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Wednesday, June 15, 2022

Speaker: The Honourable Anthony Rota



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, June 15, 2022

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayer

• (1400)

[*English*]

The Speaker: The hon. member for South Okanagan—West Kootenay will now lead us in the singing of the national anthem.

[*Members sang the national anthem*]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS IN OTTAWA

Mr. Chandra Arya (Nepean, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wish to recognize and thank several City of Ottawa officials who are not seeking re-election in the coming fall election.

Our mayor, His Worship Jim Watson, with whom I worked on the board of Invest Ottawa, has promoted affordable housing, tourism and the knowledge-based sector in Ottawa. Councillor Jan Harder has contributed tremendously to the development of present-day Barrhaven. Councillor Keith Egli, as the chair of the Ottawa Board of Health, has played a key role during the pandemic. Councillor Scott Moffatt, with his family's 200-year history in his ward, has always been an influential voice for our rural population.

I want to thank them all for their co-operative relationship with me during the last seven years. On behalf of the residents of Nepean and Ottawa, I wish them all the very best in their future endeavours.

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RETIREMENT CONGRATULATIONS

Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a great honour to rise in the House today to pay tribute to three retiring firefighters from my riding. Chief Paul Lijdsman from the Oyen Fire Department, Chief Glen Durand from the Special Areas Board and Captain Randy Haugen from the city of Camrose have dedicated much of their lives to keeping the residents of Battle River—Crowfoot safe.

These rural Alberta professionals have served east central Alberta for decades. Their actions include running into burning buildings, responding to MVAs during inclement weather, caring for the sick and injured when needed and helping during times of disaster. These community leaders were there day and night when duty called.

The residents of Battle River—Crowfoot owe Chief Lijdsman, Chief Durand and Captain Haugen a huge debt of gratitude. The courage they have displayed daily serves as an inspiration to the young and old alike.

From the House of Commons, I share my thanks for these gentlemen's tireless dedication to our communities. May God bless them as they enter a much-deserved retirement.

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COMMUNITY LEADER IN YORK CENTRE

Ms. Ya'ara Saks (York Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, June is Italian Heritage Month. I would like to honour a leader in our Italian community in York Centre, Amneris Cristofoli. This year, she celebrated her 80th birthday, but to see her we would not know it.

Amneris is a dedicated and energetic pillar in our community who runs the Grandravine Women's Fitness Club. With over 75 members, they get together and participate in health and fitness activities and social events led by Amneris. She has been teaching this group for over 35 years, with participants aged from 60 to 90 years old and over.

The fitness club is more than just an exercise class; it is a family. These ladies share stories of love, marriage and christenings, and are there for each other through the joyful and challenging times. COVID was difficult for this group, but Amneris made sure to call each lady every week to check in and make sure they were okay. I am pleased that they are back and as strong as ever, gathering for fitness and sharing their amazing cooking.

I thank Amneris for all that she does for our community.

[*Member spoke in Italian and provided the following translation:*]

I wish you well, full of health, love and success.

Statements by Members

● (1405)

[*Translation*]

KABYLE PEOPLE

Mr. Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw the attention of the House to the fact that Ferhat Mehenni, a pioneer in the decolonization of the Kabyle people, is visiting Ottawa. He used song as a peaceful means to gain recognition for the Kabyle language, identity and culture. He is a founding member of Algeria's human rights advocacy group and president of the provisional Kabyle government, which has made international claims to the right to self-determination for its people.

He has always advocated a non-violent approach, as has Kamira Nait Sid, co-president of the World Amazigh Congress, whom I have had the honour of meeting here in Parliament, but who is currently a prisoner of conscience in Algeria, as are 500 other people, mainly Kabyles.

That is why Rachid Bandou has launched a petition to ask the Canadian government to condemn the Algerian government's detention of hundreds of prisoners of conscience.

On behalf of the Bloc Québécois, I would like to express my solidarity with the Kabyle people in their struggle for freedom.

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**WEST VANCOUVER—SUNSHINE COAST—SEA TO SKY
COUNTRY GRADUATES**

Mr. Patrick Weiler (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate graduates in West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country and across Canada.

As they mark this important milestone with their classmates, friends and families, I hope they will be proud of their achievements and their hard work. High school is a very special time during which people can grow and develop, and we hope that they will carry with them the knowledge, skills and experiences that will help them chart their course into adulthood.

Whether they opt to pursue their studies or dive directly into the job market, this is the perfect time for them to find their passions and explore their path to happiness and success.

Congratulations to the graduating class of 2022. As they embark on the next chapter of their lives, I wish them and their classmates tremendous success in their future undertakings.

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[*English*]

COMMUNITY TRAILS

Mr. Blake Richards (Banff—Airdrie, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for years, alongside constituents in my riding, I have been working to build the trail that runs all the way from Calgary to Banff and Lake Louise, and we have made great progress. Despite the Liberals cancelling construction of the section from Banff to Lake Louise, we have still managed to get some large sections built, including the Glenbow Ranch Trail between Calgary and Cochrane and the Legacy Trail connecting Canmore and Banff.

During the month of June, Cochrane has a bike-a-thon fundraiser to help build another stretch of this trail, completing the full connection from Calgary to Cochrane. The mayor of Cochrane, Jeff Genung, and I are even in a friendly competition to see who can raise more money. I encourage everyone in our communities to join us in supporting this important project, whether they collect sponsorships and get out for a ride or make a pledge to the Cochrane to Calgary trail.

I want to thank all involved, including community leaders Dan Kroffat, Alex Baum, the rotary club, the Kiwanis club, Bike Cochrane, Sport for Life and Big Hill Cycle. Get out, be active and support the trail.

* * *

NATIONAL INDIGENOUS HISTORY MONTH

Ms. Pam Damoff (Oakville North—Burlington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, June is National Indigenous History Month. Each year, my team and I select a book written by an indigenous author to read together throughout the month of June to further broaden our understanding of indigenous issues, cultures and history and as a form of recognition, celebration and reconciliation.

This year, we have selected *Firekeeper's Daughter* by Angeline Boulley, available at the Oakville and Burlington public libraries and A Different Drummer Books in Burlington. I encourage everyone in my riding to join us in reading and participating in a conversation with Grand Chief Sky-Deer of the Mohawk Council of Kahnawake to discuss the Jay Treaty.

Incorporating indigenous perspectives, history and culture into all spaces as we move forward in the spirit of truth and reconciliation, while acknowledging the harms of Canada's past and present, is imperative to ensuring a future for our country that is equitable for everyone. We must listen, learn, unpack and be guided by the voices of indigenous people.

* * *

● (1410)

CANADIAN MUSIC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

Mr. Michael Coteau (Don Valley East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to recognize a great Canadian who was just inducted into the Canadian Music Hall of Fame. The platinum record-selling artist Deborah Cox is the first Black Canadian woman and the first from my neighbourhood, Flemingdon Park, to be honoured with this award.

Although Deborah is recognized and embraced today, back when she first started, she was passed over by almost every major music label in this country. It was not until she made her way into the United States that her career took flight and she became an international star. Known for her many number-one billboard hits, the rhythm and blues legend not only has left a mark on the music industry, but has excelled as an actor on the stage. Her 2004 Broadway debut was very well received and led to various roles throughout her career.

Deborah Cox's worldwide success makes us proud as Canadians, but I am especially proud because she is from the neighbourhood where I grew up, Flemingdon Park in Toronto. It is an honour to speak in the House today to let everyone know about the success of this great Canadian.

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ROYAL CANADIAN SEA CADET CORPS 344

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, "Expect No Warning" is the motto of the HMCS *Victoria*, the namesake for the Royal Canadian Sea Cadet Corps 344. On June 16, the cadet corps will be meeting for the first time since the pandemic to recognize with medals three deserving cadets: Chief Petty Officer Jayden Traimany, Chief Petty Officer Pablo Silva and Petty Officer Miguel Sharif.

For over 20 years, this cadet corps has been making an impact and will once again be on military inspection and parade ceremony. I want to recognize cadet instructors leading these fine young cadets, including Navy Lieutenant Geoff Kneller, Navy Lieutenant Buchanan, Sub-Lieutenant Jolliffe, Acting Sub-Lieutenant Lajtaka and their instructor Glen Ellaschuk. The cadet program offers youth an opportunity to gain leadership skills and build confidence in their abilities and teaches them the value of discipline. A career in the navy is a worthy life's pursuit.

I give a big congratulations to the Royal Canadian Sea Cadets Corps 344, to the deserving medal recipients and to the families that make this program possible. While they are cadets today, there are oceans of opportunity to trade up the uniform for the navy's motto "Ready, Aye Ready".

* * *

FLOODING IN THUNDER BAY—RAINY RIVER

Mr. Marcus Powlowski (Thunder Bay—Rainy River, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I recently visited the area around Fort Frances, which is experiencing flooding. In fact, Rainy Lake water levels are currently half a metre higher than they were during the 2014 flood. There are many houses and cottages on Rainy Lake or adjacent waterways, like the Seine River. Many people have spent the last month either sandbagging or pumping in order to try to save their homes, but unfortunately not all have been successful.

I am very proud to represent these people. They really represent the best of Canadians. They have worked hard, and by "work" I do not mean the kind of thing we do here in Parliament.

Neighbour helped neighbour, and despite all the hardship, many people retained their sense of humour and expressed the fact that they were more concerned about others than they were about themselves. In fact, one guy, Bob Feshuck, while standing ankle deep in water in his living room, told me that whenever he starts feeling sorry for himself, he turns on the television to see what is happening in Ukraine. Now there is a real Canadian.

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BIRTHDAY CONGRATULATIONS

Ms. Lianne Rood (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my grandmother, Helen Jamrozinski, was born 90 years

Statements by Members

ago today in eastern Europe. She is a survivor, escaping one country after another while fleeing the dictatorships and the brutalities of World War II. Eventually, she made her way, alone, at the age of 19, across the ocean to call Canada her new home. During her lifetime in Canada, she has worked hard building a successful business and raising her family.

She never expected handouts and has taught her family to work long and hard to accomplish their dreams. She left a legacy for us by teaching us to care about what we do and to contribute what we can by helping others. She has been an inspiration for me and for all her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She holds a very special place in my heart. I am thankful for all her wisdom and all she has taught me. She encouraged me to follow my dreams.

I wish a happy 90th birthday to my *babcia*. She made it, and I love her.

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FINANCIAL REGULATORS IN CANADA

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the little guy is losing his shirt. Where are the regulators? House prices doubled in six years, and now they are crashing. Why did regulators not slow the out-of-control growth in mortgage credit? Why did they not stop banks from mortgaging 95% of the value of an asset that had doubled or tripled?

Last year, the New York state attorney general banned Bitfinex and Tether from New York's financial markets and fined them. She said they were each a lie and a fraud, but it took regulators here six months to ban Tether, and Bitfinex has never been banned. Now stable coins and crypto are collapsing.

Why did regulators not ban these frauds and Ponzi schemes? Where are OSFI, CMHC, Finance Canada and the Ontario Securities Commission? Where are Crown prosecutors, attorneys general and law enforcement? Where is the government in protecting the finances of ordinary Canadians?

* * *

● (1415)

[Translation]

SUMMER IN GLENGARRY—PRESCOTT—RUSSELL

Mr. Francis Drouin (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House to welcome the return of festivals and agricultural fairs in Glengarry—Prescott—Russell.

Statements by Members

Tourism season is back, and our local businesses are ready to welcome visitors. We are kicking off the season with the Maxville agricultural fair this weekend, and other summer festivities include Canada Day celebrations throughout the region, the western festival in Wendover, the Glengarry Highland Games, agricultural fairs in Russell, Vankleek Hill and Riceville, and last but certainly not least, the Popsilos circuit, a project that combines art and agriculture.

Everyone is invited to come and enjoy some local beer at one of our five microbreweries and try the local wine at one of our vineyards.

Summer 2022 has plenty to offer in Glengarry—Prescott—Russell. I invite everyone to come and spend some time with the good folks of my region.

[English]

The Speaker: If I could have the attention of members, please.

I would like to remind everyone that statements are very important to individual members and their communities, and I am starting to hear some conversations. It is nice to see everybody talking to each other, but the rumble in the background is really drowning out the person who is speaking.

The hon. member for Vancouver East.

* * *

CARE WORKERS

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, migrant care workers are primarily women who come to Canada, leaving behind their families, to take care of children, the sick and the elderly.

The Conservatives unfairly imposed high requirements for permanent residency for caregivers, such as passing the English language test at level 5, which is higher than what is required to obtain citizenship; a 24-month work requirement; and additional education accreditation. Even though the Liberals have said publicly that these requirements are too onerous, they made no changes and reimposed them, which closed the door to many.

Meanwhile, the IRCC processing backlog is now at over two million. An access to information request exposed that almost no caregiver files have been processed since 2019. This is wrong. Caregivers feel they are being pushed to the back burner. They feel neglected and unimportant.

Caregivers should not be treated as second-class citizens. They should be given landed status on arrival. The NDP is demanding status for all now.

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[Translation]

PIERRE BRUNEAU

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, tomorrow marks the end of an era. Tomorrow, Pierre Bruneau will host his last newscast, after 46 years as anchor at TVA.

Since 1976, Pierre Bruneau has been the face of the news, delivering the information essential to public life with his trademark soothing tone and rigour. He has also been the embodiment of compassion for 32 years as a spokesperson for the Charles Bruneau Foundation, which fights childhood cancer.

As an avid consumer of news and politics, I will be among the many Quebeckers who will feel unsettled welcoming another face and voice to the five o'clock news. I will feel even more unsettled at the next leaders' debate, as I will miss that same soothing voice as someone else inherits the delicate task of refereeing.

After five decades and 23 Artis awards, meaning he was chosen by the public 23 times, and after receiving the Ordre national du Québec and the Order of Canada, Pierre Bruneau definitely deserves to feel a sense of accomplishment.

On behalf of the Bloc Québécois and myself, I wish Mr. Bruneau the best of luck for the future.

* * *

• (1420)

[English]

VIOLENT CRIME IN LAKELAND

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, violent crime is rising in big cities and rural regions alike. Rhonda owns a country store in a community of 10 people. Since 2019, she has been the victim of three armed robberies: one with a knife, one with a machete, and one with a gun. She says, "I live alone and my house and store are attached. My fear is always with me. I can't go home and forget. I see a therapist to help me get through it all and just as I start to get my life back, I get robbed again."

Rhonda wants tougher sentences to stop repeat offences and better enforcement of court ordered restitution, instead of victims being forced to relive their trauma and chase cases through civil courts. Rhonda is in a wheelchair now because she fell and broke several bones during one attack. She says, "I live in fear every day, but I won't sell my store. If I give up, the criminals will have won. I can't let that happen."

It is appalling that her experiences are becoming common in Lakeland. The NDP and Liberals should have her back, but instead they are reducing penalties for the very crimes against her. At least Conservatives stand with brave, innocent victims and all law-abiding Canadians like Rhonda. We will keep fighting for them.

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BILATERAL TRADE RELATIONSHIPS

Mr. Marc Serré (Nickel Belt, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this year marks Peru's 201st anniversary of independence. Canada has eight free trade agreements in the hemisphere. They are with Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Honduras, Panama, Peru, Mexico and the U.S.

Peru is Canada's third largest bilateral trading partner in Latin America and one of the fastest growing economies in Latin America, with an annual growth rate of 5.5%. Since its launch in 2020, the Peruvian Canadian Institute, through Huntington University, aimed at developing economic ties and bridges between our two countries.

[Translation]

I encourage all parliamentarians to take part in the ParlAmericas activities to strengthen our bond with Caribbean and Latin American countries. I invite members and senators to attend a meeting this evening in West Block in honour of the ambassadors and high commissioners. Canada plays an important role in fostering relationships with member countries of ParlAmericas when it comes to addressing climate change, gender equality and open government.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Hon. Candice Bergen (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Minister of Emergency Preparedness told the committee that law enforcement never asked for the Emergencies Act, which is yet another contradiction of the Minister of Public Safety. Nobody is backing him up, not even his own colleagues.

It is clear the Minister of Public Safety has been misleading Canadians for months. Will the Prime Minister remove him from his portfolio, yes or no?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, allow me to be very clear with Canadians. Police do not grant themselves extraordinary powers; the government does that. Parliament debated it and voted on it.

As Commissioner Lucki said, the Emergencies Act gave the police the powers they needed to get the job done. Municipalities, provincial leadership and police told us they needed more tools to bring these illegal blockades to an end. That is exactly what we did, and it is exactly what they did when we gave them more tools with the Emergencies Act.

Hon. Candice Bergen (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Public Safety has misled Canadians several times. He said protesters started fires in an Ottawa apartment building. That was false. He said foreign money was funding the protest. That was not true. He said law enforcement asked for the Emergencies Act. That was also false.

Does the Prime Minister agree that Canadians deserve better than a minister who repeatedly and overtly misleads them?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what we see right now is the Conservatives desperately trying to distract Canadians from the fact that they stood with these illegal blockaders. They encouraged them. They continue to make apologies for these people having shut down communities, hurt our economy and cost people jobs, at the same time as police were trying to do their jobs.

Oral Questions

Police asked for more tools. We granted them more tools with the Emergencies Act, and we were able to get things back to normal in this country. People are free to protest legally, but not illegally. That is what Conservative politicians do not seem to understand.

Hon. Candice Bergen (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the only people whose actions are being scrutinized right now are those of the Prime Minister and the Minister of Public Safety. In fact, as the committee's investigation into the government's use of the act continues, it is clear the legal threshold was not met to justify its use. It is clearer by the day the Emergencies Act was used for one thing and one thing only, and that was to get the Prime Minister out of hot water.

It looks like the reason the Prime Minister is not firing the Minister of Public Safety is that the minister is helping cover for the Prime Minister. Is that not the sad but real reality right now?

• (1425)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for three weeks, our communities here in Ottawa were facing illegal blockades. The work on Parliament was disrupted. Supply lines were challenged. Border crossings were interrupted. People were losing their jobs and factories were closing. Conservative politicians stood with them, encouraging these illegal blockades.

We worked with police to give them more tools, and when they asked for even more tools, we delivered the Emergencies Act, which allowed things to get back under control. There are open and transparent inquiries into that, and we are working with them on that.

Hon. Candice Bergen (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the inquiry and the committee's investigative work are finding that there is less and less evidence for the government to have used the Emergencies Act, and the evidence points to the only reason it was used was to cover up the problems the Prime Minister was finding himself in. Unfortunately, because the minister has been misleading, the work of the committee is being disrupted and corrupted.

It is very interesting to see that, when strong women stand up and speak truth to the Prime Minister, he has no problem firing them. However, when a minister of the Crown misleads Canadians, that is completely fine and he overlooks it. Why does the Prime Minister get rid of people who have integrity and speak the truth, but defend—

The Speaker: The hon. Prime Minister.

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, wow. We can see very clearly how desperately the Conservatives are trying to change the channel from the important work being done in the follow-up to the Emergencies Act to highlight the challenges that these illegal blockades posed to our economy, to our municipalities and to Canadians.

Police asked us for more tools because they said they could not deal with the situation with the existing tools. We delivered the Emergencies Act in a responsible, proportional way, which ended the crisis. At the same time, Conservative politicians kept supporting these blockades—

The Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Candice Bergen (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is not the first time the Prime Minister has kept a disgraced minister in his cabinet. He defended the former defence minister, who covered up sexual harassment in the military.

The Prime Minister calls Canadians he disagrees with names. He divides and stigmatizes for political gain, and he demotes female MPs who stand up to him.

Is it not true that the only reason he will not fire the Minister of Public Safety is because that minister is doing and saying exactly what the Prime Minister wants him to?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, we see the lengths to which the Conservatives will go to try to distract and deflect from the fact that they stood on the wrong side of this issue. They stood against hard-working Canadians who were disrupted in their daily lives: people who lost their jobs. Factories and supply chains were interrupted, all because of illegal blockades. The Conservatives continue to stand with those at the illegal blockades while we worked hard to make sure the police had the tools necessary to put an end to them.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, at the beginning of the year, the Prime Minister invoked the Emergencies Act during the civil, yet obviously illegal, occupation of Parliament Hill.

