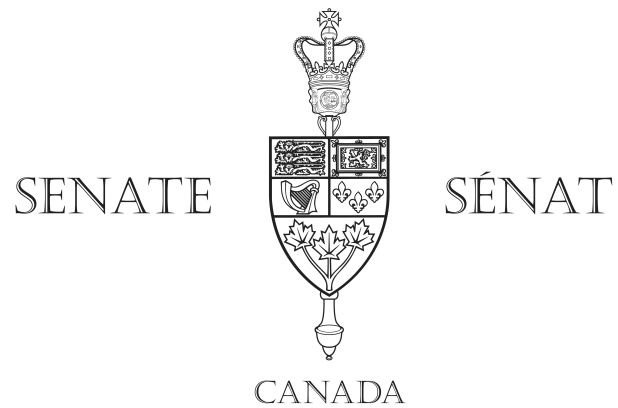




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(HANSARD)

Tuesday, September 29, 2026

The Honourable RAYMONDE GAGNÉ,
Speaker

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THE SENATE

Tuesday, September 29, 2026

The Senate met at 2 p.m., the Speaker in the chair.

Prayers.

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I received a notice from the Leader of the Canadian Senators Group, who requests, pursuant to rule 4-3(1), that the time provided for the consideration of Senators' Statements be extended today for the purpose of paying tribute to the Honourable Todd Lewis, who passed away on July 31, 2026.

I remind senators that, pursuant to our rules, each senator will be allowed only 3 minutes and they may speak only once, and the time for Tributes shall not exceed 15 minutes.

TRIBUTES

THE LATE HONOURABLE TODD LEWIS

Hon. Mary Robinson: Honourable senators, on behalf of the Canadian Senators Group, I rise today to pay tribute to our friend and colleague the late Honourable Todd Lewis.

Within this chamber, three parts of Todd's world — three families of sorts — come together today, united by our affection and respect for him and gratitude for having had him in our lives.

First is his true family, those who loved him as a husband, father, brother and cherished member of the Lewis family.

Second are his friends and colleagues in Canadian agriculture, where Todd was a trusted voice and tireless advocate for farmers, rural communities and the industry he served.

And last are his Senate colleagues. Here, Todd brought his knowledge and understanding of Saskatchewan and Canadian agriculture to our work, always focused on making a meaningful contribution. That he did so with warmth, curiosity and a wonderfully mischievous sense of humour was an added gift. There was often a twinkle behind Todd's humour. It made him not only a valued colleague but a cherished friend.

Simply put, Todd was a good man. He was dependable, thoughtful and generous with his time and counsel. When there was work to be done, he stepped forward. When someone needed support, he was there. He entered public life and service for all the right reasons. He cared deeply about Canada and building a strong and sustainable future for Canadian agriculture.

Todd never lost sight of what mattered most. Terry, Kim, Rod, John and their families meant the world to him. He adored them and was immensely proud of them. He cherished the life they shared.

I am particularly pleased that the Lewis family could join us today. Leaving the farm during harvest is far from easy.

We are grateful you are here and grateful beyond words that you shared Todd with all of us. Please know that this Senate family mourns alongside you.

Todd had a remarkable gift for making people feel seen, valued and welcome. With family and friends in Gray and at Shed Horn, in the farming community he served, in everyday encounters with people who piqued his curiosity and here, among his Senate colleagues, Todd brought people together.

As I look around this chamber today, he is still bringing people together. Under one roof are these three families that shaped his life and were, in turn, shaped by him.

Todd's early death is a loss that reaches well beyond those gathered here. Saskatchewan has lost an important voice for its future; Canada, a dedicated public servant; and Canadian agriculture, one of its most knowledgeable and steady champions.

Senator Lewis was with us for far too short a time, but he had already made his mark. He brought a practical and deeply informed perspective to our work on agriculture, energy and transportation, in particular.

There was so much more he wanted to contribute and so much more we expected he would. That is part of what makes his loss so profound. But Todd leaves us an example from which perhaps we can all learn. Todd listened before he spoke. He took in different perspectives around the table, and when he did offer his thoughts, they had weight. He had a gift for cutting through the noise, summing up what really mattered and, more often than not, pointing us toward a practical path forward. He also brought laughter and kindness to his work and his life.

