals and housing, does it make sense to bring in even more people?

● (1330)

Jenny Kwan: Mr. Speaker, the truth of the matter is that it is not just the Liberals who have failed Canadians with failed policies on housing and social services, and on investment in health care. The Conservatives did too. Successive governments, Liberal and Conservative, alternately failed Canadians in that regard, and we continue to see that today. The fallout is that we do not have enough affordable housing.

No kidding, Sherlock, because governments walked away from the housing program in the 1990s, both Liberal and Conservative. That is the result of it, and then they relied on the private sector as though it would somehow fix all the housing problems. Well, it did not, but then they blame newcomers, and that is what I am angry about. Stop the dog-whistling. Let us work together to find a coherent immigration policy that works for everyone.

[*Translation*]

Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I will ask my question quickly.

I think that in order to have a calm and respectful debate, members need to do their best to avoid accusing each other of intolerance, vilifying others and the like, because they just end up stigmatizing immigrants, and we do not want to do that.

We have said it several times and so have the Conservatives: Immigrants are not to blame for what is happening.

[*English*]

Jenny Kwan: Mr. Speaker, that is precisely my point. The problem is not about newcomers. It is about failed successive government policies. Liberal and Conservatives are alternating and failing Canadians, so instead of having a motion like this, why not put forward a motion to call on the government to put together a round table that would involve all the provinces and territories, indigenous leadership, stakeholder groups, migrant workers, unions and so on. Bring us all together and make a 10-year immigration plan. Let us do that instead of saying, here are the problems, and let us just turn our eyeballs to immigrants.

Hon. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to this opposition motion, and I will focus my comments today on a quote that the Leader of the Opposition made in his speech this morning.

He said:

> People come to Canada in numbers we can absorb. They work hard, follow the laws and integrate into our culture and economy. They can have an amazing life building Canada.
>
> The Italians and the Portuguese came here and built apartment complexes and roads that we now all take for granted. The Irish went from starving in the potato fields to thriving in factories across Ontario.

He went on to say:

> The Punjabis came here over 100 years ago to work in our forests and our mills, building incredible businesses in logging for our future.

That is some revisionist history right there. I am not saying that immigrants did not come and build this country in many ways, because they certainly did, but trying to glorify it in the way that the Leader of the Opposition did, as if to suggest that we, as Canadians, historically treated all those immigrants differently from how they are being treated today is complete revisionist history.

The reality is that, and I know my Conservative colleagues are heckling, so maybe this will set in with them, of the Irish who came here, about 100,000, more than one out of every five died either on the way here or after they arrived here, as they were trying to escape starvation in their country.

We could talk about the Italians. I am of Italian descent. My mother immigrated from Italy. The Italians were not looked at the same way. Her brothers and sisters, who by the way started a construction company in Kingston, Ontario, and built a lot of those houses and complexes that the member spoke of, were not looked at the same way as northern Europeans were. They were looked at in a much less desirable way. They were taken advantage of and used to build railroads and infrastructure in our country.

We could talk about the Punjabis, as the Leader of the Opposition also mentioned. One of the best examples of 100 years ago was when almost 400 Punjabis came in 1914. There were 376 passengers on board, primarily Punjabis, who were prevented from entering Canada under racially restrictive immigration rules. Parks Canada itself described the policies involved as "racist and exclusionary".

My point is to say this: The Leader of the Opposition got up in here today and tried to ask why we do not have the hard-working immigrants who came here, culturally assimilated, became Canadians and built this country, and why we do not have those immigrants anymore. He is creating a version of history that, quite frankly, did not exist.

My father is an immigrant. He immigrated from Holland. My father will tell stories of when he came here not knowing a word of English. When he was learning English at the former St. Patrick Catholic School in Kingston, Ontario, he would routinely be ridiculed and made fun of by kids who were here.

This grand notion that immigrants were widely accepted into this country without any sort of contempt is absolutely not true. That is just not the way it was.

This is the problem with Conservatives. There is nothing wrong with talking about the policy around the numbers of people that are allowed into the country. It is totally legitimate. It should be a discussion that we should be able to have, void of having, for some reason, to mention where the people came from. However, they do it intentionally, and the Leader of the Opposition does it intentionally, because he knows that people in his base sit at home behind their computers, going, "Yeah, that is right. Those Italians, they were strong. They were hard workers. They came here. They built this country. What is up with these lazy immigrants who are coming here now and taking our health care and all of our homes?"

That is the story. I say it in a very direct way, but that is the story the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Calgary Nose Hill routinely try to present to Canadians. That is the dog whistle politics that the member before me spoke of.

● (1335)

That is what is going on. The Conservatives want that subtle reminder that the immigrants who are coming here today are out to get our jobs. They are out to take our health care. Guess what? The immigrants who came here many years ago, over the last 100 years, faced the exact same criticisms from people. They faced the exact same reality. My Italian uncles who immigrated here, who started the very construction companies he is talking about, were demonized in the same way. People said, "Look at the Italians trying to take our jobs." That is what he is doing.

Why do we have to have a discussion about immigration policy and immigration numbers in a context of saying they are taking things from us? When the member for Calgary Nose Hill gets up and says to look at our health care system and to look at our housing situation, what the dog whistle politics is all about and what she is saying is that these newcomers are taking something that is rightfully and deservedly ours. That is exactly what the Conservatives are doing, and they know it. They know it riles up their base, and they know it puts them in a politically advantageous situation for a lot of people out there who do not want to understand, or at least who do not understand and appreciate the reality of this country.

I am very proud to be the descendant of immigrants who chose to come to Canada. My grandfather, after World War II, walked out onto the streets of Amsterdam and saw Canadian soldiers liberating the country. It was at that moment that he said, "I want to live in that country. These people care about one another. They care about the world. They care about humanity." Those are the qualities that drove people to want to come to Canada, to be a part of the Canadian dream and what Canada had to offer. I think that is incredibly powerful.

The fact that the Conservatives sit here and suggest that the people who want to come here today do not want the exact same thing is just crazy. They talk about health care. How many brand new immigrants work in the Canadian health care system in one province? So many of them are doing important work. They are not just doing the jobs that we need now, but they are doing the jobs that we have always needed.

The problem is not the immigration. The problem is the perception around it, the way the Conservatives want to spin it, and the way they want to use dog whistle politics on this, just as they do with so many other issues. They should rise above this. They should reflect on the fact that over the last 300 years, unless someone is of indigenous descent, we all immigrated here at one time or another. We all, through those who came before us, wanted a better life and the best quality of life we could have for our children.

Let us think about this. Who better to build our economy, build our country and build our cultural diversity than those who are willing to leave everything behind and go to a completely foreign land to set up a brand new life and provide for their family? Do these sound like people who are just going to be lazy upon arrival, just sit around and take all of the resources from the land? People who have that kind of motivation are not the people to sit back and wait for things to be handed to them. These are the fighters. These are the people who build businesses, who work hard, and who do shift work and work long hours. These are the people who build our country.

● (1340)

Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member's passionate delivery of his remarks, but I do think he has a bit of an unhealthy flirtation with conspiracy theories.

I think it is perfectly reasonable to ask if the Liberals have analyzed what kind of absorption our health care can take with the millions of newcomers they are planning to bring in over the next few years. To my knowledge, there has been none. Have the Liberals analyzed the amount of new housing that can be built per year relative to the millions of new people they would like to bring in?

These are very rational questions to ask about how the Liberals have set their immigration targets. What we have seen over the last 10 years is, for example, that the wait times for medically necessary treatment have gone up 60%, from 18 weeks to over 30 weeks. In that time, we also had the largest growth of our population, by six million people, mostly from immigration. The questions are very reasonable.

Have the Liberals done any analysis on the health care impacts of their immigration targets?

Hon. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, I am not going to lie. The member lost me at conspiracy theory. I spent most of the time, with everything she said after that, sitting there thinking to myself, "Wow, it is pretty remarkable that she sits in a political party with some of the wildest, conspiracy theory-driven members of Parliament I have ever encountered both in this place and outside of this place."

How is it possible that a Conservative, with a straight face, could look across the aisle and accuse a Liberal of being a conspiracy theorist? There is no objective person out there right now, listening to any of this, who would actually think what she was saying could possibly be true. On that note, my entire speech was supported by facts of history. It was supported by quotes from what the Leader of the Opposition said. There was very little that could even be attributed to a conspiracy theory.

[*Translation*]

Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in any case, my colleague says we can have a rational and respectful debate on immigration quotas, but I think he has just proven the opposite.

In fact, the issue is not at all about blaming immigrants in any way, but about assessing immigration quotas based on our intake capacity.

Their system is very inhumane toward asylum seekers. The processing times are very long. Sometimes they last between three and four years. People have time to settle in, integrate and have children, and then they receive a deportation order. I have seen this happen. I have also seen health care workers who came to help and then were deported.

When we accept too many people, we are unable to process the applications, and that hurts the asylum seekers.

● (1345)

[*English*]

Hon. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, the premise of the member's question starts off with the fact that nobody here is suggesting there is anything wrong with immigrants and immigration, and my entire 10-minute speech was on that very topic.

I disagree wholeheartedly with him, and I find it fascinating that the Bloc is doing the bidding of the Conservatives right now by trying to suggest that that is the case, when it is so well documented. It is fascinating that anybody looking at this objectively and who has listened to the member for Calgary Nose Hill in the House during question period, or to the Leader of the Opposition, would actually believe that.

Hon. Greg Fergus (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member from Kingston gave a very passionate and logical speech. When we think that we are not making any more real estate in this world and that the future requires us to learn to get along, does it not make sense to see immigration as a positive benefit to a country like Canada?

Hon. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, throughout my speech, I was trying to draw comparisons to over the last 100 years of how Canadians, both the government and the population, treated immigrants. Unfortunately, it is not one to be desired in terms of how people were looked at on a lot of occasions.

However, the member is absolutely right. Immigrants, unless they are of indigenous descent, built this country. What made us different from other places like the United States, for example, was that we did not expect people to assimilate. We expected people to celebrate their cultures and bring that cultural diversity, because it grew tolerance and acceptance and really made what Canada is as a country.

Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am very glad that today Conservatives are forcing a substantive and serious debate about immigration policy in Canada. We need this debate because for too long, Liberals have succeeded in discouraging and obstructing serious debate about immigration policy. They have done so, and we heard this clearly from the government whip, by trying to frame immigration in this Manichaean, binary, black and white context. In their imaginary world, someone is either for immigration always or against immigration always, and there is no room for in between.

In reality, though, government policy on immigration never works like this. Immigration policy is always nuanced and full of shades of grey. There are many different rules and many different kinds of categories. An effective immigration system is one in which the rules and categories are carefully calibrated to reflect principles of fundamental justice and the interests and values of Canada. We need to talk seriously and maturely about how to create immigration policies that get this calibration right.

A skilled doctor immigrating to a remote area to address an immediate shortage and getting their credentials recognized when they arrive makes sense. A foreign-trained doctor not getting their credentials recognized and being forced to compete with Canadian youth for an entry-level job in a big city does not make sense. A church or other faith group sponsoring a vulnerable refugee family and supporting their integration makes sense. A person facing the expiration of status in the United States, crossing the border illegally, claiming refugee status and spending a decade going through appeals does not make sense. An immigrant investor starting a business and a family here in Canada while creating jobs for fellow Canadians is a great news story. A person brought here for low-wage labour only to be sent back after two years is not good for Canada, and that is not fair for that newcomer.

What Conservatives ask for on immigration is a mature discussion and a calibration of rules and categories to fundamental justice and to the interests and values of Canada. When this calibration is done right and done well, the response is broad public support for a system they observe to be working, but when the system fails, people understandably object.

Today, Conservatives are offering a constructive and responsible path back to an immigration system that works, that advances the interests of Canada and that recognizes the dignity of all persons. Specifically, today's motion proposes that Liberals should not be increasing immigration numbers. Our already very high numbers provide more than sufficient room to accommodate the needs and objectives of our country. They are, in fact, too high as it is. The further increases to these numbers proposed by the Liberal government would push us beyond what can reasonably and effectively be accommodated.

I have the honour of serving as the Conservative shadow minister for jobs, so I think a lot about the link between immigration and employment. It is important to note that a properly calibrated immigration system could contribute to positive outcomes for employment for Canadians. An immigration system that focuses on facilitating newcomers with the right skills, coming into jobs and regions where their skills are recognized and where they are needed, can be done and has been done in the past. Many immigrants to Canada have started businesses that create jobs for others, filled critical skill gaps that allow economic activity to proceed and contributed to the maintenance of communities that require their labour. What we are seeing today is a poorly calibrated system, where numbers are too high and where regional and skill needs are not being matched, yet the Liberal government still wants to increase numbers even further. Under the Liberal government, there are simply too many people competing for entry-level jobs, especially in urban centres. This has led to an unemployment crisis concentrated among Canadian youth.

This issue was studied in detail at the human resources committee during its study on youth unemployment, which led to the following three unanimous immigration-related recommendations. The first was that the Government of Canada, in collaboration with provinces, territories, employers and youth-serving organizations, ensure that immigration levels plans incorporate labour market analysis, particularly impacts on young workers, including consideration of availability of entry-level jobs, wage dynamics and housing pressures. The second was that the Government of Canada, in collaboration with provinces and territories, work to strengthen systems of credential recognition so that skilled newcomers are not forced to compete for entry-level jobs. The third was that the Government of Canada apply strict penalties to companies hiring illegal workers.

Sadly, the government has not actioned any of these excellent recommendations. It has set out a levels plan that does not consider the implications for young workers. It has failed to address major gaps in credential recognition, recruiting foreign-trained professionals and then leaving those foreign-trained professionals unrecognized, stuck competing for entry-level jobs. The government actually subsidized a company that was caught hiring illegal workers.

● (1350)

Our committee heard extensive testimony about how Liberal policy choices have contributed to youth unemployment. For instance, Pierre Fortin, professor of economics at Université du Québec à Montréal, told the committee:

> Each year, about three-quarters of any new cohort of immigrants enlarges the pool of people who are looking for a first or a second job. In recent years, the huge increase in immigration has blown up the total number of new workers who compete for entry [into] the labour force and who are the most vulnerable to rising unemployment whenever the economy slows down.

> In the labour force in 2016, there were about 25 new mature immigrants for every 100 youths, but by 2025, the ratio had gone up from 25 to 70 new mature immigrants per 100 youths. This is a story about supply and demand.

Then we have economics professor Christopher Worswick from Carleton University. He reported:

> As I see it, the recent increase in youth unemployment in Canada is concerning and is likely due to, first, the recent weakening of the Canadian economy in response to the U.S. tariffs imposed and the threats of new ones and, second, the recent rapid expansion of the Canadian population driven mainly by an unprecedented increase in the temporary resident population of younger individuals.

He continued:

> International mobility programs and international student programs have similar issues, so the surge in numbers in all three programs is likely to have hurt the employment prospects of younger Canadians.

These quotations reflect an overwhelming expert consensus within the economics profession that immigration policy choices impact the supply of and demand for labour, which impact unemployment. It is not rational to ignore these economic realities for Liberal ideological reasons.

When it comes to jobs and immigration, I want to acknowledge that I sometimes hear from employer groups that want higher immigration levels because they still find it difficult to find Canadian young people to work. In some cases, employers struggle to find workers in the specific region they are in. In some cases, employers are struggling because of skill gaps. They need an employee with specific skills that are hard to find. As a result, they want higher immigration to fill these geographic or skill gaps.

In response to these very real challenges, I want to propose that we cannot simply accept the high and rising youth unemployment rate because of regional or skill gaps. Instead, we need employers to present their constructive suggestions on how to fix these gaps, how we can better align education and training with the needs of the labour market and how we can support labour mobility. We need to address youth unemployment by setting up Canadian young people for Canadian jobs.

I recall very specifically one conversation I had with Chinese restaurant owners on the west coast, facilitated by my friend and colleague from Richmond Centre—Marpole. We talked about the acute challenges Chinese restaurants face in finding qualified cooks and the role that immigration policy can play in filling that gap, but primarily, they were asking the right and important question. They wanted to know how we can support more training infrastructure, specifically in the area of Asian cooking, so that we can train the cooks we need for Canadian restaurants here in Canada. I want to salute these business owners for pushing reforms, specifically in training. We as policy-makers should be looking for more ways to support employers who want to be part of the process of training Canadian youth for Canadian jobs.

The Conservative youth jobs plan emphasizes unleashing the economy and fixing immigration, and also fixing training and building homes where the jobs are to promote labour mobility. On training, we have proposed offering relatively more generous grants to students seeking in-demand job skills and protecting reputable private colleges that have recently come under attack from the government.

The Liberals' approach to job training has been ideological instead of practical, offering the same grant to students regardless of the job relevance of their program of study and cutting off accredited private institutions that offer real-world vocational skills to Canadians. The Liberals' ideological approach to training will further reduce the number of Canadian young people with job-ready skills. Then Liberals will offer employers higher immigration numbers as the solution to their bad training policies, even while youth unemployment continues to rise.

Our plan would fix training and also address labour mobility. Our plan includes a commitment to build homes where the jobs are by offering employers a major incentive to make workforce housing available to employees who relocate. Major barriers to youth considering relocating for a job are housing and transportation, so we want to make it easier for employers to facilitate housing close to where the jobs are.

There is more that can be done beyond these ideas to improve training and mobility, and I want to encourage employers to come forward with their constructive ideas. The right questions will get us to the right answers, but we cannot persist with a situation where youth unemployment is over 13% and immigration levels continue to grow. Such an approach is neither right nor sustainable.

In conclusion, I am deeply invested in the health and integrity of Canada's immigration system. Three of my four grandparents came here as refugees, one as a refugee whose story I have shared in the House. We have to get this right. This experience motivates me to want an immigration system that works, upholds human dignity and is fair and sustainable. That is precisely what our party is offering.

● (1355)

Hon. Kody Blois (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if my hon. colleague is looking for a government that is serious about its approach to immigration, this government is doing exactly that. We have lowered our numbers of temporary foreign workers, we have lowered the number of international students permitted into the country, asylum claims are down, and we are working with employers on those thoughtful solutions around training that he highlighted.

I represent a rural riding that has a lot of agriculture, a lot of seafood and a lot of secondary processing. The temporary foreign worker program is an important piece, notwithstanding the thoughtful ideas that the member opposite has and the fact that my region's employers are trying to find local individuals to hire.

The hon. member for Bowmanville—Oshawa North and the hon. member for Calgary Nose Hill, members of his party, have suggested there should be an overall killing of the TFW program. Does the member believe that is the right approach at this point?

Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, to start off, I will say the government wants to have it both ways. The Liberals want to tell us, “Oh, don't worry, we're actually fixing the problems of the previous 10 years with the system,” but then they also say that any criticism of the system is somehow inappropriate. We are seeing this contradictory approach from their side.

Our approach to addressing some of the very real labour challenges in rural areas has been to propose a system of phasing out the existing programs while protecting that through an incremental process and at the same time making new policies in the area of training and labour mobility. Our approach is nuanced, it is substantive, and it emphasizes the need to train Canadian young people for Canadian jobs to fill those gaps.

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague spoke about the need for industry to focus on advocating for better skills training and labour mobility strategies for Canadian youth who are unemployed or underemployed.

A lot of lobbyists come to the Hill and just advocate for higher immigration. The member spoke to this in his speech. The net output has been lower wages for everybody, newcomers and Canadians alike. Can the member issue a call to action to these lobby groups that we expect them to be asking for a fair deal for Canadian workers and for newcomers to ensure that wages grow for all?

Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, that is an excellent point from my colleague, who is doing excellent work on this critical issue.

The problem is that we have Liberal failures on training policy that are actually getting worse. Stephen Harper, in his memoirs, talked about the concerns he had around the gap between training and the needs of the labour force. It has gotten so much worse in the 10 years under this government. The Liberals are making it worse.

We need to fix the training problems, and we need constructive solutions from employers about how we can fix these issues. It might be easier to say higher immigration numbers, but that is not working. We need alternatives.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

● (1400)

[*English*]

RALPH BOOMHOWER

Chris Malette (Bay of Quinte, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honour the life and legacy of an extraordinary resident of Belleville in my riding, the Bay of Quinte, who left us earlier this month. Ralph Boomhower dedicated his life to serving others. A retired Belleville firefighter, he spent many years protecting our community and continued that service long after hanging up his uniform.

For 50 years, Ralph served as president of the annual firefighter toy drive, helping bring hope and joy to local families during the holiday season. He also volunteered at the Belleville Sports Hall of Fame, served as president of the storied Wharf Street Debating Club and was a friend to all who knew him, including me.

Ralph's dedication, generosity and community spirit left a lasting mark on Belleville and on all who knew him. On behalf of the residents of the Bay of Quinte and the countless kids and families to whom he brought smiles on Christmas morning, I extend my sincere condolences to his family and friends. Rest easy, Boomy.

GURPURAB

Amarjeet Gill (Brampton West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today I rise to celebrate the second occasion of the Gurpurab of Sri Guru Nanak Sahib Ji, the founder of Sikhism. Guru Nanak Sahib Ji's timeless teachings of equality, oneness, honest living, justice and selfless service continue to inspire millions around the world. His message of universal brotherhood and respect for all humanity is as relevant today as it was over five centuries ago. Let us embrace his teachings, serve those in need and work together to build a more peaceful, compassionate and united Canada.

On this auspicious occasion, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Sikh community in Brampton, across Canada and everyone celebrating around the world. May Guru Nanak Sahib Ji bless us all with peace, happiness and prosperity.

[*Member spoke in Punjabi*]

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BUSINESS PROFESSIONAL WOMEN OF MONTREAL

Patricia Lattanzio (Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate two very important milestones. This year, the Business Professional Women of Montreal, BPW, celebrates 100 years of empowering women and advancing women's leadership. For 55 of those years, Joan Macklin has been part of that story. A pioneer in the hospitality industry and a successful entrepreneur, Joan has dedicated her whole life to opening doors for women, mentoring the next generation and strengthening her community. As president of BP of Montreal, she also championed the advocacy that contributed to making the HPV vaccine free in Quebec.

At 80, Joan continues to give back, inspires others and carries forward the spirit of BPW. I congratulate Joan on her 55 years of service and BPW Montreal on a century of successfully empowering women.

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PUBLIC SAFETY

Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Liberal government finally listed Masar Badil as a front for the terrorist organization Samidoun, but why did it take so long? Samidoun was listed in 2024. Its leaders simply changed its name.

It is the same story everywhere. Right now, legal streaming services in Canada carry Iranian and Russian state channels in violation of our sanctions. They also carry Hamas and Hezbollah channels in violation of the Criminal Code, and nothing has been done. The IRGC was listed two years ago, yet a reported 700 agents are still on our streets fundraising, recruiting and harassing Canadians. Only one has ever been removed.

Masar Badil is still holding a conference in Toronto this weekend, so will the government actually stop them now? Will it actually prosecute those who provide material support to terrorism and a now-listed entity? What is the point of all of these laws? Terrorists do not fear them in Canada, because the government does not enforce them.

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100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION

Ron McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on Remembrance Day this year, I joined residents of Port Coquitlam, commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Royal Canadian Legion. To mark this milestone, Branch 133 Port Coquitlam assembled a community time capsule containing letters, photographs, medals and other memorabilia.

Over the past century, much has changed in our communities and across Canada. This capsule will offer future generations a glimpse into the lives and experiences of those who came before them. I was honoured to contribute a letter and a couple of my father's World War II service medals. Alongside Port Coquitlam Mayor Brad West and members of the community, I was honoured to participate in the burial of the capsule in the dirt just outside the Legion's door. It is to be open for the Legion's 150th anniversary, November 11, 2076.

Lest we forget.

● (1405)

[*Translation*]

I want to commend the Royal Canadian Legion for thinking about Canada's future generations.

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[*English*]

CANADIAN PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, one century ago this month, Canada took a decisive step toward nationhood. Several years earlier, more than 66,000 Canadian soldiers had died in the First World War. Prime Minister Robert Borden insisted at the 1917 Imperial War Conference that this sacrifice be recognized and that Canada be described as one of the "autonomous nations of an Imperial Commonwealth".

That recognition led to the Balfour Declaration in November 1926, which declared Canada and the other dominions as autonomous communities equal in status to the United Kingdom.

That declaration in turn led to the 1931 Statute of Westminster, which enshrined in legislation what the 1926 declaration had declared.

As we reflect on this historic milestone, let us remember that centuries of evolution have led to our parliamentary democracy and constitutional monarchy all under the supremacy of the rule of law.

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REMEMBRANCE DAY

Anthony Housefather (Mount Royal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I recently had the honour of attending Remembrance Day ceremonies in the town of Mont-Royal, the city of Côte-Saint-Luc and the town of Hampstead.

At the Côte-Saint-Luc ceremony, 100-year-old veteran Irving Bernstein, a truly remarkable and inspiring Canadian, laid a wreath. He was joined at the ceremony by Helen, his devoted wife of 76 years.

Irving is a proud member of the Brigadier Frederick Kisch Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion. Founded by Jewish service members in 1944, including my own grandfather Abe Horovitch, this branch organized annual VE Day parades and spearheaded the creation of our Veterans Park.

I thank branch president Allan Levine, his predecessors, including the late Frank Levine, Bob Feldstein, Carl Garber, Joe Blumer, Dave Comm and Hy Geniele, and all those who serve to keep us free. We shall never forget them.

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IMMIGRATION

Grant Jackson (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for 11 years, the Liberals have run Canada's immigration system like a restaurant that keeps accepting reservations without checking whether it has any tables left. Today, the kitchen is overwhelmed, the tables are full and the line is out the door.