The Minister of Public Safety said he did that at the request of police forces, but there was no such request from law enforcement, the RCMP, the Ontario Provincial Police, or the Ottawa police.

Does the minister acknowledge that for the second time in two days, his government has misled Quebeckers and Canadians?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to be very clear with Canadians that police do not grant themselves extraordinary powers. It is the government that must do it.

Parliament subsequently debated the bill and passed it. As RCMP Commissioner Lucki stated, the Emergencies Act gave the police the powers they needed to get the job done.

Municipalities, provincial leaders and police told us that they needed more tools to dismantle these blockades. That is exactly what we did.

• (1430)

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the joint committee that is required under the act received the Deputy Prime Minister and the former public safety minister, who is now the Minister of Emergency Preparedness. They testified that it was a purely political decision and was not made at the request of police.

Who is not telling the truth? Which minister is not telling the truth? What is the Prime Minister saying?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government and our ministers have always been extremely clear that police do not grant themselves new powers. It is up to politicians and the government to make that decision. That is exactly what we did.

When law enforcement and provincial and municipal authorities asked us for more tools, we delivered them. Then we saw that they needed even more. We realized that the only way to give them what they needed was to invoke the Emergencies Act—

The Speaker: I am going to interrupt the right hon. Prime Minister.

We have a problem with the screen in the House and there are members who want to see everything the Prime Minister is saying in person.

We will make sure the screen is working and then the Prime Minister can start his answer again from the beginning.

The right hon. Prime Minister.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, the government and all our ministers have always been very clear that police do not grant themselves new powers. It is up to politicians and the government to make that decision.

When law enforcement and provincial authorities asked us for more tools, we invoked the Emergencies Act in a reasonable and proportional way. That is exactly what people expected of us, and that is how we were finally able to resolve the situation.

* * *

[*English*]

CHILD CARE

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, one in four Canadians will lose their home if interest rates continue to rise. One in four Canadians is going hungry because they cannot afford their groceries. The Minister of Finance is going to give a speech tomorrow that was supposed to respond to their needs. Instead, it is going to be a reannouncement of previous measures, none of which will help people right now.

People need immediate support so they can make ends meet. Why does the current Prime Minister continue to ignore the plight of people and refuse to deliver financial support directly to families who need it most?

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I recommend that my hon. colleague, and indeed all colleagues in the House, take advantage of the opportunities coming up to speak with Canadians who have seen their child care expenses cut in half in different parts of this country as more parts of this country, like Ontario and others, do that in the coming weeks and months.

That is because of federal investments made over the past many months that are landing right now in people's bank accounts and pocket books. At the same time, in the coming weeks, we will be increasing the Canada child benefit alongside the cost of living. Those are concrete helps delivered now—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Burnaby South.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, that would not happen until next year, and people need help today.

[*Translation*]

People need help right now to pay the bills, to make ends meet, to put food on the table.

Will the Prime Minister support our proposal to increase the GST rebate and the Canada child benefit so we can get help now to the families who need it?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Canada child benefit will be increasing in the coming weeks because we indexed it to the cost of living, and this increase will provide direct, immediate assistance to families.

Families across the country are benefiting from reduced fees for early childhood centres and day cares because we have invested money with the provinces in recent months to lower these costs. People in Ontario and in other provinces will see these changes in the weeks and months to come.

We are here to support families, and we will continue to be there for them with immediate help.

* * *

• (1435)

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, now the truth is starting to come out. Today, the Prime Minister said that “police do not grant themselves new powers”. He was admitting that the police did not ask for the Emergencies Act.

That is the exact opposite of what the Minister of Public Safety has repeatedly said. Ministerial responsibility means nothing to this Liberal government anymore.

Is the Prime Minister also going to mislead the House and repeat what the Minister of Public Safety said, or will he ask him to resign?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, during this crisis, law enforcement and provincial and municipal authorities continually asked us for more tools to deal with these illegal blockades and demonstrations, and that is exactly what we delivered. That includes invoking the Emergencies Act in a responsible and limited way to deal with these blockades.

That is exactly what happened, while Conservative politicians stood with the protesters and blockaders.

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, who asked, when did they ask and what exactly did they ask for? The Prime Minister just said that police officers asked the government to implement extraordinary measures by invoking the Emergencies Act.

The Prime Minister is repeating what the Minister of Public Safety said. This is scandalous. The Prime Minister is misleading the House too. He has a choice today. He can do the honourable thing: apologize and ask his minister to resign. Will he do so, yes or no?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are clearly willing to do anything to make people forget about how they sided with the blockaders. What I said was that, yes, police forces asked for more tools, and we gave them those tools. We sent in members of the RCMP and additional resources.

When they needed even more resources and tools, we ended up invoking the Emergencies Act. It is not up to the police to invoke that kind of act. It is up to the government, and that is exactly what we did.

[*English*]

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in April, the Minister for Public Safety said that at the recommendation of police, we invoked the Emergencies Act, but his colleagues are saying that there was never a recommendation from law enforcement. When he was appointed as the Minister, he swore an oath to be true and faithful, but we know he has not lived up to that pledge.

Will the Prime Minister hold the minister accountable and fire him for misleading Canadians?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I can understand if perhaps Conservative politicians' recollections of what happened in April are a little bit fuzzy. They were out celebrating and supporting the people barricading our streets here in Ottawa and preventing goods from flowing across the border.

What we were doing was talking to police who continually were asking for more support and more tools, whether it was more resources, more money or more RCMP officers. We were there to respond to their need for more tools and we finally did that with the invocation of the Emergencies Act, which was the government's decision and not police officers' decision.

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Public Safety told Canadians over and over again that the authorities were the ones who had asked for the Emergencies Act, yet the Minister of Emergency Preparedness testified, “I'm not aware of any recommendation of law enforcement. Quite frankly, this is a decision of government.”

Oral Questions

The Minister of Public Safety has not lived up to his oath of office, so when will the Prime Minister take immediate action and fire the Minister of Public Safety?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while Conservative politicians were busy supporting and celebrating with barricaders along Wellington Street and across the country, we were working with police who continually asked for more help and more support to be able to deal with this public order emergency. That is exactly what we continued to do throughout the three weeks, until and up to the moment in which we chose to bring in the Emergencies Act to restore order to this country and to the situation. We did it in a proportional and reasonable way, and it brought an end to these illegal actions.

• (1440)

Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Public Safety's own department confirmed that the police did not ask for the Emergencies Act to be invoked, and now the Minister of Emergency Preparedness has also publicly agreed.

In the Prime Minister's 2015 "Open and Accountable Government" document, he wrote:

For Canadians to trust our government we must trust Canadians, and we will only be successful in implementing our agenda to the extent that we earn and keep this trust.

The Minister of Public Safety has shattered that trust. When will the Prime Minister fire him?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while Conservative politicians were out there supporting barricaders and while they continued to support those illegal actions, we were working with law enforcement and municipal and provincial authorities across this country who were telling us they needed more tools. We delivered more tools, whether it was more police officers or more resources, until we realized we needed to take a further step. We chose to invoke the Emergencies Act to give them even further tools. We did it in a responsible and proportional way, and it worked.

The Speaker: Before I go to the questions, I want to remind hon. members that if they want to talk to each other they can cross over and talk very lowly. Shouting across or talking very loudly across just interrupts everyone else. I want to remind them of that.

The hon. member for Red Deer—Lacombe.

Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Emergency Preparedness made it clear last night at committee that the Minister of Public Safety has misled Canadians. The Prime Minister's "Open and Accountable Government" document also reads:

Ministers cannot dissociate themselves from or repudiate the decisions of Cabinet or their Ministry colleagues unless they resign from the Ministry.

Only one of these two ministers can be right. The Prime Minister cannot agree with both of them, so which one does he agree with, and when will the Prime Minister fire the Minister of Public Safety?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, every step of the way we worked with local police services and with responsible authorities to ensure that they got the resources

and the tools they needed to get the situation back under control. They continually asked for more tools, and we continued to step up with extra officers, extra resources, extra finances and ultimately the Emergencies Act. Absolutely, it is only a government that can choose to invoke that, and to do so in a limited and restrained way is exactly what we did.

* * *

[Translation]

GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the federal border fiasco is breaking records. Going abroad has become a real endurance test.

First, travellers have to wait in line for 24 hours to get a passport, thanks to the Minister of Families' lack of vision. Then, travellers have to wait for hours at the airport, mainly because border services are short 3,000 officers thanks to the Minister of Transport.

It is a perfect storm for travellers. When several ministers fail at the same time like that, it is because the problem comes from above.

When will the Prime Minister sort out his fiasco at the border?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we absolutely understand that people are facing challenges because of the global pandemic. That is why it is not just in Canada that there are challenges at airports and border crossings. We are seeing this all over the world. That is why we have hired about 600 new employees at passport offices, and that is why we are making investments to help the airports, because we know that the airports and airlines are facing labour shortages. We are there to support them.

I know these are difficult times for Canadians, but we are working hard to fix everything.

Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it does not end there. The Minister of Foreign Affairs is also in trouble because her staff attended a party at the Russian embassy. What a great idea that was.

The Minister of Public Safety is in trouble too because of his "alternative facts" on the Emergencies Act. What about the Minister of Immigration, who runs a department where permanent residence applications seemingly go to die, or the Minister of Environment, who has become an oil and gas developer?

Ultimately, when all the musicians are playing out of tune, the conductor is always to blame. In this case, the conductor is the Prime Minister.

When will he start looking after his own affairs instead of always meddling in Quebec's jurisdictions?

• (1445)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am here to serve all Canadians, including Quebecers. That is why we will continue to make investments to help Quebec families and address challenges, whether at our borders or in our health care systems. We will always work in partnership with provincial governments, municipalities, small businesses and Canadians who need help. We know this pandemic has been difficult, but we have been there for Canadians and we will continue to be there.

* * *

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the emergency preparedness minister said the police did not recommend enacting the Emergencies Act, and nor would it have been appropriate. The public safety minister has said for months that the police requested the act. The Deputy Prime Minister, in committee, is now amazingly vague on her recollections on this controversial issue. The RCMP and Ottawa Police said they did not request that the act be used, period. When will the Prime Minister uphold accountability, transparency and ethics and ask for the public safety minister's resignation?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is amazing, the lengths to which Conservative politicians will go to try to deflect from the fact that they were standing with blockaders and continue to support the illegal protests. We worked with police and local authorities every step of the way, who asked for more resources, which we delivered, whether it was more police officers, whether it was more financial resources or, ultimately, the Emergencies Act, which we chose to bring in to give people the tools necessary to put an end to these illegal protests.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Public Safety misled Canadians repeatedly. Using the Emergencies Act after its invocation and needing the act beforehand are two very different things. The current Liberal government invoked a Canada-wide civil liberties-limiting act to force tow truck drivers to move trucks, which is not exactly proportional.

The scandal-ridden Liberal government has a serious issue with transparency. From SNC to WE, it seems to be in its DNA. When will the Prime Minister ensure the public safety minister's resignation?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Again, Mr. Speaker, we see Conservative politicians minimizing the very real disruptions that Canadians faced during the blockades. The Conservatives stood with and encouraged the blockaders while at the same time ignoring Canadians who were afraid to go to work or leave their apartments, Canadians who were losing their jobs and businesses that were shut down because of supply chain disruptions. These are things that we took seriously. While Conservative politicians were celebrating alongside the blockaders, we used proportional, responsible measures and we got it done.

[Translation]

Mrs. Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Minister of Emergency Pre-

Oral Questions

paredness, the very colleague of the Minister of Public Safety, said, "I am not aware of any recommendation from law enforcement. Quite frankly, this was a decision of government".

This completely contradicts what the Minister of Public Safety said. He has misled Canadians and the House. There must be consequences.

Will the Prime Minister do the right thing and ask for his resignation?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, during the blockades, police forces and provincial authorities, including an Alberta minister, told us that they no longer had the tools to deal with these challenges. They needed more resources and tools. We gave them more resources and more police officers, but ultimately, we chose to invoke the Emergencies Act because it gave us specific and proportionate tools to be able to put an end to the crisis. That is exactly what happened.

Mrs. Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, contrary to what the Minister of Public Safety said, neither the RCMP nor the Ottawa Police Service asked the government to invoke the Emergencies Act. However, true to form, whenever the Prime Minister is confronted with his contradictions, he dodges the issue or blames others, and when that does not work, he takes cheap shots, which is what he has been doing throughout question period. Ministerial responsibility appears to be a foreign concept for this government.

Will he ask his minister to resign?

• (1450)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I understand my hon. colleague's indignation, but she should be asking her colleagues, who were encouraging civil disorder and supporting the people involved in the blockades, why they were backing those folks rather than law enforcement, who wanted to protect Canadians in their homes and needed additional tools. We provided police with those tools through the Emergencies Act in a responsible and proportionate manner, which is what put an end to these illegal blockades.

*Oral Questions**[English]***AIR TRANSPORTATION**

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it did not take a crystal ball to realize that Canadians would start traveling again, and what we have seen in the airports are massive delays across the country. These are delays that could have been prevented if sufficient steps had been taken ahead of time: hiring staff, making sure they have good wages and making sure the conditions of work are appropriate so that we can have the staffing levels required so that there are no delays.

What is the Prime Minister going to do now to hire staff and make sure they are well paid so that they can deal with the delays in the airports for Canadians trying to travel?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member opposite for actually highlighting one of the big challenges that are being faced right now by airlines and airports, which is staffing shortages. That is something that is not just happening in Canada; indeed, we are seeing those kinds of disruptions at airports around the world, whether it be Amsterdam, whether it be Paris, whether it be other significant airports around the world that are facing these kinds of challenges and delays.

We invested early in hiring more staff for CBSA and hiring more staff at passport offices. Fortunately we did, because the problems would have been even worse, but we do recognize that there are challenges, and we are working hard every day to solve them for Canadians.

* * *

*[Translation]***PASSPORTS**

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is not surprising that people want to travel again. They will need their passport to travel, but the wait times for getting a passport are excessive. It is unacceptable.

Will the Prime Minister ensure that the necessary workers are hired to meet the needs?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that is exactly what we have done. At the beginning of the year, long before these challenges arose, we hired 600 new employees and we are hiring 600 more, because we know how important it is to deliver passports. This has allowed us to deliver more than 360,000 passports since April 1, but there are still Canadians waiting. That is unacceptable, which is why we are working day and night to resolve this situation and help Canadians.

* * *

*[English]***FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

Ms. Joanne Thompson (St. John's East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Hans Island has been subject to a 50-year-long territorial dispute between Canada and Denmark. While the Whisky War raged on, it was high time that we found a permanent solution that affirmed Canada's sovereignty and respected the rights of the Inuit.

Can the Prime Minister share with this House the significance of the announcement of the historic agreement between Denmark and Canada that resolved this dispute?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for St. John's East for her important question and for her tremendous hard work.

As global security is threatened, it is more important than ever for democracies like Canada and Denmark to work together to resolve our differences in accordance with international law. That is why we jointly announced a historic agreement to settle the Whisky War and the dispute over Hans Island once and for all. We will continue working with our partners, like Denmark, to protect the security and stability in the Arctic while doing so hand in hand with indigenous peoples.

* * *

PUBLIC SAFETY

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the public safety minister has said repeatedly that law enforcement recommended that the government invoke the Emergencies Act, but yesterday the emergency preparedness minister said at committee, "I am not aware of any recommendation from law enforcement."

Suspending civil liberties is serious; so is misleading the House. I have a simple question for the Prime Minister: Does he believe the minister has acted honourably?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while Conservative politicians were out supporting the blockaders and standing with the illegal protesters, we were busy working with law enforcement and authorities across the country to deliver them tools that they needed, whether it be extra police officers or extra financial resources or tools. We were there for that.

Ultimately, we chose to deliver, in a proportional and responsible way, the Emergencies Act, which had measures that helped put an end to these blockades. This was something that we had to do for the good of all Canadians.

● (1455)

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the public safety minister is putting the government in a very difficult position. He has said the police requested the invocation of the act. Clearly, that is not the case. None of his cabinet colleagues concur with him. Neither does his deputy minister. The minister needs to take some time to reflect on the principle of ministerial accountability and on the integrity of our parliamentary system. He needs to decide what the honourable course of action is. Will he do that?

Oral Questions

[Translation]

CLIMATE CHANGE

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, every step of the way we worked with police services and local authorities on ensuring that they had the tools they needed to be able to put an end to these illegal blockades and these illegal protests. When we chose to invoke the Emergencies Act, it was to deliver more tools that the police ultimately used to put an end to these illegal disruptions to so many Canadians' lives.

While Conservative politicians were busy celebrating with and encouraging these illegal protesters, we acted to keep Canadians safe.

Mr. Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this, today, is how ministerial accountability dies: a Prime Minister who obfuscates and will not answer, and a minister who refuses to resign. The Minister of Public Safety clearly and unequivocally did not tell the truth. Ministers in the past have resigned on principle, ministers like Jody Wilson-Raybould and Jane Philpott.

Will the Prime Minister show that he has some principles and get that minister fired?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while we were focused on serving Canadians and getting them back to work, getting their lives back and getting their streets back, Conservative politicians were busy supporting and celebrating alongside these illegal protesters and barricaders.

We focused on delivering the support that police services needed to put an end to this, which ultimately led up to us choosing to invoke the Emergencies Act, which gave them the tools necessary that worked to put an end to these illegal blockades. That was what we were focused on and that is what we continue to be focused on: Canadians.

Mr. Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what we are witnessing here today by the Prime Minister is a poor man's master class on how to avoid accountability. We deserve accountability. Canadians deserve accountability.

The minister needs to be held to account. He has misspoken, he has misled and he has misinformed this House and the Canadian public. His position is completely untenable. The Prime Minister would not even answer a question directly on this. The Prime Minister needs to show some principles, show that his minister has some principles and get him to resign or fire him.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in February, when blockades and occupations disrupted our economy, hurt workers and endangered public safety, we invoked the Emergencies Act to help bring them to an end. We have now announced the Public Order Emergency Commission, an independent public inquiry to examine the circumstances that led to the declaration being issued and the measures taken in response, as required under the act.

We are acting in openness and transparency. We know that the members of the Conservative Party might not want light shed on these events, given their support of these blockades, but Canadians want to know the truth.

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, according to The Globe and Mail, senior public servants are warning that the oil and gas industry will barely reach half of its reduction target for greenhouse gas emissions.

Why? Because the Prime Minister refuses to cap fossil fuel production and because these targets are based on inefficient carbon capture technologies. We have to admit that carbon capture is an oil unicorn.

Does the Prime Minister realize that it is irresponsible to have targets that we have no hope of reaching?

• (1500)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member should perhaps listen to organizations such as the Canadian Climate Institute, Équiterre and Clean Prosperity, and also leading scientists who approved our plans and agree that our plan credibly outlines the contributions that every sector must make to achieve our climate targets.

We promised an ambitious and achievable plan to reduce pollution and create opportunities for Canadians, and that is exactly what we are delivering with the emissions reduction plan.

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Mr. Speaker, there is a difference of 38 megatonnes between the government's 81-megatonne emissions reduction target for the oil and gas industry and the 43 megatonnes that experts estimate the industry will actually cut. That is how much wishful thinking weighs.

Yesterday, the UN Secretary-General described the discrepancy between what needs to be done to combat climate change and what politicians are actually doing as a “dangerous disconnect”.

When will the Prime Minister understand that it is completely unrealistic to think that Canada can meet its targets without cutting oil production?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the analysis my colleague is referring to was a preliminary one that did not take into account new measures, investments and regulations that will increase our capacity to reduce emissions.

I would suggest that my colleague look to prestigious organizations, such as the Canadian Climate Institute, the Pembina Institute, the Business Council of Canada and the Petroleum Technology Alliance Canada, which have confirmed the feasibility of our plan and modelled projections consistent with those set out in our plan.

Oral Questions

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Ms. Lianne Rood (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has repeatedly parroted the Minister of Public Safety by saying that police called for the use of the Emergencies Act.

This false information was spread by the Minister of Public Safety, and by defending such incompetence, the Prime Minister is being played for a fool. We know this information is false because the former minister of public safety has said, “Quite frankly, this is a decision of government.”