Today, we remember Todd with gratitude for his life, admiration for his service and appreciation for the example he set. I think there is no better way to conclude than with a line Todd's family will know well — a little Cousin Eddie that always got a laugh in the Lewis family. I can almost hear Todd saying, "Well, that's real, real nice."

May Todd rest in peace.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

• (1410)

[Translation]

Hon. Pierre Moreau (Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, today, I wish to pay tribute to our colleague, the Honourable Todd Lewis. We are deeply saddened at his passing. His time here was far too brief, but he will be remembered as a man who was deeply devoted to his province, his community and serving others.

[English]

He joined this chamber only last year, but he brought a lifetime of experience and a deep connection to the people and land of Saskatchewan.

That connection ran deep. Senator Lewis was the fourth generation of his family to work the land near Gray, south of Regina, where his family's roots date back to 1904. He spent more than four decades working those fields, living by the rhythms and uncertainties of the prairie and building his life around the land. Farming was more than his livelihood; it shaped his sense of responsibility, community and public service.

Saskatchewan writer Sinclair Ross once wrote of prairie farmsteads as a "... testimony of human hardihood and endurance." The phrase seems especially fitting as we remember Senator Lewis. He knew what it meant to work the land and live with uncertainty — and to do both with patience, perseverance and responsibility.

He brought those same qualities to public life. For more than 20 years, Senator Lewis served on the council of the Rural Municipality of Lajord, where his fellow councillors later appointed him deputy reeve. He was also a school board trustee and a volunteer firefighter.

Beyond his community, he became a leading voice for Saskatchewan agriculture, serving as president of the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan and later as first vice-president of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture.

[Translation]

What stands out about his life is not just how long he served others but how consistently he did so. Well before he arrived in Ottawa, Senator Lewis was already devoting his time and energy to helping others in his municipality, his community and the farming community.

He arrived in the Senate with a wealth of first-hand experience. For him, farming was not just an abstract concept or an economic sector. It was a way of life for families and entire communities, one that requires a lot of patience, courage and perseverance.

[English]

He never lost that practical understanding of rural life.

Senator Lewis understood what it meant to depend on the weather and the soil, on transport and research, on markets and on decisions made far from the farm gate. Even in his brief time here, he continued to speak for those communities and for the importance of Canadian agriculture and agricultural research.

There is a particular sadness in losing a colleague just as we were beginning to see the full measure of what he could bring to this institution. But while Senator Lewis' time here was brief, his life of service was not. It was measured in decades — in a lifetime of work on the land, meetings attended, neighbours helped, communities served and causes patiently advanced.

To his wife, Terry, to his family, his friends, his colleagues and the rural and farming communities that knew him so well, I offer my deepest condolences. May they take comfort in knowing that Senator Lewis gave a great deal of himself to the people and places he served and that his life left a mark far beyond the short time he spent amongst us.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

Hon. Leo Housakos (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I rise today on behalf of the Conservative caucus to pay tribute to our friend and colleague Senator Todd Lewis, whose passing is felt by senators on every side of this chamber.

Todd joined us only in February of last year, and it is hard to accept that his time with us was so brief, but in that short time, we came to understand what brought him here, what had always motivated his public service and, most importantly, the kind of man he was.

First and foremost, he was a proud Saskatchewanian, a fourth-generation farmer who worked his land for more than 40 years and someone who understood the hard-working men and women who get up every morning to work the land and keep their communities going. That is why he spent so much of his life speaking for them.

Todd led the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan. He served as vice-president of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture. He spent more than 20 years on his municipal council. He served on his school board. He volunteered at the fire hall. That was Todd. He believed in getting involved, and he felt a deep sense of responsibility to his community.

When he arrived to the Senate, he came here ready to represent Saskatchewan, and he came here every day, every week, genuinely happy to stand up for the farmers and to serve rural communities.

But there is one thing about Todd that I think captures him better than the list of accomplishments — and God knows there were many — more than anything. A little while ago, someone showed me a clip of one of my interventions in the Senate asking a question of Senator Moreau, and the person asked me, "Who is the man who sits behind you and is always smiling, on your left?" And, sure enough, after I looked at the clip, I realized he was talking about Senator Lewis.