Youth unemployment reached 13.7% in October. Young Canadians are desperately looking for work and struggling to earn a living and build a future. The Liberals' solution is to keep taking more reservations. Between their announced targets and hidden immigration measures, the Liberals could grant permanent residency to a record 654,000 people next year alone. However, where will the newcomers work when more than 424,000 young Canadians already cannot find a job? This is not the fault of those arriving at the door. It is the fault of the government making promises it cannot keep.

Canadians deserve better and so do those hoping to build a better life here.

[*Translation*]

OATH TO THE KING

Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, a misguided ruling stated that the oath taken by members of Quebec's National Assembly is insufficient and that, as a result, members cannot sit for the upcoming session. They must either swear allegiance to the British Crown or stay home. That is the ruling. An oath of allegiance is, by its very nature, a pledge of loyalty and obedience.

The members of Quebec's National Assembly have unanimously chosen to pledge their loyalty to the people of Quebec, not to King Charles III. They have chosen to swear allegiance exclusively to Quebeckers of every background, in short, to the people of Quebec and Quebec alone, rather than to the monarch of another country.

We are often told that the monarchy is merely symbolic and ceremonial, yet a judge has now ruled that members who refuse to swear allegiance to the King have no right to sit in the National Assembly.

This illustrates the very real consequences of maintaining an outdated, obsolete and undemocratic institution. It is further proof that the time has come to abolish it once and for all.

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● (1410)

[*English*]

HUB GRAY

Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today, in this month of November, to honour the bravery and sacrifice of the Canadian veterans who defended freedom with courage and grit from the beaches of Normandy to the Korean Peninsula.

I want to salute an unsung Canadian hero. I call out Lieutenant Hub Gray of B.C.'s Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, which helped defend Hill 677 at the Battle of Kapyong. Canadian soldiers held their ground to prevent a march to Seoul by Chinese forces who outnumbered them 10 to one. Young Lieutenant Gray and his men fought with extraordinary courage in what seemed like a losing battle. Hand to hand, in bayonet combat in the dark night they held strong.

As Canadians, our national modesty often prevents stories like this from coming to light. However, recently I was at the launch of a book in Vancouver and Seoul about Lieutenant Gray, written by a Korean author. In Korea, he is a national hero. Canadians should know and celebrate him too, lest we forget our legacy.

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THE ECONOMY

Aaron Gunn (North Island—Powell River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it sure helps to have close ties with the Liberal Party. It is giving $1.6 billion of taxpayer money to Cohere AI, a company valued at more than $36 billion. Meanwhile, Telesat, a company whose CEO is a close personal friend of the Prime Minister, got $2.3 billion. We also have the condo developer bailout in B.C. That is another $1.4 billion to bail out billionaire Liberal condo developers who built condos no one could afford. The Prime Minister's wife was appointed as oceans envoy. No one really knows the total budget because the Liberals will not release any details and they voted down calls for public testimony.

Now we have the latest doozy, Ecostrat, a company whose CEO, Jordan Solomon, is the Minister of Artificial Intelligence's brother and who just got multiple government handouts worth nearly $3 million.

Why is it that everyday Canadians continue to struggle with the record cost of groceries and housing, but for well-connected Liberal insiders, it is raining cash more than ever before?

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21ST WINTER DEAFLYMPICS

Marie-France Lalonde (Orléans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise today to wish Canada's athletes the very best as they head to Innsbruck, Austria for the 21st winter Deaflympics taking place from January 15 to January 24. I am proud to say that four members of the team are from Ottawa. Among them is Cohen Lesperance-Spack, a young athlete from Orléans and one of the goaltenders for Canada's deaf ice hockey team.

I recently had the pleasure of meeting Cohen alongside Ottawa's own Jim Kyte, Team Canada Deaf Hockey club ambassador and assistant coach. Mr. Kyte made history as the first legally deaf player in the NHL and he remains a strong voice for inclusion in sport. The Deaflympics date back to 1924, and today, the Canadian Deaf Sports Association carries that tradition forward by creating incredible opportunities for Canadian athletes.

We are cheering for Cohen and the entire Canadian team. Go, Canada, go.

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IMMIGRATION

Jeff Kibble (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada is on pace to build only 231,000 homes this year, with housing starts down 4%. CMHC says up to 469,000 are needed, yet that was before the Liberals' budget added up to 200,000 more permanent residents. The Liberals continually promise to build 500,000 homes a year. Young Canadian families and immigrant families alike believed them. Indeed, Liberal members have repeatedly told the House that they are “just getting started”. Many families across Cowichan—Malahat—Langford desperately searching for homes have told me they would like to know when the Liberals are just getting finished.

Our opposition day motion is a call for the Liberals to match immigration levels to the homes and hospital beds Canada will actually have available. I will be voting in favour of our motion, and I encourage every member across the House to join me and show Canadians they support immigration levels that match our housing and health care capacity. A vote against our motion is a vote for levels that go dangerously beyond those capacities.

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[*Translation*]

JEANNE CARRIÈRE

Stéphane Lauzon (Argenteuil—Papineau—Des Collines, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I would like to pay tribute to a talented young filmmaker from Lachute, in my riding of Argenteuil—Papineau—Des Collines. Jeanne Carrière just won the prestigious award for the best short film from Quebec at CINEMANIA, the francophone film festival, for her film *Bigfoot*.

The jury was won over by the superb writing, deft direction and profoundly human story of this short film, which was shot in the Laurentians, particularly in the Harrington Valley. This award is a testament to Jeanne's exceptional talent and helps raise our region's profile on Quebec's cultural scene.

I also want to acknowledge her proud parents, Marc Carrière and Martine Ayotte, who have every reason to celebrate this wonderful achievement.

Our regions are bursting with talent that deserves to be recognized and celebrated. On behalf of our entire community, I want to sincerely congratulate Jeanne Carrière. I commend her and encourage her to continue inspiring us to dream.

* * *

● (1415)

[*English*]

IMMIGRATION

Sandra Cobena (Newmarket—Aurora, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when setting immigration levels, we must ask three fundamental questions: Where will people live, work or turn to when they need medical care? In Newmarket—Aurora, we are a community that steps up. We focus on affordable housing. Businesses are fighting to create opportunities for our youth. We give generously to our beloved hospital, but even after expanding its emergency department, our local hospital continues to operate over capacity. Across Canada, food banks recorded nearly 2.4 million visits in a single month. Canada lost 115,000 jobs in three months. Inflation is outpacing wage growth, and rents have risen by nearly 30% in five years.

This is why Conservatives are putting forward a motion in order to ensure that housing, wages, health care, jobs and social services keep up with population growth. We reject the Prime Minister's plan to increase permanent immigration next year to the highest level in history.

Oral Questions

NURSES IN CANADA

Sonia Sidhu (Brampton South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, tonight I will be hosting the Canadian Nurses Association reception, bringing together health care leaders and parliamentarians to recognize the wider role of nurses across Canada.

Nurses provide care at every stage of life for Canadians. I thank them all for their compassion, dedication, expertise and tireless commitment. Nurses and health care workers are the leaders, educators and advocates who shape the future of health care in Canada every day. We are continuing to create opportunities for nurses by streamlining credential recognition or by expanding student loan forgiveness. In budget 2026, we are strengthening our health care system by investing $1.2 billion to expand mental health and addiction services and home and community care.

I would like to recognize the members of the CNA's board of directors who are joining us in Ottawa today and welcome them to Parliament Hill.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[*Translation*]

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the cost of living is rising 50% faster than wages. Mortgage delinquencies are up 30% year over year, to a 13-year high. Food bank demand hit another record this year, and housing construction is falling. Against this disastrous backdrop, the Prime Minister wants to welcome a record number of permanent residents.

Does the Prime Minister acknowledge what 86% of Canadians know, namely that there are not enough homes, doctors or jobs to accommodate these numbers?

Hon. Lena Metlege Diab (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are talking about people who are already here in Canada, who are already living in homes. They have places to live. They work in sectors that are vital to Canadians. They pay taxes.

Here is what Canadians need to know: The vast majority of next year's permanent residents are people who are already settled here in Canada.

At the same time, we have reduced the number of new study permits, temporary foreign workers and asylum claims. Those are the right numbers.

Oral Questions

RAIL TRANSPORTATION

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians work their entire lives to buy a home and land, but the Prime Minister wants to grant himself the power to seize their land without going through the traditional expropriation processes, in order to carry out his $150-billion Alto train project, which amounts to $10,000 out of the pockets of every Canadian family.

Does the Prime Minister understand that Canadians' land does not belong to him, nor does the money in their pockets?

● (1420)

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada is lagging behind when it comes to mobility and high-speed technology.

Countries across Europe, countries like Germany, Switzerland, France, Spain and even Morocco, have developed high-speed rail networks.

We have a lot more space, we have companies, we have the workforce. We can give ourselves the gift of building a nation, with a high-speed train between Quebec City and Toronto.

* * *

[*English*]

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the cost of living has been rising 50% faster than wages for four consecutive months. Mortgage delinquencies are up 30% year over year, to a 13-year high. Food bank demand hit another record this year. Homebuilding has dropped. Into this scarcity, the Prime Minister wants to bring a record 665,000 permanent residents. We do not have the doctors, the homes and the jobs for record-breaking immigration.

Will the Prime Minister accept what 86% of Canadians believe, and that is that numbers must drop and not rise?

Hon. Lena Metlege Diab (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, here are the correct facts. More than one in three doctors is an immigrant. More than one in four registered nurses is an immigrant. Almost 40% of immigrants are in research and development. These are engineers, chemists and programmers. One in four residential builders and general contractors is an immigrant. These are the ones who are building our homes. One in three business owners has paid staff. These are the people who are healing, caring, employing and building Canadians.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for hundreds of years, we have brought doctors, tradespeople and nurses without ever having to have 665,000 immigrants in one year. In fact, the numbers that the Prime Minister has put into his budget are more than double the 20-year average. They are 40% higher than in the highest year when Justin Trudeau was prime minister, and they are on top of double-digit increases in new temporary immigrants as well.

When will the Prime Minister listen to 86% of Canadians, who know we do not have the doctors, homes and jobs to accommodate this number?

Hon. Lena Metlege Diab (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I just stood here this morning for 30 minutes explaining to the opposition what Canadians already know. We have worked with provinces, territories, regional communities, rural communities and francophone communities, everyone in this country from 10 provinces and three territories. We have listened to them. Our immigration levels plan is based on that consultation and that partnership. They have the option to choose or not, and the number, and we are providing that to them.

* * *

FORESTRY INDUSTRY

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is just to drive down wages and drive rent up to help the Prime Minister's corporate cronies, just like the latest Liberal scandal.

The Liberal government just handed $2.2 million over to Ecostrat, a company run by none other than Jordan Solomon, the brother of the Liberal AI minister. From art dealing to self-dealing, from the Group of Seven to the family of two, hard-earned tax dollars are coming out of the pockets of Canadians who cannot afford their groceries and going into the pockets of Liberal insiders.

Why did the Prime Minister force taxpayers to fork over so much money to his Minister of AI?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the opposition leader knows the minister has answered that question. He is proactively—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I cannot hear the hon. government House leader.

We will try again.

Hon. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, as the Leader of the Opposition knows, the minister has answered that question fully. He has proactively disclosed all his relationships to the Ethics Commissioner, including on this matter, followed the Commissioner's advice and pre-emptively recused himself from any discussions to avoid a potential conflict of interest. He has not been involved in any conversations or decisions related to Ecostrat.

Like all members on this side of the House, we continue to rigorously follow the Ethics Commissioner's recommendations at all times.

● (1425)

RAIL TRANSPORTATION

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's credit card budget not only drives up the cost of living; it now gives him unprecedented powers to seize the property of farmers, homeowners and other law-abiding Canadians who saved up their whole life, all to pay for the costly taxpayer-funded Alto project. The land will go over to a private consortium of powerful Liberal corporations, and if it ever gets built, it will cost $10,000 for every family in Canada, most of whom will never use it.

Why does the Prime Minister think that he should have the power to take the money and the land of hard-working Canadians and give it to his friends?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada has fallen behind the rest of the world when it comes to developing high-speed rail and mobility solutions.

The opposition leader well knows that this technology will help Canadians move between Toronto and Quebec City. It will change the way we live, study, work and play. We will continue to make sure that Canada remains at the forefront of technology and provides people and our businesses with great jobs.

[*Translation*]

Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in the budget bill, the Liberals are giving Alto even more power to expropriate land from Quebec farmers. Alto will be able to take possession of land before paying for it, expropriate land for the train route as well as for stations, garages and parking lots, charge farmers right-of-way fees when their land is subdivided, and impose a $25,000 arbitration fee on those who dare to challenge the decision. At this point, these are effectively seizure powers.

How can they be so arrogant as to treat Quebec farmers this way?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our campaign platform included a proposal to give Canadians the gift of a high-speed rail project that will connect Quebec City to Trois-Rivières, Laval, Montreal, Gatineau, Ottawa and Toronto. It will be a game-changer, form the backbone of mobility in Quebec, connect key public transit systems, change lives for the better, provide jobs, create opportunities for our businesses, and it will be—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Beloeil—Chambly.

Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are not content with using heavy-handed measures just to expropriate land from farmers and citizens. They are giving themselves the power to expropriate land from the Government of Quebec with only a notice and no consultation. This could affect public lands, riverbeds and lands held by Crown corporations like Hydro-Québec.

These measures are a complete overreach. The Prime Minister is clearly spending too much time with too many megalomaniacs and dictators. The Liberals have been indulging in their authoritarian delusions ever since they obtained a majority.

Will they show some respect for our institutions and for the people they serve?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, is he accusing Spain or all these other countries? Is he criticizing the Government of France, which has a much smaller territory? These countries gave themselves the gift of high-speed rail precisely so that they could serve their citizens and help them get around. For example, this means that a young person from a suburb has an opportunity to work in another city. Canada should have developed this technology a long time ago and we are proposing to do just that.

Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this is amateur hour. The arrogance of the Liberals and Alto cannot go unchallenged.

Using the new expropriation measures included in the budget bill, they intend to seize hundreds of acres of some of Quebec's best farmland. They have absolutely no consideration for farmers. They are completely insensitive to the trauma being inflicted on families that have previously experienced inhuman expropriations carried out on Ottawa's orders. They are being treated less like people and more like obstacles in the bulldozer's way.

Will the Liberals stop using their majority to trample on the rights of Quebeckers?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, we intend to offer fair compensation for the value of the land and the value of its economic loss.

Not only that, the process is unfolding in an atmosphere of respect, negotiation and, where possible, agreement.

We are going to carry out this major national project that will transform mobility in a very narrow, linear corridor 60 metres wide. We intend to do so respectfully, but Canada is going to give itself the gift of high-speed rail.

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● (1430)

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in 2023-24, Quebec experienced exponential demographic growth, driven almost entirely by immigration. Meanwhile, one in five adults in Quebec still do not have access to a family doctor. What did the Minister of Immigration have to say about that? She said that her plan is a good thing because it saves 5,000 spots for doctors and health care workers. However, regularizing the status of hundreds of thousands of people does not create doctors or hospitals.

Will the Liberal members from Quebec finally stand up for Quebeckers and support our motion to reject this irresponsible increase in permanent immigration?

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement and Quebec Lieutenant, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first, we were elected on a very clear promise that we would take back control of our immigration system. Over the past two years, asylum claims in Canada have dropped by 77%.

The member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles asks the same question every day, but when will he take the time to read the 1991 Canada-Quebec accord, which says that Quebec has full control over its own immigration levels?

I would invite him to read it and perhaps come up with a different question for tomorrow.

Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Gagnon-Tremblay—McDougall agreement, negotiated by Brian Mulroney and Robert Bourassa, was signed on February 5, 1991. Yes, the Canada-Quebec accord was put in place on February 5, 1991. Why? It was done because Quebec knew that managing immigration effectively was the key to successfully welcoming newcomers.

Now, however, the Government of Canada wants to bring in 650,000 permanent residents. Under the terms of the Canada-Quebec accord, numbers will surge. What will happen? Quebec's demographic weight within Canada will be drastically reduced by a massive influx of immigrants under the accord.

What does the minister have to say about that?

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement and Quebec Lieutenant, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to start by clarifying this a bit for the opposition member.

The levels are not changing. There will be 380,000 permanent residents. He is referring to two initiatives. There is one for Ukrainians who were promised permanent residence and Canadian citizenship. There is another for the people of Hong Kong. The remaining 100,000 permanent resident spots are for the provinces that want immigration and for people who are already in Canada.

I invite him to come tour the regions of Quebec with me. All he has to do is cross the bridge and go to the Chaudière-Appalaches region, where the unemployment rate is 2.4%. There, he will see for himself whether the people of Chaudière-Appalaches need temporary foreign workers.

Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, successful and responsible immigration depends, first and foremost, on our capacity to welcome newcomers. That means having enough jobs, housing, health care and educational services in place. After 11 years of Liberal government, however, the capacity simply is not there to accommodate another 200,000 people.

Will the Liberals finally recognize that the first victims of a dogmatic and irresponsible immigration policy are often the immigrants themselves?

Hon. Marjorie Michel (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have been listening carefully. Members opposite often speak about immigration and the health sector.

I would remind them that many immigrants are doctors, nurses and personal support workers. The measure we are discussing today is intended for people who are already here. It is not about bringing in additional immigrants. Our government recognizes the work and contribution of immigrants in the health care sector.

Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, we already knew that the Prime Minister was doing worse than Justin Trudeau when it comes to taxes, debt and the deficit. Now we are learning that he is doing worse than Justin Trudeau when it comes to immigration. Now is not the time to add 200,000 people. The first victims will be the immigrants themselves.

Will the Liberals vote in favour of our motion to reject the new record levels of permanent immigration proposed by the current Liberal Prime Minister?

Hon. Marjorie Michel (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first of all, there will not be 200,000 new immigrants. We are talking about immigrants who are already here, for provinces that want them to stay.

As for Quebec, the member knows full well that permanent residents fall under the jurisdiction of the Quebec government. I would therefore refer him to the Canada-Quebec accord, which he is no doubt very familiar with.

[*English*]

Chak Au (Richmond Centre—Marpole, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has announced a record-breaking 600,000 permanent resident spots for next year. This includes about 70,000 Hong Kong and Ukrainian applicants who have waited five years for the government to keep its word. The Prime Minister must honour his commitment, but he does not need to add hundreds of thousands of new permanent residents, plus 370,000 new temporary residents, to keep his promise to 70,000 people.

Will the government vote with the Conservatives to reverse the Prime Minister's record-breaking immigration levels next year?

● (1435)

Hon. Lena Metlege Diab (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think it is the first time the member has asked me a question, and I really would like to speak to him to ensure that he understands the facts. The facts he is quoting are completely erroneous.

I am very happy that they now recognize that we are going to keep our humanitarian commitment and the commitment we made to Hong Kongers and Ukrainians. That is very good news. I was wondering last week about that. The rest are up to the provinces and territories to ensure that they meet the labour gaps they need.

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, new data shows that, after inflation, Canadian paycheques are shrinking. Real wages have fallen more than 1% in the past year, and it is unconscionable that the Prime Minister is doing the bidding of wage-suppressing corporate lobbyists and setting record-high immigration levels right now. He knows that more competitions for already scarce jobs will push wages even lower. Under the Prime Minister, both newcomer and Canadian workers lose and lobbyists win.

Will the Liberal caucus vote in favour of our motion to reverse these record-setting immigration levels?

Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance and National Revenue and to the Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Conservatives like to talk a lot about affordability, but budget 2026 delivers more support on income, housing, food and energy security, which are all the cost drivers impacting Canadians. With the new enhanced workers benefit, we are giving more support to low-income workers. With Ontario at the table, we have waived HST on new home purchases. With the top-up to the groceries and essentials benefit, we are helping 12 million Canadians put more food on the table. With the heat pump rebate program, we are helping thousands of Canadians save money on their energy bills.

That is real help now on affordability, not talking points like the Conservatives do.

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what the budget is delivering is record-setting immigration at a time when jobs are already scarce. We know that young Canadians are sending out hundreds of résumés and getting no callbacks. Corporations are lobbying the Prime Minister and the Liberal caucus hard for higher immigration so that they can keep suppressing worker wages. We have tabled a motion to stop this. It rejects higher immigration levels and puts workers' rights first.

Who will the Liberal caucus side with, the teenager who cannot get a coffee shop job and the temporary foreign worker being treated like a slave or the lobbyist profiting from low wages?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this morning, I stood with Canada's Building Trades Unions and with young plumber apprentices. In fact, six of them there were working on Parliament next door.

Let me tell members about the opportunity in the skilled trades. In fact, 18,000 apprentices have applied for the $5,000 completion bonus to date. What we hear over and over is that there is a future in the trades. These are great-paying jobs. We are there to help support people to take up the opportunities for training, complete their training and build Canada strong.

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[*Translation*]

THE ECONOMY

Marilène Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, last night, the Liberals ended up steamrolling the committee to push through Bill C-39. Despite more than 100 hours of deliberation over seven days, they rejected all substantive amendments proposed by labour unions, environmentalists and indigenous peoples. The Liberals are on a full-blown power trip to weaken environmental laws, threaten workers' right to strike and trample on indigenous rights.

Bill C-39 is an authoritarian overreach imposed on Parliament in an equally authoritarian manner. Why do none of the Liberals from Quebec have the courage—

The Speaker: The hon. government House leader.

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is because the Liberals from Quebec, and Liberals in general, have put forward a platform to build Canada, so that we can achieve great things together, such as the Churchill Falls and Gull Island renewable energy projects. That is what Quebeckers are looking for. They want us to carry out projects that create opportunities for our young people and our economy.

* * *

● (1440)

THE ENVIRONMENT

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, fortunately, not all Liberals are out of control. Yesterday, the Liberal member for Victoria lamented that his government was losing all credibility on the environment. This comes after the Liberal member for West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country spoke out against Bill C-39, which would suspend the enforcement of environmental laws. It also comes after the Liberal member for Mississauga—Erin Mills sponsored a petition against Bill C-39. Simply put, there are Liberals who take action when their government goes astray, but none of them are from Quebec.

What is the point of electing Quebec Liberals if they stand idly by while their government goes off the rails?

Hon. Julie Dabrusin (Minister of the Environment, Climate Change and Nature, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our fight against climate change is ongoing. We see it every day. On this side of the House, important voices speak out for Quebec, and these members help us. Our budget includes major, historic investments in clean electricity production, among other things. That is something that Hydro-Québec is asking for. We are doing the work, we are still working hard and our fight against climate change continues.

[*English*]

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Canadian population grew by six million people in the last decade, mostly from immigration, and during that time, the median wait for medically necessary treatment went up 60%. It was 18 weeks in 2015, and now it is over 30 weeks. For over a decade, the Liberals have ignored the strain their population growth policies have put on our health system, and now the Prime Minister wants to raise permanent immigration levels to record highs.

Can the government explain how our already overburdened health care system can be reconciled with these record high immigration levels? Can they explain it?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Marjorie Michel (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when it comes to strengthening health care systems, we really work in collaboration with the provinces and territories. We are responding to their requests, because they need more health care professionals.

Concerning immigration, as I said before, the immigrants we are talking about are already here. They are already productive members of society. We are not bringing in new people.

[*English*]

Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, do members want to know what the current ER wait time is today in Winnipeg? It is 12 hours. People are waiting 12 hours to see an ER doctor in Winnipeg, and the Liberals honestly expect people to believe that bringing in millions of people in a few short years is not going to have any negative impacts on our health care system.

There were 23,000 people who died on wait-lists last year in this country. Canadians and newcomers deserve timely access to high quality medical care, but this magnitude of immigration cannot be reconciled with the problems faced in our health care system.

Will the Liberals be voting with us against their reckless immigration policies, yes or no?

Hon. Lena Metlege Diab (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada's population growth is now at its lowest rate since World War I, which was 100 years ago. It is less than half the average under Stephen Harper. Even with our new immigration levels plan, RBC forecasts growth to be just over half a per cent next year. The Conservatives are confusing permanent resident approvals with new arrivals. These are people who are already here.

We are bringing population growth back to sustainable levels while keeping the workers our provinces, territories and rural communities need and want.

Matt Strauss (Kitchener South—Hespeler, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the family doctors in the Liberal caucus will agree with me that, if a person cannot find a family doctor, they are not receiving proper health care. Six million Canadians are currently in that boat.

Canada is breaking its promise to provide proper health care to six million Canadians, yet the immigration minister plans to bring 660,000 new arrivals and new PRs into the system this year. Where does she expect them to find family doctors?

Hon. Ruby Sahota (Secretary of State (Combatting Crime), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, throughout the debate and throughout QP, we have been hearing blame put on immigrants for clogging up our hospitals and our doctors' waiting lines. Over the last decade, recent immigrants have accounted for about 3% of the total population, whereas people over the age of 65 made up almost 20% in the last year. Rather than putting blame on the provinces for mishandling the medical system, the Conservatives are blaming immigrants. That is not the way to go. Immigrants are working in our hospitals, and immigrants are our families.

● (1445)

Matt Strauss (Kitchener South—Hespeler, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what is the secretary of state talking about? I asked, where are the new immigrants going to get family doctors? This may be a news flash, but new immigrants to Canada need family doctors. They need proper health care.

I asked the immigration minister why she is bringing them here without providing family doctors to them. What she is doing is not good for our health care system, it is not good for the citizens of Canada, and it is not good for the immigrants she is bringing here.

Why will she not vote with us to reverse the Prime Minister's record-setting immigration levels this year?

Hon. Robert Oliphant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me tell members what the immigration minister was talking about. Four weeks ago—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. There is an alternative question period going on here in front of me.

The hon. parliamentary secretary has the floor.