Will the Prime Minister accept personal responsibility for this misinformation and fire his minister?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have been very clear over the past weeks, and indeed through all the questions asked during this question period, that throughout the crisis in February, we were working closely with police services and with provincial and municipal authorities who were asking for more tools, which we continually delivered, whether it was more police officers, more concrete resources or ultimately in choosing to invoke the Emergencies Act, which gave proportionate and responsible tools that allowed the police services to put an end to these illegal blockades that the Conservatives were busy supporting.

Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the public safety minister has continued to tell the country that law enforcement told him to invoke the Emergencies Act, but that is just not true.

Yesterday the emergency preparedness minister said:

I do not believe that would have been an appropriate thing for law enforcement to ask, and they did not ask.

Cabinet is clearly isolating the minister. We gave him the chance to resign honourably and he refused. Will the Prime Minister fire that minister?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what we see today is a Conservative Party desperate to try to prevent Canadians from remembering that Conservative politicians stood side by side with these barricaders, blockaders and illegal protesters while they were trying to disrupt Canadians' lives, while they were harming our economy, while they were hurting factories and workers across the country with their illegal protests.

We worked with police services and authorities to give them the tools they needed to put an end to these barricades, including deciding, ultimately, to invoke the Emergencies Act in a proportional and responsible way.

Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, well, birds of a feather, I guess, because to fire someone in his cabinet for dishonourable conduct, the Prime Minister would have to look himself in the mirror.

The public safety minister uttered a barefaced falsehood at committee, and he continues to shamelessly mislead Canadians. He is

no longer fit for the Queen's Privy Council. Will the Prime Minister fire him today?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while Canadians were struggling through the impacts of these illegal blockades and these illegal protests, while Conservatives were standing with them and encouraging them, we were working with police services and authorities across the country to bring an end to the disruption faced by so many ordinary Canadians in their lives.

That is why we delivered more and more tools throughout the three-week process and ultimately why we decided to invoke the Emergencies Act in a proportional and responsible way.

* * *

● (1505)

[Translation]

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Anju Dhillon (Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the unjust war in Ukraine is having a tremendous impact on countries all around the world.

This war has led to a global food shortage. The conflict, combined with the effects of climate change and the pandemic, is threatening to push tens of millions of people into food insecurity, hunger and famine, especially in Africa.

Could the hon. Prime Minister tell the House what Canada is doing to help the people facing this kind of crisis?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle for her question and for her hard work.

Russia's aggression has had significant and immediate consequences on global food security and nutrition for the most vulnerable people in the world. This is why we have announced that Canada would contribute \$100 million to the African Development Bank to support the growth of small and medium-sized agri-food enterprises.

This funding will help increase food security across the continent while supporting inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

* * *

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this culture of deception, deflection, not being accountable, blaming others, entitlement and division has been a culture created by the Prime Minister. He has set the example for others in his cabinet to follow, so it is no surprise to anyone to see the public safety minister using the tactics of his Prime Minister.

Oral Questions

The Prime Minister did not hesitate to force out Jody Wilson-Raybould or Jane Philpott for speaking the truth to his power. Will the Prime Minister for once do the right thing, do the honourable thing, and fire the Minister of Public Safety?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while Conservatives continue to focus on me, I will continue to focus on Canadians alongside all of the extraordinary members of our team. We are focused on fighting against inflation, on supporting Canadians with the cost of living, including such things as cutting child care fees in half and increasing the Canada child benefit with the cost of inflation, as will happen in the coming weeks.

We will continue as well to make sure that the Conservative politicians who stood with illegal protesters and blockaders, fostering division in this country, are remembered by Canadians, because we chose to invoke the Emergencies Act to put an end—

The Speaker: Before we go to the next question, I just want to remind the hon. members that we are starting to hear some more rumble and talking. Maybe just whispering a little bit more lightly would be better.

The hon. member for Carleton

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, not once, not twice, but 13 times did this public safety minister claim that the police told him to suspend people's civil liberties with the Emergencies Act. Not only did the cops say that this is not true, but yesterday two of his fellow ministers, including the Deputy Prime Minister, said that it is not true. Today, the Prime Minister refused to say that his public safety minister had acted honourably.

If his fellow ministers do not think he is honourable and truthful, why is he still in cabinet?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while the member opposite supposedly concerns himself with the freedom of Canadians to protest illegally, we are going to continue to stand with Canadians who had their lives disrupted by the illegal blockades and the protesters who went to such lengths to shut down our economy over the month of February.

We continue to work with police officers, with services, with local authorities to give them the tools needed, and ultimately we chose to invoke the Emergencies Act to keep Canadians safe and put an end to these barricades.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, he referred to disrupting people's lives. This is from the guy who took away the livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of people because of an unscientific mandate that robbed them of their individual freedom.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

• (1510)

The Speaker: I am going to interrupt the hon. member. We were doing so well. I just do not want to ruin it. Please calm down.

The hon. member for Carleton, from the top, please.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, disrupting people's lives? This is a Prime Minister who disrupted the lives of tens of thousands of people, if not hundreds of thousands, because of a personal medical decision. Everything the government has been saying

about our truckers has been false from the very beginning, starting with the claim that they would spread a virus even though they were in a truck all alone all day long, and ending with the recent claim that the police had asked for the Emergencies Act.

Now that the government has admitted that the public safety minister stated falsehoods, will the Prime Minister do the honourable thing and fire him?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, every step of the way throughout this global pandemic, we had Canadians' backs, and that meant ensuring that we followed science, that we did everything necessary to keep people safe and that we did everything necessary to make sure our economy would spring back as quickly as possible.

The member opposite knows full well that he stood against our scientific measures to keep Canadians safe. He stood against the measures we put forward to support small businesses, to support families in getting through this pandemic, and indeed stood against the measures that have led us to recovering 115% of the jobs lost during the pandemic, while the U.S. has only recovered 95%.

We had Canadians' backs. That is what we were doing during the pandemic.

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TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed (Vancouver Granville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in the digital era, cybersecurity is national security. Our critical infrastructure relies on interconnected networks and cyber-systems every day. From our financial system to telecommunications and from the energy sector to the transportation sectors, organizations need to be well prepared to be able to prevent and respond to cyber incidents.

Can the Prime Minister inform this House how new legislation on cybersecurity will enable Canadian organizations to protect critical cyber infrastructure and our communities?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Vancouver Granville for his question and his hard work.

Private Members' Business

Cybersecurity is national security. Bill C-26 will help both the public and private sectors better protect themselves against cyberattacks and is one part of our robust strategy to defend Canada and the crucial infrastructure that Canadians rely on. We will always protect the safety and security of Canadians and we will take any actions necessary to safeguard our telecommunications infrastructure.

* * *

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, two years ago, the Liberal government announced \$724.1 million to support indigenous women, girls and two-spirit people in the face of gender-based violence. However, here is the thing: We are dealing with the Liberals. Two years later, can members guess how much money was spent? It is zero dollars. Zero dollars was spent to support indigenous women, girls and two-spirit people facing gender-based violence.

Why is the government making announcements instead of taking concrete steps to support people facing gender-based violence?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that is simply not true. Over the past two years, we have invested hundreds of millions of dollars directly into grassroots organizations that have been there to support survivors of domestic violence and gender-based violence.

Addressing the ongoing violence, including that related to the MMIWG, requires living up to our goals as a country and respecting all the calls to justice. In June 2021, partners from across the country came together and released the national action plan to finally end this ongoing tragedy, and it will be supported by budget 2021's \$2.2-billion investment in concrete measures that will keep people safe.

* * *

TAXATION

Mr. Kevin Vuong (Spadina—Fort York, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are facing soaring gas prices. However, most consumers are unaware of the federal government's hidden fleecing. It is called "tax cascading", and it must stop.

In Ontario, the government applies HST to fuel purchases and then applies it to the excise tax, the carbon tax and the provincial tax. The government is taxing taxes. If it is serious about helping Canadians, the government should take its triple-dipping tax hands out of consumers' pockets.

Will the Prime Minister eliminate tax cascading and provide Canadians with a fuel tax rebate from the massive slush fund that he is raking in?

• (1515)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the investments we have made have been directed at supporting families and the vulnerable through these difficult times. We chose to invest billions of dollars to ensure that child care fees get cut in half this year, and we are seeing, right across the country, that this is having an incredibly positive impact on families where it is com-

ing into place. A lot of people in various jurisdictions, like the member's own province of Ontario, are looking forward to that kicking in for them as well.

We are also increasing the Canada child benefit to match the cost of inflation in the coming weeks to make sure that families have more money for the cost of living and the cost of groceries and everyday items. That is part of what we are doing to have Canadians'—

The Speaker: I am afraid that is all the time we have.

I want to thank all MPs. Today was a day we can all be very proud of.

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[Translation]

PIERRE BRUNEAU

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent for the following motion:

That the House:

- (a) salute the extraordinary work of Mr. Pierre Bruneau as anchor of the TVA network for 46 years, as he will host his last newscast this Thursday evening;
- (b) underline the remarkable contribution of Mr. Pierre Bruneau to information in Quebec thanks to his rigour, his dedication and his immense talent as a communicator;
- (c) recall his commitment to children with cancer through the Charles-Bruneau Foundation since 1990 and express its gratitude to him; and
- (d) wish Mr. Pierre Bruneau good luck in his future projects.

The Speaker: All those opposed to the hon. member moving the motion will please say nay.

Agreed.

The House has heard the terms of the motion. All those opposed to the motion will please say nay.

(Motion agreed to)

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[Translation]

CONSERVATION OF FISH STOCKS AND MANAGEMENT OF PINNIPEDS ACT

The House resumed from June 8 consideration of the motion that Bill C-251, An Act respecting the development of a federal framework on the conservation of fish stocks and management of pinnipeds, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Speaker: It being 3:18 p.m., pursuant to order made on Thursday, November 25, 2021, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-251 under Private Members' Business.

[English]

Call in the members.

During the taking of the vote:

● (1530)

SITTING SUSPENDED

The Speaker: I wish to inform the House that we are currently experiencing technical issues with the electronic voting system. Accordingly, the sitting will be suspended to the call of the Chair while we identify a solution.

(The sitting of the House was suspended at 3:32 p.m.)

SITTING RESUMED

(The House resumed at 4 p.m.)

● (1600)

[Translation]

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

(Division No. 151)

YEAS

Members

Abouttaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Arnold	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Barsalou-Duval	Beaulieu
Benzen	Bergen
Berthold	Bérubé
Bezan	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Block
Bragdon	Brassard
Brock	Brunelle-Duceppe
Calkins	Caputo
Carrie	Chabot
Chambers	Champoux
Chong	Cooper
Dalton	Dancho
Davidson	DeBellefeuille
Deltell	d'Entremont
Desbiens	Desilets
Doherty	Dowdall
Dreeshen	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Ellis	Epp
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Fast	Ferri
Findlay	Fortin
Garon	Gaudreau
Généreux	Genuis
Gill	Gladu
Godin	Goodridge
Gourde	Gray
Hallan	Jeneroux
Kelly	Kitchen
Kmiec	Kram
Kramp-Neuman	Kurek
Kusie	Lantsman
Larouche	Lawrence
Lehoux	Lemire
Lewis (Essex)	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Liepert	Lloyd
Lobb	MacKenzie
Maguire	Martel
Mazier	McCauley (Edmonton West)
McLean	Melillo

Mendès	Michaud
Moore	Morantz
Morrison	Motz
Muys	Nater
Normandin	O'Toole
Patzer	Paul-Hus
Pauzé	Perkins
Perron	Plamondon
Poilievre	Powlowski
Rayes	Redekopp
Reid	Rempel Garner
Richards	Roberts
Rood	Ruff
Savard-Tremblay	Scheer
Schmale	Seeback
Shields	Shiplay
Simard	Sinclair-Desgagné
Small	Soroka
Steinley	Ste-Marie
Stewart	Strahl
Stubbs	Thériault
Therrien	Thomas
Tochor	Tolmie
Trudel	Uppal
Van Popta	Vecchio
Vidal	Vien
Viersen	Vignola
Villemure	Vis
Vuong	Wagantall
Warkentin	Waugh
Webber	Williams
Williamson	Zimmer— 150

Private Members' Business

NAYS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anandasangaree
Angus	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Atwin	Bachrach
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Barron
Beech	Bendayan
Bennett	Bibeau
Bittle	Blaikie
Blair	Blaney
Blois	Boissonnault
Boulerice	Bradford
Brière	Cannings
Carr	Casey
Chagger	Chahal
Champagne	Chatel
Chen	Chiang
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Collins (Victoria)
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Damoff
Davies	Desjarlais
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diab	Dong
Drouin	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Erskine-Smith	Fergus
Fillmore	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fragiskatos	Fraser
Fry	Gaheer
Garneau	Garrison
Gazan	Gerretsen
Gould	Green
Guilbeault	Hajdu

Private Members' Business

Hanley	Hardie
Hepfner	Holland
Housefather	Hughes
Hussen	Hutchings
Iacono	Idlout
Ien	Jaczek
Johns	Joly
Jowhari	Julian
Kayabaga	Kelloway
Khalid	Khera
Koutrakis	Kusmierczyk
Kwan	Lalonde
Lambropoulos	Lametti
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Lattanzio	Lauzon
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Lightbound	Long
Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacGregor	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maloney	Martinez Ferrada
Masse	Mathysen
May (Cambridge)	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty
McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLeod	McPherson
Medicino	Miao
Miller	Morrice
Morrissey	Murray
Naqvi	Noormohamed
O'Connell	Oliphant
O'Regan	Petitpas Taylor
Robillard	Rodriguez
Rogers	Romanado
Sahota	Saks
Samson	Sarai
Scarpaleggia	Schiefke
Serré	Sgro
Shanahan	Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton East)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Singh	Sorbara
St-Onge	Sudds
Tassi	Taylor Roy
Thompson	Trudeau
Turnbull	Valdez
Van Bynen	van Koevorden
Vandal	Vandenbeld
Virani	Weiler
Wilkinson	Yip
Zahid	Zarrillo
Zuberi— 175	

PAIRED

Members

Anand	Gallant
Hoback	Lake
Ng	Qualtrough— 6

The Speaker: I declare the motion defeated.

[*English*]

Mr. John Brassard: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. It is just on a point of clarification on the vote and whether a member needs a jacket to vote inside the House and outside of the House on video, because we are working under the assumption that this is the House and so is the video.

The Speaker: The clarification is that, yes, whether it is in the House or by application, members who are men have to have a jacket.

[*Translation*]

RETIREMENT INCOME

The House resumed from June 10 consideration of the motion.

The Speaker: Pursuant to order made on Thursday, November 25, 2021, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on Motion No. 45 under Private Members' Business in the name of the hon. member for Etobicoke North.

● (1605)

[*English*]

The question is on the motion.

● (1615)

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

(*Division No. 152*)

YEAS

Members

Abouttaif	Aitchison
Albas	Aldag
Alghabra	Ali
Allison	Anandasangaree
Arnold	Arseneault
Arya	Atwin
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Barsalou-Duval	Battiste
Beaulieu	Beech
Bendayan	Bennett
Benzen	Bergen
Berthold	Bérubé
Bezan	Bibeau
Bittle	Blair
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas
Block	Blois
Boissonnault	Bradford
Bragdon	Brassard
Brière	Brock
Brunelle-Duceppe	Calkins
Caputo	Carr
Carrie	Casey
Chabot	Chagger
Chahal	Chambers
Champagne	Champoux
Chatel	Chen
Chiang	Chong
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Cooper
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Dalton
Damoff	Dancho
Davidson	DeBellefeuille
Deltell	d'Entremont
Desbiens	Desilets
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diab	Doherty
Dong	Dowdall
Dreeshen	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Ellis	Epp
Erskine-Smith	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Falk (Provencher)	Fast
Fergus	Ferreri

Private Members' Business

Fillmore
Fisher
Fortier
Fragiskatos
Fry
Garneau
Gaudreau
Genuis
Gill
Godin
Gould
Gray
Hajdu
Hanley
Hepfner
Housefather
Hutchings
Ien
Jeneroux
Jowhari
Kelloway
Khalid
Kitchen
Koutrakis
Kramp-Neuman
Kusie
Lalonde
Lametti
Lantsman
Larouche
Lauzon
LeBlanc
Lehoux
Lewis (Essex)
Liepert
Lloyd
Long
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maloney
Martinez Ferrada
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McCauley (Edmonton West)
McGuinty
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLeod
Mendès
Miao
Miller
Morantz
Morrison
Motz
Muys
Nater
Normandin
Oliphant
O'Toole
Paul-Hus
Perkins
Petitpas Taylor
Poilievre
Rayes
Reid
Richards
Robillard
Rogers
Rood
Sahota
Samson
Savard-Tremblay
Scheer
Schmale

Findlay
Fonseca
Fortin
Fraser
Gaheer
Garon
Généreux
Gerretsen
Gladu
Goodridge
Gourde
Guilbeault
Hallan
Hardie
Holland
Hussen
Iacono
Jaczek
Joly
Kayabaga
Kelly
Khera
Kmiec
Kram
Kurek
Kusmierczyk
Lambropoulos
Lamoureux
Lapointe
Lattanzio
Lawrence
Lebouthillier
Lemire
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Lightbound
Lobb
Longfield
MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacKenzie
Maguire
Martel
May (Cambridge)
Mazier
McDonald (Avalon)
McKay
McLean
Melillo
Mencicino
Michaud
Moore
Morrice
Morrisey
Murray
Naqvi
Noormohamed
O'Connell
O'Regan
Patzner
Pauzé
Perron
Plamondon
Powlowski
Redekopp
Rempel Garner
Roberts
Rodriguez
Romanado
Ruff
Saks
Sarai
Scarpaleggia
Schieffe
Seeback

Serré
Shanahan
Shields
Sidhu (Brampton East)
Simard
Small
Soroka
Ste-Marie
St-Onge
Stubbs
Tassi
Thériault
Thomas
Tochor
Trudeau
Turnbull
Valdez
van Koeverden
Vandal
Vecchio
Vien
Vignola
Virani
Vuong
Warkentin
Webber
Wilkinson
Williamson
Zahid
Zuberi— 301

Sgro
Sheehan
Shipley
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sinclair-Desgagné
Sorbara
Steinley
Stewart
Strahl
Sudds
Taylor Roy
Therrien
Thompson
Tolmie
Trudel
Uppal
Van Bynen
Van Popta
Vandenbeld
Vidal
Viersen
Villemure
Vis
Wagantall
Waugh
Weiler
Williams
Yip
Zimmer

NAYS

Members

Angus
Bachrach
Blaikie
Boulerice
Collins (Victoria)
Desjarlais
Gazan
Hughes
Johns
Kwan
Masse
McPherson
Zarrillo— 25

Ashton
Barron
Blaney
Cannings
Davies
Garrison
Green
Idlout
Julian
MacGregor
Mathysen
Singh

PAIRED

Members

Anand
Hoback
Ng

Gallant
Lake
Qualtrough— 6

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* * *

● (1620)

[*Translation*]

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT

The House resumed from June 13 consideration of the motion that Bill C-215, An Act to amend the Employment Insurance Act (illness, injury or quarantine), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Speaker: Pursuant to order made on Thursday, November 25, 2021, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-215 under Private Members' Business.