And that really was Senator Lewis. He was upbeat, he was positive, and he was genuinely happy to be here. He was happy to be doing the work. He understood that the work that we did in this place mattered, and he was grateful for the opportunity to contribute. Even in the middle of long sittings, even during the difficult debates, there he was, always with a smile. I think that's what many of us will remember most: the warm personality that he brought here.

I want to point out another thing that really identifies the character of Senator Lewis. Most senators, when they're appointed here — we Conservatives know they're Liberals calling themselves independents. Some senators get appointed here, and Liberals and Conservatives can't really identify what they are. In the case of Senator Lewis, I can say that when he was summoned to this place, Conservatives were jumping up and down, telling me, "Senator Lewis is a great Conservative. He's a great voice for Saskatchewan. You'll see." And all my Liberal friends were saying, "What are you talking about? He's a great Liberal and a great voice of Saskatchewan."

So I very quickly came to the conclusion, after all that and meeting him, that all sides loved Senator Lewis, despite their political ties.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

Senator Housakos: Canadian farmers have lost a strong voice. Saskatchewan has lost a proud son. This chamber has lost a wonderful colleague, and those of us in this chamber have lost a dear colleague and a dear friend.

To Todd's family and friends, to his colleagues in the Canadian Senators Group and to everyone back home in Saskatchewan who knew and loved him, please accept our deepest condolences. Todd's time here was far, far too short, but we're lucky to have had him here, and we were very lucky to have known him. Thank you. May he rest in peace.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

Hon. Lucie Moncion: Honourable senators, I am speaking today on behalf of the Independent Senators Group to pay tribute to our late colleague the Honourable Todd Lewis.

Colleagues, not all of us had the privilege of knowing him as well as some of you did. But as we learn more about his life, we come to realize just how central his commitment to the common good was. There is a difference between being part of a community and choosing to devote yourself to making it stronger. Todd Lewis made that choice time and again.

For more than 40 years, he farmed his family's land near Gray, Saskatchewan, as a fourth-generation farmer, but his engagement in his community extended far beyond that. He served on the local school board. He devoted more than 20 years to the council of the Rural Municipality of Lajord. He was a volunteer firefighter. He chaired the board of his community rink.

• (1420)

And when he believed that farmers needed a stronger voice, he stepped forward in that respect as well. He devoted many years to the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan, including serving as its president, before continuing his advocacy at the national level with the Canadian Federation of Agriculture.

Ultimately, his desire to serve brought him here, to the Senate of Canada. It is apparent from his career that his commitment was driven by a conviction that each of us bears a responsibility toward the communities to which we belong.

I extend my deepest condolences to his family, his loved ones, his friends and all the communities he served throughout his life.

As we pay tribute to our colleague today, the legacy of the Honourable Todd Lewis reminds us that communities are strengthened by those who step forward, give of themselves and seek to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those around them.

May you rest in peace, dear Senator Lewis. Thank you.

Hon. Duncan Wilson: Honourable senators, I rise with a heavy heart on behalf of the Progressive Senate Group to remember our friend and colleague the Honourable Senator Todd Lewis.

During his funeral service, we heard about the farming perspective that provided a compass for how Todd approached life. He would seed in the spring and combine in the fall. As he combined, he would think of what he would need to seed in the field the next spring. In this way, he was conditioned to always think of what was needed next.

I was able to see this perspective while working with him on the steering committee of the Transport and Communications Committee. Todd was instrumental in getting our supply chain labour report across the finish line in record time. He advocated for the importance of what we were studying and what it meant for the agricultural world that would benefit from the committee's work. It was in this context that I encountered what stands out to me as his trademark line, "It's just common sense."

While Todd and I came to this place with very different backgrounds, we quickly became allies and, like with many of you, friends.

While we stood shoulder to shoulder on that committee, I had the distinct pleasure of seeing his common-sense approach on the Committee on Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources, when he gave parts of Bill S-4 — which I was sponsoring for the government — a very rough ride. Assurances from officials did not satisfy him as he fought for what he believed was right and in the best interests of Saskatchewan.