Hon. Robert Oliphant: Mr. Speaker, let me tell members what the minister was talking about. Four weeks ago, I was in Sunnybrook hospital. I had surgery, and it was a serious surgery. My anesthesiologist was a newcomer from Israel. The first nurse I saw out of the recovery room was a nurse from Somalia. The second nurse was from Vietnam. Everyone who was taking care of me, every technician, everyone with me, was a newcomer to Canada. We want to thank them today, not deride them.

Helena Konanz (Similkameen—South Okanagan—West Kootenay, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's plan to bring immigration levels to the highest in Canadian history is unsustainable for our health care system. It will lengthen wait-lists for all Canadians. This week at health committee, the president of the Canadian Cardiovascular Society told us he is concerned about these major increases.

Will my Liberal colleagues listen to him and support our motion to reverse the Prime Minister's record-breaking immigration levels next year?

Taleeb Noormohamed (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member from British Columbia knows, in our province, there is a major need for people who are in health care to continue to work in those hospitals. Whether in the Okanagan or in Vancouver, the people who are working in our hospitals, the care workers, the aid workers and the folks who are helping deliver services to patients are immigrants. Many of those people are in this country, and what Conservatives want to do is send those people back to where they came from. We want to keep them here to make sure they can take care of Canadians as they have been doing and as they will continue to do.

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AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Dominique O'Rourke (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last Friday I had the ultimate honour of joining Unifor workers and auto sector leaders at the Ford plant in Oakville to celebrate a new stamping plant and the production of the new Super Duty. Earlier this month, Honda announced the expansion of hybrid production in Alliston. Across the country, companies are choosing Canada to grow, invest and create good jobs.

Can the Minister of Industry please tell the House what the investments mean for our auto sector, for our workers and for the future of Canada?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would love to thank my fantastic colleague from Guelph for her advocacy.

Indeed, in the middle of a trade war, we are fighting back. Canada is an auto nation, and we are putting in place all the conditions for automakers and auto workers to find success here. This month, global automakers are doubling down in our country. In Alliston, Honda is investing, and Ford is investing in Oakville, and so we have just protected 6,000 jobs across the country and across Ontario.

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● (1450)

[*Translation*]

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Gabriel Hardy (Montmorency—Charlevoix, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government just gave $2.2 million to Ecostrat, a business led by Jordan Solomon, the brother of the Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation. After awarding $2.3 billion to Telesat, a business led by a close friend of the Prime Minister's, now the government is awarding millions to a business led by a minister's brother.

My question is very simple: How do the Liberals always manage to find money for businesses run by their friends and loved ones while Canadians and Quebeckers struggle to pay the bills at the end of the month?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member knows that all members on this side of the House rigorously comply with our code of conduct and our code of ethics, which are some of the strictest in the world, with the highest standards.

Gabriel Hardy (Montmorency—Charlevoix, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is not all. The member for Toronto Centre became the Minister of Artificial Intelligence on May 13, 2025. Less than four months later, a $630,000 deal was signed between the National Research Council Canada and Ecostrat. What was it for? It was a deal on artificial intelligence. Another interesting fact is that nearly 60% of Ecostrat's lobbying activities began after the CEO's brother became the minister.

To get access to millions of dollars, does a person have to have the best project, or do they just have to be lucky enough to be a relative or close friend of the Liberal government?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the minister is in no way involved in the decisions surrounding any of that. The minister proactively disclosed all of his relationships to the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner. He strictly adheres to the applicable standards, which, once again, are among the highest in the world.

[*English*]

Blaine Calkins (Ponoka—Didsbury, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a good day for the Solomon family and a bad day for Canadian taxpayers. The federal government recently doled out $2.2 million to a company by the name of Ecostrat, owned by none other than Jordan Solomon, brother of the Liberal AI minister. Much like the recent Cohere AI purchase, we can clearly see that Liberal insiders are the first to line their pockets when the government tenders contracts.

Can the Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation please explain why Canadians' tax dollars should be dispensed to his family members?

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have already answered that question several times, as has the minister, but if that member would care to exit this chamber and repeat those allegations outside of the place where he enjoys unfettered privilege, I think we would all then get the measure of what the real game is here.

Blaine Calkins (Ponoka—Didsbury, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is how it works. The Prime Minister appoints Jordan Solomon's brother as the AI minister, and then Jordan Solomon, the CEO at Ecostrat, lobbies 25 federal bodies. One of these, FedDev Ontario, is under the purview of the AI minister. Then the Liberal government, which the AI minister serves in, awards Ecostrat $2.2 million.

Why is it that every time millions or billions of tax dollars are spent, a Liberal insider or family member is so damn easy to find?

The Speaker: I think we should watch our language a little.

The hon. government House leader.

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the minister has, of course, complied with all of the very stringent ethics requirements that are in place. Those ethics requirements are among the most stringent and toughest in the world. The minister has proactively declared all of his relationships and has severed himself from any discussions involving this company.

We will always, always adhere to the ethics requirements.

Aaron Gunn (North Island—Powell River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Dan Goldberg is a close, personal friend of the Prime Minister. He is also the CEO of Telesat, a company that was about to go bankrupt if it were not for a convenient $2.3 billion from the Liberal government.

Given this, how is it possible that both Telesat and Goldberg just happened to be left off the Prime Minister's conflict of interest screen? Why, if the Liberals have nothing to hide, do they continue to block the ethics oversight committee from hearing testimony from senior government and Telesat officials?

● (1455)

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, all questions linked to the ethics screen of the Prime Minister have been already given to the opposition on many occasions. When it comes to Telesat, I think we need to agree, the opposition and, of course, the government, that this is a key company, and we need to make sure not only that we protect the jobs at Telesat but that we develop Telesat as a real national champion.

* * *

CARBON PRICING

Ned Kuruc (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the industrial carbon tax is destroying Canadian industry. Conservatives have been saying this for years. It was confirmed last week when Stellantis said it faced approximately $330 million annually in greenhouse gas emissions-related costs. Stelco confirmed on a site visit that the industrial carbon tax would cost it $500 million over six years. The Liberals are putting Canadian manufacturers at a disadvantage because their American counterparts do not face the same emissions costs.

When will the minister get rid of the industrial carbon tax?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when it comes to our advanced manufacturing sector across the country, we know that the main threat against it is the trade war. I do not know why my colleagues never allude to American tariffs, why they do not stand with manufacturers and their workers to make sure to denounce these American tariffs.

Meanwhile, if my colleague has different examples, I look forward to working with him. We need to protect workers and protect businesses affected by the tariffs, and that is the main reason we are fighting this trade war.

Ned Kuruc (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would ask the minister to stop misleading Canadians. Conservatives have always denounced the unjust tariffs since the very beginning. It might be acceptable to her, but it is not acceptable to her ministry and the House of Commons.

Liberals created an unfair playing field that makes Canadian auto manufacturing less competitive. Two thousand Stellantis workers are still out of a job. Even their union is asking for emissions cost relief. It is time the minister put Canadian workers first. I will simply ask again.

When will she eliminate the carbon tax?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, one cannot defend an industry when one fundamentally does not understand the main threat against it, which is definitely the American tariffs. It is a fact that American tariffs are hitting our auto workers at 25%. It is a fact that certain manufacturers are targeted by the American administration, up to 50%, with tariffs. It is a fact that the government is there with help to support these businesses.

Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Donald Trump's illegal and unjustified tariffs have been condemned by Conservatives. The problem is, they have had 18 months—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I thought we would be done by three.

The hon. member may begin from the top.

Kyle Seeback: Mr. Speaker, Donald Trump's illegal and unjustified tariffs have been condemned by Conservatives. Here is the problem—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: The member may continue.

Kyle Seeback: Mr. Speaker, Donald Trump's illegal and unjustified tariffs have been condemned repeatedly by Conservatives. Here is the problem. Eighteen months later, the Liberals have not been able to get those tariffs removed. If we want to save the jobs at Stellantis, we have to do the things we can do. Lana Payne from Unifor has called the industrial greenhouse gas emissions cost an own goal. That is what is hurting the industry and what the Liberals can control.

Why will the hon. minister not stand up now and get rid of the industrial carbon tax?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it took a while, but hearing him refer to the American tariffs, I rest my case.

● (1500)

Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is why we are where we are. The minister talks about Donald Trump's tariffs and says there is nothing else we can do. That is absolutely false. We know her jobs guarantee is useless. We know the government's efforts to get rid of Donald Trump's tariffs have done nothing.

What is left? What is left to help Canadian industry and the Stellantis plant and those 3,000 workers? As Lana Payne said, the industrial carbon tax is an own goal. The Liberals can do something. They can remove it. They can save those jobs by getting rid of the industrial carbon tax.

Why does the minister not actually do something that will help those workers?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have been doing the work, along with the union and along with the Government of Ontario, to make sure we protect the jobs. Either they protect the jobs or we will sue them and get our money back, our $831 million.

* * *

[*Translation*]

NORTHERN AFFAIRS

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Québec Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Université Laval, which I know well, is world renowned for its leadership in Arctic research. For example, its Centre for Northern Studies works closely with Polar Knowledge Canada to support researchers at the Canadian High Arctic Research Station.

Can the Minister of Northern and Arctic Affairs tell us how budget 2026 will support the Arctic research partnership between Université Laval and Polar Knowledge Canada?

[*English*]

Hon. Rebecca Chartrand (Minister of Northern and Arctic Affairs and Minister responsible for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada's north is a cornerstone for our sovereignty, for our security and, more importantly, for our Arctic research. I am pleased to highlight that budget 2026 is committing $250 million to Polar Knowledge Canada. Canada is already a world leader in Arctic research. These new and critical investments will support researchers across the country, allowing the next generation to gain field work experience in the Canadian High Arctic Research Station in Cambridge Bay—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Lethbridge.

* * *

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Rachael Thomas (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, John recently met with me in my office to share his story. Living with a disability, he could no longer afford to pay rent, so he applied to live in affordable housing, but with the wait-list several years long, he was eventually evicted and now lives in his car. There is not enough affordable housing that already exists in our country now, let alone after the government brings in a record number of permanent immigrants into our country.

Will the government make the right decision and vote with us in order to reverse course and restore balance?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, again, the disturbing reality is that Conservatives blame immigrants for the housing challenges. We have a lot of challenges to our housing prices. We have 40 years of not building enough affordable housing in Canada from governments of all stripes. As a government, we are focused on tripling the non-market housing we build and ending homelessness within 10 years. These are actions the Conservatives have never even thought to take, much less put into a plan. We are putting it in a plan. We are acting on that plan and delivering affordable housing.

Rachael Thomas (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is just the basic dignity and respect that is deserved by every single person who comes to this country with a dream to make something of themselves, to have a second chance at life. There is basic dignity required, and housing is one of those basic, dignified needs. The fact that the government is turning a blind eye to that and is unwilling to make sure this need is met is absolutely appalling, not only for the Canadians who are already here but for the newcomers who are going to come here and call it home.

Will it reverse course with regard to its commitment to bring a record number of immigrants into this country next year?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there was an encouraging thread there that the members opposite would possibly support our focus on delivering affordable housing, ending homelessness, tripling non-market housing and building supportive and transitional housing and tens of thousands of homes that are needed for those who are most vulnerable across Canada. We are committed to doing this work. We invite them to vote with us and support that work.

Kathy Borrelli (Windsor—Tecumseh—Lakeshore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my friends Jacob and Bavia are hard-working young professionals who did everything right. They earned their degrees. They struggled to find good jobs, yet they cannot afford a home. Young Canadians and new Canadians alike are now competing in an increasingly unaffordable housing market. Immigration levels are up. Housing starts are down. This will make it harder for Jacob and Bavia to buy a new home.

Will the government reverse the Prime Minister's record-breaking immigration levels for next year?

● (1505)

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when the member opposite is speaking to new young graduates, I hope she tells them she voted against eliminating interest on their Canada student loans, that she voted against affordable child care, which every young family will tell us is saving an average of $6,000 to $13,000 per child per year in this country. I hope she is telling the members in her riding that instead of standing up for young people looking for jobs, instead of standing up for the tradespeople who are building those homes, by the way, across this country, she is voting against all of—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Scarborough—Agincourt.

* * *

HOUSING

Jean Yip (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as we work to build Canada strong, we must ensure that no one is left behind, especially older Canadians who are experiencing housing insecurity and the risk of homelessness.

Can the Secretary of State for Seniors tell the House how the government's plan to end homelessness within the next 10 years will help older Canadians age with dignity and security?

Hon. Stephanie McLean (Secretary of State (Seniors), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for her advocacy on this issue. Access to safe and affordable housing is one of the fundamental pillars of aging with dignity.

That is why the government is making an unprecedented investment of $30 billion to help ensure that every Canadian, including older adults, has a roof over their head. We are renewing the Canada housing benefit, supporting delivery of 25,000 transitional and supportive homes, and investing $2 billion to renew and build mental health and addictions treatment facilities. At the end of the day, Canada strong starts in a warm home.

PARKS CANADA

Mike Dawson (Miramichi—Grand Lake, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the expulsion of Acadians from their land in New Brunswick did not end in the 18th century. It has continued under this government.

Jackie Vautour, the last resident of Claire-Fontaine, spent more than 50 years fighting the expulsion of Acadian families from the land that is now Kouchibouguac National Park. He died in 2021, still refusing to leave.

Now that Acadian families are gone, the government says the park is not important enough to keep the staff to run it. Will the minister explain why, after stealing the land from the living, the government is now leaving the park for dead?

Hon. Julie Dabrusin (Minister of the Environment, Climate Change and Nature, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know that our national parks are so important to Canadians right across this country. We have the Parks Canada workers to thank for all of the work they do to make them such safe and wonderful places to visit.

Workforce adjustment letters have been sent to workers. That does not mean that they are all losing their jobs. It means many different things. It can mean that their job may change. It may mean that their job remains. We are going to make sure that we work with Parks Canada workers through this process.

* * *

JUSTICE

Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are bulldozing over indigenous, environmental and workers' rights with Bill C-39.

They rejected every NDP amendment brought forward by unions, environmental groups and indigenous peoples. Even the Prime Minister's own MPs warn that expanding fossil fuels is costing the Liberals climate credibility, but we are ready to fight back.

On December 8, people are mobilizing in Ottawa for a national day of action to stop Bill C-39. Why must Canadians take to the streets to defend their constitutional rights?

Hon. Rebecca Alty (Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the building Canada strong act upholds existing opportunities and obligations to consult with indigenous people. Aboriginal and treaty rights remain. The duty to consult remains.

The bill does not amend or alter the existing commitments to UNDRIP and under the Impact Assessment Act, the Canadian Energy Regulator Act and the Building Canada Act. It also preserves the Impact Assessment Act's requirements for indigenous consultation at every stage: planning, impact assessment and decision-making.

The bill will also establish a Crown consultation hub to ensure that each potentially impacted indigenous group goes through one clear and coordinated consultation process.

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, Bill C-39 should be known as the building Canada strong, ruthless, inhumane and brutal act.

From the time that clause-by-clause started, we worked from 9 a.m. until midnight, seven days in a row, without a single opposition member, Green or NDP amendment to protect the environment, protect indigenous rights or protect workers' rights being accepted. It was a slam dunk, whipped vote, with a no to anything to protect the environment.

Will anyone agree that legislation by exhaustion is wrong?

● (1510)

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, after many weeks of hearing witnesses from all over Canada, from every possible perspective, and indeed after 100 hours of very close scrutiny of this bill that we committed to in the Liberal platform, which will provide job opportunities, build projects and keep Canada's very elevated standards in environment and other matters, we are ready to move forward with this very important piece of legislation that, yes, keeps a commitment that we made to Canadians in the last election.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

BUDGET 2025 IMPLEMENTATION ACT, NO. 2

The House resumed from November 23 consideration of Bill C-31, A second Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on November 4, 2025, as reported (with amendments) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

The Speaker: It being 3:11 p.m., the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded divisions on the motions at report stage of Bill C-31.

Call in the members.

And the bells having rung:

The Speaker: The question is on Motion No. 1.

● (1525)

(The House divided on Motion No. 1, which was negatived on the following division:)

Government Orders

(Division No. 199)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Anderson	Anstey
Arnold	Au
Baber	Barlow
Barrett	Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu	Bélanger (Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt)
Berthold	Bexte
Bezan	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Bonin
Borrelli	Bragdon
Brassard	Brunelle-Duceppe
Calkins	Caputo
Chambers	Champoux
Chong	Cobena
Cody	Cooper
Dancho	Davidson
Davies (Niagara South)	Dawson
DeBellefeuille	Deltell
DeRidder	Deschênes
Diotte	Doherty
Dowdall	Duncan
Epp	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster—Meadow Lake)
Falk (Provencher)	Fortin
Garon	Gaudreau
Genuis	Gill (Calgary Skyview)
Gill (Brampton West)	Gill (Calgary McKnight)
Gill (Windsor West)	Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan)
Gill (Abbotsford—South Langley)	Godin
Goodridge	Gourde
Groleau	Guglielmin
Gunn	Hallan
Hardy	Ho
Hoback	Holman
Jackson	Jansen
Jivani	Kelly
Khanna	Kibble
Kirkland	Kmiec
Konanz	Kram
Kramp-Neuman	Kronis
Kuruc	Kusie
Lake	Lantsman
Larouche	Lawrence
Lawton	Lefebvre
Lemire	Leslie
Lewis (Essex)	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Lloyd	Lobb
Mahal	Majumdar
Malette (Kapuskasing—Timmins—Mushkegowuk)	Mantle
Mazier	McCauley
McLean (Calgary Centre)	Melillo
Menegakis	Moore
Morin	Morrison
Motz	Muys
Nater	Normandin
Patzer	Paul-Hus
Perron	Plamondon
Poilievre	Redekopp
Reid	Rempel Garner
Reynolds	Richards
Roberts	Rood
Ross	Rowe
Ruff	Scheer
Schmale	Seeback
Simard	Small

Steinley
Stevenson
Strauss
Thériault
Tochor
Uppal
Vien
Vis
Waugh
Zimmer– — 149

Ste-Marie
Strahl
Stubbs
Thomas
Tolmie
Van Popta
Viersen
Warkentin
Williamson

NAYS

Members

Acan
Ali
Anand
Auguste
Baker
Battiste
Begum
Bendayan
Blois
Caley
Carr
Chagger
Chartrand
Chenette
Church
Connors
Coteau
Dandurand
d'Entremont
Desrochers
Dhillon
Duclos
Earle
El-Khoury
Fancy
Fergus
Fortier
Fraser
Fuhr
Gainey
Gazan
Gladu
Gould
Greaves
Gull-Masty
Hanley
Hepfner
Hodgson
Housefather
Iacono
Jeneroux
Joly
Kayabaga
Khalid
Koutrakis
Lalonde
Lamoureux
Lapointe (Sudbury)
Lauzon
Lavoie
Leitão
Long
Ma
MacDonald (Cardigan)
Malette (Bay of Quinte)
Martin
McGuinty
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)

Al Soud
Alty
Anandasangaree
Bains
Bardeesy
Beech
Belanger (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River)
Bittle
Brière
Carney
Casey
Chang
Chatel
Chi
Clark
Cormier
Dabrusin
Danko
Deschênes-Thériault
Dhaliwal
Diab
Duguid
Ehsassi
Eyolfson
Fanjoy
Fonseca
Fragiskatos
Fry
Gaheer
Gasparro
Gerretsen
Gobeil
Grant
Guay
Hajdu
Harrison
Hirtle
Hogan
Hussen
Jaczek
Johns
Joseph
Kelloway
Klassen
Kwan
Lambropoulos
Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles)
Lattanzio
Lavack
LeBlanc
Lightbound
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maloney
May
McKelvie
McKnight

McLean (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke)
Ménard
Michel
Miller
Morrissey
Naqvi
Nguyen
Ntumba
Olszewski
Osborne
Powlowski
Ramsay
Robertson
Romanado
Sahota
Sarai
Sawatzky
Sgro
Sheehan
Sodhi
Sousa
Sudds
Thompson
Valdez
Vandenbeld
Weiler
Zahid
Zuberi– — 171

McPherson
Mendès
Miedema
Mingarelli
Myles
Nathan
Noormohamed
Oliphant
O'Rourke
Petitpas Taylor
Provost
Rana
Rochefort
Royer
Saini
Sari
Schiefke
Shahnawaz
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Solomon
St-Pierre
Tesser Derksen
Turnbull
van Koeverden
Villeneuve
Yip
Zerucelli

PAIRED

Members

Bailey
Block
Dalton
Fisher
Idlout
Sidhu (Brampton East)

Baldinelli
Champagne
Dzerowicz
Gallant
McKenzie
Watchorn– — 12

The Speaker: I declare Motion No. 1 defeated.

[*English*]

The question is on Motion No. 2. A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 3 and 4.

Hon. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, I believe that if you seek it, you will find agreement to apply the result from the previous vote to this vote, with Liberal members voting no.

Hon. Rob Moore: Mr. Speaker, Conservatives agree to apply and will be voting yes.

[*Translation*]

Yves Perron: Mr. Speaker, the members of the Bloc Québécois agree to apply the result of the previous vote to this vote and will vote in favour of the motion.

[*English*]

Jenny Kwan: Mr. Speaker, the NDP agrees to apply and will be voting yes.

[*Translation*]

Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, the Green Party also agrees to apply and will vote in favour of the motion.

[*English*]

(The House divided on Motion No. 2, which was negatived on the following division:)

(Division No. 200)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif
Albas
Anderson
Arnold
Baber
Barrett
Beaulieu
Berthold
Bezan
Blanchette-Joncas
Borrelli
Brassard
Calkins
Chambers
Chong
Cody
Dancho
Davies (Niagara South)
DeBellefeuille
DeRidder
Diotte
Dowdall
Epp
Falk (Provencher)
Garon
Gazan
Gill (Calgary Skyview)
Gill (Calgary McKnight)
Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan)
Godin
Gourde
Guglielmin
Hallan
Ho
Holman
Jansen
Johns
Khanna
Kirkland
Konanz
Kramp-Neuman
Kuruc
Kwan
Lantsman
Lawrence
Lefebvre
Leslie
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Lobb
Majumdar
Mantle
Mazier
McLean (Calgary Centre)
Melillo
Moore
Morrison
Muys
Normandin
Paul-Hus
Plamondon
Redekopp
Rempel Garner
Richards
Rood
Rowe
Aitchison
Allison
Anstey
Au
Barlow
Barsalou-Duval
Bélanger (Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt)
Bexte
Blanchet
Bonin
Bragdon
Brunelle-Duceppe
Caputo
Champoux
Cobena
Cooper
Davidson
Dawson
Deltell
Deschênes
Doherty
Duncan
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster—Meadow Lake)
Fortin
Gaudreau
Genuis
Gill (Brampton West)
Gill (Windsor West)
Gill (Abbotsford—South Langley)
Goodridge
Groleau
Gunn
Hardy
Hoback
Jackson
Jivani
Kelly
Kibble
Kmiec
Kram
Kronis
Kusie
Lake
Larouche
Lawton
Lemire
Lewis (Essex)
Lloyd
Mahal
Malette (Kapuskasing—Timmins—Mushkegowuk)
May
McCauley
McPherson
Menegakis
Morin
Motz
Nater
Patzer
Perron
Poilievre
Reid
Reynolds
Roberts
Ross
Ruff
Scheer
Seeback
Small
Ste-Marie
Strahl
Stubbs
Thomas
Tolmie
Van Popta
Viersen
Warkentin
Williamson
Schmale
Simard
Steinley
Stevenson
Strauss
Thériault
Tochor
Uppal
Vien
Vis
Waugh
Zimmer– — 154

NAYS

Members

Acan
Ali
Anand
Auguste
Baker
Battiste
Begum
Bendayan
Blois
Caley
Carr
Chagger
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
McGuinty
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
Al Soud
Alty
Anandasangaree
Bains
Bardeesy
Beech
Belanger (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River)
Bittle
Brière
Carney
Casey
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
McKelvie
McKnight

McLean (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke) | Ménard
Mendès | Michel
Miedema | Miller
Mingarelli | Morrissey
Myles | Naqvi
Nathan | Nguyen
Noormohamed | Ntumba
Oliphant | Olszewski
O'Rourke | Osborne
Petitpas Taylor | Powlowski
Provost | Ramsay
Rana | Robertson
Rochefort | Romanado
Royer | Sahota
Saini | Sarai
Sari | Sawatzky
Schiefke | Sgro
Shahnawaz | Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South) | Sodhi
Solomon | Sousa
St-Pierre | Sudds
Tesser Derksen | Thompson
Turnbull | Valdez
van Koeverden | Vandenbeld
Villeneuve | Weiler
Yip | Zahid
Zerucelli | Zuberi– — 166

PAIRED

Members

Bailey | Baldinelli
Block | Champagne
Dalton | Dzerowicz
Fisher | Gallant
Idlout | McKenzie
Sidhu (Brampton East) | Watchorn– — 12

The Speaker: I declare Motion No. 2 defeated. I therefore declare Motions Nos. 3 and 4 defeated.

The question is on Motion No. 5.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, I think you will find that there is unanimous consent to apply the result from the previous vote to this vote, with Liberal members voting no.

[*English*]

Hon. Rob Moore: Mr. Speaker, Conservatives agree to apply and will be voting yes.

[*Translation*]

Yves Perron: Mr. Speaker, the members of the Bloc Québécois agree to apply the result of the previous vote to this vote and will vote in favour of the motion, and we applaud the commendable effort in French that was just made.

[*English*]

Jenny Kwan: Mr. Speaker, the NDP agrees to apply and will be voting for.

Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, the Green Party agrees to apply and also votes in favour.