Private Members' Business

● (1630)

[English]

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

(Division No. 153)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Angus	Arnold
Ashton	Bachrach
Baldinelli	Barlow
Barrett	Barron
Barsalou-Duval	Beaulieu
Benzen	Bergen
Berthold	Bérubé
Bezan	Blaikie
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas
Blaney	Block
Boulerice	Bragdon
Brassard	Brook
Brunelle-Duceppe	Calkins
Cannings	Caputo
Carrie	Chabot
Chambers	Champoux
Chong	Collins (Victoria)
Cooper	Dalton
Dancho	Davidson
Davies	DeBellefeuille
Deltell	d'Entremont
Desbiens	Desilets
Desjarlais	Doherty
Dowdall	Dreeshen
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Ellis
Epp	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Falk (Provencher)	Fast
Ferreri	Findlay
Fortin	Garon
Garrison	Gaudreau
Gazan	Généreux
Gill	Gladu
Godin	Goodridge
Gourde	Gray
Green	Hallan
Hughes	Idlout
Jeneroux	Johns
Julian	Kelly
Kitchen	Kmiec
Kram	Kramp-Neuman
Kurek	Kusie
Kwan	Lantsman
Larouche	Lawrence
Lehoux	Lemire
Lewis (Essex)	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Liepert	Lloyd
Lobb	MacGregor
MacKenzie	Maguire
Martel	Masse
Mathysen	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
Mazier	McCaughey (Edmonton West)
McLean	McPherson
Melillo	Michaud
Moore	Morantz
Morrice	Morrison
Motz	Muys
Nater	Normandin
O'Toole	Patzer
Paul-Hus	Pauzé
Perkins	Perron

Plamondon
Rayes
Reid
Richards
Rood
Savard-Tremblay
Schmale
Shields
Simard
Singh
Soroka
Ste-Marie
Strahl
Thériault
Thomas
Tolmie
Uppal
Vecchio
Vien
Vignola
Vis
Wagantall
Waugh
Williamson
Zimmer— 173

Poillievre
Redekopp
Rempel Garner
Roberts
Ruff
Scheer
Seeback
Shiple
Sinclair-Desgagné
Small
Steinley
Stewart
Stubbs
Therrien
Tochor
Trudel
Van Popta
Vidal
Vierson
Villemure
Vuong
Warkentin
Webber
Zarrillo

NAYS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anandasangaree
Arseneault	Arya
Atwin	Badawey
Bains	Baker
Battiste	Beech
Bendayan	Bennett
Bibeau	Bittle
Blair	Blois
Boissonnault	Bradford
Brière	Carr
Casey	Chagger
Chahal	Champagne
Chatel	Chen
Chiang	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Damoff
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diab	Dong
Drouin	Dubourg
Duguid	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dzerowicz	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Erskine-Smith
Fergus	Fillmore
Fisher	Fonseca
Fortier	Fragiskatos
Fraser	Fry
Gaheer	Garneau
Gerretsen	Gould
Guilbeault	Hajdu
Hanley	Hardie
Hepfner	Holland
Housefather	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Ien	Jaczek
Joly	Jones
Jowhari	Kayabaga
Kelloway	Khalid
Khera	Koutrakis
Kusmierczyk	Lalonde
Lambropoulos	Lametti
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Lattanzio	Lauzon
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier

Government Orders

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

● (1635)
[English]

CRIMINAL CODE

The House resumed from June 14 consideration of the motion that Bill C-5, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, be read the third time and passed.

The Speaker: Pursuant to order made on Thursday, November 25, 2021, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the amendment to the motion at third reading of Bill C-5.

The question is on the amendment. May I dispense?

Some hon. members: No.

[Chair read text of amendment to House]

● (1645)

(The House divided on the amendment, which was negated on the following division:)

(Division No. 154)

YEAS

Members

Abouttaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Arnold	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Benzen	Bergen
Berthold	Bezan
Block	Bragdon
Brassard	Brock
Calkins	Caputo
Carrie	Chambers
Chong	Cooper
Dalton	Dancho
Davidson	Deltell
d'Entremont	Doherty
Dowdall	Dreeshen
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Ellis
Epp	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Falk (Provencher)	Fast
Ferri	Findlay
Généreux	Geniis
Gladu	Godin
Goodridge	Gourde
Gray	Hallan
Jeneroux	Kelly
Kitchen	Kmiec
Kram	Kramp-Neuman
Kurek	Kusie
Lantsman	Lawrence
Lehoux	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
Lloyd	Lobb
MacKenzie	Maguire
Martel	Mazier
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McLean
Melillo	Moore
Morantz	Morrison
Motz	Muys
Nater	O'Toole
Patzer	Paul-Hus
Perkins	Poillievre

Lightbound	Long
Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Martinez Ferrada	May (Cambridge)
McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty
McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLeod	Mendès
Medicino	Miao
Miller	Morrissey
Murray	Naqvi
Noormohamed	O'Connell
Oliphant	O'Regan
Petitpas Taylor	Powlowski
Robillard	Rodriguez
Rogers	Romanado
Sahota	Saks
Samson	Sarai
Scarpaleggia	Schieffe
Serré	Sgro
Shanahan	Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton East)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sorbara	St-Onge
Sudds	Tassi
Taylor Roy	Thompson
Trudeau	Turnbull
Valdez	Van Bynen
van Koeverden	Vandal
Vandenbeld	Virani
Weiler	Wilkinson
Yip	Zahid
Zuberi— 151	

PAIRED

Members

Anand	Gallant
Hoback	Lake
Ng	Qualtrough— 6

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities.

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

The Speaker: We have a point of order from the hon. member for Brampton North.

Ms. Ruby Sahota: Mr. Speaker, the member for Bay of Quinte voted from his assigned seat in the House and then moved to another seat in the chamber before the completion and tally of the vote.

The Speaker: I want to remind hon. members that under the present rules, they must remain in the seat they have chosen when they vote. I am afraid that vote will have to be struck.

We have a point of order from the hon. member for Bay of Quinte.

Mr. Ryan Williams: Mr. Speaker, I inadvertently left. I am going to ask for unanimous consent to allow my vote to stand. I did not mean to do that. It was a rookie mistake.

The Speaker: All those opposed to the hon. member's proposal will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

Government Orders

Rayes
Reid
Richards
Rood
Scheer
Seeback
Shipley
Soroka
Stewart
Stubbs
Tochor
Uppal
Vecchio
Vien
Vis
Wagantall
Waugh
Williams
Zimmer — 117

Redekopp
Rempel Garner
Roberts
Ruff
Schmale
Shields
Small
Steinley
Strahl
Thomas
Tolmie
Van Popta
Vidal
Viersen
Vuong
Warkentin
Webber
Williamson

Ien
Johns
Jones
Julian
Kelloway
Koutrakis
Kwan
Lambropoulos
Lamoureux
Larouche
Lauzon
Lebouthillier
Lightbound
Longfield
MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacGregor
Maloney
Masse
May (Cambridge)
McDonald (Avalon)
McKay
McLeod
Mendès
Miao
Miller
Morrissey
Naqvi
Normandin
Oliphant
Pauzé
Petitpas Taylor
Powlowski
Rodriguez
Romanado
Saks
Sarai
Scarpaleggia
Serré
Shanahan
Sidhu (Brampton East)
Simard
Singh
Ste-Marie
Sudds
Taylor Roy
Therrien
Trudeau
Turnbull
Van Bynen
Vandal
Vignola
Virani
Wilkinson
Zahid
Zuberi — 209

Jaczek
Joly
Jowhari
Kayabaga
Khalid
Kusmierczyk
Lalonde
Lametti
Lapointe
Lattanzio
LeBlanc
Lemire
Long
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Martinez Ferrada
Mathysen
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McGuinty
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McPherson
Mendicino
Michaud
Morrice
Murray
Noormohamed
O'Connell
O'Regan
Perron
Plamondon
Robillard
Rogers
Sahota
Samson
Savard-Tremblay
Schieffe
Sgro
Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sinclair-Desgagné
Sorbara
St-Onge
Tassi
Thériault
Thompson
Trudel
Valdez
van Koeverden
Vandenbeld
Villemure
Weiler
Yip
Zarrillo

NAYS

Members

Aldag
Ali
Angus
Arya
Atwin
Badawey
Baker
Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu
Bendayan
Bérubé
Bittle
Blair
Blanchette-Joncas
Blois
Boulerice
Brière
Cannings
Casey
Chagger
Champagne
Chatel
Chiang
Collins (Victoria)
Coteau
Damoff
DeBellefeuille
Desilets
Dhaliwal
Diab
Drouin
Duclos
Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Ehsassi
Erskine-Smith
Fillmore
Fonseca
Fortin
Fraser
Gaheer
Garon
Gaudreau
Gerretsen
Gould
Guilbeault
Hanley
Hepfner
Housefather
Hussen
Iacono

Alghabra
Anandasangaree
Arseneault
Ashton
Bachrach
Bains
Barron
Battiste
Beech
Bennett
Bibeau
Blaikie
Blanchet
Blaney
Boissonnault
Bradford
Brunelle-Duceppe
Carr
Chabot
Chahal
Champoux
Chen
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Cormier
Dabrusin
Davies
Desbiens
Desjarlais
Dhillon
Dong
Dubourg
Duguid
Dzerowicz
El-Khoury
Fergus
Fisher
Fortier
Fragiskatos
Fry
Garneau
Garrison
Gazan
Gill
Green
Hajdu
Hardie
Holland
Hughes
Hutchings
Idlout

PAIRED

Members

Anand
Hoback
Ng
Gallant
Lake
Qualtrough — 6

The Speaker: I declare the amendment defeated.

[*Translation*]

The next question is on the main motion.

If a member of a recognized party present in the House wishes to request a recorded division or that the motion be adopted on division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

The hon. House leader of the official opposition.

[English]

Mr. John Brassard: Mr. Speaker, we request a recorded division.

• (1700)

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

(Division No. 155)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anandasangaree
Angus	Arseneault
Arya	Atwin
Bachrach	Badawey
Bains	Baker
Barron	Barsalou-Duval
Battiste	Beaulieu
Beech	Bendayan
Bennett	Bérubé
Bibeau	Bittle
Blaikie	Blair
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas
Blaney	Blois
Boissonnault	Boulerice
Bradford	Brière
Brunelle-Duceppe	Cannings
Carr	Casey
Chabot	Chagger
Chahal	Champagne
Champoux	Chatel
Chen	Chiang
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Collins (Victoria)
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Damoff
Davies	DeBellefeuille
Desbiens	Desilets
Desjarlais	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Diab
Dong	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dzerowicz	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Erskine-Smith
Fergus	Fillmore
Fisher	Fonseca
Fortier	Fortin
Fragiskatos	Fraser
Freeland	Fry
Gaheer	Garneau
Garon	Garrison
Gaudreau	Gerretsen
Gill	Gould
Green	Guilbeault
Hajdu	Hanley
Hardie	Hepfner
Holland	Housefather
Hughes	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Ien	Jaczek
Johns	Joly
Jones	Jowhari
Julian	Kayabaga
Kelloway	Khalid
Koutrakis	Kusmierczyk
Kwan	Lalonde
Lambropoulos	Lametti

Lamoureux	Lapointe
Larouche	Lattanzio
Lauzon	LeBlanc
Lebouthillier	Lemire
Lightbound	Long
Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacGregor	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maloney	Martinez Ferrada
Masse	Mathysen
May (Cambridge)	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty
McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLeod	McPherson
Mendès	Mendicino
Miao	Michaud
Miller	Morrice
Morrissey	Murray
Naqvi	Noormohamed
Normandin	O'Connell
Oliphant	O'Regan
Pauzé	Perron
Petitpas Taylor	Plamondon
Powlowski	Robillard
Rodriguez	Rogers
Romanado	Sahota
Saks	Samson
Sarai	Savard-Tremblay
Scarpaleggia	Schiefke
Serré	Shanahan
Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Simard
Sinclair-Desgagné	Singh
Sorbara	Ste-Marie
St-Onge	Sudds
Tassi	Taylor Roy
Thériault	Therrien
Thompson	Trudeau
Trudel	Turnbull
Valdez	Van Bynen
van Koeverden	Vandal
Vandenbeld	Vignola
Villemure	Virani
Weiler	Wilkinson
Yip	Zahid
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Barrett
Bergen
Bezan
Bragdon
Brock
Caputo
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Dancho
Deltell
Doherty
Dreeshen
Ellis
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Fast
Findlay
Genuis
Godin
Goodridge
Hallan

Private Members' Business

Jeneroux	Kelly
Kitchen	Kmiec
Kram	Kramp-Neuman
Kurek	Kusie
Lantsman	Lawrence
Lehoux	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
Lloyd	Lobb
MacKenzie	Maguire
Martel	Mazier
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McLean
Melillo	Moore
Morantz	Morrison
Motz	Muys
Nater	O'Toole
Patzer	Paul-Hus
Perkins	Poilievre
Rayes	Redekopp
Reid	Rempel Garner
Richards	Roberts
Rood	Ruff
Scheer	Schmale
Seeback	Shields
Shipley	Small
Soroka	Steinley
Stewart	Strahl
Stubbs	Thomas
Tochor	Tolmie
Uppal	Van Popta
Vecchio	Vidal
Vien	Viersen
Vis	Vuong
Wagantall	Warkentin
Waugh	Webber
Williams	Williamson
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PAIRED

Members

Anand	Gallant
Hoback	Lake
Ng	Qualtrough — 6

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

(Bill read the third time and passed)

The 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 Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, Health; the hon. member for Edmonton Strathcona, Climate Change; the hon. member for Courtenay—Alberni, Marine Transportation.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*Translation*]

INTERNATIONAL MOTHER LANGUAGE DAY ACT

The House resumed from June 14 consideration of the motion that Bill S-214, An Act to establish International Mother Language Day, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage.

The Speaker: Pursuant to order made on Thursday, November 25, 2021, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill S-214 under Private Members' Business.

● (1710)

[*English*]

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

(*Division No. 156*)

YEAS

Members

Abouttaif	Aitchison
Albas	Aldag
Alghabra	Ali
Allison	Anandasangaree
Angus	Arnold
Arseneault	Arya
Ashton	Atwin
Bachrach	Badawey
Bains	Baker
Baldinelli	Barlow
Barrett	Barron
Barsalou-Duval	Battiste
Beaulieu	Beech
Bendayan	Bennett
Benzen	Bergen
Berthold	Bérubé
Bezan	Bibeau
Bittle	Blaikie
Blair	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Blaney
Block	Boissonnault
Boulerice	Bradford
Bragdon	Brassard
Brière	Brock
Brunelle-Duceppe	Calkins
Cannings	Caputo
Carr	Carrie
Casey	Chabot
Chagger	Chahal
Chambers	Champagne
Champoux	Chatel
Chen	Chiang
Chong	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Collins (Victoria)	Cooper
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Dalton
Damoff	Dancho
Davidson	Davies
DeBellefeuille	Deltell
d'Entremont	Desbiens
Desilets	Desjarlais
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diab	Doherty
Dong	Dowdall
Dreeshen	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Ellis	Epp
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Fast	Fergus
Ferreri	Fillmore
Findlay	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fortin	Fragiskatos
Fraser	Freeland
Fry	Gaheer
Garneau	Garon
Garrison	Gaudreau
Gazan	Généreux
Genuis	Gerretsen

Gill
 Godin
 Gould
 Gray
 Guilbeault
 Hallan
 Hardie
 Holland
 Hughes
 Hutchings
 Idlout
 Jaczek
 Johns
 Jones
 Julian
 Kelloway
 Khalid
 Kitchen
 Koutrakis
 Kramp-Neuman
 Kusie
 Kwan
 Lambropoulos
 Lamoureux
 Lapointe
 Lattanzio
 Lawrence
 Lebouthillier
 Lemire
 Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
 Lightbound
 Lobb
 Longfield
 MacAulay (Cardigan)
 MacGregor
 MacKinnon (Gatineau)
 Maloney
 Martinez Ferrada
 Mathysen
 May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
 McCauley (Edmonton West)
 McGuinty
 McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
 McLeod
 Melillo
 Mendicino
 Michaud
 Moore
 Morrice
 Morrissey
 Murray
 Naqvi
 Noormohamed
 O'Connell
 O'Regan
 Patzer
 Pausé
 Perron
 Plamondon
 Powlowski
 Redekopp
 Rempel Garner
 Roberts
 Rodriguez
 Romanado
 Ruff
 Saks
 Sarai
 Scarpaleggia
 Schiefke
 Seeback
 Sgro
 Sheehan

Gladu
 Goodridge
 Gourde
 Green
 Hajdu
 Hanley
 Hepfner
 Housefather
 Hussen
 Iacono
 Ien
 Jeneroux
 Joly
 Jowhari
 Kayabaga
 Kelly
 Khera
 Kmiec
 Kram
 Kurek
 Kusmierczyk
 Lalonde
 Lametti
 Lantsman
 Larouche
 Lauzon
 LeBlanc
 Lehoux
 Lewis (Essex)
 Liepert
 Lloyd
 Long
 Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
 MacDonald (Malpeque)
 MacKenzie
 Maguire
 Martel
 Masse
 May (Cambridge)
 Mazier
 McDonald (Avalon)
 McKay
 McLean
 McPherson
 Mendès
 Miao
 Miller
 Morantz
 Morrison
 Motz
 Muys
 Nater
 Normandin
 Oliphant
 O'Toole
 Paul-Hus
 Perkins
 Petitpas Taylor
 Poilievre
 Rayes
 Reid
 Richards
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 Schmale
 Serré
 Shanahan
 Shields

Shiely
 Sidhu (Brampton South)
 Sinclair-Desgagné
 Small
 Soroka
 Ste-Marie
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 Tassi
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 Van Bynen
 Van Popta
 Vandenbeld
 Vien
 Vignola
 Virani
 Vuong
 Warkentin
 Webber
 Wilkinson
 Williamson
 Zahid
 Zimmer

NAYS

Nil

PAIRED

Members

Anand
 Hoback
 Ng

Gallant
 Lake
 Qualtrough— 6

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage.

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1715)

[*Translation*]

INFORMATION COMMISSIONER

The Deputy Speaker: It is my duty to lay upon the table, pursuant to subsection 40(1) of the Access to Information Act, the report of the Information Commissioner for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2021.

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(h), this report is deemed permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics.

* * *

[*English*]

PUBLIC SECTOR INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER

The Deputy Speaker: It is my duty to lay upon the table, pursuant to subsection 38(3.3) of the Public Service Disclosure Protection Act, the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner's report for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2022.

Routine Proceedings

Pursuant to Standing Order 32(5), this report is deemed to have been permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates.

* * *

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

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

* * *

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

FINANCE

Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East—Cooksville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the fifth report of the Standing Committee on Finance in relation to the motion adopted on Thursday, February 17, 2022, regarding the invocation of the Emergencies Act and related measures.

I would like to thank our clerk, Alexandre Roger; analysts Brett Capwell, Sylvain Fleury, Michaël Lambert-Racine and Joëlle Malo; the whole team of interpreters, technologists and staff of the committee; and of course all of the members of the committee for their dedicated work on this study and on the report.

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the fifth report of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans, entitled "Traceability and Labelling of Fish and Seafood Products". Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

I would like to thank all the members of the committee for their work, as well as the witnesses who appeared and of course our translation people, our clerk and our analysts for putting the report together for us in such a timely manner.

[*Translation*]

CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a report in both official languages.

[*English*]

This is the second report of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage, in relation to Bill C-11, an act to amend the Broadcasting Act and to make related and consequential amendments to other acts.

The committee has studied the bill and has decided to report the bill back to the House with amendments.

I want to give specific thanks to all the officials, the clerks and the interpreters who helped us with this extraordinary committee work as we went through clause-by-clause, specifically to Mr. Philippe Méla, the legislative clerk.

• (1720)

MEDICAL FREEDOM ACT

Mr. Dean Allison (Niagara West, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-285, An Act to amend the Canadian Human Rights Act, the Canada Labour Code and the Employment Insurance Act.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to introduce my bill, a bill that I believe is crucial at this point in time. I would like to thank my esteemed colleague, the member for Peace River—Westlock, for seconding the bill.

As a Canadian, I am a firm believer in freedom. I believe in the freedom of Canadians to make their own medical choices. That is why, today, I am introducing the medical freedom bill. The bill would amend the Canadian Human Rights Act to add conscientious belief and medical history to the list of prohibited grounds of discrimination. The bill seeks to protect travellers from being banned because of their medical status. It would protect employees from reprisals by their employers because of a medical choice. The bill would also safeguard employees' EI benefits in the event that they are let go because of a medical decision they made for themselves.

Finally, I truly believe this bill to be the start of more legislation and action that would seek to fortify our freedoms and enshrine them to never again be cast aside as they have been in the past year.

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

* * *

RECOGNITION OF FOREIGN CREDENTIALS ACT

Mr. Brad Redekopp (Saskatoon West, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-286, An Act to amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (recognition of foreign credentials).