My favourite memory is from when the Transport Committee studied the high-speed rail project. Take a farmer from Saskatchewan and a port guy from British Columbia and ask them for their thoughts on the importance of a faster passenger train service between Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal; you can imagine our reaction. We locked eyes across the room and shared a good laugh.

Fittingly, Todd's maiden speech was on the National Agricultural Soil Health Strategy. True to form, his first words in this chamber were, "Can you imagine a farmer talking about dirt?" He then immediately launched into a technical quote from the *Senate Procedure in Practice* manual. This was emblematic of Senator Lewis, a farmer at heart but also a fierce intellect who could attack complex issues with confidence and ease.

While Todd's 538 days here were far too few and the void he left behind is much too big, he made an outsized impact on Saskatchewan and on Canada. His brother Rod said it best, "Todd opened up their farming world to the rest of the world." We are all the better for it.

To his wife, Terry, and his daughter, Kim; to our CSG colleagues, his chosen Senate family; and to all who cared for Todd, the Progressive Senate Group sends our love, and we share your grief in mourning a friend and leader gone far too soon. Rest in peace, our dear friend.

Hon. Flordeliz (Gigi) Osler: Honourable senators, I rise today to pay tribute to our colleague the Honourable Todd Lewis.

After his unexpected passing, many of you reached out to share condolences, and on behalf of your friends in CSG, I say thank you.

We know many wanted but were unable to travel to Regina for Todd's funeral, given the suddenness of the circumstances, so let me share with you what it was like.

Those of us who were able to attend saw Todd's community, neighbours, and family celebrate him with much love. The service showed a side of Todd that many did not see given his too-brief time in the Senate.

So, to honour him and his family, I want to read to you from the funeral program:

Todd will be remembered for his kindness. He made people feel welcome and cared for in all aspects of his life. His loved ones will remember his charisma, warmth, generosity, infectious laugh, and his appreciation of a good joke. Todd was a community man – he loved his hometown and spent countless hours volunteering in Gray.

Todd's first love was farming, and he was so proud of the family farm he built with his dad, brother, and nephew. Round Lake was another of his favourite places where he spent every summer with his family and many friends. He was an avid Montreal Canadiens and Roughrider fan and dedicated many of his younger years both playing and coaching football. He loved to travel and see new places. In more recent years, Todd became a leading voice for agriculture, serving with the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan and the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, before being appointed to the Senate of Canada. Above all, Todd loved his family, and his happy place was anywhere he could be with them.

Todd was predeceased by his father, Donald Lewis; his mothers, Anne Lewis and Ione Barber; and brother Craig Stokes.

Todd is survived by his wife of 38 years, Terry; his daughter, Kim (Spencer); brothers Rod (Lucy) and John (Jen); nephew Brendan; and nieces Jaclynn (Kris) and Avery; as well as an abundance of extended family of aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, and nephews.

Finally, to the Lewis family, on behalf of his Senate family, thank you for sharing Todd with us.

Hon. Joan Kingston: Honourable colleagues and Senator Lewis's family, I wish that I had known Senator Todd Lewis much longer. I feel a sense of loss, as we all do, that someone has been taken from us who — despite his short time with us — demonstrated all the qualities of an exemplary parliamentarian.

I think that we, as senators, all recently received a copy from a Canadian author of a little book called *Be a Good One*, which includes advice drawn from famous quotes throughout the ages on how to be an impactful public representative. This book's lessons could have been written by Senator Lewis.

Senator Lewis was always involved in public life, as an elected municipal representative and as an advocate for his industry, for his beloved province of Saskatchewan and for Canada. In short, long before being appointed to the Senate, Todd found a way to support the political process.

Senator Lewis portrayed a sincere belief in our capacity as parliamentarians to come together, work together and find a way forward. I was impressed after the very first meeting of the Committee on Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources that Todd attended; what an asset he was to our deliberations.

Of course, it should have come as no surprise; according to reports from his fellow citizens in Saskatchewan, throughout his career, he earned a reputation as a thoughtful, practical voice who could bring together farmers, industry groups and governments to address issues affecting agriculture. He brought that same strong, pragmatic voice to broader issues in the Senate Chamber and committees.