(The House divided on Motion No. 5, which was negatived on the following division:)

(Division No. 201)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif | Aitchison
Albas | Allison
Anderson | Anstey
Arnold | Au
Baber | Barlow
Barrett | Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu | Bélanger (Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt)
Berthold | Bexte
Bezan | Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas | Bonin
Borrelli | Bragdon
Brassard | Brunelle-Duceppe
Calkins | Caputo
Chambers | Champoux
Chong | Cobena
Cody | Cooper
Dancho | Davidson
Davies (Niagara South) | Dawson
DeBellefeuille | Deltell
DeRidder | Deschênes
Diotte | Doherty
Dowdall | Duncan
Epp | Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster—Meadow Lake)
Falk (Provencher) | Fortin
Garon | Gaudreau
Gazan | Genuis
Gill (Calgary Skyview) | Gill (Brampton West)
Gill (Calgary McKnight) | Gill (Windsor West)
Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan) | Gill (Abbotsford—South Langley)
Godin | Goodridge
Gourde | Groleau
Guglielmin | Gunn
Hallan | Hardy
Ho | Hoback
Holman | Jackson
Jansen | Jivani
Johns | Kelly
Khanna | Kibble
Kirkland | Kmiec
Konanz | Kram
Kramp-Neuman | Kronis
Kuruc | Kusie
Kwan | Lake
Lantsman | Larouche
Lawrence | Lawton
Lefebvre | Lemire
Leslie | Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk) | Lloyd
Lobb | Mahal
Majumdar | Malette (Kapuskasing—Timmins—Mushkegowuk)
Mantle | May
Mazier | McCauley
McLean (Calgary Centre) | McPherson
Melillo | Menegakis
Moore | Morin
Morrison | Motz
Muys | Nater
Normandin | Patzer
Paul-Hus | Perron
Plamondon | Poilievre
Redekopp | Reid
Rempel Garner | Reynolds
Richards | Roberts
Rood | Ross
Rowe | Ruff

Scheer
Seeback
Small
Ste-Marie
Strahl
Stubbs
Thomas
Tolmie
Van Popta
Viersen
Warkentin
Williamson
Schmale
Simard
Steinley
Stevenson
Strauss
Thériault
Tochor
Uppal
Vien
Vis
Waugh
Zimmer– — 154

NAYS

Members

Acan
Ali
Anand
Auguste
Baker
Battiste
Begum
Bendayan
Blois
Caley
Carr
Chagger
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
McGuinty
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
Al Soud
Alty
Anandasangaree
Bains
Bardeesy
Beech
Belanger (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River)
Bittle
Brière
Carney
Casey
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
McKelvie
McKnight
McLean (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke)
Mendès
Miedema
Mingarelli
Myles
Nathan
Noormohamed
Oliphant
O'Rourke
Petitpas Taylor
Provost
Rana
Rochefort
Royer
Saini
Sari
Schiefke
Shahnawaz
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Solomon
St-Pierre
Tesser Derksen
Turnbull
van Koeverden
Villeneuve
Yip
Zerucelli
Ménard
Michel
Miller
Morrissey
Naqvi
Nguyen
Ntumba
Olszewski
Osborne
Powlowski
Ramsay
Robertson
Romanado
Sahota
Sarai
Sawatzky
Sgro
Sheehan
Sodhi
Sousa
Sudds
Thompson
Valdez
Vandenbeld
Weiler
Zahid
Zuberi– — 166

PAIRED

Members

Bailey
Block
Dalton
Fisher
Idlout
Sidhu (Brampton East)
Baldinelli
Champagne
Dzerowicz
Gallant
McKenzie
Watchorn– — 12

The Speaker: I declare Motion No. 5 defeated.

[*Translation*]

The question is on Motion No. 6. A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 7, 9 to 15 and 17 to 32.

[*English*]

Hon. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, I believe if you seek it, you will find agreement to apply the results from the previous vote to this vote, with Liberal members voting against.

Hon. Rob Moore: Mr. Speaker, Conservatives agree to apply and will be voting no.

[*Translation*]

Yves Perron: Mr. Speaker, the Bloc agrees to apply the result of the previous vote to this vote and will vote in favour of the motion.

[*English*]

Jenny Kwan: Mr. Speaker, the NDP agrees to apply and will be voting yes.

Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, the Green Party also agrees to apply the vote and will be voting in favour.

[*Translation*]

(The House divided on Motion No. 6, which was negatived on the following division:)

Government Orders

(Division No. 202)

YEAS

Members

Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu
Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas
Bonin
Brunelle-Duceppe
Champoux
DeBellefeuille
Deschênes
Fortin
Garon
Gaudreau
Gazan
Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan)
Johns
Kwan
Larouche
Lemire
May
McPherson
Normandin
Perron
Plamondon
Simard
Ste-Marie
Thériault– — 26

NAYS

Members

Aboultaif
Acan
Aitchison
Al Soud
Albas
Ali
Allison
Alty
Anand
Anandasangaree
Anderson
Anstey
Arnold
Au
Auguste
Baber
Bains
Baker
Bardeesy
Barlow
Barrett
Battiste
Beech
Begum
Belanger (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River)
Bélanger (Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt)
Bendayan
Berthold
Bexte
Bezan
Bittle
Blois
Borrelli
Bragdon
Brassard
Brière
Caley
Calkins
Caputo
Carney
Carr
Casey
Chagger
Chambers
Chang
Chartrand
Chatel
Chenette
Chi
Chong
Church
Clark
Cobena
Cody
Connors
Cooper
Cormier
Coteau
Dabrusin
Dancho
Dandurand
Danko
Davidson
Davies (Niagara South)
Dawson
Deltell
d'Entremont
DeRidder
Deschênes-Thériault
Desrochers
Dhaliwal
Dhillon
Diab
Diotte
Doherty
Dowdall
Duclos
Duguid
Duncan
Earle
Ehsassi
El-Khoury
Epp
Eyolfson
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster—Meadow Lake)
Falk (Provencher)
Fancy
Fanjoy
Fergus
Fonseca
Fortier
Fragiskatos
Fraser
Fry
Fuhr
Gaheer
Gainey
Gasparro
Genuis
Gerretsen
Gill (Calgary Skyview)
Gill (Brampton West)
Gill (Calgary McKnight)
Gill (Windsor West)
Gill (Abbotsford—South Langley)
Gladu
Gobeil
Godin
Goodridge
Gould
Gourde
Grant
Greaves
Groleau
Guay
Guglielmin
Gull-Masty
Gunn
Hajdu
Hallan
Hanley
Hardy
Harrison
Hepfner
Hirtle
Ho
Hoback
Hodgson
Hogan
Holman
Housefather
Hussen
Iacono
Jackson
Jaczek
Jansen
Jeneroux
Jivani
Joly
Joseph
Kayabaga
Kelloway
Kelly
Khalid
Khanna
Kibble
Kirkland
Klassen
Kmiec
Konanz
Koutrakis
Kram
Kramp-Neuman
Kronis
Kuruc
Kusie
Lake
Lalonde
Lambropoulos
Lamoureux
Lantsman
Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles)
Lapointe (Sudbury)
Lattanzio
Lauzon
Lavack
Lavoie
Lawrence
Lawton
LeBlanc
Lefebvre
Leitão
Leslie
Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Lightbound
Lloyd
Lobb
Long
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
Ma
MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacDonald (Cardigan)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Mahal
Majumdar
Malette (Bay of Quinte)
Malette (Kapuskasing—Timmins—Mushkegowuk)
Maloney
Mantle
Martin
Mazier
McCauley
McGuinty
McKelvie
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McKnight
McLean (Calgary Centre)
McLean (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke)
Melillo
Ménard
Mendès
Menegakis
Michel
Miedema
Miller
Mingarelli
Moore
Morin
Morrison
Morrissey
Motz
Muys
Myles
Naqvi
Nater
Nathan
Nguyen
Noormohamed
Ntumba
Oliphant
Olszewski
O'Rourke
Osborne
Patzer
Paul-Hus
Petitpas Taylor
Poilievre
Powlowski
Provost
Ramsay
Rana
Redekopp
Reid
Rempel Garner
Reynolds
Richards
Roberts
Robertson
Rochefort
Romanado
Rood

Ross	Rowe
Royer	Ruff
Sahota	Saini
Sarai	Sari
Sawatzky	Scheer
Schiefke	Schmale
Seeback	Sgro
Shahnawaz	Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Small
Sodhi	Solomon
Sousa	Steinley
Stevenson	St-Pierre
Strahl	Strauss
Stubbs	Sudds
Tesser Derksen	Thomas
Thompson	Tochor
Tolmie	Turnbull
Uppal	Valdez
van Koeverden	Van Popta
Vandenbeld	Vien
Viersen	Villeneuve
Vis	Warkentin
Waugh	Weiler
Williamson	Yip
Zahid	Zerucelli
Zimmer	Zuberi– — 294

PAIRED

Members

Bailey	Baldinelli
Block	Champagne
Dalton	Dzerowicz
Fisher	Gallant
Idlout	McKenzie
Sidhu (Brampton East)	Watchorn– — 12

The Speaker: I declare Motion No. 6 defeated. I therefore declare Motions Nos. 7, 9 to 15 and 17 to 32 defeated.

● (1530)

[*English*]

The question is on Motion No. 8. A vote on this motion also applies to Motion No. 16.

Hon. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, I believe if you seek it, you will find agreement to apply the result from the previous vote to this vote, with Liberal members voting against.

Hon. Rob Moore: Mr. Speaker, Conservatives agree to apply and will be voting yes.

[*Translation*]

Yves Perron: Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois agrees to apply the result of the previous vote and is voting in favour of the motion.

[*English*]

Jenny Kwan: Mr. Speaker, the NDP agrees to apply and will be voting yes.

[*Translation*]

Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, the Green Party also agrees to apply and is voting in favour of the motion.

[*English*]

(The House divided on Motion No. 8, which was negatived on the following division:)

(Division No. 203)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Anderson	Anstey
Arnold	Au
Baber	Barlow
Barrett	Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu	Bélanger (Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt)
Berthold	Bexte
Bezan	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Bonin
Borrelli	Bragdon
Brassard	Brunelle-Duceppe
Calkins	Caputo
Chambers	Champoux
Chong	Cobena
Cody	Cooper
Dancho	Davidson
Davies (Niagara South)	Dawson
DeBellefeuille	Deltell
DeRidder	Deschênes
Diotte	Doherty
Dowdall	Duncan
Epp	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster—Meadow Lake)
Falk (Provencher)	Fortin
Garon	Gaudreau
Gazan	Genuis
Gill (Calgary Skyview)	Gill (Brampton West)
Gill (Calgary McKnight)	Gill (Windsor West)
Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan)	Gill (Abbotsford—South Langley)
Godin	Goodridge
Gourde	Groleau
Guglielmin	Gunn
Hallan	Hardy
Ho	Hoback
Holman	Jackson
Jansen	Jivani
Johns	Kelly
Khanna	Kibble
Kirkland	Kmiec
Konanz	Kram
Kramp-Neuman	Kronis
Kuruc	Kusie
Kwan	Lake
Lantsman	Larouche
Lawrence	Lawton
Lefebvre	Lemire
Leslie	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Lloyd
Lobb	Mahal
Majumdar	Malette (Kapuskasing—Timmins—Mushkegowuk)
Mantle	May
Mazier	McCauley
McLean (Calgary Centre)	McPherson
Melillo	Menegakis
Moore	Morin
Morrison	Motz
Muys	Nater
Normandin	Patzer
Paul-Hus	Perron
Plamondon	Poilievre
Redekopp	Reid
Rempel Garner	Reynolds
Richards	Roberts
Rood	Ross
Rowe	Ruff

Scheer
Seeback
Small
Ste-Marie
Strahl
Stubbs
Thomas
Tolmie
Van Popta
Viersen
Warkentin
Williamson
Schmale
Simard
Steinley
Stevenson
Strauss
Thériault
Tochor
Uppal
Vien
Vis
Waugh
Zimmer– — 154

NAYS

Members

Acan
Ali
Anand
Auguste
Baker
Battiste
Begum
Bendayan
Blois
Caley
Carr
Chagger
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
McGuinty
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
Al Soud
Alty
Anandasangaree
Bains
Bardeesy
Beech
Belanger (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River)
Bittle
Brière
Carney
Casey
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
McKelvie
McKnight
McLean (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke)
Mendès
Miedema
Mingarelli
Myles
Nathan
Noormohamed
Oliphant
O'Rourke
Petitpas Taylor
Provost
Rana
Rochefort
Royer
Saini
Sari
Schiefke
Shahnawaz
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Solomon
St-Pierre
Tesser Derksen
Turnbull
van Koeverden
Villeneuve
Yip
Zerucelli
Ménard
Michel
Miller
Morrissey
Naqvi
Nguyen
Ntumba
Olszewski
Osborne
Powlowski
Ramsay
Robertson
Romanado
Sahota
Sarai
Sawatzky
Sgro
Sheehan
Sodhi
Sousa
Sudds
Thompson
Valdez
Vandenbeld
Weiler
Zahid
Zuberi– — 166

PAIRED

Members

Bailey
Block
Dalton
Fisher
Idlout
Sidhu (Brampton East)
Baldinelli
Champagne
Dzerowicz
Gallant
McKenzie
Watchorn– — 12

The Speaker: I declare Motion No. 8 defeated. I therefore declare Motion No. 16 defeated.

Hon. Shafqat Ali (for the Minister of Finance and National Revenue) moved that the bill, as amended, be concurred in at report stage.

Hon. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, I believe if you seek it, you will find consent to apply the results from the previous vote to this vote, with Liberal members voting yes.

Hon. Rob Moore: Mr. Speaker, Conservatives agree to apply and will be voting no.

[*Translation*]

Yves Perron: Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois agrees to apply the result of the previous vote and is voting against the motion.

[*English*]

Jenny Kwan: Mr. Speaker, the NDP agrees to apply and will be voting no.

Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, the Green Party agrees to apply the vote and will be voting no.

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

(Division No. 204)

YEAS

Members

Acan
Ali
Al Soud
Alty

Anand
Anandasangaree
Auguste
Bains
Baker
Bardeesy
Battiste
Beech
Begum
Belanger (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River)
Bendayan
Bittle
Blois
Brière
Caley
Carney
Carr
Casey
Chagger
Chang
Chartrand
Chatel
Chenette
Chi
Church
Clark
Connors
Cormier
Coteau
Dabrusin
Dandurand
Danko
d'Entremont
Deschênes-Thériault
Desrochers
Dhaliwal
Dhillon
Diab
Duclos
Duguid
Earle
Ehsassi
El-Khoury
Eyolfson
Fancy
Fanjoy
Fergus
Fonseca
Fortier
Fragiskatos
Fraser
Fry
Fuhr
Gaheer
Gainey
Gasparro
Gerretsen
Gladu
Gobeil
Gould
Grant
Greaves
Guay
Gull-Masty
Hajdu
Hanley
Harrison
Hepfner
Hirtle
Hodgson
Hogan
Housefather
Hussen
Iacono
Jaczek
Jeneroux
Joly
Joseph
Kayabaga
Kelloway
Khalid
Klassen
Koutrakis
Lalonde
Lambropoulos
Lamoureux
Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles)
Lapointe (Sudbury)
Lattanzio
Lauzon
Lavack
Lavoie
LeBlanc
Leitão
Lightbound
Long
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
Ma
MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacDonald (Cardigan)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Malette (Bay of Quinte)
Maloney
Martin
McGuinty
McKelvie
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McKnight
McLean (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke)
Ménard
Mendès
Michel
Miedema
Miller
Mingarelli
Morrissey
Myles
Naqvi
Nathan
Nguyen
Noormohamed
Ntumba
Oliphant
Olszewski
O'Rourke
Osborne
Petitpas Taylor
Powlowski
Provost
Ramsay
Rana
Robertson
Rochefort
Romanado
Royer
Sahota
Saini
Sarai
Sari
Sawatzky
Schiefke
Sgro
Shahnawaz
Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sodhi
Solomon
Sousa
St-Pierre
Sudds
Tesser Derksen
Thompson
Turnbull
Valdez
van Koeverden
Vandenbeld
Villeneuve
Weiler
Yip
Zahid
Zerucelli
Zuberi– — 166

NAYS

Members

Aboultaif
Aitchison
Albas
Allison
Anderson
Anstey
Arnold
Au
Baber
Barlow
Barrett
Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu
Bélanger (Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt)
Berthold
Bexte
Bezan
Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas
Bonin
Borrelli
Bragdon
Brassard
Brunelle-Duceppe
Calkins
Caputo
Chambers
Champoux
Chong
Cobena
Cody
Cooper
Dancho
Davidson
Davies (Niagara South)
Dawson
DeBellefeuille
Deltell
DeRidder
Deschênes
Diotte
Doherty
Dowdall
Duncan
Epp
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster—Meadow Lake)
Falk (Provencher)
Fortin
Garon
Gaudreau
Gazan
Genuis
Gill (Calgary Skyview)
Gill (Brampton West)
Gill (Calgary McKnight)
Gill (Windsor West)
Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan)
Gill (Abbotsford—South Langley)
Godin
Goodridge
Gourde
Groleau
Guglielmin
Gunn
Hallan
Hardy
Ho
Hoback
Holman
Jackson
Jansen
Jivani
Johns
Kelly
Khanna
Kibble
Kirkland
Kmiec
Konanz
Kram
Kramp-Neuman
Kronis
Kuruc
Kusie
Kwan
Lake
Lantsman
Larouche
Lawrence
Lawton
Lefebvre
Lemire
Leslie
Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Lloyd
Lobb
Mahal
Majumdar
Malette (Kapuskasing—Timmins—Mushkegowuk)
Mantle
May
Mazier
McCauley
McLean (Calgary Centre)
McPherson
Melillo
Menegakis
Moore
Morin
Morrison
Motz
Muys
Nater
Normandin
Patzer

Paul-Hus	Perron
Plamondon	Poilievre
Redekopp	Reid
Rempel Garner	Reynolds
Richards	Roberts
Rood	Ross
Rowe	Ruff
Scheer	Schmale
Seeback	Simard
Small	Steinley
Ste-Marie	Stevenson
Strahl	Strauss
Stubbs	Thériault
Thomas	Tochor
Tolmie	Uppal
Van Popta	Vien
Viersen	Vis
Warkentin	Waugh
Williamson	Zimmer– — 154

PAIRED

Members

Bailey	Baldinelli
Block	Champagne
Dalton	Dzerowicz
Fisher	Gallant
Idlout	McKenzie
Sidhu (Brampton East)	Watchorn– — 12

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* * *

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—IMMIGRATION LEVELS

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

Grant Jackson (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the numbers announced in the Liberal government's 2026 budget are problematic for many reasons. Chief among them is that the government continues to set immigration targets without properly accounting for Canada's capacity to welcome newcomers.

Immigration has played an important role in building this country. There is no question about that. Generations of newcomers have contributed to our economy, strengthened Manitoba's communities and helped make Canada what it is today, but for 11 years, the Liberals have run Canada's immigration system like a restaurant that keeps accepting reservations, even when every table in the venue is full and the kitchen cannot keep up. That is not the fault of the new patrons; it is the responsibility of those accepting the reservations, the Liberals. Now the kitchen is overwhelmed, the tables are full, the line is out the door and the Liberals are prepared to accept almost one million more reservations next year alone.

The Liberals have brought too many people into Canada too fast without ensuring that our communities and infrastructure have the capacity to keep pace. Young Canadians are struggling to find work. Newcomers are struggling to access the opportunities they were promised, and families are struggling to find affordable housing, yet the Liberals continue to announce immigration targets that raise serious questions about sustainability while making decisions that benefit large employers and post-secondary institutions instead of addressing the needs of Canadians.

The government advertises a target of 380,000 permanent residents annually, but when we account for the additional programs announced in the levels plan and the budget, that number could reach more than 650,000 people next year.

Yes, approximately 70,000 of those spots are for Hong Kong and Ukrainian applicants already in Canada, many of whom were promised status years ago, and Conservatives support the government finally keeping its promise to those specific communities, but even after accounting for those commitments and another 5,000 spots for doctors, that still leaves 585,000 permanent resident spots. That alone would represent the highest annual number of permanent resident admissions in Canadian history.

Who are those other 585,000 spots for? Does the government plan to prioritize them or the Canadians already here who cannot access timely health care, affordable housing or a well-paying job?

I would like to reiterate that newcomers are not responsible for these challenges. The responsibility rests with the Liberal government, whose decisions affect Canadians who have lived here their whole lives and newcomers who arrived expecting a fair opportunity to succeed, which neither group can currently achieve.

Youth unemployment reached 13.7% in October. Young Canadians are struggling to find their first jobs and enter the workforce, yet, at a time when young Canadians are struggling to find work, the Liberals are making it easier for businesses to recruit internationally.

On November 3, the government removed the labour market impact assessment requirement for qualifying express entry job offers. That assessment was in place to help determine whether Canadian workers were available before employers turned to foreign labour.

When questioned about this decision, the Minister of Immigration defended the removal by saying, “It is good for businesses. It is good for employers.” Where do workers fall under the Liberal minister's hierarchy of priorities? Are they being given the opportunities to train, compete and find employment?

When businesses have access to a larger pool of workers, they face less pressure to raise wages. That may benefit their bottom line, but it comes at the expense of Canadian workers, particularly young Canadian workers.

Conservatives have been clear on this: Canadians should always be prioritized for Canadian jobs. At the immigration committee, I questioned many witnesses, including some from Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters, about what their membership is doing to recruit and retain Canadian workers.

● (1535)

They told our committee that 70% of their members had raised wages, but only 34% had established partnerships with local schools and colleges to address their skills needs. I asked them why that number was so low, and why more businesses are not partnering with Canadian colleges and universities to train the extra workers they need instead of banging on politicians' doors asking them to bring in more temporary foreign workers. The witnesses did not have much of an answer. Neither do the Liberals.

Immigration targets should be established in close consultation with provincial and territorial governments, taking into account not just the business lobby's need, but also the province's capacity for housing, health care and employment. We should be strengthening those training partnerships, improving labour mobility across the country and helping rural communities, like those I represent, attract and retain the workers they need. A well-managed immigration system should complement this and workers, not become an outright substitute for them.

The government's levels plan provides for hundreds of thousands of new temporary worker arrivals annually. While some may address immediate labour shortages, those shortages will persist if we fail to invest in training Canadians.

Businesses are not the only ones with a financial incentive to push Liberals for higher immigration levels. Many of our post-secondary institutions have one as well. The government's latest immigration levels plan targets 450,000 new international student arrivals over the next three years.

Members can consider Conestoga College in Ontario, where the number of study permit holders grew by 187% between 2019 and 2023, reaching more than 38,000 people. Concerns about aggressive international student recruitment and the exploitation of these students became so serious that the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration undertook a study to examine it.

The financial incentive is clear. International students pay substantially higher tuition at Canadian institutions than domestic students, encouraging those institutions to recruit internationally. We continue to hear calls for greater international student enrolment at the immigration committee, despite concerns about whether those institutions can adequately support the students who got us into the study in the first place.

I questioned representatives from Concordia University about its calls to increase international enrolment, despite existing concerns about student housing. I cited a report from its own student union describing international students struggling to find affordable rents, including a student who had been sleeping in a shelter. When I asked about accommodating these students, the university's representative responded, “We offer seats in classrooms, not bedrooms.”

Are they kidding me? What a callous response. Apparently, recruiting these students is the university's priority, but ensuring they have somewhere to live is not. Both businesses and post-secondary institutions have financial incentives to push for higher immigration levels, but what benefits their bottom lines does not necessarily benefit Canadians or newcomers.

The Brandon Sun recently reported on a deeply troubling RCMP investigation involving a business in the Dauphin area of my home province of Manitoba. According to police, the allegations include the business owner demanding payments ranging from $10,000 to $30,000 from foreign workers in exchange for employment. There was unpaid overtime, reduced hours for workers who complained and threats involving their immigration status.

Foreign workers should never be placed in a position where an employer can exploit their immigration status for financial gain. Canadian workers should not be overlooked because a business finds it more convenient to recruit from abroad than it does domestically.

We need an immigration system that responds to genuine labour shortages, prioritizes Canadian workers and gives newcomers a fair opportunity to succeed. When a government invites people to build their lives in Canada, it has a responsibility to ensure that the country is prepared to welcome them. That is the spirit of the motion before us. I hope all members of the House will support it.

● (1540)

The Deputy Speaker: Before I proceed to questions and comments, I have to inform the House that due to the deferred recorded divisions taken earlier, Government Orders will be extended by 19 minutes.

Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton—Bkejwanong, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member opposite's commentary, but he does not appear to understand that the government has reduced immigration levels and that the ones in the current plan are already here. They already have housing. They are already working, paying taxes and obeying our laws. In the go-forward, certainly we need to look to who is coming into the country and put Canadians first.

Would he not agree that once we fill the positions that Canadians will fill, we are still going to need extra workers to care for our aging population, to build all these nation-building projects and to care for our young children, and that we need to bring immigration in to help build our economy and support these areas of gap?

● (1545)

Grant Jackson: Mr. Speaker, that member is completely wrong regarding the numbers with respect to both permanent residents and temporary residents that the levels plan introduced and the budget talks about and proposes to enact. I encourage her to reread the document with a closer eye.

With respect to folks who are already here, I do not hear from immigrants saying that everything is perfect and that they have had an easy time finding housing or a family doctor. In fact, I hear the exact opposite from newcomers in my constituency and from every other part of the country, and we hear from them at the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration. She can review that testimony if she likes. It is on the public record. There is no housing. There are not enough jobs. There are not enough family doctors and capacity in our health care system to deal with who we have here now, and there certainly are not enough to deal with the numbers that these Liberals, including that new Liberal member, are proposing to bring in next year.

[*Translation*]

Rhéal Éloi Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I was reading the motion, and it is unbelievable. There is really no point in making agreements with the federal government. The government is supposed to consult the provinces before setting its immigration thresholds. Does my colleague interpret this the same way that I do?