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is a great honour for me to rise and present my very first private member's bill in this House, the recognition of foreign credentials bill.

I am bringing forward this legislation in my role as deputy shadow minister for immigration to help immigrant communities throughout Canada. This is an issue that I constantly hear about from newcomers to Canada, and it is something I want to improve. Many newcomers to Canada have qualifications to do a particular job in their home country, but a combination of red tape, confusing rules and licensing boards means they cannot practise their profession here in Canada. We all know the examples of doctors driving taxis, nurses working as nannies, or mechanics working as janitors. The system for foreign credential recognition is broken. When newcomers to our country are denied the opportunity to practise their profession, it hurts them and their families, and it negatively affects the Canadian economy, individual businesses and the welfare of all Canadians.

One way to fix this process is by reducing red tape. By giving government the tools to bypass the red tape, the process could be expedited. My proposed legislation would give the government expanded regulatory authority in assessing foreign credentials. It would allow the minister to designate certain foreign education credentials as equivalent to Canadian ones. This would speed up and simplify the ability of newcomers to work in their profession in Canada.

As I said, the largest barrier is red tape, and this bill would remove some of that complexity and confusion. My legislation is one piece of the puzzle. It is not the whole picture, but it is a solid start. When combined with funding announcements, such as the one proposed by my friend, the future leader of the Conservative Party, the member for Carleton, this legislation would go a long way to resolving the issue.

That said, I would ask all members of this House to support this legislation.

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

* * *

CITIZENSHIP ACT

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC) moved that Bill S-245, An Act to amend the Citizenship Act (granting citizenship to certain Canadians), be read the first time.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise today to move first reading of Bill S-245, an act to amend the Citizenship Act with regard to granting citizenship to certain Canadians.

I first want to thank my friend, Senator Yonah Martin, for her leadership on this file and for introducing this bill in the other place, where it passed unanimously.

It is an honour to sponsor this bill here in the House and raise awareness of lost Canadians. These are Canadians who had citizenship before they turned 28, but because of a bureaucratic mistake, they lost their Canadian citizenship and the rights that come with being a Canadian citizen. While many amendments have been made to the Citizenship Act to restore citizenship to lost Canadians, there still remain many Canadians who have been left without citizenship.

I want to thank my colleague and friend, the hon. member for Souris—Moose Mountain, for seconding this bill, and my col-

Routine Proceedings

leagues who have already indicated their support for this very important bill. I hope that all members in this place will also unanimously support Bill S-245 and restore citizenship to lost Canadians.

(Motion agreed to and bill read the first time)

* * *

● (1725)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Longueuil—Charles-LeMoyne, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there have been discussions among the parties and if you seek it, I believe you will find unanimous consent to adopt the following motion:

That, notwithstanding any standing order, special order or usual practice of the House, during consideration of Bill C-14, An Act to amend the Constitution Act, 1867 (electoral representation), at report stage later today, one member of each recognized party and a member of the Green Party be allowed to speak for not more than 10 minutes followed by five minutes for questions and comments, and, at the conclusion of the time provided for debate or when no member rises to speak, whichever is earlier, the question on report stage motion No. 1 be deemed put and negatived on division, the bill be deemed concurred in at the report stage on division and deemed read a third time and passed on division.

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed to the hon. deputy House leader's moving the motion will please say nay.

It is agreed.

The House has heard the terms of the motion. All those opposed to the motion will please say nay.

(Motion agreed to)

Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Longueuil—Charles-LeMoyne, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there have been discussions among the parties and if you seek it, I believe you will find unanimous consent to adopt the following motion:

That a take-note debate on global food insecurity be held on Thursday, June 16, 2022, pursuant to Standing Order 53.1, and that, notwithstanding any standing order, special order, or usual practice of the House: (a) members rising to speak during the debate may indicate to the Chair that they will be dividing their time with another member; (b) the time provided for the debate be extended beyond four hours, as needed, to include a minimum of 12 periods of 20 minutes each; and (c) no quorum calls, dilatory motions or requests for unanimous consent shall be received by the Chair.

[Translation]

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed to the hon. member for Longueuil—Charles-LeMoyne moving the motion will please say nay.

I hear none. The House has heard the terms of the motion. All those opposed to the motion will please say nay.

(Motion agreed to)

Routine Proceedings

[English]

PETITIONS

SRI LANKAN TAMILS

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition. This petition concerns the Tamil Rights Group's communication sent to the Office of the Prosecutor at the International Criminal Court under article 15 of the Rome Statute.

There is mounting evidence that the Tamil population in Sri Lanka was subject to atrocities that amounted to crimes against humanity and war crimes, particularly in the final stages of the civil war that ended in 2009. Parliament recently unanimously adopted a motion to make May 18 Tamil Genocide Remembrance Day, and the petitioners are looking to Canada, which was a state party to the Rome Statute, to refer the situation to the International Criminal Court.

* * *

POINTS OF ORDER

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Longueuil—Charles-LeMoine, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am rising on a point of order to seek unanimous consent to finish Routine Proceedings before proceeding to Private Members' Business hour.

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed to the hon. member's moving the motion will please say nay.

It is agreed.

The House has heard the terms of the motion. All those opposed to the motion will please say nay.

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

● (1730)

PETITIONS

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to present a petition to the House where the citizens who have signed it are calling upon the Prime Minister and the Government of Canada to enact just transition legislation.

They want this legislation to reduce emissions by at least 60% below 2005 levels by the year 2030. They want it to create new public economic institutions that expand public ownership of services and utilities across the economy. They want it to create good, green jobs and drive inclusive workforce development and, finally, they want this transition to be paid for by increasing taxes on the wealthiest and corporations and financing through a public national bank.

PENSIONS

Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Whitby, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of one of my constituents in Whitby, signed by more than 12,000 Canadians from across Canada. Since

1982, more than 250,000 Canadian seniors have suffered the loss of pension income due to corporate insolvency. With over four million Canadians depending on a defined benefit pension for their financial security and retirement, we cannot afford another pension insolvency, like that of Sears or Nortel, which had a negative impact on the financial security of many seniors.

This petition calls upon the government, through the Department of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, to work with all Canadian parliamentarians to undertake a direct consultation, generating specific goals and timelines to ensure that vulnerable seniors receive 100% of their pensions that their employers have committed to.

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I rise to present two petitions today. The first one is one that drew my attention to something that we really need to focus on, which is that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, many years ago now, called on the government to take action to deal with the judicial system and make sure it is cognizant of the challenges to indigenous people in obtaining justice in this country.

The petitioners hearken back to a report from February 2013, when a former judge, the Hon. Frank Iacobucci, issued a report on what happens in terms of jury representation of indigenous peoples. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action 25 to 42 speak directly to this issue.

The petitioners call on the House of Commons to undertake to encourage the provinces to reform their jury selection system in order to ensure that the accused stand before a jury of their peers and not of people who have no understanding of their realities.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, the second petition is from a group called the Physician Mothers of Canada. It calls on the government to take seriously the warnings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change that we are dangerously close to leaping past the important threshold of no more than 1.5°C global average temperature rise.

It calls on the House of Commons and the Government of Canada to eliminate fossil fuels, to move more quickly toward renewable energy, to eliminate single-use plastic and to ensure that there is climate justice in the move away from fossil fuels.

SALMON FISHERY

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Madam Speaker, today I am here to present a petition on behalf of many people who live in the Powell River region of my riding. They are very concerned that the Department of Fisheries and Oceans has not increased community funding to hatcheries or made any adjustments since 1982. The reality is that they just do not have the resources necessary to carry out the Pacific salmon enhancement, conservation and education activities that they do so well with their very limited resources.

Routine Proceedings

The petitioners are asking the Government of Canada to increase the annual contribution agreements to the Powell River Salmon Society and, of course, to ensure proper representation of coastal communities by DFO staff.

[*Translation*]

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Mrs. Sophie Chatel (Pontiac, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am honoured to rise in the House today to table a petition that was started by the council of mayors of the MRC Pontiac and concerns a request for funding to ensure adequate cellular coverage in all rural communities of the Pontiac.

• (1735)

[*English*]

I would like to thank the warden, Jane Toller, for her leadership, and every mayor and regional councillor for their amazing work for the community of Pontiac. They have my full support.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Madam Speaker, I have an important petition that I am presenting today on behalf of over 100 Canadians from coast to coast to coast. They are concerned about companies based in Canada that are contributing to human rights abuses and environmental damage around the world.

We often see situations where human rights activists and environmental activists are being tortured, killed and intimidated. We have seen widespread examples of sexual violence, even slavery, on the sites of Canadian-owned corporations. The undersigned are asking the Canadian government to put in place due diligence legislation that would require companies to prevent adverse human rights impacts and environmental damage, require companies to do their due diligence and ensure a legal right for people who have been harmed to be able to seek justice in Canadian courts.

I would add that my Bill C-262 does exactly that. The petitioners are asking the Canadian government to push forward legislation such as that.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.): Madam Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Nos. 523, 526 and 527.

[*Text*]

Question No. 523—**Mr. Michael Kram:**

With regard to the Green and Inclusive Community Buildings program, of the \$1.5 billion in funding to be delivered, since the program's announcement on April 14, 2021: (a) what are the details of the projects approved to date, including the (i) name of each project approved, (ii) dollar amount of funds distributed to each project, (iii) name of each recipient of funding, (iv) location of each project by city, town or village, (v) province or territory; (b) what are the criteria and metrics used to determine which projects are eligible for funding; and (c) what are the criteria and metrics used to determine which projects receive funds, if different from (b)?

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and

Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to the green and inclusive community buildings program, of the \$1.5 billion in funding to be delivered, since the program's announcement on April 14, 2021, members should please note that Infrastructure Canada provides funding for public infrastructure projects through various programs to provinces, territories, municipalities and other recipients. This response is based on federal funding commitments and does not necessarily reflect when project spending occurred.

Members may refer to the attached annex for information with regard to projects approved to date.

With respect to part (b), all applications are reviewed for eligibility against the following criteria: The applicant must be an eligible applicant type; the applicant must be an eligible applicant type; the building/asset must be an eligible asset type; the building/asset must be a non-commercial community-oriented structure or space that provides open, available and accessible community services to the public; the applicant must have authority over the asset either as the asset owner or by having secured an agreement with the asset owner to carry out the project; the project must be implemented no earlier than April 1, 2021, and no later than March 31, 2026; for retrofits only, the applicant must submit their building's structural information, energy profile and greenhouse gas, GHG, emissions using the RETScreen Expert software; for retrofits only, the project must not lead to an increase in GHG emissions in the building's operation; impacts of climate change have been assessed and considered for the project; the applicant must commit to securing the necessary capital to proceed if approved for federal funding; the applicant must provide all necessary data and supporting documents; the applicant must attest to the manner in which the project will meet relevant building and construction laws and regulations, including completion or planned completion of such environmental assessment and consultation as may be required by federal and provincial/territorial governments; and the applicant must attest to the manner in which the project will align to the building standards and codes that apply to the jurisdiction of the existing building, as applicable.

With respect to part (c), these are the criteria used to assess and evaluate applications. For retrofits, the following criteria apply:

Routine Proceedings

Construction start date: Projects that begin sooner will receive a higher score. Located in and demonstrates the ability to serve one or more communities with high needs: Projects that provide greater benefits to high need communities will receive a higher score. Increased accessibility: Where applicable, projects that demonstrate an intention to exceed (rather than meet) the highest standards for accessibility will receive a higher score. GHG reductions: Projects that demonstrate the ability to achieve greater GHG emission reductions relative to the building's baseline will receive a higher score. Energy savings: Projects that will achieve at least 25% in energy efficiency improvements compared to the building's baseline energy consumption, as calculated with the RETScreen Expert software, will receive a higher score and are more likely to be selected for funding; in select cases, projects with lower energy efficiency improvements could be considered and selected for funding. Climate resiliency and best practices adoption: Projects that demonstrate strong climate resiliency considerations and measures will receive a higher score; projects that provide reasonable and accurate detail for why climate resiliency is not relevant to their project will not be subject to this criterion and will be assessed relative to other project merits. Confidence in delivery/risk: Projects that demonstrate strong risk assessment and mitigation measures will receive a higher score.

Continuous intake retrofit projects with total eligible project costs between \$100,000 and \$2,999,999 are evaluated on a continuous basis, with projects needing to meet or exceed a minimum point threshold in order to be granted funding. Retrofit projects with total eligible project costs between \$3,000,000 and \$25,000,000 are evaluated on a competitive basis, with projects being scored and ranked against one another.

For new builds, the following criteria apply: Construction start date: Projects that begin sooner will receive a higher score. Located in and demonstrates the ability to serve one or more communities with high needs: Projects that provide greater benefits to high needs communities will receive a higher score. Increased accessibility: Projects that demonstrate an intention to exceed (rather than meet) the highest standards for accessibility will receive a higher score. Zero-carbon design standard: Projects that are designed to meet net-zero carbon performance without the need for a transition plan will be scored higher; projects that are exempted from this standard will not be subject to this criterion and will be assessed relative to other project design merits. Climate resiliency and best practices adoption: Projects that demonstrate strong climate resiliency considerations and measures will be scored higher; projects that provide reasonable and accurate detail for why climate resiliency is not relevant to their project will not be subject to this criterion and will be assessed relative to other project merits. Confidence in delivery/risk: Projects that demonstrate a strong risk assessment and mitigation measures will be scored higher.

All new build projects are evaluated on a competitive basis, with projects being scored and ranked against one another.

All of the above information can be found in the green and inclusive community buildings applicant guide at <https://www.infrastucture.gc.ca/alt-format/pdf/gicb-bcvi/GICB-Applicant-Guide-BCVI-Guide-du-demandeur-EN.pdf>

Question No. 526—**Ms. Heather McPherson:**

With regard to orders issued under section 4(1)(b) of the Special Economic Measures Act and section 4(1)(b) of the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act, broken down by year since 2014, month since 2022 and action (freeze, seize or sequester): (a) how many times have these orders been used; (b) how many properties have been frozen, seized or sequestered as a result from these orders; and (c) what is the assessed value of properties frozen, seized or sequestered?

Hon. Robert Oliphant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to (a), (b) and (c), Canada's sanctions regime prohibits persons in Canada and Canadians abroad from engaging in activities related to the property of sanctioned persons, including the provision of financial or related services. As a result, the assets of sanctioned persons are effectively frozen. They cannot be sold and they cannot be transferred, making transactions involving these assets prohibited.

Together with like-minded international partners, the Government of Canada evaluates potential targets for sanctions that would have the greatest impact on the Russian government and put maximum pressure on President Putin.

Through budget 2022, the Government of Canada is proposing amendments to the Special Economic Measures Act and the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act that will allow courts to order seized or restrained property belonging to sanctioned persons, including Russian elites, oligarchs and their proxies, to be forfeited to the Crown.

The proceeds generated from forfeited assets may be used for the reconstruction of a foreign state adversely affected by grave breaches of international peace and security, the restoration of international peace and security, and the compensation of victims affected by grave breaches of international peace and security, gross and systematic human rights violations or acts of significant corruption.

The management and disposal of assets are expected to be handled by the Minister of Public Services and Procurement Canada under the Seized Property Management Act. These changes will make Canada's sanctions regime a leader in the G7.

The Government of Canada has also recently proposed legislation that would render foreign nationals sanctioned in response to Russian aggression in Ukraine inadmissible to Canada. These changes would allow Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada officials to deny temporary visas overseas. They would also allow the Canada Border Services Agency to deny entry to, and remove, individuals subjected to sanctions.

Routine Proceedings

Federally regulated financial institutions, or FRFIs, are regulated and supervised by Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions, OSFI. This includes foreign banks operating in Canada. OSFI expects FRFIs to comply with all relevant Canadian sanctions legislation and to ensure they have adequate procedures in place to comply on an ongoing basis with existing laws and any future laws.

Disclosures on the existence of sanctioned assets are made by reporting entities, such as Canadian financial institutions, to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the RCMP.

The approach adopted by the Government of Canada has been to use sanctions authorities under section 4(1)(a) of both the Special Economic Measures Act, or SEMA, and the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act, or JVCFOA, to prohibit certain activities through regulations made under the relevant acts.

Question No. 527—**Mr. Chris Lewis:**

With regard to delays in the processing of applications for Temporary Foreign Workers (TFW): (a) what is the current processing time; (b) how many applications are still awaiting a decision or are still being processed as of April 29, 2022; (c) what are the government's specific targets, including the related timelines, for reducing the processing times; (d) what is the breakdown of (a) and (b) by sector and occupation; (e) how many government employees or full-time equivalents were assigned to processing TFW applications as of (i) January 1, 2020, (ii) April 29, 2022; and (f) how many employees who process TFW applications were on leave as of April 29, 2022, due to not meeting the government's vaccine attestation requirements?

Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to (a), as of April 30, 2022, the current monthly average processing time for employers seeking labour market impact assessments, or LMIAs, from Service Canada to support the entry of temporary foreign workers, TFWs, was 37 business days. The processing times vary between program streams and by processing regions.

With regard to (b), as of April 29, 2022, 11,044 LMIA applications from 7,421 employers are awaiting a decision.

With regard to (c), to address the high program demand—which, as a reference, is 49% higher than forecast for April 2022—reduce the inventory and improve processing times, the program has increased its resources and since January has doubled its productivity, with approximately 2,000 files processed per week. As a result of these efforts, the national average processing time went from 44 business days in February 2022 to 37 business days in April 2022. The department has seen continuous improvement, largely due to the implementation of processing improvements, including streamlining and simplification measures.

With regard to (d), average processing times of the top 10 sectors of LMIA applications assessed in April 2022 were as follows: Full-service restaurants and limited-service eating places, 35 business days; computer services and related services, 23 business days; private households, 25 business days; cattle ranching and farming, 33 business days; general freight trucking, 66 business days; vegetable and melon farming, 24 business days; fruit and tree nut farming, 21 business days; residential building construction, 40 business days; building finishing contractors, 32 business days; services to buildings and dwellings, 49 business days.

Average processing times of the top 10 occupations of LMIA applications assessed in April 2022 were as follows: General farm workers, 28 business days; cooks, 34 business days; food service supervisors, 35 business days; home child care providers, 25 business days; transportation truck drivers, 80 business days; retail sales supervisors, 37 business days; administrative assistants, 34 business days; software engineers and designers, 15 business days; computer programmers and interactive media developers, 19 business days; carpenters, 39 business days.

Sectors, as based on the North American industry classification system, or NAICS, and occupations, as based on the national occupational classification, or NOC, are only entered into the LMIA system when the assessment has started or a decision has been rendered. Therefore, as of April 29, 2022, only 25% of all current applications awaiting a decision have a sector and occupation assigned to them. Processing times listed for the sectors and occupations just mentioned are for completed files.

With regard to (e), the program had approximately 400 full-time equivalent, FTE, employees assigned to it in 2020. By the end of April 2022, program capacity exceeded 500 FTEs, and 60 additional bilingual resources are expected to be hired in the short term.

With regard to (f), information on employees on leave without pay by program is not available.

* * *

[English]

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURN

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.): Madam Speaker, if the government's response to Questions Nos. 521, 522, 524 and 525 could be made orders for return, these returns would be tabled immediately.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 521—**Mr. Len Webber:**

With regard to electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure in Canada: (a) what does the government project to be the number of registered EVs in Canada for each of the next 10 years for each province and territory; (b) what is the projected infrastructure investment in electrical grids in each province and territory required to meet this demand; (c) what is the projected number of public charging stations in each province and territory over each of the next 10 years; (d) how much (i) has the government contributed to EV infrastructure in each of the past five years in each province and territory, (ii) is the government projecting to contribute in each of the next 10 years in each province and territory; and (e) what federal standards are being considered for EV charging infrastructure?