Senator Lewis was a grounded individual. He demonstrated humility and a genuine love for the work that he did and the people that he served. He was an excellent listener.

• (1430)

Senator Lewis's character displayed all of the very best traits: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and good

citizenship. One of his lifelong friends shared in a local media report:

... he spent his life looking for the greater good. It wasn't just about Todd, it was about the greater good for our community, our [rural municipality], Saskatchewan and then Canada.

Senator Lewis was always growing and eager to apply his wisdom and skills gained in his home province on issues from coast to coast to coast. I will always be grateful that he was part of the Energy and Environment Committee's study group examining the oil and gas industry in Newfoundland and Labrador. It was a pleasure to get to know him in a setting outside of the Senate and to watch him engage with Canadians on their own turf.

As Maya Angelou famously said:

... people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.

This sentiment was echoed by another of Senator Lewis's admirers from Saskatchewan. He said:

One of the things that he taught me, and we should all take a lesson from, is to treat people with kindness. ... He really fought for Saskatchewan producers and Canadian agricultural producers. Most of all, he was just a kind, gentle person. He looked out for everyone and he looked out for everyone's best interests before his own.

Thank you, Todd. You made this world a better place.

Hon. Tracy Muggli: Honourable senators, I stand today to do something I wish I had taken more time and initiative to do in person, which is to acknowledge the greatness of the Honourable Todd Lewis.

As is the case with many of us, we were just becoming familiarized with the incredible depths of his knowledge, his true Saskatchewanian sense of humour — that's how you say it — and the remarkable size of his heart.

To be honest, Senator Lewis reminded me of my dad some 30 or 40 years ago as I grew up on the farm. He carried the same quiet presence that held such deep respect for his profession, respect for the power of the land and what it could do when cared for properly and such deep respect for his community.

Clearly, Todd knew — as we small-town Saskatchewan people do — that everyone must do their part in order for small communities to thrive, never mind exist. He just made me feel like I could be my Saskatchewan farm kid self, which is why I think so many of our conversations were really just joking around. In fact, I was reminded yesterday during the swearing-in of new senators that I had tried to convince him that there were numerous protocols that he had not been told about, but he didn't flinch.

I came to realize early in his appointment the depth of his knowledge, and as a Saskatchewan Agriculture and Forestry Committee representative, I knew I would come to rely on him for his Saskatchewan-based knowledge and expertise. So many times, I tapped him on the shoulder, accosted him in the hallway and dominated his time while enjoying an after-session pint at D'Arcy McGee's, which, by the way, served as the primary location for the efforts of Senator Klyne, myself and other members of the Progressive Senate Group, or PSG, in trying to convert him to join the PSG.

Of course, we made outlandish promises that we knew could not even be made, all in fun, but we always knew he was exactly where he needed to be. It was always in good humour, sometimes just to get a rise out of him, and because we truly enjoyed being with him.

Honestly, my motivation was simply to have more access to his knowledge and the non-work-related conversation. I think, because I am a Saskatchewan farm kid, in connecting with him, I could relive my farm kid childhood and bring my knowledge up to date.

A real regret: I truly wish I would have made a trip to his farm so he could have shown me proof of the depth of his topsoil. That still remains ambiguous, but I remain grateful that I had the chance to experience the depth of his kindness.

May his legacy be ours to carry as we pursue good agricultural policy, and may he look down upon us with guidance and pride. May he rest in peace. May his wife, Terry; daughter, Kim; brothers, Rod and John; and many extended family and friends find peace in memories made. Thank you.

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

THE LATE HONOURABLE TODD LEWIS

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONCLUDED

Leave having been given to proceed to Inquiries, Order No. 19:

Hon. Robert Black rose pursuant to notice of September 28, 2026:

That he will call the attention of the Senate to the life of the Honourable Todd Lewis.

He said: Honourable senators, I rise today to pay tribute to a kind and gentle man, a colleague, a mentor, a role model, a friend, someone who joined us not long ago and who left us far too soon.