From what I understand, there was no consultation. Quebec, for example, is required to welcome newcomers in a way that respects Quebec's demographic balance, but how are we supposed to do that if we are not consulted? How can we help these newcomers integrate successfully? We are required to do so, but we are being inundated by unilateral decisions by the federal government.

Does my colleague interpret this the same way that I do? Is there a way to get this government to listen to reason?

[*English*]

Grant Jackson: Mr. Speaker, my colleague raises an excellent point. The government members make loud and long-winded proclamations about how consultative they are, but we have seen no evidence of that within the immigration system, so they are making unilateral decisions, as that member quite rightly points out.

My mother would say that sometimes a blind squirrel finds a nut every once in a while, but I do not think the Liberals have landed on that in this particular instance. Provinces like Quebec are being left to deal with a situation that they had no say in or control in creating. That is wrong. The provinces need to play a role in this system. Moreover, we need less immigration so that the provincial health care systems, the housing market and the jobs market can get realigned to support Canadian workers, including Quebeckers, first and then we can have a conversation about where immigration levels need to go from there.

Marcus Powlowski (Thunder Bay—Rainy River, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member talked about immigrants creating a problem in health care and emergency rooms. I am a long-time emergency room doctor. I did not work in the emergency room in Brandon, but I did work in The Pas and Norway House, and I worked with nurses who were immigrants, PSWs who were immigrants and doctors who were immigrants. I would suggest immigrants are not the problem in health care and emergency rooms.

Grant Jackson: Mr. Speaker, there was no question there, although I do thank my colleague for his service to Manitobans as a medical officer. I understand that many health care workers who are working in our health care system are immigrants, and that is a wonderful thing. That is a small fraction of the massive number of people the Liberals have brought into this country over the last 10 years, and the rest of those people all require health care. They need primary care physicians. They need emergency room physicians. They need nurses. They need health care aides. The Liberals have not brought in a proportional number of medical professionals from the immigration system as to the overall number. That is part of the reason we have a shortage of health care in this country. There is no question about it.

[*Translation*]

Carlos Leitão (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my esteemed colleague from Winnipeg North.

It is my turn to speak to the opposition motion. I do not think it will come as a surprise to anyone that I will be voting against the motion. In fact, I think we will all be voting against this motion. We are going to vote against it for a number of reasons, and I will try to explain them in the few minutes I have.

First, I want to talk numbers. There are a lot of numbers floating around. In the plan that was unveiled in the budget, the three-year plan for 2027 to 2029, our goal or target is to welcome 370,000 temporary residents and 380,000 permanent residents per year. It is important to make a distinction between temporary residents and permanent residents. There seems to be some confusion about that. That would mean 750,000 newcomers, divided between temporary and permanent residents, per year, that is, in 2027, 2028 and 2029. That represents 1.8% of the Canadian population. Is that a lot or not enough? We can discuss that.

Personally, I believe that Canada has the capacity to handle this. We have, after all, experienced much higher levels of immigration at times in our history and managed to cope. I do not see why 1.8% of the population would suddenly be a harmful threshold. That is simply not the case.

The other important point is that we are adjusting the number of permanent residents. There will be 380,000 permanent residents, but we are going to add to that 200,000 people who are already here. Those 200,000 people already have a home, are already working in Canada and are already paying taxes in Canada. They do not represent an additional burden on Canada's public services or infrastructure. These people are already here; they work here and they pay taxes here. We are going to regularize their status. The measure would apply to up to 200,000 people, although the final number could be lower. The cap is set at 200,000, and this would be a one-time adjustment implemented in 2027.

Another very important number has to be kept in mind. In previous years, in 2022 and 2023, to be precise, the number of people coming to Canada on temporary permits, such as work or study permits, and the number of asylum seekers increased dramatically. In 2022 and 2023, the numbers were very high, it is true. From 2024 on, however, the number of arrivals was brought under control, primarily in 2025, because it was too high. Population figures are measured from July to July. From July 1, 2025, to July 1, 2026, Canada's population grew by 189,000, for a population increase of less than 0.5%. That is the figure that should guide our discussion.

● (1550)

What does this population growth mean? It means that Canada regained control over temporary immigration, which surged in 2022 and 2023, but more importantly, it means we have a significant demographic issue. If Canada's population grew by 189,000 from 2025 to 2026, that means a lot of people left the country, but it also reflects a demographic issue: Unfortunately, deaths now outnumber births. Canada is aging rapidly, and that comes with a host of other challenges.

Getting back to immigration, I have to admit that what we are hearing here in the House irks me. It actually really troubles me because I too was born abroad. I too am an immigrant. I came here in 1975. The kind of rhetoric we are hearing now, both in the House and in Canada in general, bears an unfortunate resemblance to what we hear in places like Europe but never used to hear here. There is growing intolerance toward foreigners that I find particularly regressive, to be honest.

What worries me the most are the connections that people are making, the fact that people are trying to link up things that are totally unrelated. We hear a lot about the health care system. We hear a lot about a tragedy that took place near my riding, at the Terrebonne hospital. An 87-year-old who was waiting in the emergency room needed to use the washroom but did not come back. No one noticed for hours and, unfortunately, that person died in the washroom. It was an extremely sad incident, but people are talking about it and then bringing up immigration. What does immigration have to do with that tragic accident? Come on. Making connections between unrelated things is problematic.

Like my colleague, who mentioned it during question period, this summer, I needed health care at a public hospital too, at the CHUM, not to name names. I had an operation and it went well. The surgeon in the operating room was Canadian, but the rest of the staff came from other countries. When we talk about the health care system, we cannot overlook the number of foreign workers working as technicians and nurses in almost every hospital in Canada's major cities, in Canada's biggest hospitals. They keep our system going. During the pandemic, we called them our guardian angels. Now, we are getting ready to dump them. I think that is very sad.

In closing, because I think my time is coming to an end, I will note one last thing that was mentioned but not discussed at all. It is that immigration is an extremely important issue for Canada in terms of economic growth. Yes, we are talking about people, but it is important for economic growth. As our workforce gets older and people leave the workforce, we need workers. We need workers to increase productivity, to invest, to help our economy grow, to produce government revenues, to properly fund our health care and education systems and many other things. Immigration is absolutely crucial. The levels we set, the 380,000 permanent residents and the 360,000 temporary residents, are pretty much the minimum our economy needs, in my opinion.

● (1555)

Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to pay tribute to my distinguished colleague. He knows full well how much respect and admiration I have for him and for everything he has done for Quebec. I hope that he will draw on that experience in Quebec to inspire the Prime Minister when it comes to managing the public finances. I cannot stress that enough. It was a great day for Canada when my colleague and his family arrived here in 1975, and I believe he has given back every bit as much as my own parents, who arrived in 1958. On that, we are in complete agreement. That said, I believe my colleague would agree that successful immigration depends on our capacity to welcome newcomers. As he himself noted, three or four years ago Canada experienced a very significant influx of immigrants, and we regained control of the situation.

The problem is that the current Prime Minister is performing worse than Justin Trudeau. His fiscal record is worse, and his immigration record is worse. I would like my colleague to explain to us why up to 200,000 more—

● (1600)

The Deputy Speaker: I must interrupt the member to give the parliamentary secretary the opportunity to reply.

Carlos Leitão: Mr. Speaker, I know what my colleague was getting at when he talked about an additional 200,000. However, as I have said three or four times, those 200,000 people are already here. They are not newcomers. They are already here, they are already working, they are going to school. They may be doctors, nurses or skilled workers in Beauce or elsewhere in Quebec, where things are in flux and plants are experiencing a labour shortage. These people are already here. The idea is simply to regularize them.

Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, everyone here agrees that immigration is valuable. Nevertheless, the Bloc Québécois thinks it is healthy to have a democratic debate on immigration levels and the government's immigration policies.

I realize that some statements can be offensive, and I agree with my colleague on that. Some things are unacceptable. In my opinion, the main reason people cannot find care and the health care system is plagued with problems is that the federal government has been cutting health transfers for a long time. The blame falls squarely on his government, not on newcomers.

Earlier, the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship told me that the international mobility program requires a CAQ, a Quebec acceptance certificate, but that is completely false. Does my colleague think that is acceptable? How are we supposed to have a healthy democratic debate on immigration when the federal government's Minister of Immigration cannot even understand her own programs?

Carlos Leitão: Mr. Speaker, as everyone is well aware, Quebec is entirely sovereign when it comes to immigration. Quebec sets its own thresholds, and the number of people coming in will be included in the overall threshold that Quebec sets for itself. Consequently, the discussion will focus on whether Quebec's thresholds are sufficient to meet Quebec's needs. That is a separate discussion, but Quebec has the final say.

Louis Villeneuve (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I know the opposition members want to blame us for all the ills of the earth and perhaps even the universe. However, back home in Brome—Missisquoi, I have business owners coming to see me every day because they are short-staffed. They post jobs and no one applies. Businesses are in jeopardy. I would like my colleague to explain something. If we regularize the status of the 200,000 people already living here, how is that going to help our economy?

Carlos Leitão: Mr. Speaker, we are going to provide significant support to businesses, and therefore to our economy as well. In Brome—Missisquoi and other regions of Quebec, some businesses are facing the very real prospect of losing temporary foreign workers who are already there and who have been working for them for years. If those individuals were forced to leave, the viability of the entire business could be put at risk. Those employers might have to reduce shifts and cut production because they would not have enough workers. Businesses in Quebec's regions, and elsewhere in Canada, need workers, and that is why we must maintain immigration levels at reasonable levels.

[*English*]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there are so many things I would like to say on this issue. There are a couple of issues that I have been a long-time advocate on: health care and immigration. They have been issues that I have dealt with over the last 30-plus years. Members will excuse me if, at times, I get a bit passionate on an issue because it means so much to me personally and I see so much value in it. This includes many of the things I talk about, including Canada's greatest asset being our diversity and the people who make it up, along with the beautiful programs we provide like our national health care system.

I have no problem at all with having a reasonable debate on the issue of immigration levels. In fact, I used to sit on the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, and there were many discussions on immigration. I talk about immigration every week. Every Saturday, people can hear me at a local restaurant talking about immigration. This Sunday coming up, I believe I have about four hours of Zoom meetings in the afternoon to talk about immigration. I will talk to at least 200 or 300 people between now and then on the issue of immigration. I understand what the government is doing. Sadly, I also understand why the Conservatives are doing what they are doing.

As I said, I do not have a problem with having a reasonable discussion on immigration. I will have one any time, anywhere. That is the reason, and I do not say this lightly, I have challenged members, in particular the Conservative shadow critic and the leader of the Conservative Party, to come to Winnipeg. I would even go to Calgary. I would welcome a reasonable discussion on the issue of immigration because I understand how important it is to our nation.

Having said that, that is not what is being promoted in the House of Commons today. Everyone, I am sure, could at least acknowledge the fact that there are many within society who are racist. There are many people in Canada who have no problem hurling negative, derogatory comments at people. This includes comments such as, “Go back to where you came from.” Individuals have been violated because they may have come to Canada in the last dozen or so years.

One of my very first experiences with racism was when I was at the then Victoria Hotel back in the day when I was a relatively new MLA. I was at an Italian event. Someone walked by and the person posed the question, “How long have you been in Canada?” The question was to a Black woman. People do not necessarily realize that racial comments, even of the lightest nature or innocent nature, can be very hurtful. We also have those who are extreme and will threaten violence. They will not just talk about someone going home, but they will also threaten physical violence. I suggest those are the ones all of us should be on the same page about.

Let us take a look at what the Conservatives, collectively, have been talking about. They are trying to feed the impression that Canada is going to get 600,000 new people coming into Canada. They might try to deny it, but that is the reality. It might even offend some of the Conservative members. I hope it does. I hope some of the Conservative members realize the damage it causes. They are feeding into a very negative narrative. I am talking about selected individuals within the Conservative Party. They are supporting individuals who have that hard attitude that hurts and discriminates.

● (1605)

There is that sector of society that says that immigrants have stolen their jobs, that immigrants are bad. They are negative on a wide spectrum of areas, and they will say it in anger. Far too often, we will see it on social media. We will see it in our schoolyards. We will see it in our workforce. We have a choice, as leaders of our community, to deal with the issue of racism.

When one stands up and tries to give the impression that immigrants are a problem for our health care system, for our housing and for our jobs, not only is it not true but it causes a great deal of harm. When one makes that statement, one might please some in society. One should recognize the damage that one is causing.

We are a diverse nation. All of us have a responsibility to promote that aspect of our society. We have a responsibility to fight racism, not encourage it indirectly. That is, in fact, what we have been witnessing. When I think about immigration policies and what we have done, this Prime Minister, in particular, as a leader, has demonstrated how we can stabilize immigration and still meet the needs of Canadians and our provinces in listening and consulting.

Our Minister of Immigration, contrary to the impression that some have attempted to get across the floor today, has done extensive consultations and has been working with communities, not only provinces, territories and indigenous leaders, but also numerous stakeholders of Ukrainian heritage, in the Filipino community, in the Punjabi community and in all the different communities that are out there. She has a true understanding of what we need to do as a nation. That is what we have seen in the budget and the targets that have been established by the Prime Minister and the government.

Canada's population growth is at the lowest it has been since World War I. Do we want to blame housing? Do we know that virtually every province has seen an increase in the vacancy rate? More apartment units are available today than before.

As for health care, members can walk into an emergency room at Health Sciences Centre, Winnipeg's busiest hospital, on a Friday night or a Saturday. Members can take a walk with me and try to tell me that it is all immigrants who are using our health care services. I can tell members that the first generation, the second generation and immigrants today are the ones who are providing care in many different fields of our health care professions.

Do members want to talk about wait times? They can take a look at populations in smaller provinces compared to larger provinces. We will find that there is no correlation whatsoever in regard to this fictitious argument that has been advanced by members of the Conservative Party.

It is being advanced by the Conservative Party's leadership team. To try to give a false impression that it is causing no harm is balderdash. It is causing harm. All we have to do is take a look at what is taking place on social media and in our communities. As leaders of our communities, we should be taking the tone down on issues like racism.

These are the types of things we should be doing, as opposed to introducing motions like the one we have before us today, which are meant for one purpose and one purpose only, and that is to deal with the issue of racists—

● (1610)

The Deputy Speaker: Questions and comments, the hon. member for Windsor West.

Harb Gill (Windsor West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the current backlog and lack of accountable or decent service at IRCC is absolutely astounding. The government showed complete disregard for its own national security by letting a lot of people in without vetting, and started scratching its head when crimes like extortion went through the roof. Now the same government is claiming to speak for the immigrants who were extorted. That is outrageous. That is beyond the pale of anything I ever heard in the House.

This member has the gall to stand here and say he is for immigration. You have not done anything for immigrants. You have abused them. You have stood by while they have been exploited.

● (1615)

The Deputy Speaker: I am going to stop the member there. The member is using "you" and directing it at the Speaker. I am not participating in the debate. I am just trying to manage it.

I invite the member to finish, and then I will recognize the parliamentary secretary.

Harb Gill: Mr. Speaker, why in the world would Canadians or immigrants now believe that these guys in the government have their stuff together? I do not believe them.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, whether it is the member from Calgary, who is their shadow critic on immigration, the leader of the Conservative Party or even the member who just posed the question, I would love to see them come and have a reasonable debate on the issue in Winnipeg. I would love to be able to have that debate. At the end of the day, what I am advocating for is my province of Manitoba in part, because the Province of Manitoba says it wants to be able to retain the individuals. The 600,000 people the Conservative Party talks about are hundreds of thousands of people who are actually working, contributing taxes and providing services, such as health care, construction and so much more. Manitoba wants to retain them. It is only the Conservative Party that wants to kick them out of the country.

[*Translation*]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski-Neigette—Mitis—Matapédia—Les Basques, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is remarkable how deeply the Liberals are trapped in their ideological bubble. They are dangerous. Immigration and immigration policy in Canada are out of control.

Compared to every other G7 country, Canada has experienced the fastest population growth over the past 25 years. No one can say we are not welcoming. The Bank of Canada itself stated in a study published last fall that population growth in Canada is driving up housing costs. That is the Bank of Canada saying so, the Prime Minister's former employer. No one can accuse the official opposition, or any of the other opposition parties, of being hostile to immigration or dismissive of the positive things immigration can bring.

My question for my colleague is simple: Does he acknowledge, as most Canadians do, that the Government of Canada is currently admitting too many immigrants?

That is also what IRCC's own polling shows. The Department of Citizenship and Immigration itself is reporting that Canadians believe immigration policy is currently out of control.

Does my colleague acknowledge that?

[*English*]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, what I would say is that the Bloc party has been conned by the Conservatives. When we take a look at what the budget and the announcement is all about, it is providing more opportunity for provinces to have a direct impact on who is coming into the provinces, who they want to be able to keep in their provinces. I cannot believe the Bloc is voting against it. The Bloc is actually supporting the Conservative narrative that we are going to get 600,000 new immigrants coming into the country, which is nothing but crap. It is just not true. I do not—

The Deputy Speaker: Sorry, I have to interrupt the parliamentary secretary. He used a word that we should probably avoid because there are words we use in the House that could lead to disorder.

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

The Deputy Speaker: I thank the secretary of state. This debate has sometimes gone and veered off. I am just trying to make sure it is within Standing Order 18 on decorum for this place.

I invite the parliamentary secretary to finish, but the secretary of state mentioned very wise words. I will let the member finish so I can continue with questions and comments.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated at the beginning, sometimes I get a little passionate on the issue. I can tell the member that he does not have to believe everything the Conservative Party is pumping out and providing the Bloc party. Let us be reasonable.

Robert Morrissey (Egmont, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I agree with the parliamentary secretary on all the comments he made in his speech as it relates to immigration. I could take any member in the House to all the small rural communities in my riding and show them how immigration has rebuilt those communities, invigorated the economy and grown the economy. It has just generally added to the well-being of these communities.

I would ask the parliamentary secretary to again explain and put on the record correctly the 600,000 number that is often referenced as new and what our government is doing to make permanent these people who are already here.

● (1620)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, it is a direct response to the consultation that the Minister of Immigration has dealt with.

Let us think about communities like Neepawa in Manitoba, Winkler, Steinbach and Brandon, all of which want to be able to retain immigrants, because immigration adds so much value to the economy. They need and want, because it is not only adding value, it is bringing back life to many of our communities, especially in rural areas, and that is just in the south. I could also talk about northern Manitoba, places like Dauphin, Interlake and so forth.

Brad Redekopp (Saskatoon West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I hope the member for Winnipeg North can take a breather and calm down a little.

I am a third-generation immigrant. My grandparents came to Canada over 100 years ago. A Canadian who is not indigenous is a child of immigrants. It is in their blood. Even yours, Mr. Speaker. Over the history of Canada, immigrants have been instrumental in building Canada, based on a balanced, orderly and properly managed immigration system. That was the assumption that underlined Canada's immigration, and it ran like that for most of our history, until the Liberals took over.

We all know what happened. The peak out-of-control moment came in 2024. The current Prime Minister said exactly that. He admitted that. Since then, the numbers have stabilized a bit, but are still at very high levels compared to history. Of course, then the Prime Minister had the audacity to say that immigration was under control, and then, further, to raise permanent immigration to the highest levels ever, even 40% higher than the highest levels that Justin Trudeau had in 2024. It is really important to understand that it is not the immigrants who have created this problem. It is not their fault. It is purely the fault of the Liberal government and the current Prime Minister.

Let me explain. We will start with the numbers. The target for permanent residents for 2027 is 662,000. That number is not in dispute. No one has ever disputed that that is the total for next year. Now, to get that number, we actually have to do some math because the government's gone to great lengths to cook the books, to make sure that it is hard to figure out. However, that is the number and the government has not disputed it. As I said, it is 40% higher than the highest number of Justin Trudeau in 2024.

Now, let us hear the talking points that the Liberals use on this. They say that they are already here. It is true that some of them are already here. However, that is the way it always is with getting permanent residence. First of all, many of them are not here, but people come here through the process and they become PRs. Then, guess what. They get backfilled with other temporary residents. Let us not forget that in this plan there are another 370,000 new temporary residents who will be coming into Canada. Essentially they will take the place of those who are given permanent residence. This is the way the process works. The number is what the number is, it is 662,000.

The second thing the Liberals will say is that it is a one-time measure. How about last year? Last year was another one-time measure, so this is actually the second-time measure, if we want to be technical about it. The one-time measure was last year, and this year is the second-time measure. I am sure next year will be a third-time measure. They are just going to keep adding special asterisks, “Look below the line, by the way we are going to do this”.

The third thing the Liberals say is that this is separate from the PR targets in their plan. I do not understand that. This morning the immigration minister kind of wrapped herself into a pretzel trying to explain how this works, that somebody getting a PR is the same as another person getting a PR. I do not know how we differentiate, that this person is in the 380,000 bucket and this person would be in the 200,000 bucket. If they get PR, it has to be reported.

The fourth thing the Liberals say is that this is what their stakeholders want. This is the heart of the matter. This is the business lobby talking to the Liberal government to keep the flow of foreign workers, low-wage, indentured workers, to sustain the profits at the expense of our youth and at the expense of our unemployed. In many cases, it is because these employers are not willing to do the hard work. Training and labour mobility are some of the policies that we should be seeing from the government that we are not. Once again, this is not the fault of immigrants. This is the fault of the lack of policies and the lack of creativity that we are seeing from the government.

Now, we talk about jobs, housing and health care. On the jobs front, we all know youth unemployment is at nearly 14%. In Toronto, it is 17%; in Vancouver, it is 15%. Kids need jobs for experience. We need to train and hire local. We need to work hard to get our kids into these jobs. In June, we had a young 25-year-old guy come to our immigration committee. He was a software engineer from Scarborough and a graduate of Western University. He had put out 500 applications over two years of unemployment to try to find a job. He finally started to volunteer. He worked 20 hours a week at a tech startup. He only got full-time work after he started looking outside his field. That is when he finally got a job. That is an example, and there are many of them, of a young person who is trying to find a job in a good-paying career who cannot find that job. I have faith in our youth. I have confidence in our youth. I know that if we put the challenge to them, they will succeed.

On housing, CMHC said we need 450,000 housing starts a year in order to meet the needs in our country. The actual number is 245,000, and it seems to be getting lower. By the way, that number is the same as it was in the mid-1970s.

● (1625)

Of course, there are many problems. Housing is unaffordable. Interest rates are high, making housing even more unaffordable. We all know about municipal problems: granting permits, all the time it takes to get things done and building codes, which are under federal control. At least the model codes are, and that is the subject of a private member's bill that I have.

On health care, one in six adults did not have primary health care in 2025. Health Canada says that there is a shortage of 23,000 doctors in Canada, and there was a story that I shared before. Prashant was a father of three. He came to an Edmonton ER with chest pain that he described as 15 out of 10, and the ER was so busy that they just gave him a Tylenol and told him to wait. Eight hours later, he stood up, put his hand on his chest and died. These are the kinds of things that happen in ERs right across the country from lack of capacity and from having population growth that cannot be sustained by our health care system. We must solve this for newcomers and for those who have been here for a long time. Everybody is suffering from this. It does not matter if someone is a newcomer or not; they are suffering from this.

The other thing I want to talk about relating to this is processing abuse and fraud. We forget about this sometimes. We forget about the significance of this. The international student program flagged 150,000 non-compliance cases. The Auditor General told us about this last year. The department had only time to investigate 4,000 of them. They actually flagged 800 people specifically for misrepresenting documents, and there was no follow-up.

There is also a ton of abuse in the LMIA system. Just recently, the government made some changes to express entry to eliminate the LMIA. LMIA, for those who do not know, is a process a business has to go through to essentially say that there is nobody local who can do the job, and therefore, they get permission to hire somebody from outside the country. It is a bit of a check. It can be abused, and there was a lot of fraud in that system, so the government has now taken that away for a large category of express entry applicants. When I talked to a friend of mine, who is an immigration consultant, the very first thing he said to me about this is that we are going to see fraud start to grow again, and he is right, because taking that away just opens the door to fraud.

Fraud is a problem that has been around with this government in the immigration system for years now. On exit tracking, the government does not know how many people are actually in Canada. People who are ordered to leave Canada do not leave. The Auditor General also looked at 39,000 people without status, or in other words, people who had to leave the country, and found that more than half of them were still here. There are estimates of up to 500,000 or more undocumented people or, in other words, people who should not be in Canada. These are people whose paperwork has expired, but they still stay here.

The result of this is that we have long processing times, criminals are let into Canada and there is a loss of confidence. We talk a lot about how Canadians have lost confidence. Again, it is not immigrants who have done this. It is shady operators, immigration consultants and foreign operators who are taking advantage.

As such, the solution is not complicated. We start by lowering permanent immigration levels to let things catch up and to get things under control. We have to set those with the help of provinces. We have to investigate fraud. We have to verify departures, and we should be publishing a number, not numbers in several different places that we have to go to add them all up. Ultimately, the goal is to help immigrants be successful when they get here.

The Liberals have a plan to bring in 660,000 permanent residents next year. Of those, 70,000 are Hong Kong and Ukrainian applicants who were promised status years ago and whom the government has failed to meet their obligation to. Another 5,000, the government says, are for licensed physicians. Let us take those 75,000 out. That still leaves 585,000 new permanent residents in this next year. That is a city the size of Quebec City.

Who are those 585,000 spots for, and which overcrowded emergency room are they supposed to wait in? We do not need hundreds of thousands of new permanent residents and hundreds of thousands of new temporary residents to keep a promise the government made to 75,000 people. It is important to keep our promise. It is important that the government finally keep that promise it made to these people, but it does not have to add in hundreds of thousands to do it. It could do it with the existing numbers we have.