(Return tabled)

Private Members' Business

Question No. 522—**Mr. Len Webber:**

With regard to correspondence received by ministers: (a) how many pieces of correspondence (both mail and email) have been received by each minister in each of the past four years (2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021); (b) for each of the past four years, (i) what is the average response time for a final response to correspondence received from members of Parliament, (ii) what is the average response time for a final response to correspondence received from non-members of Parliament, (iii) when does the oldest unresolved correspondence file date back to, (iv) how many pieces of correspondence did not receive a response; (c) what are the targeted service standards; (d) how many pieces of correspondence were redirected to another individual for a final response; and (e) for each minister's correspondence unit, (i) what is the total annual budget, (ii) how many employees are assigned to handle ministerial correspondence, (iii) what other metrics are recorded and tracked by the correspondence units?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 524—**Mr. Terry Dowdall:**

With regard to contracts provided to consultants related to the processing of requests made under the Access to Information Act and the Privacy Act (ATIP), signed since January 1, 2020: (a) what are the details of all such contracts, including for each the (i) vendor, (ii) value, (iii) date, (iv) description of services provided, (v) start and end dates of the contract, (vi) number of ATIPs processed by the consulting vendor, (vii) file number, if known; and (b) of the ATIP requests received since January 1, 2020, and broken down by month, how many have been assigned to (i) government employees, (ii) consultants for processing?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 525—**Mr. John Nater:**

With regard to Canadian military equipment and other government assets left behind in Afghanistan following the Taliban takeover in 2021: (a) what is the total estimated value of the equipment left behind; and (b) what is the breakdown of the equipment left behind, including the (i) description, (ii) volume, (iii) value of each item left behind?

(Return tabled)

[English]

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.): Madam Speaker, I ask that all notices of motions for the production of papers be allowed to stand.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): It being 5:37 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

BANKRUPTCY AND INSOLVENCY ACT

The House resumed from April 1 consideration of the motion that Bill C-228, An Act to amend the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act, the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act and the Pension Benefits Standards Act, 1985, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.): Madam Speaker, Bill C-228 has been introduced by the member for Sarnia—Lambton, and I first want to express my support for her passion as it relates to the bill.

The concept of superpriority, in terms of making sure that it is put in the proper order, is something that I have been interested in since I first arrived in the House. I am very interested in seeing the bill go to committee so that the committee can do the proper work and send its recommendations back to the House. Unfortunately, over time, we have seen a shift in the way that corporations treat their employees, quite frankly. We have seen a number of corporations, and some even within my riding, declare bankruptcy and, as a result, give themselves the ability to neglect payments to pensioners in particular.

Shortly after I was elected, I was very impressed by a group from the Invista plant in Kingston, which manufactures nylon. A group of not employees but managers came forward. They would not have been affected by any legislation such as this. The group was led by Peter Strauss and some other individuals from my riding. They came forward, as previous management of this plant, on behalf of the employees who would be affected when decisions were made to allow companies to declare bankruptcy in these positions. I was very moved by that, because it showed that there was deep concern.

We have to reflect on the fact that there are many pensioners out there who paid into pensions throughout their working careers and are, quite frankly, relying on this income at the end of their careers for their retirement. In many cases, individuals are limited with respect to how much they can contribute to RRSPs if they are expecting to receive a pension that they are paying into. It should certainly not be the fault of individual employees, pensioners, if a company declares bankruptcy once they have retired.

I was really concerned a few years ago after seeing some corporations declare bankruptcy. I think of Sears in particular, and when it declared bankruptcy. Prior to declaring bankruptcy, it started to move assets into other companies. For example, it moved buildings and land into other companies so that it could shield those assets from the bankruptcy and insolvency operations that would take place once the company put itself in that position. I can see the frustration that some individuals would have around circumstances like that, and I know that they would be extremely upset to discover that this type of activity had been happening. However, the reality is that this is the model allowed for these corporations.

• (1740)

I can appreciate the fact that if we set the environment for corporations to act in a certain way, they are going to act in that way. If we make it allowable for corporations to move assets around and basically skirt some responsibilities in the interests of profit, because there are very few human elements to the capitalist system, the default reaction unfortunately is that the very nature of it is going to encourage companies to do that. Therefore, it falls upon government, quite frankly: the policy-makers and lawmakers, to set the proper environment to ensure that individuals are properly taken care of in circumstances like this.

Having said all this, I was part of a small working group a number of years ago. We were looking at and studying this issue, and I know that there are some concerns out there. I do not, at this point, necessarily agree with those concerns, but I know that there are some around what this does to an individual corporation's ability to access financing from a bank. There are some out there that I recall having told us that it would make it more difficult to leverage capital, so I realize that there are various elements to this and variables that need to be considered. I really hope that at the end of the day we can focus on making sure that the individuals who have in good faith relied on institutions, in this case their employers, to manage their retirement funds have it done in a proper way.

I look forward to this bill continuing to go through the debate process. I am personally in support of seeing this go to committee so that the proper study can be done. I look forward to hearing about that as it comes back from committee, so that I can then inform myself to make a decision on how to vote for this. At this point, it is certainly something that I am very interested in, given the comments that I have made to this point.

• (1745)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette, BQ): Madam Speaker, I am honoured to rise today to speak to Bill C-228, which was introduced by the member for Sarnia—Lambton. This is a very important bill. I sincerely commend my colleague and congratulate her on the work she does in the House.

In theory, every elected member is allowed to introduce their own bill in the House of Commons during every Parliament. Not everyone has the opportunity to do so, since there is very little time. Each one of us would have all kinds of bills to introduce. When a member like the member for Sarnia—Lambton has the opportunity to introduce a bill, that is a very fortunate event, and I sincerely thank her for choosing this topic. This bill, if passed, will correct what I consider to be a serious injustice. Based on what we have been hearing in the House, I have a lot of faith that this bill will move forward. It may even be passed. I tip my hat to my colleague, sincerely.

In my riding of Joliette, my colleague Véronique Hivon represents us in the National Assembly. She has announced that she will not be seeking re-election after 14 years of dedicated service. The lesson I take from her is that we need to work across party lines, make connections that go beyond party boundaries and political games, and work together for the common good to make a difference. I truly believe that each and every one of us is here in the

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House because we want to make things better for people, and the member for Sarnia—Lambton's Bill C-228 is proof of that.

As my colleagues know, Bill C-228 amends the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act and the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act to better protect workers' pension plans. When a business goes bankrupt, it is always a great tragedy. If it is a family business, then it is a tragedy for the family. It is also a tragedy for the community where the company does business. However, it is even more tragic for the workers who depend on the jobs that business provides to earn their living. Any bankruptcy is a tragedy, of course, but it particularly affects pensioners. That is what the bill before us would correct. It seeks to better protect pension plans in the event of bankruptcy.

Everyone remembers the case of White Birch, which went bankrupt in 2010, I believe. The workers lost about half of their pensions because the pension plan was not adequately funded. It was such a tragedy. Those people had worked hard all their lives—those were not easy jobs—to make enough money to be considered middle class and, for all those years, they had been contributing to a pension fund so they could retire. They believed they would work hard, get up early every morning to earn their keep, and then, at 65 or so, they would be able to go at a slower pace for the rest of their lives and enjoy what they had put aside through the pension plan. However, overnight, these people, who had budgeted very carefully, knowing that people have less income in retirement than when they are working, saw half their income disappear because the company went bankrupt.

Finally, we learned that pension funds, pension plans are unsecured creditors, so once the taxes owing to the government are paid, and all the other higher ranking creditors are paid, there is practically nothing left for underfunded pension liabilities like that. These are terrible situations that ruin lives.

The bill introduced by my esteemed colleague from Sarnia—Lambton includes several aspects, but basically it seeks to ensure that pension plans are given a higher priority when creditors are being paid off. This would help to better shelter pension funds to ensure that the pensions are paid.

• (1750)

Earlier, I spoke about working together across party lines, and so I thank the member for choosing to present her bill to the media together with my Bloc Québécois colleague, the member for Manicouagan.

During the 42nd Parliament, from 2015 to 2019, Cliffs, a company in my colleague from Manicouagan's riding, went bankrupt, leaving many workers in a difficult situation. The United Steelworkers stepped in and miraculously managed to reduce pension losses, but the harm had already been done. As a result, my colleague then introduced a bill similar to this one.

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What is different today is that we have a minority government. The people voted this government in, but they did not give it free rein, which means that it must answer to all parliamentarians, a majority of whom are not from the same political party. That gives the House, this Parliament, some leverage and makes it possible for bills like my colleague's to be passed.

In this case, the Liberals might be changing their stance, since they want to study this bill in committee, so at least the bill will make it that far. Let us hope that we will be able to improve it and get it through the other stages. Obviously, there will be work to do in committee. Questions will need to be answered. We will have to make sure that we understand every part of the bill so that everything is done properly, according to the rules. That is what committee work is for. I am sure we can make that happen.

This issue is obviously very important to us. We see that federal-regulated businesses would also be protected by the change to the Pension Benefits Standards Act, 1985. This affects 3% of the labour force in Quebec. In her bill, my colleague from Manicouagan also proposed raising group insurance to the rank of preferred creditor. This is not the case here and that is something that could be discussed by the committee.

As I was saying, the principle of the bill is honourable. The member did not have to introduce this bill, and I commend her for deciding to do so.

I will certainly ask a question in committee about the possibility of transferring rather than liquidating the pension fund. I will also have questions about the possibility of an employee taking out insurance to cover all or part of a potential deficit in the pension fund. When Groupe Capitaux Médias declared bankruptcy, the workers of the various daily and weekly papers in Quebec belonging to the group lost part of their pensions. In contrast, workers at the newspaper *Le Droit*, based in Ottawa, will receive almost their entire pension thanks to insurance. This measure is already in place in Ontario, but not in Quebec, and I think that Quebec would do well to consider this model.

After the White Birch bankruptcy, the first case that really struck me, there was the Cliffs case on the north shore. I was elected at the same time as my colleague from Manicouagan, and this second case really shook us up. It was at that point that my colleagues and I got a better grasp of the issue. However, since then, there have been more cases. I just spoke about Groupe Capitaux Médias, but there are others. I remember in particular the Sears bankruptcy, which the member for Sarnia—Lambton and I went through.

How many dozens or hundreds of families of retired workers run the risk of losing half or even more of their retirement pensions because a company did not adequately fund their pension plan before declaring bankruptcy? In my opinion, it is our role in the House as legislators to correct this shortcoming by raising the creditor ranking of pensioners so they are better protected.

In closing, I would like to again thank the member for Sarnia—Lambton.

• (1755)

[English]

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to be speaking to Bill C-228, which addresses pensions in the case of bankruptcy or insolvency. For the NDP, this addresses something that has been a long-term concern for us. We know pensioners are really made fragile when they lose a significant part of their pension. We know it is absolutely devastating when workers who worked so hard for a company, workers who spent their lives dedicated and loyal doing that work, lose their pension on the other side or know they are going to lose their pension.

Whenever I think of this issue, I always think of Pat Horgan, who was a former member of my constituency. He passed away several years ago. I remember him sharing his story of his many years of dedication to Safeway, where he travelled quite a distance to work and support his family. He spent many, many years of his life working really hard. His amazing pension provided a solid foundation for his family. He retired early to care for a young son. Pat was making \$2,700 a month, and when everything fell apart, his pension went from \$2,700 down to \$72 a month.

This happens to Canadians in our country, and that is why this type of legislation is so important. This is why we are holding the government to support this. It needs to understand that, when it puts Canadians in that situation, when it tells companies everybody is above the workers, it really disenfranchises those folks. It means that, when they retire, they do not have that stability.

Pat, in his retirement, had to go back to work. He had to go back to work to support his family. I remember him saying to me he was grateful he had the health and well-being to work, even though as he got older and older it became harder and harder for him. This is why it is so important that we are here today.

Pensions are deferred wages. This is how we plan for our future and for our retirement. When someone gets older, one faces multiple challenges because of aging. If someone does not have the pension they worked so hard for, and everybody else walks away with the money they need while that person is left in a fragile and vulnerable position, it is simply not fair. It is an injustice. It is unfair, and it finally needs to be dealt with. Worker pensions should not be at the bottom of the list. I am so hopeful this bill will get to where it needs to get because it would take the steps that are much needed toward fixing this.

I need to be honest. I was a little worried in the very beginning if I would support this bill or not. My caucus and I had some very important concerns, which we brought forward to the member for Sarnia—Lambton. Happily, some commitments, discussions and agreed upon changes, and I thank the member for that important work, will allow this caucus to vote in favour of the bill.

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Because of this work, yesterday, together with the NDP member for Elmwood—Transcona, the Bloc member for Manicouagan and, of course, the member for Sarnia—Lambton, all three opposition parties were able to announce their collaboration on this bill.

I need to take this opportunity of course to thank my dear friend Mr. Scott Duvall, who is the former member of Parliament for Hamilton Mountain. He worked diligently both in the 42nd Parliament and the 43rd Parliament to get this work done and introduced his own bill in the 42nd Parliament. I know he worked so hard with the Bloc to get the bill through, and we did not see it get where it needed to in the other place because of an election that was called for no reason.

I am so happy to be having this discussion because Scott Duvall committed his life to this work. He lived through this. He came from a union background and had seen this happen. He had worked to support workers and was absolutely dedicated. I really respect the work he continues to do, and I hope this gets over the finish line. I know he would be really happy to see that.

Currently, we know our laws leave workers behind. I believe it is extremely important not only to amend the bankruptcy laws to ensure not only that unfunded liabilities for pension funds are honoured over both secured and unsecured creditors but also that companies can no longer stop payment of retirement benefits during the bankruptcy proceedings. This is another factor that is really important to understand.

• (1800)

These long processes have such a profound impact in the short term and long term for workers. We know that when there is the significant loss within a community of a big organization or business, it really has a profound impact, especially on smaller rural and remote communities like those that I represent. This is important. I am seeing this right now in a bit of a different circumstance with the mill in Powell River where folks are waiting to move on, but they are not getting any termination or severance pay. They are waiting for that. That is what happens in bankruptcies. People are waiting because all of the secured creditors get to go first. There is a pattern for businesses in trouble to leave workers hanging, unable to bridge the gap and move forward in a meaningful way. Our federal laws need to be improved to support workers.

That is the foundation of this for me and I hope it is for all of us as we vote on this. We have to make sure that workers are recognized in our country. All too often we have systems in place where workers stay poor while the people at the very top walk away with a lot of resources. When people work hard for a company, when they wake up every day and show their dedication and loyalty by showing up for work and helping that business grow its own resources, its own wealth, we have to make sure that when it gets tough, those people are not left behind.

As the NDP's spokesperson for seniors, I have spoken to many seniors who have had this experience and have significant challenges financially when they retire. It can become very significant if they lose their pensions.

One of the concerns I have with this bill is it does not really include protection for health care benefits during the insolvency pro-

cess. This is concerning to me. I have talked to a significant number of seniors in my riding who really struggle with health care costs.

I was talking to someone not too long ago who was talking about diabetes medication and how hard it is to make ends meet now because that person does not have any extra resources. We also know that as people age, dental care becomes increasingly more important and is a huge deterrent to health. I have talked to seniors who struggle to chew their food and are having to blend their food in a blender to make sure they get the healthy nutrients they need.

One senior told me that she lost her pension because of a bankruptcy and is now in a position where she has significant dental work that needs to be done. She is trying to save up for it. She keeps getting a recurring infection in her gums. Her dental professionals are trying to make that work without her losing any more of her teeth. I cannot imagine being in that circumstance.

This is an important part. We need to make sure that those things are put in place. I know this is exactly why the NDP is fighting so hard to get dental care in this country for low-income people, especially vulnerable people with health issues, persons living with disabilities, seniors and children. We need to make sure that people have that opportunity. Often when people lose their dental health, they lose so many other opportunities in their life.

In closing, I look forward to having this bill go to committee and for all of us to work together to amend it and make some changes so that we can serve the workers across this country who build our communities, who pay their taxes and do all they can. We want to make sure when they retire that they are protected. Hopefully, we will get there.

I want to again thank the member who brought this bill forward for her hard work, her diligence and her ability to work across party lines. I think that is a real testament to some of the work we do in this place.

Mrs. Shelby Kramp-Neuman (Hastings—Lennox and Addington, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am very happy to rise today to speak to this very important piece of legislation tabled by my colleague from Sarnia—Lambton.

Pension protection has been at the forefront of our legislature for what seems like years. Every Parliament has had various attempts to protect worker pensions from insolvency. They are tabled and it seems that every Parliament has this issue which we all agree is important, but it dies on the Order Paper.

Private Members' Business

Hopefully, Bill C-228, an act to amend the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act, the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act and the Pension Benefits Standards Act, 1985, will finally see our legislature take concrete action to protect Canadian workers and their hard-earned pensions.

Bill C-228 amends the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act and the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act to ensure that claims in respect of unfunded liabilities or its solvency deficiencies of a pension plan are accorded priority in the event of bankruptcy proceedings. It also provides that an employer has to maintain group insurance plans and provide benefits to, or in respect of, its employees or former employees.

This area has particular importance to me given my previous career as a financial adviser and current career as the official opposition's shadow minister for seniors. Workers spend their entire lives building something for them to enjoy during their golden years. Bill C-228 is a big step forward in securing those years for future generations.

This legislation builds off two previous pieces of legislation that were before the House: Bill C-405 in the 42nd Parliament and Bill C-253 in the 43rd Parliament.

Bill C-405, which was tabled by my hon. colleague from Durham, was unfortunately defeated at second reading. The logic from the government according to the now Minister of Justice, was that the "proposed changes reduce the flexibility of courts based on particular situations and facts. These current flexibilities help to achieve the best outcome for the company and the pensioners and they might conflict with important policy objectives." The NDP felt that the legislation did not accurately protect pensions.

The following Parliament saw a little more progress on the file. The member for Manicouagan managed to garner enough support to send her attempt to committee despite opposition from the Liberals, who claimed:

[T]he employee group benefit claims would be weakened and that could ultimately weaken companies in their ability to restructure and affect that sense of competitiveness of firms with respect to defined benefit pension plans as well as group insurance benefit plans, which would not necessarily help pensioners and workers in all cases. It has the potential to threaten the existence of defined pension plans.

While the bill may not have been perfect, we on this side of the House were willing to put the financial security of Canadians ahead of any partisan differences and we pledged to send the bill to committee so that it could be improved. Over seven meetings and after consultations with dozens of witnesses and expert testimony, the bill was returned to Parliament amended and improved.

I bring up Bill C-253 because this legislation that we are speaking about here today is very much a spiritual successor to that earlier piece of legislation. The two pieces of legislation share a very large amount of the same text. What Bill C-228 does is build on the very good work that was done on the file in the last parliamentary sitting by amending the Pension Benefits Standards Act, 1985, to empower the Superintendent of Financial Institutions to determine that the funding of a pension plan is impaired or that the pension plan administrator is at risk and to set out measures to be taken by the employer in respect of the funding of the plan in such cases.

• (1805)

Michael Powell, president of the Canadian Federation of Pensioners, said:

We support Bill C-253 and the extension of superpriority to pension deficits. This is the simplest solution to meaningfully improve pension protection for Canadian seniors.

In our Canadian regulatory environment, the only single place to protect pensions is within insolvency regulations. This committee and Parliament face a decision between the status quo—which leaves seniors' future financial well-being at risk and perpetuates an unfair system designed to exclude seniors from protecting their own financial interests, an unfair system that has been proven to significantly harm older Canadians—and a new future that offers protection to vulnerable seniors.

Mr. Hassan Yussuff, former president of the Canadian Labour Congress, was also supportive, saying, "The CLC, of course, supports Bill C-253, and I want to thank the members who voted to advance this bill."

Unfortunately, an election call meant the death knell for Bill C-253. While the bill itself is dead, the spirit of co-operation among all parties that followed Bill C-253 need not be.

During debate on Bill C-253, the legislation's previous iteration of Bill C-228, the former member for Hamilton Mountain called for support of the legislation, even though he had a similar piece of legislation tabled before the House, Bill C-259. Unless I missed my mark, that legislation has been reintroduced in this Parliament by the member for Elmwood—Transcona as Bill C-225. The former member for Hamilton Mountain said, "I feel strongly about the necessity of these protections put forward, so much that my bill, Bill C-259, contains equivalent measures to every article contained in this bill. I would like to let her and the House know that I am calling on all my NDP colleagues to support the bill at second reading and I hope to see it get to committee."

I hope my honourable friend and his party will continue down the path of co-operation and multipartisanship that his predecessor did.