Three things stick out in my mind. Senator Lewis rose for his inaugural speech on Tuesday, October 28, 2025, to support my Bill S-230. As you have already heard, he had us in stitches within seconds of starting his speech, and part of it focused on Saskatchewan soils, in general, and his farm, specifically. He noted the health of prairie soils and, in particular, his own farm's

healthy soils. With that twinkle in his eye and a snicker, he told us that he had 25 feet of topsoil on much of his farm, something truly unheard of in much of the rest of this country.

When Senator Robinson phoned me on Saturday morning, August 1, I was at a tree farm near Wroxeter, Ontario. The nursery owner, Emanuel Martin, was pointing out the particulars of a new variety of tree he had for sale. It was called the Green Giant Cedar. After a good cry with Mary and collecting myself, Emanuel gave me one of those cedars, and he asked me to plant it, tend to it and look after it. Colleagues, I planted this Green Giant Cedar in a quiet grove on a special trail on our property in memory of another giant in my eyes, Senator Todd Lewis.

Finally, colleagues, I've shared with Todd's family something that I found on, of all places, a wine bottle in a boutique winery in New York State many years ago. It was written by young Hannah Senesh, 1921-1944, a poet and playwright who spent her last years in the Jewish resistance under the British Armed Forces in World War II. Her words have, in the past, comforted me on many occasions:

There are stars up above, so far away we only see their light long, long after the star itself is gone. And so it is with the people that we loved — their memories keep shining ever brightly though their time with us is done. But the stars that light up the darkest night, these are the lights that guide us. As we live our days, these are the ways to remember.

I last saw Senator Lewis on Thursday, July 16, when we — his wife, Terry; my wife, Julie; Senator Robinson and others — had lunch on the Halifax Harbour front. At our goodbyes, he gave me a bear hug, saying, "Take care, Rob. Have a good summer." Fifteen days later, he was gone.

I will miss Senator Lewis, a gentle giant like that cedar tree, and I will remember him as a mentor and one of those stars that will guide me going forward. To his wife, Terry; his daughter, Kim; his brothers, Rod and John, and their families; and his friends: May you find peace and comfort in the company of family, friends and very special memories into the future. Rest in peace, Todd.

Hon. Marty Klyne: Honourable senators, friends and members of Senator Lewis's family, Senator Lewis was with us in this chamber for a short time, but he left a lasting impression on all of us who had the privilege of knowing him.

One of the memories that will stay with me is a visit to his farm near Gray, Saskatchewan, with my staff last July. That day offered a glimpse of the qualities that made Senator Lewis such a remarkable person and colleague.

We began our visit at the rink in Gray, which also serves as the town museum. It was filled with hockey memorabilia, decades of local history and all the signs of a community that looks after its own and takes pride in where it comes from. It struck me that there could hardly have been a more fitting place to meet Senator Lewis. He was a man with deep roots in his family, his community, Saskatchewan and the land he had farmed for more than 40 years.

That connection to community was reflected in how he lived. He served more than 20 years on his municipal council, sat on his local school board, volunteered as a firefighter and devoted countless hours to his community rink and hall. He spent a lifetime showing up for the people and places he called home.

• (1440)

At his family farm, Senator Lewis showed us his land and equipment. It quickly became clear that he knew his way around even the most sophisticated, high-tech machinery, yet he saw no contradiction between innovation and tradition. For him, new technology was another way of caring for the land, protecting its future and carrying forward a craft passed down through generations.

As a fourth-generation farmer, he was a strong advocate for Saskatchewan agriculture, serving as President of the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan, or APAS, and, later, as First Vice-President of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture.

He brought that practical perspective to the Senate.

I remember more than his accomplishments, though. I remember how warmly he spoke about his family and land. I remember his genuine nature, his generosity and, of course, his loyalty to the Roughriders. He had played for the Rams at the University of Regina, too, and seemed to carry that same pride and connection to Saskatchewan throughout every chapter of his life.

Crystal and Toby Frisk, who had a 40-year friendship with the Honourable Todd Lewis, described him as a humble man from a small town who was a leader, a gentleman and a pillar of his community. Crystal, who met Senator Lewis when they were much younger, said his "big smile and easy laugh made him a friend the moment you met him." I can't disagree.