The Prime Minister does not want Canadians doing the math and does not want them to see the impacts on housing, health care and jobs. He is doing it because of corporate lobbyists wanting cheap labour, which holds down wages for newcomers and Canadians alike. We can see the immigration mess that we have right now is not the fault of immigrants. It is clearly the fault of the government and the Prime Minister, so I urge my colleagues to join me and reject the Prime Minister's plan to permanently increase immigration to the highest levels in Canadian history.

● (1630)

Pauline Rochefort (Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State (Rural Development), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in my riding, there was a recent article in The North Bay Nugget that basically pointed out that the rural community immigration pilot is not bringing in thousands of new immigrants to North Bay but rather is helping skilled workers already living and working in the region to secure permanent residency while filling critical labour shortages. It had interviewed the North Bay and District Chamber of Commerce. That is very simply because in the last census, Statistics Canada reported that for over 50 years, there was no population growth in northern Ontario.

Now that the mining sector has the wind in its sails, I would like to know why my colleague is spreading disinformation on such an important topic.

Brad Redekopp: Mr. Speaker, I would like to know, from the member's perspective, why the government continues to bring people to places such as Toronto, where the unemployment rate for youth is 17%, places where there are no jobs and there is such strain on health care. There certainly are places in our country where we need people.

I would also ask the member why the government is not bringing in labour mobility policies, is not working on training policies and is not looking at options other than simply bringing people in en masse to fill entry-level jobs to allow corporate people to keep their wages low. These are all questions that should be asked. These are things that need to be looked at. We could have a very efficient, well-run immigration system if only it were under control.

[*Translation*]

Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague. I hold him in high regard and had the good fortune of serving with him for three or four years on the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration. We did some great work together.

There is one thing that many people here today are overlooking in this debate. Everyone is talking about numbers. We seem to forget that behind those numbers are real people. Immigration is not just about numbers. These are people who come here in search of a better life, and we often forget that.

In our constituency offices, we are forced to help these people navigate the bureaucratic maze of the federal government's immigration system. The Department of Citizenship and Immigration should be the most humane department, yet it is probably the least humane. We have to work ourselves to the bone trying to help people through it. It is like “the place that sends you mad” from Asterix.

Could the government address the structural problems within the Department of Citizenship and Immigration, instead of citing figures that do not reflect the capacity of Quebec and Canada to receive these immigrants?

[*English*]

Brad Redekopp: Mr. Speaker, absolutely it should. The government is again ramping up immigration without having solved some of the basic problems that exist in the department. The member mentioned cases where processing time takes forever, and I think all members of the House have experienced having a lot of constituents come to us with problems every day. Almost all of them, at least the ones we get in our office, are related to immigration.

The department is not functioning well. Backlogs are forever. It is very hard to get information and hard to understand why decisions are made. It is a horribly run organization, in my opinion. The civil servants who work there try hard, but I think they are working with policies and systems that are not good, and that is the fault of the Liberal government. The government could certainly do well to improve that department. That would make the system run smoother. That should happen first before trying to put more demand on the department.

Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent—Akiawenhrahk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I recognize that my colleague is a second-generation immigrant, and I deeply appreciate his testimony.

In this debate, we have heard some people making a link between the position of some members of the House who want to welcome new Canadians but within the capacity of being able to welcome them, and those who talk about racism when addressing this issue. I would like to hear what my colleague has to say to the people who attack us, saying it is racism, when it is everything but that.

● (1635)

Brad Redekopp: Mr. Speaker, what is most important when I look at policy, and I think most of my colleagues of the House would agree, is to make sure that when someone comes to our country, they are successful. That is the most important thing to me. When Canada makes a commitment to somebody to come to our country, we want to make sure they are able to come here, get their proper documentation, integrate into our culture, get health care, have a job and a place to live. In other words, we want to make sure they are able to be successful. That is the key goal on this side. We want people to be successful, and right now, we need to lower the numbers in order to achieve that goal.

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, The Economy; the hon. member for Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, Justice; the hon. member for York—Durham, The Economy.

[*English*]

Harb Gill (Windsor West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want everyone to take a moment to look at the chair you sit on. The four people who occupy that chair, the Speaker, you as the Deputy Speaker and the Assistant Deputy Speakers, have something in common. Some of you came to Canada as children. Others were born here to parents or grandparents who came from somewhere else. Today, you, along with others, help preside over the highest democratic institution in our country. That is the Canadian promise: opportunity, hard work and belonging.

I know that promise because I have lived it. I came to Canada in 1988. I left behind my parents, other relatives, friends and everything familiar. I came here looking for an opportunity to build a life. I was not looking for a handout. I was looking for a fair chance, and Canadians gave me one.

I also benefited from the sacrifices of the generations who came before me. My uncle, Hargurdev Randhawa, a former chief petty officer of the Royal Indian Navy, arrived in Canada in the 1960s. He worked at Ford for more than three decades. When the layoffs came around, he picked tomatoes at farms in Leamington to feed his family and keep a roof over their heads. My cousins and I are beneficiaries of his sacrifices.

Thousands of families across Windsor and this country have similar stories. Italian, Polish, Hungarian, Ukrainian and Irish families, as well as countless others, came here. They worked in our factories, opened businesses, built neighbourhoods and helped build our communities. They brought different languages, traditions and faiths, but they shared a common goal: to contribute, raise their families and give their children a better future. That is what immigration has meant to Canada.

I spent nearly three decades in policing. In that line of work, we meet all kinds of people. When we stand beside our partner in a difficult situation, we do not ask where they were born or what language they speak at home. We want to know whether they have our back, and they need to know that we have theirs. That is exactly what Canadians are like.

Think about some of the officers who made the ultimate sacrifice this year: OPP officer Tarun Bali, Montreal officer Mohamed Benredouane and Toronto police officer Marc Pinizzotto, among others. They came from different backgrounds, but their commitment to Canadians was never in question. Now their families have an empty chair at the dinner table, but these men were our colleagues, our neighbours and Canadians serving Canadians.

That is the Canada I fight for. I never had to give up my values or integrity to become a Canadian. In fact, they made me a better Canadian, and no one who comes here should be asked to erase their past to belong here. However, loving this country also means being honest about the crossroads we are at today.

There are young Canadians whose families have been here for generations who wonder whether they will ever be able to afford a home. Their parents work very long hours and are still struggling to make ends meet. There are newcomers whose qualifications are not recognized, international students getting ripped off by scammers pretending to provide an education, and temporary foreign workers afraid to speak up because their livelihood depends on a nasty employer who is using them as indentured labour. There is a human being behind every one of these stories. All are suffering because of the government's deeply flawed policies.

A Canadian family struggling to pay rent did not create our immigration system. A newcomer struggling to find decent work did not create the housing or health care shortages. They are not each other's enemy but people who are trying to build a life. We as Canadians are entitled to ask whether immigration policies are working for us. Trying to get answers on whether our communities have enough housing, doctors, hospital beds, schools and jobs is not racism.

It is a reasonable question if the government were competent enough to answer. Instead, the government is quick to label people as racist or worse. As an immigrant, a former police officer and a proud Conservative MP, let me be very clear. I condemn racism, hatred and bigotry wherever they appear, but we must also stop treating every legitimate question about immigration as an expression of prejudice.

For 11 years, the Liberals made promises about immigration, with no plan on how they were going to deal with pressures in housing, health care, jobs and public services. They failed to protect the vulnerable newcomers from exploitation. They did not ensure that immigration numbers matched the needs of our communities.

● (1640)

After 11 years, the Liberals now suddenly have a plan. What a revelation that was. The government seems to believe that announcing an immigration target is the same thing as having an immigration plan. It is not. Let us look at the numbers. The government is planning for 380,000 permanent residents and 370,000 new temporary resident arrivals annually. When prior commitments and people who are already in the system are factored in, permanent resident admissions will reach approximately 600,000 next year.

Canadians still deserve to know how many are coming, how many are already here and whether our communities have the capacity to support this overall plan. Announcing a number is easy. Making sure people have housing, jobs and access to health care is the responsibility of the government, and it keeps failing on that account over and over again. After 11 years and repeated failures, Canadians are tired of hearing "Trust us." They want a proper plan.

We need an immigration system that responds to our country's needs, protects newcomers from exploitation and makes sure that an employer cannot use someone's immigration status to silence them. We must also protect Canadian workers from downward pressure on wages and make sure people who come here have a fair opportunity to put their skills to work. That is not anti-immigrant. It is fairness for Canadians and for immigrants too. When people raise legitimate concerns, the Liberal government cannot start calling them anti-Canadian. It cannot deflect from its failure by saying that anyone who questions its policies is somehow racist or intolerant.

The Liberals do not get to create the problem, condemn the public reaction and then call themselves heroes while actively sowing discord and division. We can debate immigration levels, we can challenge government decisions and we can disagree about policy, which is our job, but we should never lose sight of the people who sent us here. We need to do right by them, not by the lobbyists who keep filling their coffers.

The sacrifice and contribution of the people who came here decades ago, worked hard and helped build this country deserve to be respected. Newcomers who followed the rules and came here believing in the Canadian promise deserve dignity and a fair chance. The concerns of Canadian families working hard, struggling with the affordability crisis, paying their taxes and wondering if their kids will have the same opportunities should be top of mind.

I came to Canada in 1988, as I said. I was given opportunity, as were many others. I worked hard, and my family put down roots. I had the privilege of serving my community as a police officer, and now I have the privilege of serving in the House. I am immensely grateful to the people of this country for giving me such honours. I am very proud of what generations of Canadians from every background have built together.

However, we cannot take those achievements for granted. We must protect the promise of Canada by managing immigration responsibly, treating people fairly and preserving the opportunity that brought so many of us here in the first place. We build a country not simply by bringing people together. We build a country by giving people reasons to stand together. That is the Canada I believe in. It is the Canada the citizens of this nation laid down their lives for, and that is the Canada we should be working to build.

● (1645)

Hon. Buckley Belanger (Secretary of State (Rural Development), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am going to respond to the member from Windsor by saying that the opportunity afforded to him is the same opportunity we are trying to afford to this immigration plan for people who have lived here for the last 20 or 25 years and want to call Canada their home. They want the same opportunity he had, yet we have this motion before us today that is contrary to that interest.

The member for Saskatoon West has repeatedly criticized the Liberal immigration plan, yet he actively engages with the immigrant community in Saskatoon. When he meets with the immigrants in Saskatoon and asks for their support in the election, what exactly is he promising them? Whose fault was it, when he advocated less than two years ago to fast-track foreign student applications?

Again, whom are you misleading? Are you misleading the immigrant community in Saskatoon or the immigrant community in Canada?

The Deputy Speaker: The secretary of state artfully began by referring his comments through the Speaker but then ended with "you". I am not misleading anyone.

I will allow the member for Windsor West to respond.

Harb Gill: Mr. Speaker, there are roughly one and a half million Canadians who are not contributing to our country's economy at this time. Over 360,000 people have stopped looking for a job even though they want to work. Their skill level, mental health and family life are steadily declining over time.

As a former police officer, I can say that this is leading to very expensive and difficult social problems, which are tearing our social fabric apart. We are failing Canadians, new and existing ones, if we bring in more people. It is going to further inflame the problems that exist today for those here and those arriving. How does that make sense at all?

[*Translation*]

Rhéal Éloi Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I raised this earlier with one of his colleagues, but I will put the same question to him. I am surprised by the lack of consultation. We obviously understand the importance of immigration to Canada and the need to support population growth. We understand the importance of welcoming refugees from around the world.

However, Quebec has an agreement that, in principle, requires the federal government to consult the Quebec government before setting immigration levels. That consultation did not take place. Moreover, when it comes to welcoming refugees, Quebec accepted more than its fair share several years ago. The resulting bill was estimated at $670 million. The federal government turned a deaf ear and never reimbursed a cent.

We do not get the impression that there is any real collaboration between the federal government and the provinces on this issue.

What does my colleague think of that?

[*English*]

Harb Gill: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for that question. That is an excellent question, and I did hear him ask that question earlier. He is absolutely right.

It is remarkable that the government once again wants to legislate by decree, not by consultation. At the very least, there should be consultations with the people who are expected to accept the immigrants coming into this country. I want more immigration, but it should be measured, and the needs of our country should be placed first rather than just opening the doors, as the Liberals did over the past 10 years. That is not a sustainable model.

We see what is happening right now. We see how kids are being exploited. They are being used as indentured labour. We have people who are working for half the wage they are supposed to be getting. That is what the Liberals are allowing, and they are blind to it, sadly.

Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when my grandparents immigrated here from southern Russia, they were made a promise. The promise was that there would be a place for them to live, a place for them to educate their children and a place to raise a family.

Can the member briefly talk about the experience his family had when they came to Canada?

● (1650)

Harb Gill: Mr. Speaker, I was invited by my uncle, who had been a chief petty officer in the Royal Indian Navy. I came here as a permanent resident. I had to work hard, but this country and its people opened their hearts and doors to me so that I could work hard and contribute. I am grateful for all the opportunities this nation has given me, and I am glad it gave me those opportunities. I hope it keeps giving those opportunities to people like me.

Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak strongly against this motion because it is based on disinformation. I will not say misinformation; I say disinformation. It is also an illogical argument that we are hearing from the opposition over there.

I would like to put the facts on the table. Here are the facts. Asylum claims in 2026-27 are going to be down by 68%, temporary foreign workers are down by 57%, international students are down by 71%, and the number of non-permanent residents is now the lowest since 1970.

I am sorry, Mr. Speaker. I would like to say that I will be sharing my time with the member for Kings—Hants.

As I was saying, it is easy to blame a government for things that happen, but actually, this whole population problem started with COVID. It was a pandemic. A lot of people who were here as temporary residents, temporary foreign workers or international students were locked in here for almost two years when we could not travel anywhere because of the pandemic. It created an imbalance. I think what we are seeing now is an artificial population situation that was a result of that.

We need to talk about how we deal with this population problem now, and the government is suggesting we do it in a managed way, where we manage how we bring in immigration. We are now trying to do that by talking to provinces and territories, because we have the provincial program in which they say what they need. We are trying to make sure that we match the immigration, for instance, with the workers needed in certain provinces.

We are talking to industries that are saying they want to expand and do things but they cannot do it because they do not have skilled workers. We are saying we will look at bringing in the groups they say they need, and I think those groups are pretty well clear. We need health care providers. We need doctors, nurses and people working in the health care sector. That is the first one. Secondly, we need people who are skilled workers in construction. The Catch-22 situation is this. If we do not have construction workers to build the houses, we cannot build housing, even though we have money dedicated to doing it. This is a huge area where we need to bring in people.

I came here in 1970 because Canada was at the same place we are now. It needed doctors. I was a doctor who trained in Dublin, Ireland. I came here to practise medicine. It was great. I came here because I fulfilled a labour market need.

This government is looking at fulfilling labour market needs. Of course, we have young people who cannot find work, and that is why we put $8 billion into training young people, giving them job skills training for the jobs that are needed in this sector right now. We are looking at what Canada needs to build a strong economy and to build productivity. We are looking at what jobs we need, and we are trying to train our young people in those jobs.

It is not like when I came here in 1970. It is different now. We live in a different world. The kinds of work we need people to do are very different from the work we needed from people when they came in the early part of the 20th century or more recently, 15 or 20 years ago. It is a different world now, so we have put aside $8 billion to train our young people to work.

We also know there are jobs here that are posted by provinces for people to do certain work that young people and others do not want to do. They are not the kinds of jobs they wish to do. That is why we are bringing temporary foreign workers to work in the agricultural sector and some of the hotel and tourism sectors. They can come in and fill jobs we cannot fill.

In the interim, we need to match the labour market needs with immigration. That is exactly what this government is doing. In the spring economic update, and in the last budget, we gave money to hospitals to start building expansions, to build their hospitals bigger and better and expand as they need to, and then we gave them money to get health care workers.

When we hear people saying emergency rooms are closing and people have long wait times, I would like to inform the House that those are, in fact, the jurisdiction of provinces. Provinces decide who works where, when and how in the health care sector. Money is given to the provinces to help them meet the new needs of more doctors, more nurses, to get credentialing done.

● (1655)

Credentialling, by the way, is another provincial jurisdiction. The federal government does not have jurisdiction over that, but we work in partnership. We give money to help them do these things. When an emergency room closes, and there are not enough resources, people have to talk to their province about that, not to the federal government. We do not have jurisdiction over that, but we help with money to get people to do this.

We need to talk about facts. Everybody wants to come here and find a place to live, and to do that we need construction workers, which we do not have enough of, to build the housing that we put money into. To be able to get a big economy, we need to get industry and businesses to expand. They tell us they cannot expand unless they get people with the skills they need, so what are we doing? We are trying to skill our young people to fulfill those needs, and we are trying to bring in people to match those needs. We are looking at matching labour market needs right now.

The issue of refugees, as we know, is a humanitarian thing. We have to agree to the commitments we have made internationally to the United Nations as to how many refugees we are going to take. That is not something we make up on our own.

Let us talk about what we are trying to do here. We want people to have a house to live in when they come. We want people to have a job when they come, and so we are trying to match them, which is what we are doing when we talk to the provinces. We are trying to make sure that when people come here, they have homes and they have jobs. It is in our best interest as a country to make sure we have that ability to grow, to expand, to build Canada strong. I know I have made announcements in my city of Vancouver for a building that is sitting there because we could not get construction workers to build. Let us really talk about facts, look at the logic and match what we are doing.

Disinformation is cheap. It is a cheap shot to say the Liberals are responsible for everything. The last I heard, I do not think we actually built the COVID-19 virus. It created great turmoil in the world. Internationally, a lot of businesses shut down, factories closed, and workers were out of work. We are trying to rectify that in what is now a critical time globally, and we are doing it in a managed way. Helping us to manage it well would be worth the while of the opposition party, instead of feeding people disinformation. Let us talk about it. Yes, we need workers. We need to help our young people here to get the training they need. We also need to bring in people who have the skills and training we need here and do not have, which is exactly what we are doing.

When I listen to this debate, I find it to be quite a dysfunctional thing to do in the House. We are trying to make things better. We are trying to work together. I would ask the opposition members to stop playing this game. I hear them saying that they are not, and that they are all immigrants, but it sounds like they are saying, "We don't want immigrants. We only want the people here to do the work. We want our young people to get the jobs." That is not true, I do not think they mean that, but they are saying it because it is a cheap shot.

Taking cheap shots in the House, my colleagues, is not the way to build a strong nation, to help people find work and find homes. This government has put in place a lot of policies and a lot of money to do exactly what opposition members are wanting it to do, and yet they vote against it every time. I do not understand the logic of their arguments. I just do not. It is just playing politics, and it is actually playing politics with people's lives.

● (1700)

Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton—Bkejwanong, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague hit the nail on the head in her fantastic speech. We absolutely need workers.

I just got an email from somebody in my riding who has been looking for mechanics and skilled workers. They put the job posting out again and again but could not find anybody. They finally found some great employees, who they are keeping, but now they have all been told they have to leave the country, which is something we should escalate. I also have a college in my riding that provides PSWs, ECE workers, nurses and paramedics. These are all jobs we need that we do not have enough Canadian students for.

I wonder if my colleague could comment on the fact that there are many places in Canada that have a shortage and actually need these workers.

Hon. Hedy Fry: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for that excellent question because it hits at the heart of what we are talking about right now.

People talk about emergency rooms being closed and wait times being long, and that is a provincial jurisdiction, but we do not have enough doctors, and we do not have enough nurses. Who do we have? One in four nurses in this country is an immigrant. One in three doctors is an immigrant. We have to go outside the country to get them. Is the opposition not counting them, or did they not bother to do algebra in school to understand why they balance, or what X plus Y equals? If we do not do that, we are making mistakes and causing problems when there are none.

We need to have people to fill these jobs, and that is exactly what we are doing right now. We are looking at doctors, nurses and construction workers, as I said before. We need them if we are going to be able to build the houses for people to live in and have the health care that people need. The Conservatives cannot say they do not want immigrants when we need doctors and nurses to take care of us.

Harb Gill (Windsor West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like the member to think about the newcomer who arrived here legally, paid their taxes, worked hard and believed their children would have a better future.

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Harb Gill: Mr. Speaker, that is me, but I am also talking about the people who just got here a year ago, two years ago or five years ago, who are struggling. The Liberal government has done jack squat to help them out. What is it going to do to help them proceed to have a successful and fruitful life here, instead of flooding the system with more folks, without the capacity to house them, feed them, school them or take care of them? We know how many people are going to the food banks already.

None of these issues are being addressed by the Liberal government.

The Deputy Speaker: As a reminder to members, Standing Order 18 calls for decorum. It is a pretty long-standing order. At the back end, it also talks about the careful use of the language of the House to not bring this place into disrepute or to affect its dignity. This is just to remind the member that he should probably take a look at the words he used.

The hon. member for Vancouver Centre.

Hon. Hedy Fry: Mr. Speaker, I think that is exactly what we are doing. I do not understand why the hon. members across do not understand that or see that. There is a lack of logic in everything they are talking about.

About 60% of the people who are counted in this number of immigrants we are talking about are people who are living here already, who are working here, who are paying taxes, but want to be permanent residents. They want to be citizens. They are waiting in line. We are trying to bring them in line because they are already here, so that is exactly what we are doing.

[*Translation*]

Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question will be simple, and I am going to try to calm things down a bit for everyone.

I think that having a healthy, democratic debate on immigration levels makes sense in any parliament that has jurisdiction over this matter. Certain questions need to be asked. Obviously, we should never target immigrants. Instead, we should focus on the government policies that set these levels and that determine whether or not our immigration system is working.

In 2024, this government unanimously passed a motion to resettle 10,000 Uyghur refugees. The member who just gave a speech voted in favour of that motion. In 2026, of the 10,000 Uyghurs that this government had planned to resettle, only 280 were accepted by Canada.

Why do they make up numbers like that if they are unable to deliver on what they promised?

[*English*]

Hon. Hedy Fry: Mr. Speaker, I just want to point out that some of those waiting in line in the numbers being cited here are the Hong Kong pathways people and the Ukrainians who came here temporarily and now want to be permanent, who want to stay here and work. Colleagues need to figure this out and start working on the facts, for a change.

● (1705)

Hon. Kody Blois (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today we have the opportunity to debate the Conservative opposition day motion on immigration. I will read the text of the motion:

> That, in order to ensure housing, wages, healthcare, jobs and other social services keep pace with the population growth, the House reject the Prime Minister's plan to increase permanent immigration next year to the highest levels in history.

I am going to start right there by rejecting the way the Conservatives are framing this question.

The Minister of Immigration introduced in the budget, as is required under law, the levels plan. This is the amount of immigration that the government is forecasting over the next three years. The way the Conservatives are choosing to highlight and suggest that this is the highest level of immigration in the history of the country needs correction. This is what the government is choosing to do. There are approximately 200,000 applications that the government is willing, for individuals who are largely already in the country, to move into a PR, or permanent residency, pathway. When we look the numbers of temporary residents, through temporary foreign worker programs, they are actually below the historical norms, and when we look at the numbers of permanent residency applications that are not necessarily precluded to individuals who are in the country, those are actually below the numbers that the Conservatives had previously, under the Harper government.

Let us start first by rejecting the way the Conservatives have framed that. I have not heard a whole lot from the opposition benches today, in terms of how they have done this. How can the Conservatives suggest that Canada has runaway immigration when it was the first time in the history of this country that Canada's population actually declined in 2025? I pose that question to the hon. members across the way. How does Canada have runaway immigration when our actual population numbers are declining? That is the first time that has happened since Confederation. The Conservatives have not seemed to address that in the text of their motion, and I have not heard it in any of their conversation pieces today.

The fact of the matter is that the Prime Minister and this government, from day one of Canada's new government, looked at the situation, and there was a course correction. Having been part of the back benches of government since 2019, I will be the first one to say that the last government, under Prime Minister Trudeau, did get out in front of its skis. We were starting to lose the social consensus around immigration. I think the ambition was far too high for what the country could absorb, as it relates to housing and as it relates to health care.

However, the Prime Minister, having spent time in the United Kingdom and having seen the way migration and immigration has been and continues to be weaponized in the United Kingdom and the way it is being weaponized in the European Union, has been very thoughtful about making sure that we actually decline. I think there are some statistics that I have not heard the Conservatives say. Again, I think this bears repeating for Canadians at home. As has been articulated, we need to be able to have frank and open conversations about this. This is important. Canadians need to understand the facts, but so much of the conversation I have heard today is driven by fearmongering and high-level, 10,000-foot views, saying that Canada is awash with immigrants. The statistics do not back that up whatsoever.

In fact, the number of temporary foreign workers in this country is down 56% year over year. The number of asylum claims is down 68%. That is, in part, because we are declining in our numbers of admissions into the country, but we are also changing the protocol process that is available to individuals who are seeking to claim asylum in the country. International student arrivals are down by 67% from their high. Again, this is a program that we have capped.

The government is taking responsible measures to make sure that we can manage our immigration numbers to ensure that we do not lose that social consensus. It is not helpful when His Majesty's loyal official opposition, in a desperate plea, down 25% in the national polls, make this their issue without the facts to actually back up where they are. They very well could have made that issue three years ago, and they did raise it. I give them credit for it. They are beating on a horse right now. There is no meat to this. They are trying to draw blood from a stone, would be the expression back home in Nova Scotia. Again, there are no statistics to back the Conservatives up, and this has been highlighted. The member for Vancouver Centre did an excellent job.

I want to give some information that is important. The Conservatives suggest that we are not going to have health care delivery because we are allowing 200,000 individuals who are already in the country. These are Ukrainian refugees. There was a time that the Conservative Party, during the course of the war in Ukraine, spoke very strongly about the need, not only to support Ukraine, but to support individuals who were being displaced by the war. We do not hear those types of questions anymore here in the House of Commons.