I mentioned earlier how I had a previous life as a financial adviser. I saw first-hand the complete destruction of livelihoods that tore through Hastings—Lennox and Addington when Nortel and Sears went belly up. The financial security of nearly 37,000 Canadians went up in smoke overnight.

These were terrible lessons that affected every single one of our ridings and lessons that we cannot continue to ignore. We, as a legislature, need to work toward protecting Canadian pensioners. We have before us a piece of legislation that has previously received support from the majority of parties in this House. It is a piece of legislation that, in fact, has been tabled by two separate parties. How often can we say that? It is a piece of legislation that has already gone through the scrutiny of a parliamentary committee and debate.

I would suggest to my colleagues in the House that we do the right thing, pass Bill C-228 into law and avoid the fate of so many other attempts to protect Canadian pensioners.

• (1810)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné (Terrebonne, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would like to begin by thanking my esteemed colleague, the member for Sarnia—Lambton, for introducing Bill C-228 and for working across party lines throughout the process, working with all the opposition parties on a bill that matters very much to the Bloc Québécois.

I would also like to express my appreciation to my colleague from Manicouagan, who began working hard on Bill C-228's precursor in 2015. She has really done some outstanding work.

We are here to talk about Bill C-228, which amends the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act and the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act. The amendments would:

...ensure that claims in respect of unfunded liabilities or solvency deficiencies of pension plans and claims relating to the cessation of an employer's participation in group insurance plans are paid in priority in the event of bankruptcy proceedings.

It also amends the *Pension Benefits Standards Act, 1985* to provide that an employer may provide financial security in the form of insurance for any portion of the contributions that they are required to pay under subsections 9(1.1) and (1.2) of the Act...

Basically, this means that the enactment:

...to authorize the administrator of [a potentially] underfunded pension plan, in certain situations [including bankruptcy], to transfer or permit the transfer of any part of the assets or liabilities of the pension plan to another pension plan. The amendments also provide for the tabling of an annual report respecting the solvency of pension plans.

I would like to begin by providing a bit of context. My hon. colleague from Joliette touched on this.

One important factor in the history of all the bills on this issue is of course the bankruptcy of the American company Cliffs Natural Resources. The two Canadian subsidiaries operating its facilities, at Bloom Lake in Pointe-Noire and in Wabush, were placed under the protection of the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act in 2015.

As a result, Cliffs Natural Resources announced plans to reorganize its operations with a view to closing down its operations in eastern Canada. This restructuring had serious repercussions for Cliffs' employees, as well as for its retired workers who lost much of their pension and group insurance.

During the 42nd Parliament—that is, from 2015 to 2019—my esteemed colleague, the member for Manicouagan, introduced Bill C-372, a bill to protect workers' pension funds. Debated for

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just one hour, the bill, which was intended to prevent injustices like the injustice done to Cliffs workers, sought to ensure that this would not happen again and that other retirees would not lose the pensions they worked for all their lives. Unfortunately, the bill was never acted upon because the Liberal majority government at the time did not implement it.

Throughout the last Parliament, the Bloc Québécois worked very hard, particularly with the other opposition parties, to protect pension funds, but unfortunately that work did not bear fruit. To buy time, the government appointed the former minister of seniors to hold a consultation and, again, that led to absolutely nothing. Since then, we have also seen the bankruptcies of Sears and Groupe Capitaux Médias.

With the economic turmoil caused by the pandemic, there is every reason to believe that there will be more bankruptcies and that workers must be protected to ensure that, in the event of a bankruptcy, they have access to a pension fund.

I would like to take this opportunity to quote a very important part of the press conference my esteemed colleague from Manicouagan gave, in collaboration with the esteemed member for Sarnia—Lambton: “A pension fund is deferred wages resulting from an agreement between workers and a company. When a company decides to breach that contract and pay off its debt by using that money, that is theft, plain and simple.”

• (1815)

While all the opposition parties have introduced a bill to protect workers' pensions, we have the opportunity, as parliamentarians, to move quickly through each stage of the legislative process to ensure that pension plans are protected as soon as possible. We have this opportunity because we are in a minority government. For once, the opposition parties can join forces, set partisanship aside, and get this bill passed to help these workers.

No one will be surprised to learn that the Bloc Québécois supports the principle of Bill C-228. Currently, when an employer declares bankruptcy, what they owe the pension fund is considered an unsecured claim. Also, once secured creditors and preferred claims are paid, there is practically nothing left to replenish the undercapitalized pension funds. The result is that pensioners end up with reduced pensions, sometimes drastically so.

The overall objective of Bill C-228 is quite similar, in that it is designed to better protect pension funds in the event of bankruptcy. When a company is being restructured in accordance with the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act or when it is being liquidated in accordance with the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act, Bill C-228 would designate pension plans as preferred creditors, as was proposed in the Bloc Québécois bill that died on the Order Paper when the election was called before it reached report stage.

Bill C-228 is, however, missing one of the provisions in the Bloc Québécois's bill, a provision that would have also designated group insurance plans as preferred creditors. We are prepared to accept this omission to ensure that this bill is passed. It does not provide the same level of protection for workers, although it is an improvement over what we have now.

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Bill C-228 also contains amendments to the Pension Benefits Standards Act of 1985 that were not included in the Bloc Québécois bill. These changes only affect federally regulated businesses, such as telecommunications companies, banks and inter-provincial or international transportation companies, or about 3% of Quebec's workforce. These changes provide some flexibility to the administrator of a pension fund. The bill allows an employer to purchase insurance to cover all or part of the pension fund's deficit. This provision harmonizes the federal legislation with the Ontario legislation, where there is an insurance fund for pensions. This is a good measure. Quebec should use it as an example.

When Capital Media went bankrupt, the retired workers from various local daily newspapers lost part of their pension, while those from *Le Droit*, based in Ottawa, managed to hang on to nearly all of theirs. Under this legislation, instead of emptying the pension fund upon bankruptcy, the administrator of the fund would be allowed to transfer it to another one. This measure does raise some questions. Does it salvage anything, or does it prevent the fund from being bailed out by the employer's assets? This would have to be examined.

Generally speaking, the bill is a step forward in protecting seniors. After all, a retired worker's pension is deferred wages, as my colleague from Manicouagan said. There is no reason why salary should be considered a priority claim, but not retirement.

Once and for all, we must put an end to this measure that is burdening Quebec workers and retirees. We must guarantee them the financial security they deserve. Once again, this bill draws heavily on former Bill C-253, which was introduced in the House.

We must lead by example. Workers' interests must come before partisanship. That is what we are doing today.

• (1820)

[*English*]

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is very encouraging to hear all parties in the House agree that this bill needs to go to committee. Over the last 10 years, there have been multiple attempts by multiple parties to address the issue of pension protection in Canada. We have seen countless Canadians impacted: They have not received their severance or have received pennies on the dollar.

Bill C-228 would do three things. First, it would allow the annual report on the solvency of funds to be tabled here in the House so that it is a matter of public record and we know which funds are in trouble. Second, it would provide a mechanism to transfer money into those funds without tax implications to top them up and restore them to solvency. That is really where we want to be. Third, in the case of bankruptcy, the bill would make pensions a priority, after source deductions and taxes and suppliers take back their goods, but before large creditors and unsecured creditors. That is where we have put the priority for pensioners to receive their due.

I thank the member for Manicouagan and the member for Elmwood—Transcona for the many discussions we have had on things we need to do to the bill to try to address concerns. I also thank the members who have spoken tonight: the member for Kingston and the Islands, members from the Bloc, my colleague from Hastings—

Lennox and Addington and even the member for Whitby, who presented a petition in the House on pension protection. This just shows that the time is right for us to work together and get this right at committee.

One thing we are going to be working on and talking about at committee is cleaning up some of the clauses. There were a number of bills and each one of them had something in it that everybody did not like. When we were cleaning up some of the things we did not like in the previous bill, Bill C-405, a couple of clauses got left behind, so we got rid of them.

The insurance idea is something people want to talk about at committee. Some people like that idea and some people do not. The NDP also correctly raised the point that pensions are not the only consideration; severance pay is too. It is something people have not received when companies are in bad shape. That should go in, with the same priority as pensions. I agree with that.

In trying to make sure that we do not get the unintended consequences that the member for Kingston and the Islands was talking about, one thing of concern is whether or not businesses can get adequate credit. We have allowed a different coming-into-force time. The reporting and topping up of funds would be immediate, but we would give a number of years before the priority part of this bill comes into force. That would allow businesses time to get their house in order, and I would argue that if they cannot get their act together, they are a greater financial risk, so they should pay the associated consequences for that.

I am happy to say that there is support in the Senate. If the bill makes it out of committee and goes to the other place, there is support from multiple parties in the Senate, from Senators Plett, Yussuff and Dalphond. There is also huge stakeholder support across the country. Letters have gone out everywhere from Mike Powell with the Canadian Federation of Pensioners, CARP and the number of other stakeholders that have come forward.

I am encouraged by what I have heard today. I know this is what Canadians want us to do. They want us to work together, have the discussions and work collaboratively. As the twice-named most collegial parliamentarian, it is my pleasure to work together across the aisles. This is important for seniors in our country and it is important for people who work their whole lives. We can do something great in this moment, so I encourage all members of the House to support Bill C-228 and send it to committee. Let us work together and get this done for Canadians.

• (1825)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The question is on the motion.

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[*Translation*]

If a member of a recognized party present in the House wishes to request a recorded division or that the motion be adopted on division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

[*English*]

The hon. member for Longueuil—Charles-LeMoyne.

Mrs. Sherry Romanado: Madam Speaker, I request a recorded division.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Pursuant to order made on Thursday, November 25, 2021, the division stands deferred until Wednesday, June 22, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

The hon. deputy House leader.

Mrs. Sherry Romanado: Madam Speaker, I am sure if you canvass the House, you will find consent to see the clock at 6:30.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

PRESERVING PROVINCIAL REPRESENTATION IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS ACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-14, An Act to amend the Constitution Act, 1867 (electoral representation), as reported (without amendment) from the committee.

[*English*]

SPEAKER'S RULING

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): There is one motion in amendment standing on the Notice Paper for the report stage of Bill C-14. Motion No. 1 will be debated and voted upon.

[*Translation*]

MOTIONS IN AMENDMENT

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC) moved:

That Bill C-14 be amended by deleting the alternative title.

He said: Madam Speaker, as always, it is a privilege to rise in the House on behalf of my constituents. I will try to be brief and not use up all of my speaking time. I hope that other members will be happy to hear that.

I think we all agree that no one province in our beautiful country should lose a seat when electoral boundaries are redistributed, usually following the census every 10 years. This is essentially how things have been done since our country was formed in 1867.

The last time that a province lost a seat in the House of Commons was in 1966. There was a redistribution in the 1990s, which led to the creation of a third territory, with its own laws and a distinct identity, but that was a unique situation, so I am not counting that.

In reviewing past legislation, I noted only two instances where the number of seats was reduced between elections. A lot of changes were made over a number of years, especially prior to the 1970s, when the process of amending the number of seats was very different from the process in the House today. I will elaborate on that later.

As I said at second reading, the issue was extending the 1985 grandfather clause to the 43rd Parliament. That clause promised that no province would dip below the number of seats held in 1985. That was discussed in committee, and we are now debating a small amendment that I proposed. Essentially, the government is proposing to extend this grandfather clause to the 43rd Parliament, which I agree with, of course.

The three Canadian provinces with the strongest demographic growth are British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario. Even with these changes, however, they will continue to be under-represented in the House of Commons.

In 1985, British Columbia had 32 seats, Alberta had 26 and Ontario had 99. At the time of the election in 2019, British Columbia had 42 seats, Alberta had 34 and Ontario had 121. Even with these changes, Ontario will be the most under-represented province in the House of Commons.

I will call the changes proposed in 2012 the Harper formula in honour of the prime minister of the day. The current government is still using the Harper formula because I honestly think it had a lot of good ideas. The Harper formula gave my province, Alberta, and its population nine more seats in the House. That brings us much closer to the proportional representation by population that many Albertans want. I believe they are about 0.5% apart, so we are very close.

British Columbia will continue to be under-represented. It will have only 12.5% of the seats with 13.68% of the population. Even with the grandfather clause from 1985, which will be pushed to the 43rd Parliament, in the next 10, 20 or 30 years this Parliament will have to carry out a more balanced redistribution for Canadians and western Canadians, because our population is growing quickly.

Ontario, the largest province in this country, was the largest province at Confederation. It is still the largest province, and that will not change in the future. Toronto will certainly continue to be the largest city in our country. With each redistribution by the House of Commons, Toronto will post the greatest gains when we ask the province of Ontario how many seats it should have.

I also believe that each redistribution creates tensions among members representing the major cities and those representing the smaller cities and the regions.

Government Orders

• (1830)

There are several commissions that are working on it or that have already produced maps—a first draft, if you will—and they are the commissions in British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan. I do not think that Manitoba has returned its maps yet. Ontario has not. In Quebec, of course, the commission is waiting to see whether this bill will be passed. It is the Senate that will examine the issue and decide whether the content of this bill is to the liking of senators. In practice, I think only Nova Scotia has published its maps so far.

This has resulted in a major debate in the House, because representing a region, a territory or a group of small towns or villages is very different. I have colleagues who represent regions that have 20 mayors or 30 boards of directors to talk to. I do not even have one. As I said in the House, until 2019, I did not even have a high school in my riding. Even though I had the largest riding in Calgary, I did not have a public high school, a Catholic school, a private school or a charter school. The first school opened a few years ago, just before the pandemic. My colleagues were surprised that there could be a riding in a big city like Calgary that did not have a high school. That has changed, but I still have only one. I do not have a legion in my riding either. I have colleagues who have 10, 15, 20 or 25 events in their riding on Remembrance Day.

Representing a region is very different from representing a riding in a big metropolitan area like Vancouver, Toronto, Calgary or Edmonton. We need different strategies to represent our constituents well.

I said this during the debates at second reading of this bill, but I will say it again because I promised my constituents. On October 29, I wrote an article on a website called Substack. I sent it to the 8,500 constituents who subscribe to the newsletter I send out every Friday. I told them that if the Liberal government proposed changes to how boundaries are drawn and seats distributed in the House of Commons, I would speak in favour of the principle of representation by population, because that really is extremely important in western Canada.

In the beginning, when Alberta joined the Confederation created by this Parliament, we had seven seats, as did British Columbia. Since then, of course, our province has grown. There are 4.3 to 4.4 million Albertans in our province. I almost said “in our country” because, as I often say, we are a distinct society. I know my Quebec colleagues appreciate that. I know the repercussions. I am thinking of the Charlottetown Accord, the great debates of the 1980s and 1990s in Quebec, and the major Constitutional debates.

I want to make sure that once again I do what I promised my constituents. In the future, the next time seats in the House of Commons are redistributed, Parliament is going to have to take a hard look at representation by population for the people of western Canada. This is really important. We cannot have a country where western Canadians are so under-represented. I think we can all agree to a small difference of 0.5%. That is reasonable. We can absolutely do that. However, no one knows where the Canadian population is going to go in the next few years. No one knows what the economy will look like, or which parts of the country will be more attractive than others.

Once again, I want to say that I agree with this bill. It is a lean bill that reduces changes to the redistribution of seats in the House of Commons, so I support this bill.

• (1835)

Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would first like to congratulate my colleague on his speech, which he delivered in French. I think that is very much to his credit.

My main take-away from the member's speech was his reference to the infamous representation by population. I could not help but think of the Union Act of 1840. There were two nations at that time. Quebec was forced to unite with Upper Canada following the revolt of the Patriotes, and it was given equal political weight with the rest of Canada. In a way, it was recognized that there were two nations, one that was more French-Canadian at the time and one that was more English-Canadian in Upper Canada, and that they should be given equal weight. When did that change?

This changed when the weight of the population became greater in the rest of Canada than it was in Quebec. It is odd. I would like to know what my colleague thinks. That is the vision of John A. Macdonald, where, now that Quebec has less weight on a population level, we will change the rules of the game. A few years later, we had Brian Mulroney, who proposed giving Quebec a stable 25%, regardless of what happened in the future.

I would like to know whether my colleague sides more with Mr. Macdonald or with Mr. Mulroney.

• (1840)

Mr. Tom Kmiec: Madam Speaker, I would simply like to remind the member that the Charlottetown accord, which guaranteed that Quebec would never have less than 25% of the total number of seats in the House of Commons, was rejected by 58% of Quebecers during a national referendum.

I would also like to quickly tell him that we cannot blame Albertans for the mistakes of Ontarians.

[*English*]

Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his speech and for some of what he has had to say about the importance of representation by population. It made me think of something more recent than the Constitution Act of 1867: the rules for the Conservative leadership race. These do not have representation by population. Each riding in the country, no matter where it is and no matter how many members there are in that region and in those ridings, is accorded an equal number of points. In fact, I believe those points are distributed on a proportional basis, which is a debate perhaps for another time.

Does he feel the Conservative leadership race should be put on hold until they have a representation by population system in place for their party?

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Mr. Tom Kmiec: Madam Speaker, it is a wonderful question. I do not think they use proportional voting in the member's own party.

I will mention this: My colleagues know me to be a contrarian, and perhaps it will surprise the member for Elmwood—Transcona that I actually voted in the 2003 merger between the Canadian Alliance and the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada. I was a young Canadian Alliance activist, and I voted no.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I will just remind hon. members that partisan politics are not the business of the House.

Questions and comments; the hon. member for Red Deer—Mountain View.

Mr. Earl Dreeshen (Red Deer—Mountain View, CPC): Madam Speaker, the hon. member has seen a lot of the country and certainly understands what is taking place. I would like to talk to him about representation by responsibility. He did mention it when he talked about the size of his riding and compared it with some of the rural ridings that we see all around the country. Certainly in Alberta, in one riding we could have 40 different municipalities that one has to be responsible for. It may take hours or days to get there and back.

Could he comment on how that also tends to affect the ability of members of Parliament to represent their communities?

Mr. Tom Kmiec: Madam Speaker, I did mention it. There have been Supreme Court decisions and lower court decisions on this. In Canada, what is most important is what is called effective representation. In court decisions, that has been the way to nuance representation by population, which were the great debates that led to eventual Confederation in 1867. The courts have found that effective representation is a concept that goes beyond that: It asks if a member of Parliament can effectively represent their communities. These are not just a number on a map, and include a whole bunch of communities. It is asking if they can they get around, listen to their constituents and then report back to Ottawa. That is the way it is supposed to work, as opposed to what is often done here, which is that someone stays in Ottawa and then reports back on how good Ottawa is to their place of origin. It should be the other way around.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would much prefer to be in Ottawa making these comments, but it is nice that we have the hybrid. It enables me to speak on the floor of the House while I am here in Winnipeg.

We are in an interesting debate in regard to Bill C-14. I am not necessarily surprised that we would see an amendment at this stage. One of the things that I have found over the past number of months is that, at times, we get legislation that one would naturally think would flow through the House of Commons: There would be relatively minimal debate, and we would get it through second reading and into committee.

I do not see this as controversial legislation. I am not exactly sure where the Bloc actually falls on the legislation. I would hope that it would support the province of Quebec getting a guaranteed number

of seats, but at the end of the day, I like to think that this is the type of legislation that should ultimately pass through.

Was it necessary, for example, for us to have an amendment? I do not think it was for a report stage amendment. I think that when we get relatively uncontroversial legislation, where it appears that everyone is going to be voting in favour, I would have rather seen a debate on something like, let us say, Bill C-21 and the issue of guns and the safety of Canadians, which is top of mind for a lot of people.

True to form, what I have found is that, whether it is good, rather uncontroversial legislation such as Bill C-14 or if it is controversial or potentially controversial legislation, the Conservatives have one approach in dealing with the government's agenda and that is to prevent it from ultimately passing.

Having said that, I want to recognize a number of points in regard to Bill C-14. Having had the opportunity to speak on the legislation in the past, I want to be very specific on a few things.

One is the need for the legislation. I think it important that we recognize, as has been pointed out, that shifts take place in Canada's population for a wide variety of reasons. One could talk about things such as job opportunities, transfers, the allure of another area, or just people wanting to move to a warmer climate. In my case, they want to come to a nice, cool climate. People change their ridings.