I will also remember how warmly he spoke about his staff. It was a small but telling reflection of his leadership. He understood that good work is never done alone. Senator Lewis's time in the Senate was far too short, but he gave us a glimpse of knowledge, practical wisdom and a commitment to Saskatchewan and rural Canada that he left with us to carry forward.

Before I sign off, I want to let senators know about this 25-foot topsoil. That came out of the big dig from the Wascana Lake in front of the legislature.

To his family, we're deeply grateful that he shared himself with us, however briefly. He is still in our hearts; we will never lose him.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Pamela Wallin: Honourable senators, you know what they say about a farmer: He has to be an optimist, or he wouldn't still be one. It's a way of life — no farmers, no food. We know all the clichés, but this one really captured Todd: You reap what you sow. It's a golden rule, and it defined Todd. He always sowed with heart in hand, and he reaped the respect of all who knew him.

Todd was indeed an optimist. He believed in hard work, taking time to change minds and giving anyone and everyone the benefit of the doubt because that was the right thing to do. Todd believed that no act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted if you're trying to help others understand your world and why that world matters to them.

He did that through APAS, and he did it here in the Senate. He even invited a former prime minister to come to his farm to see what a farm looked like and the importance of agriculture to Ottawa's bottom line.

When Todd was asked to serve his country in this chamber, it was never about "should he" or "could he," whether he deserved the honour or he could have an impact; no, it was about how to do it all: keep the farm running, be the public advocate he already was, make the trips, answer the calls and have the time to be a husband and a father, because those were job number one.

Todd was a guy you just immediately loved. You could stand in a line at the airport, have a nice dinner or just a quick catch-up between votes. He was comfortable, so he made you feel comfortable. His eyes were kind, and his smile was warm. He was a guy with a big heart. However, only a fool would mistake that teddy-bear persona for a softie, although he was that. He was smart as a whip and tough as nails. In Saskatchewan, a farm boy comes from hardy stock.

We often shared jokes about coming from a place where you can watch your dog run away from home for two weeks, and we smiled when someone who had once driven through on their way to Winnipeg or Calgary disparaged the flatness or the endless fields, claiming there was nothing to see. Obviously, they just weren't looking.

As beautiful as Saskatchewan is, it can also be harsh. Character is defined by unforgiving circumstances. Even the simplest plan can be hijacked by a snowstorm in April or hail in August. The elements test you, and no one knows that better than a farmer.

Todd was a son of the land, and he was a steward of it. The highest tribute that can be paid is this: Everybody who knew him called him a friend, because he was.

Todd, you are and will be missed beyond measure. Our hearts are with you, Terry, Kim and the entire family. We will try and have your back, because we know he has ours.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Colin Deacon: Honourable senators and Todd's family, I grew up on a farm in southern Ontario. As a teenager, I worked beside some of the most insightful and respectful men I've ever known. They often spoke of their youth and farming in the 1920s

and 1930s. One gentle old-timer talked about his start in Saskatchewan, working to finally acquire a single horse and a one-furrow plow. By the late 1920s, he said that opportunity was everywhere.

It didn't last, however. Saskatchewan farm incomes plummeted by 97% between 1928 and 1933. He left and never returned.

It seems that the lessons of the Great Depression were imprinted onto the genetic code of those who stayed — those who fought to survive and rebuild. Over the past 12 years, my brother Rich had the honour of getting to know the fine people of Gray, Saskatchewan, and the Lewis family, in particular. I'm going to quote my brother:

On rare occasion, it will happen, that you arrive in a place, however small, and are struck by its richness of community . . . its inner beauty.

Gray, Saskatchewan, with fewer than a hundred residents, is such a place . . . floating on an ocean of wheat and canola.

Gray is where Todd Lewis grew up, stayed and became a local leader. Gray shaped his good nature, his determination to solve problems and his reflex to always pitch in and help.

Todd brought those qualities to many provincial roles and, ultimately, to national ones, including here in the Senate, but, as we've all said, for far, far too short a time.

I'll quote my brother Rich again:

Insight into Todd's character can be found at the Gray Rink, with its November thru March natural ice pad, its Friday night community dinners that Todd, his family and neighbours would organize, cook and serve.

Everyone's needs were considered, from those in wheelchairs to a well appointed colouring and play area for kids.