● (1710)

The program and the policy that they are pursuing today would actually disenfranchise individuals who are in our communities, who are making a difference, who have a work permit and who are contributing to the social and economic well-being of our communities.

The Conservative position is that those individuals should be asked to leave the country and go back to a war-torn area in Ukraine right now. I ask my hon. colleagues, is that what they stand for? Is that what they are choosing to move forward?

The hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan is standing and trying to catcall me now. I asked him a question in the House earlier today about the fact that the member for Calgary Nose Hill and the member for Bowmanville—Oshawa North are calling for the complete dismantling of the temporary foreign worker program.

I look at my hon. colleague, the member for Bow River. On the agricultural sector, maybe less so in western Canada with the particular commodity groups, that member purports to talk about agriculture. What would the agriculture community in Canada think about the Conservative position to actually eliminate the temporary foreign worker program altogether? It is not to reform it and not to reduce its numbers, but to get rid of it.

They could come to Berwick, Nova Scotia, and talk to the people in Grand View Manor. I am going to ask my Conservative colleagues if they are big corporate lobbyists or is that a not-for-profit delivering health care in rural Nova Scotia who is telling their member of Parliament that it is important to have pathways for individuals? We have a number of temporary foreign workers who are filling the gap in our health care system. We have people who are seeking PR status so that they can continue to deliver health care to my constituents. The Conservatives are suggesting that is corporate lobbying.

The Conservative program, if we actually supported the motion that they are suggesting today, which is to undermine individuals who are actively, in our communities, contributing to our health care system, construction and food processing, would fundamentally undermine health care delivery, which is already fragile enough, by the way, in rural Nova Scotia. That is the Conservative plan. I do not think it is very well thought out, but it is really thought out to get the 30-second clips that we are going to see all over social media, the half-truths, the half-information that gins people up, without actual facts about what is happening across the country.

The Conservative Party should come to Berwick, Nova Scotia, talk to the people in Grand View Manor and suggest that the individuals who are working in the health care system to deliver for seniors in Nova Scotia should not be permitted to have a pathway to PR under the government's plan to make sure that we can continue individuals who are already in the country. This is not about new arrivals; this is about people who are in our country under a TFW program, who are seeking to go to permanent residency, because they have a place to live, they are contributing to the economy and the Conservatives want them gone. I do not see how that makes any sense at all.

Let us talk about Eden Valley Poultry. This is a business in my riding that has over 400 employees, about 20% of whom are temporary foreign workers. They now have a pathway to be able to either extend their permits or go towards a PR solution. They are individuals who are contributing to food security in Nova Scotia, and the Conservatives want these individuals gone.

We can go to Halls Harbour, Nova Scotia. In the lobster pound about 10% of the workforce is temporary foreign workers. Again, the Conservative Party wants that program entirely eliminated.

I do not know what Rodger Cameron and the guys are doing down at Halls Harbour, but under the Conservative program, they would not have a lobster pound. They would not have an ability to contribute to rural communities in Nova Scotia.

I want the member for Calgary Nose Hill, the member for Bowmanville—Oshawa North and every other Conservative member who goes home to their rural constituencies to stand up and tell their stakeholders that is not the Conservative position, that they are not actually suggesting that they would eliminate the TFW program that would be so essential to rural Canada. I want Conservative members to start saying what they are saying in this House back home in their constituencies. I can promise it is inconsistent.

I am happy to go down to Leamington. I would love to hear the position in Leamington. They have a great hon. member, a great guy, a smart guy, a good advocate. I like him. I hope to God he is not actually saying what the member for Bowmanville—Oshawa North is saying in Leamington. There are 60,000 workers under the seasonal agricultural worker program who come to Canada every year. The Conservative program actually proposes to get rid of the TFW program that matters across this country.

The last thing I am going to say is this government has immigration under control. This government is taking an approach for individuals who are in the country, who are contributing, who have a roof over their head and who are making a difference at a local business. We want to have a pathway for them to stay and continue to contribute to our communities. At the same time, we are reducing overall immigration into this country, because we want to make sure we have the housing, the social health care and the opportunities that are available to Canadians. We are walking that careful balance.

If these guys had the keys to the kingdom, there would not be an ability for Canadian business to be able to compete in rural Canada specifically.

● (1715)

Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member said during his speech that I was catcalling him. I was heckling, but I certainly was not catcalling. Just in case my wife is watching, I wanted to put that clearly on the record.

The member is buying into this extreme framing of this, that people are either for all of it or against all of it, and that is not an honest or substantive way of looking at immigration, which is about calibration and lining up with the interests of Canada. We need skilled labour, especially in remote areas. The way to do that is to fix the government's failures on training policy and train Canadian workers for those skills. It is to support labour mobility in the ways we have proposed and also to have immigration programs that work in the right ways to align with the interests of Canada, such as a special program for agriculture, etc.

Has the member actually read the announcements and policies we have put forward? I think they are sophisticated and—

The Deputy Speaker: I have to cut the member off to allow the Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister a chance to respond.

Hon. Kody Blois: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that it was not a catcall. That is fine.

The member is right as it relates to the training and the importance of doing that at the same time, but that is exactly what we are doing. We are trying to have 100,000 Red Seal skilled trade workers. We have training programs in place, but what he is dodging is that members of his own caucus are outright calling not for reform and not for adjustment but for the temporary foreign worker program to be eliminated in its entirety. He should stand in his place here in the House and say that that is a ludicrous idea, that we need skilled trade workers and that we have to support Canadians and give them greater opportunity in the economy, but, at the same time, the position of the member for Calgary Nose Hill and the member for Bowmanville—Oshawa North is ludicrous public policy. That is what he should do.

[*Translation*]

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

The facts are quite clear. Canada has experienced the fastest population growth of any G7 country over the past 25 years. Earlier, my colleague played with the numbers by telling us that 2025 was the first year in Canada's history in which population growth declined. Let us remember that, even in 2025, Canada's population growth rate was twice that of the United States and three times that of the United Kingdom. When my colleague wants to cite statistics, it would be helpful if he compared population growth as well, not just fiscal capacity.

Another fact is that population growth is currently outpacing our capacity to accommodate it, particularly when it comes to housing and the strain on public services.

Does my colleague acknowledge that population growth, and the new immigration targets, remain higher than the average levels seen between 2015 and 2019?

Hon. Kody Blois: Mr. Speaker, here is a fact for my hon. colleague. For the first time since Confederation, Canada's population is declining. That is simply a fact.

Here is what I find interesting. Whether we are talking about the agri-food sector in Beauce or the regional economy, the stakeholders that I have spoken with in the regions of Quebec, including business owners and farmers, have told me that they need temporary foreign workers. The Conservative motion seeks to do away with this program, which would jeopardize the balance between protecting Canadian jobs and the need for temporary workers.

Why is my colleague so opposed to the temporary foreign worker program for residents and the protection of jobs—

The Deputy Speaker: We will move on to questions and comments.

The hon. member for Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas has the floor.

[*English*]

John-Paul Danko (Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his comments that it is perhaps disappointing but not surprising that we are continuing to hear members of the opposition blaming immigrants for the challenges in housing, health care and crime. We all hear those dog whistles loud and clear.

I recently had an event in my constituency office where we invited new citizens, and it was the most joyous occasion to have those people there, all of them working productively in the economy, fulfilling those jobs—

● (1720)

The Deputy Speaker: I have to interrupt the member as we are running out of time. I need to give the Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister a chance to respond.

Hon. Kody Blois: Mr. Speaker, I would simply say that, as a government, we recognize the importance of making sure we move systematically to protect the social licences of immigration into the country and that we need to do it sustainably. The government is doing exactly that. We have chosen to allow up to 200,000 individuals who are already in this country to be part of a PR program. The Conservatives are suggesting that we should blame immigrants and, at the same time, that they are going to get rid of the temporary foreign worker program. It does not cut water in our—

The Deputy Speaker: Resuming debate, the hon. member for Thornhill.

Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, listening to this debate all day long, one cannot help but think about the other side's multiple arguments about racism and fomenting hatred. There is nobody in this country right now who does not believe this is a problem. If we step outside of this place and go to our constituencies, we understand the pressure that young people are under, and the people who want to buy homes or cannot access the health care system. That is 85% of Canadians. I am not sure that calling them racist is necessarily a good tack here. I, like so many other members of the House, am a child of immigrants, so I find it even more inane. I know what this institution can be and why it is important to this country's history. I am living proof of that.

Just over 50 years ago, when my parents were looking to escape communism, they heard a story about a place where peace and freedom were guaranteed, where they could raise a family and get ahead with hard work and determination, where they would be welcomed into a proud family and a proud heritage. That place was Canada, and that story was true.

They did not arrive with much, just a few suitcases and a language they were still learning. They were well educated and forever uncredentialed, which is a story that continues today, and they had the belief that if they worked hard enough, this country would give them a fair shot.

It did. On a taxi driver's salary, my father bought a home. It was not a mansion. It was a home in a safe neighbourhood, where both his kids could play outside. Let us think about that. Back then, a taxi driver could buy a home. They walked into a synagogue without looking over their shoulder as they had in the country they had fled, where faith was something they had to hide. They walked into a country where they could walk anywhere proudly and were protected. They worked long shifts so their kids were not without. They made every sacrifice, and they bet on Canada. Canada never let them down, not once.

Here is the part I want them and the House to hear. They gave back and made this country better. None of that happened by accident. It happened because generations of Canadians had built something deliberate: an immigration system with purpose, shared values and a national consensus that said, “Come here, build here and belong here.” That consensus is broken. That is for sure.

Being Canadian was never just about a piece of paper. It meant something. It meant taking on the obligations and honouring them. It meant voting. It meant showing up. It meant pitching in. It meant understanding that belonging is not only something one receives but something one gives back too. Holding it all together was a promise, a simple, powerful promise that the rules are clear and apply to everyone. There are no exceptions, and there is no special treatment. There is not a special line for some people but, rather, one line for everybody.

My parents stood in that line, and they were proud to. Those things were not anti-immigrant. In fact, they were the very things that made immigration successful and sustainable in this country, but they are also the principles the Liberals have been tearing down for 11 years.

When my parents became citizens, they swore an oath in person, not on a Zoom meeting. Their passports had pictures of Terry Fox and Parliament Hill, and that meant something. It was not squirrels and nuts or people jumping into lakes. The previous prime minister called this a "postnational state".The same Liberal government that is wrapping itself in a flag today used to suggest we should be ashamed of that flag. It implied that a sense of shared identity was not important. It forgot that citizenship is not just a noun but a verb too. We should remember that in the House.

As a noun, citizenship is something one has, a certificate, a passport, a status on some government file. As a verb, it means citizenship is something one does. It is showing up to vote, volunteering at a Legion hall for Remembrance Day, coaching a minor hockey team or shovelling one's neighbour's driveway before they wake up in the morning. It is learning the story of what this country is and its history, being proud and passing it along to our children. It means that building a cohesive society requires more than just sharing a passport. It requires intentionality. It means, again, celebrating our history, doubling down on our commitment to democratic values, making sure that we leave conflicts from abroad on the doorstep before they enter our streets, and that we tell our kids that too. Our national identity is so much more than poutine, ice-skating and a new-found patriotism that came along five minutes ago because of some idiotic trade war with our once-reliable neighbour.

● (1725)

It should never be reduced to that. It is something more, and I think anyone standing in this institution needs to understand that.

When my parents came to this country, they waited their turn. They filled out every single form. They met every single requirement, and they did everything this country asked them to do. They never asked for a shortcut, and they always had a chance.

Today, people who play by the rules are watching others skip the line, and that is exactly why we are having this conversation in this place. People are asking a simple question: Why bother with the line in the first place?

Let us consider the facts to back this up if we want to cherry-pick numbers as the Liberals have been doing all afternoon. At the end of last year, there were roughly 300 asylum claims waiting to be heard. The federal health program claimants cost $211 million in 2020. By 2025, that cost is nearly $900 million, and the Parliamentary Budget Officer projects that it is going to be $1.5 billion a year within five years. Meanwhile, about 30,000 people with removal orders are still waiting to be removed, and there are tens of thousands the government simply cannot locate. Those are the actual facts.

We have evidence from the justice system too. It is not just asylum seekers. A 34-year-old temporary resident was recently convicted of theft after a violent confrontation. He was granted an unconditional discharge when the judge explicitly cited his non-citizen status and his risk of deportation as reasons for a lenient outcome. There was also a temporary resident who recently pled guilty to sexually assaulting a woman in Prince George, B.C. He received 170 days of house arrest plus 18 months of probation.

It used to be common sense that if someone broke the law in this country, they would not get to stay here, and they would get a one-way ticket out of this country. I do not know when that changed, but it certainly has not changed the consensus of every Canadian I have spoken to. What we have right now is not a compassionate system. It is complete chaos. Anyone can walk out of this place and talk to somebody who lives it every single day in their city.

It is for that reason that the immigration system that was once the envy and the model that everybody in the world would copy is now the system that everybody would shy away from and not look at as a model for anything. It is not fair to families who are paying higher grocery prices and watching homes slip further and further out of their reach. It is not fair to young Canadians, the more than one in eight who are looking for work and cannot find it. Our youth unemployment rate is double the national average.

This is not fair to people like my parents. They stood in line, they followed the rules and they did everything right. All they wanted was to build a better life and, in doing so, a better Canada. The Liberals broke that system, but the consensus that builds this country is not gone. It is not gone from the people in this place, it is not gone from the people on this side of the House, and it is not gone from the people we speak to in our communities, but it requires a different path.

Sustainable immigration levels, a renewed commitment to citizenship as something that we do and not just something that we hold, and a system that earns back the trust of the people who came here as well as the people who pay into it, are what Conservatives are proposing. I urge every single member of this House to treat this debate with the seriousness that it deserves, because 85% of people cannot be wrong.

Our system is out of control, and people cannot find the housing, the jobs and the health care they need. It is hard to imagine that the pressure comes from anything else. There are other factors, but to say that the pressure does not come from record immigration is dishonest to Canadians, dishonest to this House and dishonest to this debate.

● (1730)

Hon. Kody Blois (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague for her remarks today. It would be nice if we had some time over the next number of months to talk about the idea of what it means to be Canadian and the idea of citizenship. She spoke of some strong grounds there. It would have been nice to have more time for her to actually identify what that could be. I think that could be a great idea for the House to take up at some point.

The one thing I did not hear from the hon. member is how Canada's population has actually declined in 2025. As I remarked in my speech, had this argument been happening three years ago, I think there would have been more validity to the Conservative position today. At this point, the government has actually seen a decline in the population. Asylum claims are down, TFWs are down and permanent residency applications are down. The government has immigration under control.

Can the hon. member at least recognize that point, that the population has decreased in 2025, and explain why her party is against the temporary—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Thornhill.

Melissa Lantsman: Mr. Speaker, nobody believes that because it is not true. If we look at the Liberals immigration plan from last year, we can see that, first of all, they forgot to count 300,000 people. Second of all, they promised 380,000, but it was 448,000. I do not think we can take what the immigration minister is hiding on page 216 of the budget.

Defending immigration means defending the integrity of our system. I think that is what Canadians expect us to do in this place. It means defending the integrity of our citizenship and what it means to be Canadian. It means defending the integrity of the numbers and not just moving people into columns so we can have a better story on budget day.

[*Translation*]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski-Neigette—Mitis—Matapédia—Les Basques, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I commend my colleague for her speech. We share certain points of view.

It is astounding to see just how much the Liberals are trying to manipulate the numbers. My colleague opposite mentioned that there was a decline in demographic growth in 2025, but he failed to mention that Canada led the G7 for population growth over the previous 25 years.

The Liberals are saying that they have retaken control of immigration policy. In my opinion, that is false, because they compare current figures to the record-setting years of 2023 and 2024 and then claim to have reduced immigration levels. However, when we look at permanent resident targets and compare them to the average levels between 2015 and 2019, they are still 25% higher.

I would like my colleague to tell us what she thinks about the Liberals distorting the facts when it comes to their immigration policy.

[*English*]

Melissa Lantsman: Mr. Speaker, it is always about the line the Liberals do not tell us about, whether that is in the calculation of their GDP, where they do not tell us about GDP per capita, or the net debt-to-GDP ratio, which they used to use as their fiscal anchor and counts pensions. There is always more to the story with the Liberals, and the same goes for immigration.

If someone believes that 380,000 permanent residents is the number of permanent residents, they should read the budget, because, under that line, they are adding record numbers of permanent residents.

Guess what. Permanent residents put pressures on the system that we have not had before, such as pressures on the job market, pressures where these folks, who are temporary, now become permanent and can move around the country and get a job wherever they want.

That is a record number for immigration. They should just say so.

Brad Redekopp (Saskatoon West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there are about 75,000 Hong Kong and Ukrainian people who are included in the budget, in these numbers.

Did the Liberals need to increase the numbers by hundreds of thousands to accommodate these 75,000 people?

Melissa Lantsman: Mr. Speaker, they did not need to increase the number today. They could have added that in the total, and they also could have taken care of this problem five years ago, when they promised those communities permanent residency here, the Ukrainian community and the Hong Kongers.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): It being 5:34 p.m, it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the business of supply.

[*Translation*]

The question is on the motion.

If a member participating in person wishes that the motion be carried or carried on division, or if a member of a recognized party participating in person wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

[*English*]

Brad Redekopp: Mr. Speaker, we would request a recorded division.

● (1735)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Pursuant to Standing Order 45, the division stands deferred until Wednesday, November 25, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister is rising on a point of order. Is it to see the clock?

Hon. Kody Blois: Mr. Speaker, that is correct. I am hoping to see the clock at whatever time you want it to be.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): It is very tempting to see it at any time, but let us see the clock at 5:45 p.m. to begin Private Members' Business.

Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*English*]

CORRECTIONS AND CONDITIONAL RELEASE ACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-221, An Act to amend the Corrections and Conditional Release Act (disclosure of information to victims), as reported (with amendments) from the committee.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): There being no motions at report stage, the House will now proceed, without debate, to the putting of the question on the motion to concur in the bill at report stage.

Mel Arnold (Kamloops—Shuswap—Central Rockies, CPC) moved that the bill, as amended, be concurred in.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): If a member participating in person wishes that the motion be carried or carried on division, or if a member of a recognized party participating in person wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

An hon. member: Mr. Speaker, I ask that it be carried.

(Motion agreed to)

Mel Arnold moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is always an honour to rise as the representative of Kamloops—Shuswap—Central Rockies, a riding as vast and diverse in geography as it is in people, culture and economies.

I would like to start off by thanking the people who have made it possible for me to stand in this place to bring their voices to Ottawa and propose legislation to improve the lives of Canadians.

This is what I have proposed in Bill C-221, an act to amend the Corrections and Conditional Release Act, to bring meaningful results to Canadians. This bill is a reiteration of bills tabled in previous parliaments. They are Hon. Lisa Raitt's bill, Bill C-466, in the 42nd Parliament; Senator Boisvenu's bill, Bill S-219, in the 43rd Parliament; and Dr. Colin Carrie's bill, Bill C-320, in the 44th Parliament. Unfortunately, these three bills did not receive royal assent before the expiration of the parliaments they were introduced in.

The necessity of this bill was brought to the attention of my friend, the former member for Oshawa, Dr. Colin Carrie, by his constituent Ms. Lisa Freeman. Ms. Freeman's father, Roland Slingerland, was brutally murdered in Oshawa in 1991. Ms. Freeman has now spent decades advocating for legislative changes for the benefit of victims of crime. I want to thank Ms. Freeman and all the victims of crime like her who have been waiting so long for this simple change to be made to the Corrections and Conditional Release Act.

Lisa has been fighting for all victims of crime who have been left in the dark, or who are lacking or have been denied information related to the transfers, releases or early parole of the offenders who have already caused so much harm and pain to the victims and their families. We owe it to Lisa, her family and the hundreds of thousands of victims like her to see the proposals in Bill C-221 not only passed but also brought into force.

This bill, Bill C-221, proposes the addition of 10 words in multiple disclosure provisions within the Corrections and Conditional Release Act so that victims of crime can be provided explanations of how Corrections Canada and the Parole Board determine dates for reviews and release of convicted offenders.

In this Parliament, after Bill C-221 was introduced, the government introduced Bill C-16. That bill contained many proposals included in the proposals of my bill, which I should also call Lisa's bill, Bill C-221. Bill C-16 was passed and received royal assent, so one might think that all is done and that my bill, Bill C-221, is now redundant and no longer required, but Bill C-16 failed to include a coming into force date for measures it shared with Bill C-221. That coming into force requires an order in council, or a cabinet decision, which may or may not occur at any time in the future, depending on the government.

As I have stated previously, Canadians invest their trust in us, and they expect and deserve a return on that investment. They look to Parliament and every member of the House and of the other chamber to work collaboratively to deliver meaningful results for Canadians.

I want to now thank the members from all parties who participated in second reading of this bill. I am grateful for the unanimous support of the House that progressed Bill C-221 to committee stage. At committee stage, with the support of all parties, we were able to amend Bill C-221 so that its proposed measures, which were previously passed in Bill C-16, would come into force one year after Bill C-221 receives royal assent, or on any day earlier fixed by an order of the Governor in Council. I thank all members of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, who worked collaboratively and effectively to review and amend my bill so it would activate the measures that were passed in Bill C-16.

● (1740)

In previous debates on this bill, I have spoken to Ms. Freeman's experiencing years of stress, anxiety and pain, some of which was caused by uncertainty about the status of the man who murdered her father. Ms. Freeman is not alone, not in her stress, anxiety and pain; not in her fight to bring justice to victims; and not in her fight to get legislation passed to reduce that stress, anxiety and pain. I stand with her and thousands like her. My Conservative colleagues who introduced similar bills in previous parliaments stand with them. So far, all members of the House have stood with them.

I sincerely hope the bill will continue to progress towards timely completion so that the measures it proposes can finally be brought into force. Ms. Freeman and other victims of crime have waited for Parliament to finally pass these measures so they can come into effect, and today is another important step in finally delivering these important measures. We owe it to Canadians, who sent us to this place to represent them and deliver good legislation. We owe it to victims of crime to support their ability to receive explanations and information that can support their peace of mind and mitigate the burdens they carry while they follow offenders through parole and release processes. We owe it to Canadians like Lisa Freeman and thousands like her to protect them from the traumatization of not knowing the reasons for unexpected or early parole or release.

The proposals in Bill C-221, and now the amendments to it, have been supported by all parties. This is a 10-word change that Parliament has already agreed to four times. I urge everyone to pass the bill, pass these measures and finally give Lisa and the thousands like her the clarity they deserve.

Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton—Bkejwanong, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member opposite for bringing this private member's bill forward and for all of his work on it. Could he talk a bit about why it is so important that the families of so many victims of crimes, which have happened across Canada, receive information, and why this coming into force is such an urgent concern?

● (1745)

Mel Arnold: Mr. Speaker, this is so important because of the anxiety, uncertainty and stress that is caused when victims do not know the reasons behind the decisions of early release of or parole for the offenders who have victimized them, their family members or others.

Rhonda Kirkland (Oshawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it was an honour, of course, to second this bill. It is a reminder that we are in this place to work among ourselves and each other, to be responsible and to make good decisions. This one is a good decision.

I would like to hear from the member about what it means to him that we are able to pass this and move along quickly, and his hopes for how it proceeds in the Senate.

Mel Arnold: Mr. Speaker, it is important that we move this through as soon as possible. Victims like Lisa Freeman, her family and others have waited decades for this to pass. The first iteration of this bill was in 2019. We are now approaching 2027. They have waited far too long, in my opinion, for the passage of these measures, and I hope that, today, we are able to pass it one stage further, on to the other chamber, so it can also pass it judiciously and speedily there.

[*Translation*]

Claude DeBellefeuille (Vallée-du-Haut-Saint-Laurent, BQ): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to commend my colleague.

He did an incredible job. He came to defend his bill before the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, on which I serve. Basically, this bill conveys compassion for victims.

I would like to thank him for introducing this bill and for convincing everyone in the House to support it.

I would like him to tell me what he thinks is the most beautiful thing that will happen after this evening's speeches.

[*English*]

Mel Arnold: Mr. Speaker, I think the most beautiful thing after tonight would be if this bill passes this stage in the House, moves to the Senate, gets picked up quickly there and gets passed through the Senate expeditiously so that these victims, who we have been referring to in all of this debate, see the resolve that Lisa and others have been looking for for so long. Let us not delay it any further.

Harb Gill (Windsor West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I truly appreciate my colleague's efforts in this regard. As a former police officer, I had to deal with victims all the time. I would like him to tell us how it is going to help police officers address the issues and concerns that victims often bring to them, for disclosure issues especially.

Mel Arnold: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his many years of service in the police force. Without members like him, our streets would not be as safe as they are.

The victims need to understand. Without the reasons for early release and parole being explained to them, they often cannot understand why someone was released earlier. I spoke in one of my previous interventions about how my younger brother was killed by a drunk driver. That drunk driver did not serve much of a sentence, but there was no explanation to us as a family. That is only one small example. There are many other egregious cases out there where victims have suffered for years and years, parole hearing after parole hearing, without knowing why.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be brief in my comments, just to express appreciation to the member across the way for bringing forward Bill C-221. It is legislation that, I believe, does have the unanimous support of all members in the chamber.

The member made reference to the issue of working collaboratively. Whether it is this legislation or Bailey's law, we have had opposition members' legislation advance through the House.

As the government has recognized the importance of victims and the importance of making our communities safer places, bills dealing with bail reform or reinstating mandatory minimums have been included in the litany of legislation that has come before us in the last 18 months. I believe that Bill C-221 does complement that. For that, I support having correctional and parole authorities provide explanations to victims. I think it is absolutely essential and I recommend the passage of this bill as quickly as possible.