The ceiling of that main room evokes a prairie Sistine Chapel. On it is a map of the local land grid with the original pioneer family names stencilled in each quarter, and the subsequent owners below.

It's a salute to Gray's sturdy, resolute fore-bearers.

After 100 or more prairie winters, and so many quarter sections still with the same families, it's also an indication that . . . those genes . . . and that will . . . persevere today.

Colleagues, it's the unrelenting kindness, the reflex to embrace the needs of every community member, the enduring respect for the sacrifices of those who came before and the commitment to helping one another, especially through the toughest of times — those values were the essence of the Honourable Senator Todd Lewis. He is and will continue to be deeply missed.

Thank you, colleagues.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Pat Duncan: Honourable senators and Senator Lewis's family, at my first encounter with Senator Todd Lewis, in welcoming him to the Senate of Canada and wishing to establish my Saskatchewan credentials, I noted my son, Craig Berube — not the former Leafs coach; my son is still employed — attended Athol Murray College of Notre Dame in Wilcox, Saskatchewan, and, following high school, played Junior A hockey for the Hounds.

• (1450)

Todd's immediate smile was as broad and wide open as the Saskatchewan sky. He said, "You have driven right by my farm."

Thereafter, we would often be walking into the Senate of Canada Building together, and our conversations were similar — warm, friendly and a report on how the farms in Saskatchewan were faring. Sometimes there was a little hockey or football talk for fun.

Senator Lewis represented Saskatchewan. He was every Saskatchewanian. I have no doubt he had a friend, a relative or a close tie in every province and territory in Canada. There were no farming-related questions he would not answer with patience and grace, and there was genuine care and kindness for the person who was asking. Even the shortest conversations would include a genuine interest in how things were with everyone involved.

The loss of Senator Lewis is a loss to Saskatchewan, to our country and, most especially, to his family. I offer you my heartfelt condolences. My thoughts will be with you during this difficult journey of grief and loss. Please know that I am truly grateful for the short time I had to know him, and thank you for sharing him with the Senate of Canada. Thank you.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

(Debate concluded.)

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Theresa Lewis, wife of the late Honourable Todd Lewis, and their daughter, Kimberly. They are accompanied by other family members, friends and colleagues of the late Honourable Todd Lewis.

On behalf of all senators, I express my sincere condolences and share my deepest sympathies with you during this difficult time.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

THE LATE HONOURABLE TODD LEWIS

SILENT TRIBUTE

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I would ask that you all rise and join me in a minute of silence.

(Honourable senators then stood in silent tribute.)

THE SENATE

MOTION TO RESOLVE INTO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE TO CONSIDER SUBJECT MATTER OF BILL C-38 ADOPTED

Leave having been given to proceed to Government Business, Motions, Order Nos. 86 and 87:

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate), pursuant to notice of September 28, 2026, moved:

That, notwithstanding any provision of the Rules, previous order or usual practice:

1. at 1:45 p.m. on Thursday, October 1, 2026, the Senate resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to examine the subject matter of Bill C-38, An Act to amend the Excise Tax Act (extension of the federal fuel excise tax relief);
2. the Committee of the Whole receive the Honourable François-Philippe Champagne, P.C., M.P., Minister of Finance and National Revenue, accompanied by at most two officials;
3. the committee rise no later than 65 minutes after it begins;
4. the minister's introductory remarks be limited to a maximum of five minutes;
5. if, during the Committee of the Whole, a senator does not use the entire period of 10 minutes for debate provided under rule 12-31(3)(d), including the responses of the witnesses, that senator may yield the balance of time to another senator; and
6. for greater certainty, all witnesses appear in person.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION TO ADJOURN UNTIL THURSDAY,
OCTOBER 1, 2026, ADOPTED

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate), pursuant to notice of September 28, 2026, moved:

That, pursuant to the order adopted by the Senate on June 4, 2025, when the Senate adjourns today, it do stand adjourned until Thursday, October 1, 2026, at 1:30 p.m.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 5-13(2), I move:

That the Senate do now adjourn.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is leave granted, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(At 2:56 p.m., the Senate was continued until Thursday, October 1, 2026, at 1:30 p.m.)

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