It is not a question. It is more of a statement.

● (1750)

[*Translation*]

Claude DeBellefeuille (Vallée-du-Haut-Saint-Laurent, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise on behalf of the Bloc Québécois at this stage of C-221, an act to amend the Corrections and Conditional Release Act with a view to improving communications with victims.

This bill was introduced by my esteemed colleague from Kamloops—Shuswap—Central Rockies, for whom I have a great deal of respect. I want to congratulate him, because shepherding a private member's bill through Parliament is not always an easy task. He has defended it well, but more importantly, he has won over parliamentarians from all parties through his determination, perseverance and, I would say, his confidence in the judgment of MPs regarding the importance of passing this legislation for victims.

As he noted in his speech before mine, this bill had already been introduced and debated in the previous Parliament but unfortunately died on the Order Paper in the Senate. As a result, the benefits it could have provided to victims were delayed. I therefore thank him for taking up the cause once again and for guiding the bill through all the legislative stages to bring it nearly to the end of its journey in the House of Commons. Then it will continue on to the Senate for further consideration.

What is this bill really about? I am trying to find a word that sums up this bill, and the word that comes to mind is “compassion”. It is about showing compassion to victims, showing compassion to the families of victims who have lost a loved one and who want to be informed about the release conditions of the offender, the inmate, so they can grieve their loss and also to feel safe. That is missing in the current system.

Since I sit on the public safety committee, I would say that many bills seek to better support victims and their loved ones in terms of providing information and amending the Criminal Code or the Corrections and Conditional Release Act, in order to improve the situation and put victims' families and loved ones at the centre.

Of course, there is the prison system, there are offenders who need to be prepared for reintegration, but there are also victims and their loved ones. There are some shortcomings that need to be addressed in the laws and in our administrative processes so we can give greater consideration to victims and show more compassion for them and their loved ones.

What does this bill do?

At its core, it would require that the reasons for granting parole be documented and communicated to victims and their families. This could apply to day parole, escorted temporary absences for weekend outings or other purposes, and other forms of release, so that victims can understand why the decision was made.

Under the current law, victims are already informed of release dates, escorted temporary absences and medical releases. What they are not told is why those decisions were made. The reasons are neither explained nor documented. That is something victims and their families have been calling for for a long time.

I find myself wondering why legislation is needed simply to ensure that victims are given a clear explanation of why a particular absence or release is considered appropriate in a given offender's case.

That is what this bill would change, by making it a legal requirement.

Of course, there is still more that could be done to reassure victims. For example, the Bloc Québécois would have liked to see victims automatically receive information about offenders, rather than having to request it themselves.

● (1755)

The majority of victims who testified before the committee told us that the parole process often places the burden on them to seek out information, understand the process, ask questions and obtain answers. That burden falls to them and their loved ones, and we would have liked to see that change. However, I found myself wondering whether it really requires legislation to ensure that victims have a meaningful role in the offender's parole process.

In my first speech, I spoke about a young girl who was murdered at the age of 17 during a robbery. For more than 20 years, her family has struggled to obtain information in advance. They do eventually get information, but it takes courage and patience. Finding the right person, getting the information they need when they need it is often complicated. One has to ask why this burden falls to victims, who are already coping with the loss of a loved one and who are trying to come to terms with their grief.

Brigitte Serre's family, for example, wants to be kept informed in advance. They want the right to give evidence. That is what they are asking for. Following the vote on this bill this evening, the family will finally get what they are asking for. This is huge. They have been waiting for 20 years for an explanation as to why a specific date was chosen for an early release on parole, for example. We can tell that family that Bill C-221 meets their needs.

It is rather sad, and even discouraging, that it took so long for us here in the House to realize that the law needed to be modernized. A lot of legislative changes have been made regarding inmates and their reintegration, but it seems that, along the way, the importance of victims and their loved ones has been forgotten. Bill C-221 fixes that, and we hope the House will vote unanimously, since all parties supported Bill C-221 at the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security.

In closing, I want victims to know that the Bloc Québécois stands with them. They are at the heart of our decisions, and we are proud to support Bill C-221. Once again, I thank my colleague for supporting this bill. I suggest we go out for a glass of champagne once it has received royal assent.

[*English*]

Rhonda Kirkland (Oshawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to rise in support of this bill. It holds deep meaning for victims of violent crime and for me personally, as the member of Parliament for Oshawa.

Bill C-221 builds upon years of advocacy for greater transparency and fairness in Canada's parole system. It also continues the work of the previous member of Parliament for Oshawa, Dr. Colin Carrie, who introduced the initiative as Bill C-320 in the 44th Parliament. It was inspired by the strength and determination of an Oshawa resident, and my good friend, Lisa Freeman.

Bill C-221 would respond directly to failures that have left victims without clear information, timely notice or the transparency they deserve.

I want to thank my colleague the member for Kamloops—Shuswap—Central Rockies for introducing this crucial legislation.

More than 30 years ago in my community of Oshawa, we were shaken by the murder of Roland Slingerland. Roland was a caretaker at a rooming house. He was a navy veteran and a father of four daughters. He was murdered while trying to protect a woman who was fleeing intimate partner violence. The axe murderer who killed him had gone looking for his estranged girlfriend, and Roland refused to reveal her location. He put someone else's safety first, and for that courageous act, he lost his life.

The man who murdered Roland Slingerland was on parole at the time for previous offences. The system that was supposed to protect the public did not.

For Lisa, the impact did not end with the trial. She has spent most of her adult life navigating the parole process, not by choice but because every decision made about the offender directly affected her sense of safety and her family's well-being. She was repeatedly left without the information she needed. Transfers happened without notice, security levels changed with no explanation, and hearing dates shifted unpredictably. There were times she was completely shut out of the process. However, Lisa refused to stay silent.

When a judge hands down a life sentence with no parole for 25 years, people may feel like that is a strong sentence and the public is safe, but for victims and their families, the reality is far more complicated. They cannot take a 25-year deep breath. Long before, there are multiple forms of conditional release, multiple review stages and multiple opportunities for offenders to return to the community, sometimes years earlier than the public expects or the sentence implies.

When victims are not given the information they need, this complexity is not only overwhelming but often damaging. It forces families to relive trauma over and over again. This is what Bill C-221 would address.

The current mandate under the Parole Board of Canada is that it is able to provide certain information to registered victims, but this practice is inconsistent today. The bill would strengthen the Corrections and Conditional Release Act by requiring, by law, that when the parole board provides information about eligibility dates or review dates for temporary absences, releases or parole, it must include an explanation of how these dates were determined.

Victims would no longer receive information without context. They would no longer be forced to interpret a system that feels deliberately opaque to them. They would receive clear reasoning so they could understand what is happening, prepare for what is coming and participate meaningfully in the process if they wish.

The previous version, Bill C-320, passed unanimously in the House, and it passed unanimously at committee. Every party in the House supported it. The bill was as close to becoming law as possible before the government prorogued Parliament so that the Liberals could hold a leadership race. The consensus was clear across political lines, across both chambers and among those who work directly with victims every day.

Today, with Bill C-221, we have the chance to complete that work. We have a chance to take a bill that has already earned national agreement and turn it into real protection for victims and their families.

● (1800)

Lisa Freeman was never seeking recognition or spotlight. She simply refused to remain silent in the face of a system that repeatedly failed to acknowledge or respect her. Instead she turned her experience into a commitment to helping others who have been victimized. Through her books, workshops, vigils and ongoing advocacy, Lisa continues to call for greater transparency and accountability so no other family has to endure what her family has experienced.

Lisa's father demonstrated extraordinary courage that day when he stepped in to protect someone in danger. Today she honours that courage by standing up for victims and fighting for meaningful change. The bill reflects Lisa's determination to create a better, more compassionate path for those who will face the parole process in the future. While no legislation can undo what she and her family have endured, she hopes her efforts will ensure that others do not experience that same pain, trauma and hurt throughout the parole process.

Bill C-221 is a testament to what can be achieved when victims speak and when lawmakers listen. It shows what is possible when a community refuses to let injustice stand unchallenged. I urge Parliament to finish the work that began years ago and pass the bill through the remaining stages as quickly as possible and unanimously.

● (1805)

Alex Ruff (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to commend my hon. colleague for bringing the bill forward. My support is 100% behind this very important issue.

On a lighter note, though, I do want to commend the member for Winnipeg North for giving by far the best speech he has ever given in the chamber. If he could continue to give speeches of that calibre here, I think legislation would be passed at a record pace, one never seen before. I just wanted to get that on the record.

My support is 100% behind Bill C-221.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): There being no further members rising, the hon. member for Kamloops—Shuswap—Central Rockies has five minutes for his right of reply.

Mel Arnold (Kamloops—Shuswap—Central Rockies, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all members of the House.

There being nothing presented that needs a rebuttal, a right of reply or a response, I just want to use my right of reply time to thank everyone involved in the process thus far on Bill C-221 and its previous iterations: the Hon. Lisa Raitt in 2019, in the 42nd Parliament, for initially introducing these measures; Senator Boisvenu in 2020, in the 43rd Parliament; and Dr. Colin Carrie with Bill C-320 in 2023, in the 44th Parliament. Members of the House and the Senate, up to final reading in the Senate in the 44th Parliament, have supported the proposals in this bill, and I thank everyone for that.

I want to thank legislative counsel for drafting the initial bill and the amendments at committee stage, and members of all parties in the 45th Parliament for supporting Bill C-221 during the debate in the chamber and at committee stage. Most of all, I especially want to thank Lisa Freeman, who has shown incredible perseverance, patience and tenacity in keeping this proposal moving forward. I thank her for her support. I hope we can now deliver results for her and other victims of crime.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The question is on the motion.

If a member participating in person wishes that the motion be carried or carried on division, or if a member of a recognized party participating in person wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

Mel Arnold: Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded division.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Pursuant to Standing Order 98, the division stands deferred until Wednesday, November 25, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

[*English*]

THE ECONOMY

Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am rising tonight to address the increasing youth unemployment crisis.

Today, we had a debate about Liberal failures on immigration. It was an opportunity to identify a series of policy failures that have led us to increasing, and for a long time high, youth unemployment rates that are really affecting the next generation in all kinds of profound ways. The youth unemployment rate is now up to 13.7%. Sadly, there was another big jump in last month's data.

A year ago, Conservatives put forward our youth jobs plan that addressed the issues that are now getting more recognition. Our youth jobs plan highlighted the need to unleash the economy, address barriers to opportunity investment, fix the immigration system, align our immigration system with the needs of our economy, fix training and also build homes where the jobs are, to support labour mobility. We had constructive proposals in all of these areas. Liberals failed to act, and we see the problem continuing to get worse.

I want to highlight today how Liberal failures on training policy have created a situation in which we have worsening youth unemployment and worsening skills gaps, and the government response to this is to say that even higher immigration can solve those problems, when it cannot. The training failures of this government are evident, insofar as it has taken an ideological approach to training. The government has, instead of pragmatically trying to support the development of job-relevant skills for young people, pulled funding from students at private vocational institutions for student grants and failed to follow our advice to offer relatively more generous grants to students seeking in-demand fields.

The government's failure to align skills development with the needs of the economy is leading to widening skill gaps, which means we have employers who are struggling to find people with the skills they need, and young people who are unemployed. In response to that, the Liberals say that we need more immigration to fill that gap. Actually what we need is support for an alignment of education and training with the needs of the labour market. The approach that we take should be an emphasis on aligning job training with the needs of the economy, but Liberal failures on training policy are now leading to failures on immigration policy. That is, the government increases immigration levels in response to skill gaps that could be solved with training, but in both cases, these are driving more pressure on the Canadian system and higher youth unemployment.

Again, our constructive proposals have been in the areas of unleashing the economy, fixing immigration, fixing training policy and building homes where the jobs are. It was very interesting for me to read recently, in Stephen Harper's memoirs, about the challenges around skilled training gaps and the need to address them, which is why the Harper government brought in completion grants for trades and job grants and aligned provincial governments, the federal government and employers.

However, when the Liberals took power, they really denigrated trades work. We have had 11 years of moving in the opposite direction. This government actually cancelled completion grants for trades workers before it reinstated them. We have seen big failures in this policy area from this government, and it is driving the youth unemployment crisis that we continue to see.

● (1810)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, ironically, the member made reference to Stephen Harper. It was Stephen Harper who set the stage to increase the number of international students. I was actually in third party opposition when the Conservatives brought forward a press release indicating, believe it or not, that they wanted around 400,000 international students and researchers. That is what they believed the annual intake should be for the country. Then, if we take a look at today's Prime Minister and today's government, we are saying 350,000 over three years, so there has been a shift.

The reason I started off with that is that we spent the entire day debating the issue of immigration. The Conservatives try to blame the problems of Canada, real or perceived, and in many ways they are perceived by Conservatives, on immigrants. It is really quite unfortunate, as I indicated earlier today, whether in a speech or in questions. There is a certain element within the Conservative Party that has made the determination, and I must say that I am a bit disappointed in my friend across the way when he alluded to youth unemployment, indirectly saying that it is immigrants who are at fault or that immigrants were to blame.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Absolutely, Mr. Speaker, and I would ask him to correct me if I am wrong.

Let us have a bit of a flashback. When Stephen Harper was the prime minister, what was the youth unemployment rate? Let us be fair. We will give the first couple of years off, but we can take a look at the last four years, when he had a majority government. In 2011, it was 13.9%; in 2012, it was 14.1%; and in 2013, it was 13.5%. At the end of the day, the member is saying that, well, we just had a big bump, and it went up to 13.7% here in Canada.

I do not like to see high youth unemployment, even when Stephen Harper was the prime minister and his leaders sat around the cabinet table and said they wanted to increase the number of international students to just under 400,000 a year. I did not criticize the Harper government back then. I would never try to put the blame on international students or immigrants. I would not put the blame on them for youth unemployment, but that is what we are actually seeing.

The reality is that we can go to the province of Manitoba and talk to the provincial minister of immigration, Malaya Marcelino, and find out what she has to say about Manitoba's need for international workers and Manitoba's need and desire to keep the people who are there today, in many areas. We can go into the rural side of Manitoba, where the demand goes far beyond even that of the provincial minister. We have mayors and communities saying that we need to retain. They are not blaming young people, as the member across the way just did. I do question the motivation behind tying unemployment rates among young people to immigrants.

● (1815)

Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, that was not the member's best. I did not, at any point, blame immigrants. I blame the government's immigration policy failures as definitely being a contributing factor to youth unemployment. Do not take my word for it. The member can read the unanimous report of the human resources committee, which studied youth unemployment. Its unanimous recommendations included changes to the government's approach to immigration, such as that the government consider the impact on young workers, including the availability of entry-level jobs, wage dynamics and housing pressures, when setting immigration levels; and that they fix credential recognition problems and apply strict penalties to companies hiring illegal workers. The report quotes at length various economists and experts from various reputable universities throughout Canada, highlighting how supply and demand works and that failures of immigration policy are causing youth unemployment.

What does the member have to say to that?

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives did not have a problem when Stephen Harper said he wanted to increase it on an annual basis to hundreds of thousands compared to what this Prime Minister is actually proposing. The member is wrong in his opening comments because, again, we spent the entire day talking about how the Conservatives are blaming immigrants for issues, whether it is youth unemployment, housing issues or health care issues. What impact does that have on individuals out in our community who have racist attitudes, who criticize and blame everything on immigrants? They discriminate against them. There is violence against immigrants. These are the types of things that are taking place.

When they see members of Parliament blaming immigrants, two plus two equals what? The Conservatives need to figure that out.

● (1820)

JUSTICE

Alex Ruff (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Mr. Speaker, why are we here tonight? Well, back on January 29, I stood in this chamber during question period and asked the government House leader when they were going to get on with doing the NSICOP Act review, which was mandated to be done by October 6, 2022. The House leader rose, and in response, he thanked me for bringing this to their attention and said they would get back to me when they were going to do the review.

Unfortunately, five months passed, and in June, I stood again and I asked the same question. This time it was the Minister of Public Safety who stood. To my surprise, I was really happy with the response. The Minister of Public Safety stood in this chamber and reassured not only Parliament, but Canadians, that they would undertake this review. He said they looked forward to "the review that we will undertake starting this year". Well, we are running out of time.

I even made it easy for the government. Back in March, I tabled Motion No. 29 to form a special joint committee that would allow the act to be reviewed. The bicameral committee, which would be made up of both senators and members of Parliament, could look at this bill with representation from all of the recognized parties and all the different groups within the other place. All the government needs to do is move Motion No. 29. It has my permission. It can take it and run with it, tweak it if it needs to be tweaked and do it.

Ultimately, the only reason I am here tonight is because I am worried, as we only have two and a half weeks left of sitting time here in the chamber. Is the Minister of Public Safety going to keep his word and initiate this now over four years overdue review before the House rises, or is the minister just misleading the House and Canadians?

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I can assure the member opposite that the Minister of Public Safety understands the importance of NSICOP and the need to have a review done. There are two points I should talk about, but let me start off with acknowledging the legislative agenda the Minister of Public Safety has working on the whole crime file. We have seen the most progressive, largest crime agenda in legislation in generations. We have even seen co-operation and collaboration on some of the private members' bills, such as Bailey's law and the other this afternoon prior to the late show. Whether it is bringing in bail reform legislation, reinstituting mandatory minimums in a number of crimes that are committed in Canada or ensuring that we are protecting as much as possible the rights of victims, it has been a very busy time for the government, particularly the minister responsible for public safety. That is not to take away from the importance of NSICOP.

Getting to my second point, I sat in third party opposition when they made the decision to exclude NSICOP. I argued back then that Canada was the only country in the Five Eyes that did not have such a parliamentary committee that would do the fine work it does. On that note, I would compliment the member opposite, because I know he sat on the committee and is still on the committee. I acknowledge the fantastic work it does. I appreciate it. For the residents of Winnipeg North and all Canadians, that is a very important committee. I recognize that. I want to make sure the member has an appreciation of what the government is attempting to accomplish on a wide spectrum of issues, as well as the minister responsible for public safety and the government House leader, both of whom the member has had some dialogue with.

I can assure the member that the agenda has been very full. We cannot get enough time in the chamber. That is why we are sitting until midnight next week, even until eight o'clock on Friday of next week. It is because there is such an eagerness for us to get even more done. I will make a commitment to the member opposite to see if there is something I can do to nudge it a little further ahead, because, like him, I too would like to see something happen on that front.

I suspect it is likely that there has already been some background work done in the department in how it wants to approach the review. It would not surprise me if the Minister of Public Safety has already internally looked at ways they might be able to deal with what the member is suggesting.

● (1825)

Alex Ruff: Mr. Speaker, it is obvious to me that the parliamentary secretary is the parliamentary secretary to the House leader because he replied the same as the House leader did back in January. That is, he did not answer. He talked about everything other than just answering my question about whether the Minister of Public Safety is going to keep his word. He stood in this chamber, promised me, all members in the chamber and Canadians the review would start this year. Well, this year is running out.

The parliamentary secretary tried to make a case about how busy we are. This is four years overdue. I have been here for seven years, and the member has been here a lot longer. We have not been that busy over the last four years. In fact, we spent a whole bunch of time in the last Parliament not doing anything other than the government failing to turn documents over to this chamber in order to proceed, which was in contravention to parliamentary privilege.

Again, when will we see the necessary legislative review that is over four years overdue? The minister said it would be this year. Will it be this year, yes or no?

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I have had the opportunity to have a number of discussions with the member opposite here inside the chamber. One of the things I can honestly say is that I have always seen him to be a fair man. He seems to want to be reasonable and fair.

To that end, I would suggest that we need to recognize that even though the request has been there for a number of years, we have to be fair to the Minister of Public Safety. There is also the fact that we got a new Prime Minister 18 months ago. We should cut them, maybe, a little bit of slack in regard to ensuring that the new government has the opportunity, given the heavy workload and the need for things like sitting late.

I hope that the member continues to be fair in his thinking, and I am sure that he is going to, as much as possible, push the Minister of Public Safety to make sure that we are not just doing something internally on the issue but trying to—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The hon. member for York—Durham.

THE ECONOMY

Jacob Mantle (York—Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am rising to follow up on a question that I had asked about the economy.

At the time, when I asked this question earlier in the year, Canada was in a recession, with two quarters of negative growth. Since then, we have had the budget introduced. On the growth side, actually, not much has changed. Both the OECD and the Parliamentary Budget Officer say that growth will be 0.9%, less than 1%. That is basically no growth.

Part of what weighs on that growth is debt, and there is a whole lot of debt in the budget. How much debt? It seems to depend on how we count it. If one is the Prime Minister, one counts Canada's debt at about 9.3% of the economy, 9.3% of GDP.

This is where the Liberals get this fabled lowest net debt-to-GDP ratio in the G7. We hear it over and over, like a broken record. It implies that there is a lot of room to borrow and spend, which is exactly what the budget does. It borrows and spends. The word net, that little three-letter word, is doing a whole lot of work in that budget.

For most people, net would mean that we add up all of the government's assets, everything the government owns and everything that could be sold to pay that debt, and then we subtract all the government's liabilities, everything it owes. It is pretty simple. That is actually not what the Liberals do in the budget.

They actually do two of what I am going to call magical accounting tricks. They are magical, but unfortunately they are just tricks.

First, they include the assets of the Canada pension plan and the Quebec pension plan. That is right, the pension of all Canadians. The government is saying that our pensions are an asset we can use to pay off foreign creditors.

Secondly, the Liberals leave out the actual pension and benefit payments that they have to make to public sector workers and veterans and other public pension expenses that they will need to make in the future. In other words, the government admits in the budget that the money Canadians have contributed to government pensions is available to cover government spending. It is unbelievable that our pensions, the pensions of Canadians, are available to be rated by foreign creditors.

What is worse, as I said, is that the government then proceeds to ignore the concurrent obligation to even pay those pension benefits. It is really unbelievable.

Instead, if we look at just the gross debt that the government owes, all the debt, which is what is commonly called gross debt, and if we just add up all the debt, that actual gross debt-to-GDP number, of all levels of government, federal, provincial and everything else, it is about 116% of GDP. If we look at just the federal and provincial governments, it is 75% of GDP. If we look at just the federal government, it is about 45% of GDP. No matter how we count it, it is a lot bigger than the Liberal government's misleading 9.3%.

Is it really the government's position that the Canada pension plan and the Quebec pension plan are available to be rated by foreign creditors to pay for their spending?

● (1830)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is interesting, over the last 18 months, how focused the Conservative Party has been on the issue of debt.

The member pointed it out himself, and I will not disappoint him, that when we think in terms of the lowest net debt to GDP in the entire G7, we have the lowest. The G7 includes countries such as the United States, the U.K, Australia and Italy. These are countries that people can relate to.

What the member did not make reference to is the fact that we have a AAA credit rating. In the G7, the only other country that has a AAA credit rating is Germany. I think that is something that needs to be right up front.

The second thing I would make reference to, which I talked about, is this fixation that the Conservatives have today. I think it is only today's far right that has that fixation, because when we take a look at progressive conservatives, even with Stephen Harper under the Conservatives back then, 16 of 19 budgets were debts. In fact, when Stephen Harper first became the prime minister, two of those debts were following the years of Paul Martin, when the Conservatives inherited a multi-billion-dollar surplus. They turned it into a debt, and that was at a time when the Canadian economy was doing well.

Fast-forward, and the surplus they had in the 2014-15 budget, their last one, was an artificially created surplus, because they sold off GM shares, among some other magical things, as the member made reference to magic.

Then, going further ahead, prior to their current leader and their move to the far right, they supported pandemic expenditures dealing with wages and supports to Canadians. That was like $175 billion that they supported.

On the one hand, they like to be critical for the sake of being critical, and then on the other hand, the track record of the Conservative Party, or the progressive conservative party, has been nothing but debt.

We have the fiscal capacity to invest in Canadians and build a stronger and healthier economy that works for all Canadians. We are doing that by building big projects and working in collaboration with provinces, territories and indigenous people. They are big projects that are going to deliver jobs and provide clean energy and all forms of supports, whether it is expanding ports in B.C. and Quebec or investing in nuclear energy here in Ontario, mining opportunities in Manitoba and Saskatchewan or energy development in Atlantic Canada. Those are major projects.

I am already out of time. I will continue on in my one-minute rebuttal.

● (1835)

Jacob Mantle: Mr. Speaker, that is a new argument I have never heard before: A concern about debt is now a far-right conspiracy. According to the parliamentary secretary, if one is concerned about debt, they are a far-right conspiracy theorist.

Well, I am concerned about debt, because it is real. It is not a conspiracy. We can look at it in the budget tables. It is spelled out for us in black and white. No matter how many accounting tricks the Liberals come up with or try to hoodwink Canadians with, the numbers do not lie. The numbers show that they are borrowing more money than ever before and that debt charges are the fastest-growing component of the federal expenditure.

I am critical, not for its own sake, but because I am concerned about the next generation, because every dollar borrowed is a future tax that has to be imposed.

I am going to ask my question again, because the parliamentary secretary did not answer it. Is it the government's position that government pensions are available to satisfy government debts?

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I would not want the member to put words in my mouth. I did not say it was a conspiracy theory. What I said is the far right. If I said the word “conspiracy”, I will withdraw it with respect to that particular issue.

At the end of the day, those who believe, as the member opposite believes, that we should not be borrowing money to the degree it is being borrowed, should follow the logic of what Conservative members have been saying here on the floor of the House of Commons. They have been saying to get rid of the national school food program, as an example, and to get rid of the national dental care program. They said they were in opposition to the child care program the national government rolled out. Those all have a negative impact on Canadians and ultimately do not address the far right's concerns.

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 2 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 6:38 p.m.)

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