Immigration is such a huge factor. Over the years, Canada continues to grow in good part because of immigration to our country. We are very dependent on immigration. Our birth rate is going down. As we grow as a nation overall, there is natural population shifting that occurs. It comes also in the form of immigration.

As a result, every 10 years, there is an obligation through an independent mechanism, and I want to emphasize that it really is an independent mechanism, that ensures that the ridings reflect the changes we have seen based on census material.

No one was surprised at all that we got a report this year. It was anticipated that we would get a report 10 years after we received the last report.

Going forward, every decade we will continue to receive recommendations from Elections Canada, through the commission, as to the need to change boundaries and possibly add constituencies or do some shifting.

That is, in essence, why we have the legislation today. It is because of the change in populations. In particular, for Quebec, there is a need for us to establish a floor, a minimum number of seats, for the province.

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• (1845)

Doing it this way prevents us from having to do a constitutional change, where there is a 7/50 formula in order to enact a change. It addresses, for the most part, the biggest concerns that members of Parliament, on all sides of the issue, have as we recognize how important it is that the province of Quebec not lose any seats. I suspect that is the reason why the legislation would ultimately pass, hopefully unanimously, in the House.

Back in November, there was the establishment of these three-member commissions. We have a national commission. The commission establishes individual commissions of three people in a province, and through those commissions they all have a responsibility. That was done in November of last year, I believe. Those commissions then all have a responsibility to develop the new boundaries, whatever they might look like. They sit around, look at the numbers and the maps and try to provide new boundaries that we could be running the next federal election on.

Each commission operates independently. Manitoba, for example, has a three-member commission, and it operates independently of other aspects of Elections Canada, of political entities and of different stakeholders, such as community members and so forth. It is important to emphasize that it is, in fact, independent.

In developing those boundaries, the commission is tasked with a timeline. That timeline is quickly approaching, and the commissions need to provide a draft of the boundaries. One could be very concerned in regard to the dragging out of Bill C-14. The people who are paying the price for the House of Commons dragging its feet on the passage of this legislation are the people of Quebec. We know we want to see that minimum number of seats for the province of Quebec, and we have consistently said that from day one, as members will recall, when the national commission initially made the recommendation. It was an immediate response that came from not only my Quebec colleagues but from the caucus as a whole: Under no circumstances could we allow the province of Quebec not to have the 78 seats.

Until this legislation passes, that three-member commission in the province of Quebec has its hands tied, at least in good part, as other commissions continue to move forward with drafting boundaries, because the boundaries will change within different provinces. There will be tweaks in the city of Winnipeg, whether Winnipeg North grows more to the north or more in the inner city. This is something I wait for with bated breath, in hopes that we see some changes that the community will in fact support.

Once that draft is finished, the commission has to make it public. Once it is made public, it has to have public hearings that must take place before the end of October, because by mid-December the report has to be finalized.

That is why it is critically important that we pass this legislation. It is so the commission in the province of Quebec can finalize a draft so that it can go to the public, and in turn the public can provide its input so the commission can then provide that final draft by the end of the year.

It is an independent process, and that is why I am supporting Bill C-14. I hope all members would support its quick passage. I see my time has—

• (1850)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Questions and comments, the hon. member for Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Madam Speaker, I was listening to my colleague's speech and, this time, it was interesting to see that he actually had something to say.

His comments were mainly directed at us and he basically told us how good, nice, and kind they are and how they are being charitable and generous, since Quebec will lose one less seat.

That is really something. I am just beside myself.

I have some questions. Parliament recognized Quebec as a nation, and that is supposed to mean something, yet census after census and redistribution after redistribution, Quebec's representation in Canada drops. That just makes me wish all the more that Quebec would become independent and form its own country.

What can my colleague say to those Quebeckers who believe that Quebec should be a country when they see that ultimately we are going backwards all the time?

• (1855)

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, the first thing I would say is that the Government of Canada responded immediately by recognizing that we do not want to see the province of Quebec diminished in terms of numbers of seats. That is why we have this legislation, even though other opposition parties may see fit to try to delay it or even possibly cause some confusion about it.

What the Bloc members are proposing would require a constitutional change. I do not believe for a moment that Canadians are open to having a round of constitutional debates and discussions on this issue, along with the many other issues that would come out of any sort of a discussion on the Constitution.

I think the most important thing to recognize here is that if we want to support the people of Quebec in going through this independent process, we need to allow them the opportunity of having a basic number of seats and let the commission do the work it needs to do.

Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Sport, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the member has such a long track record of service in this place, so I have a very broad question for him, because I know he has a lot of knowledge.

This is a complicated thing to figure out, how to best represent our neighbours, given the geography of Canada and how far spread out we are. Could he expand on the importance of ensuring that from a riding size perspective and a population perspective how that representation is important? We are representing people, but we are also representing territory.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, that is a wonderful question.

One of the things that I could add to the debate is to say that we all want to have fair representation for the people and communities which we represent. We are talking about the independence of Elections Canada. We could just as equally be talking about the important services that members of Parliament, elected officials, provide to their constituents through the resources provided to them through the House of Commons, for example, a member's allowance, travel frequency and how convenient it is for members to be able to participate. There is a wide spectrum of things that complement a member's ability to represent the communities they have been elected to represent.

This type of discussion would be very fruitful going forward.

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, one of the questions I have follows up on the member's response to his colleague. One of my colleagues is the member for Nunavut. She represents more land mass than any other parliamentarian in the world. It is very difficult for her to reach all of the communities in her riding.

I wonder if he could elaborate on the ways in which we could support members of Parliament in this place who have very, very large ridings. They are expected to work through much more challenging situations than I do in an urban riding.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, we talk about how members can best serve their constituents in terms of presentation, or physically, and one of the things I have learned over the last few years is the importance of the Internet and the important role that technology can play, in ensuring there is a heightened sense of equity and fairness in enabling people to be fully engaged and to participate. The hybrid Parliament is an excellent example of that and something we should keep in some form or another.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak to Bill C-14.

I want to start by giving an overview of the problem that this bill is designed to fix in part. Every 10 years, the Chief Electoral Officer presents a new distribution of the number of seats in the House of Commons, so there are some things that keep happening every 10 years.

One thing that comes up systematically is that Quebec loses a percentage of its share of seats in the House. Allow me to give a quick background, and I will ask my colleagues to take me at my word. I have the figures and have pored over them like a dog eyeing a steak. Back in 1867, Quebec had 36% of the seats in the House and in 2015, it had 23.1%. That is typical. With the new distribution, Quebec will drop from 23.1% to 22.5%.

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My colleague from Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères said something extraordinary. He is a brilliant Bloc Québécois member, although that is redundant. I see more and more Conservatives looking at us, as though they, too, can be brilliant. I would tell them to be patient because anything is possible. We are extending a light blue hand to their dark blue hand and we are waiting.

Back to the debate. My colleague said that the francophone nation used to be in the majority. It was decided back then that, because Quebecers were in the majority, they would split the seats 50-50. As soon as it no longer suited them because there were more of us, they changed their mind. In the old days, Quebecers had a lot of children—14 or 15 per family. Some parents even put stickers on their kids because they could not remember their names. In 1867, the government decided to change things. Going forward, seat distribution would be determined on the basis of population. At that point, four provinces were created, and Quebec's share of the seats fell to 33%. Our minority status in Canada was institutionalized. That is Lord Durham's political legacy.

In this classic tale, where we lose a certain percentage seats, there was recently a new plot twist. In addition to having fewer seats in percentage terms, Quebec was actually going to lose a seat. That matters. Our number of seats was going to drop from 78 to 77 seats. The Bloc Québécois began to fight, as did the Quebec government and various stakeholders in Quebec, and rightly so. Certain members here from other provinces even thought we were going a bit too far. That is when we began speaking out, because this sort of thing has not happened since 1966. The government eventually began to think that maybe it should not do this, because it did seem a bit crazy. If you want to drown someone in the pool, of course it looks crazy to push their head down and hold them in the water. What looks less crazy is gradually raising the water level in the pool. This way, a nation will eventually die, but quietly. That is what is planned for Quebec. That is what is going to happen.

The fact that Quebec has managed to make French the common language of Quebecers is no small feat. It was even impossible for the French who failed us in 1760. They left and abandoned us, saying that things were not going well here and that, in any event, the English would take care of us, along with the priests. They thought that we would be speaking English within a generation. Two hundred years later, when France's General de Gaulle saw that Quebecers were still here and were speaking French, he made the connection and declared, "Vive le Québec libre".

● (1900)

It is a feat, but as we fight against the odds, in a situation that is becoming increasingly untenable, we will eventually need help to ensure that our nation survives and thrives, so that this nation lives on.

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Is it because Quebec is better? No. Quebec is not better than the rest of Canada, but it is different. Beauty is often found in differences. I like going to Toronto. It is not home, but I like it. I like going to New York and France. I like that. It is not home, but I like it.

When the Bloc came to the House last year saying that Quebec is a nation, MPs got on board. I was impressed. We thought we were going to have to fight harder than that. Of course, the motion did not pass unanimously, but the vast majority of members agreed that Quebec is a nation.

Then some other members began getting ideas. I can never remember other people's riding names, which are incredibly long and just keep getting longer. There are 338 of us, and it is getting out of hand. We might as well use acronyms.

Getting back to my point, when we declared that Quebec was a nation, a Conservative member from British Columbia said that his province was also a nation. I told him that I was unaware, that he should explain it to us, prove it to us and bring forward a motion to that effect for us to discuss.

Then one of his colleagues, who was even more worked up than he was, said that Alberta was a nation. I will not say his name, but he did say that Alberta was a nation, and for 30 seconds he tried to convince us of that. I had to wonder.

Quebec is definitely a nation. We have a different language. We like to speak out, loud and clear, in our different language. Members can argue about it and say that language is not a big deal, but actually, it is a big deal. We are a different culture. Quebec has its own writers. I could name a few, and I doubt the other members would have any idea who they are. We had to fight at the leaders' meeting to convey how important Pierre Bruneau is to us.

We have to explain to members who we are. When Jean Leloup won a bunch of trophies, we had to explain to Canada who he was. We have to explain to members who we are. That is normal, because we are different.

Our economy is different. It is based on other aspects that are less developed elsewhere in Canada. The other regions in Canada are not worse than Quebec. They are just different.

Our history is different. When they get to the chapter on 1759, our history teachers dejectedly explain the defeat on the Plains of Abraham. Elsewhere in Canada, history teachers are pleased as punch to talk about 1759, what they call the victory on the Plains of Abraham. Need I say more?

I have two things to point out to my colleagues who say that other provinces are nations. First, when the Prime Minister was elected, he raised his arms and cheerily declared that Canada would be the first post-national state. To the people who say that their provinces are nations, I say that their leader said that they were no longer nations, that the era of nations is over.

One day, someone said to me, without any malice, that Canada is like a boring party, and everyone is just waiting for the first guest to leave so that they can leave too.

Last week, I heard the member from British Columbia say that B.C. was a nation and that Alberta was a nation in his colleague's

eyes. My loving response to them is this: Why not make Canada a true confederation of sovereign states that unite as sovereign states, which manage everything within our own respective borders and which would meet to manage our economic relations and share a currency? Instead of coming together and explaining how we are different, we would meet to talk about what unites us all. That is my wish for all of us.

Unfortunately, Bill C-14 does not reflect what we want. It is either a partial success or a partial failure, depending on whether we see the glass as half full or half empty. To fix this problem once and for all, and we need to agree on the idea that it is once and for all, Quebec would have to be guaranteed at least 25% of the seats in the House, as was proposed in the Charlottetown accord.

● (1905)

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure and a joy to listen to my Bloc Québécois colleague. I say that in all sincerity, but not without chiding him for mentioning the leaders meeting, which must remain confidential.

However, I want to salute him because we share a point of view that he talked about eloquently, as only he knows how, regarding the riding names that are too long. It makes no sense. I invite the House of Commons decision-makers to use Quebec as a model for this. In Quebec, it stops at two names, not more, which is a great idea. I invite everyone to follow the Quebec model.

Speaking of Quebec earlier, that member expressed the hope and the beauty of living in a confederation of sovereign states that work together. The primary objective of the member from that group is to make Quebec a country, to have independence. Okay.

There is a solution for that: On October 3, Quebeckers will have the opportunity to either choose a new government or keep the current one. We will see what they decide and we cannot assume anything. However, we know that one of the parties in the running is focused on achieving independence through a referendum right out of the gate. Why does the member not run for the Parti Québécois in the upcoming election—

● (1910)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for La Prairie.

Mr. Alain Therrien: Madam Speaker, I enjoy listening to him as well, and we have known one another a long time.

A coach does not ask a good defenceman to go out and play offence if he is good on defence. I came to the House to defend Quebecers' interests while waiting for the big day. That is the Bloc Québécois's mission. We look after the interests of Quebecers, we speak on behalf of Quebecers, we explain what Quebecers need, we talk about the values of Quebecers and their political views.

We defend Quebec's interests in the House because they need to be defended until the big day arrives. There are people in Quebec City who are playing offence, making sure that a majority of Quebecers will one day say "yes, finally", after always being told no by the federal government. At some point, they will think more positively.

In the meantime, I am the Bobby Orr of Canadian politics.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I will stop the clock for a few seconds to remind the hon. member that there are many Quebecers in the House.

The hon. member for Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon.

Mr. Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, CPC): Madam Speaker, I believe that during his speech, the member for La Prairie said that a member from British Columbia claimed that the province wanted to be a nation. That is not correct, because I think that the member for La Prairie was talking about me.

In fact, it is the member for La Prairie who, in trying to summarize my position, said that I wanted British Columbia to be a nation. Can the member for La Prairie clarify what he meant?

Mr. Alain Therrien: Madam Speaker, I should apologize because there are indeed MPs from Quebec who are not Bloc Québécois members, but we are the only ones who have not made compromises and do not need to make compromises because our caucus is not Canadian. It represents Quebec exclusively. To hear the sound of a pure, unadulterated symphony, one need only listen to Bloc Québécois members. I recommend that the House do so.

Getting back to my colleague from the riding whose name is impossible to memorize, let me just express my profound respect and admiration for him. The last time he rose in the House to speak to Bill C-14, he said that British Columbia was a nation and a distinct society. I more or less quoted him verbatim. As I recall, I even invited him to Quebec, and that invitation stands.

I myself am planning to visit British Columbia, where everything looks so gorgeous. I am going next year. I even talked to my wife about it, and she is excited. I want to explore that beautiful part of the country, but I want my colleague to explain to me why it is a nation, because that is what he told the House. We remain friends nevertheless.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I support Bill C-14. I think nearly everyone here supports it.

I remember the debate on the Charlottetown accord. At that time, I was invited by civil society members to campaign with them in favour of the Charlottetown accord. At the same time, I was inspired because there was a real grassroots movement against the Charlottetown accord.

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My question is not a simple one. In the opinion of my colleague from La Prairie, should we be trying harder to come up with a constitutional solution that really works for Quebec?

• (1915)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member has 15 seconds to respond.

Mr. Alain Therrien: Madam Speaker, you are being hard on me. I may stretch these 15 seconds a little.

Quebec faces many difficulties with respect to its values and needs in the Canadian federation. The solution to this problem would have been to simply set a minimum threshold with a percentage to guarantee that Quebec always has the same percentage of representatives in the House. There is no need to open the Constitution. We do not need 50% of the seats.

Patrick Taillon, a well-known constitutional expert, came before the parliamentary committee and told us that we did not need to do that. It is already provided for. I do not have enough time, but I would have said that the Supreme Court recognized, in 1987, the right to adopt clauses like the senatorial clause and the grandfather clause. We could have called it the Quebec clause. It would have been included in this bill and it would have resolved—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Order. We must resume debate.

The hon. member for Elmwood—Transcona.

Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise this evening to participate in the debate on Bill C-14.

The NDP has long supported the principle that Quebec should maintain a consistent proportion of the seats in the House of Commons. That is not what Bill C-14 would do, but we think that this bill is nevertheless important, to ensure that no ground is lost while we hold a broader debate on the proportion of seats. That is why this bill is worthwhile, and it is urgent, in light of the pending electoral distribution.

We must choose to ensure that the new seats reflect the number of seats that we want Quebec to have at the end of this process. Time is of the essence and we must make a decision. It is not a perfect one, but it is the right decision under the circumstances.

[*English*]

This has been an interesting debate. We have heard a lot about representation and some of the important principles that undergird the Canadian electoral system. We know that already in the House of Commons, representation by population is not the only consideration. Just as an example, provinces cannot have fewer seats in the House of Commons than they have in the Senate. That is already a departure from representation by population. We also know that rural areas tend to be weighted differently in order to ensure that there continues to be a strong role representation in the House of Commons, beyond what representation by population would dictate. Those are just a couple of examples of the way in which representation by population is not the only way that we determine representation in Canada, so there are certainly precedents for looking at other departures from representation by population.

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Sometimes people get quite animated in this place during those debates. We just saw an example of that, and we have seen examples from folks in other parties as well who get pretty animated. We have seen some very spirited defences of representation by population, particularly from some of the western Conservative members. That is fair enough. We come here to represent our constituents and the points of view that people have on these matters, and they are rightly an object of concern.

I do think it is important to try to have these debates with a bit of humility, though, because they are very important and foundational debates. For instance, I look at the current Conservative leadership race, and I note with interest that, in their own system, representation by population is not the rule. That is fair enough. Different parties do that differently. In the NDP, we have a one member, one vote system. We do not have any kind of weighting.

In the Conservative Party, they have chosen to have a weighting. That is something that defies representation by population, presumably for good reason. I am not saying the Conservatives should not do that, and I am not saying that they should. What I am saying is that they have made a choice to forego strict representation by population because, presumably, they think it matters to have a proportionate weighting of voices from across the country in the selection of their leader.

Also, when we talk about representation in this place, we sometimes talk about the voting system we have. I have heard Conservatives take very strong positions on that, defending the balloting system that we have and defending the first-past-the-post system that we have. Folks can correct me during questions and comments if I am wrong, but I note with interest that I believe the Conservatives are going to have a preferential ballot in the Conservative leadership race. That is something the Conservatives are very much against in other contexts, but they have seen it to be appropriate for their leadership. Not only are they going to have a preferential ballot, but they are also going to have a preferential ballot that informs a proportional system because leadership candidates will get a number of votes within their riding association proportionate to the percentage of votes they got out of that system. Then, presumably, based on the alternative ballot, as some people fall off, those votes will be successively redistributed within that riding through the points system until they elect a leader.

I note also that the Conservatives are doing this uniquely by mail-in ballot, which is something I listened to many Conservatives talk about in a filibuster at the procedure and House affairs committee in the last Parliament. They were very clear then that they felt mail-in ballots led to fraudulent electoral outcomes. Here we are.

● (1920)

We have a Conservative Party that is using a preferential ballot in a non-representation-by-population system to have proportionate outcomes in a mail-in process, which is why I encourage us to speak to these issues here in the House with some humility, because I think that, in fact, depending on the context, various members do support different kinds of electoral principles.

That is why I think we should be able to have this conversation in a responsible way, in the way I think Canadians would expect mature adults to try to have those conversations: not demonize each

other because of the kinds of positions we are putting forward, but try to hear what is important and of value in the other person's position and then try to hammer out a compromise, as was the case originally in 1867. There were compromises made that did not satisfy everyone at the time but that managed to move the Canadian project forward, and there have been many compromises since that have not been perfect and certainly have not pleased everyone. However, Canada has been a constant activity and a constant project of trying to seek consensus and agreement. As difficult as that is, I think it is actually Canada's strength.

We live in a world right now that is rife with conflict. We live in a world right now where people are choosing to end conversation and negotiation in favour of polarization and violence. One of the things that I think have been great about Canada, for all its many faults, because it is not a perfect place, has been its ability to find a way, even among very different peoples, languages, cultures and histories, to take on these important questions of political representation and find a path toward compromise.

We have a lot more work to do. We have work to do in the case of Quebec, which continues to see its proportion of seats decline in the House of Commons, despite its special status within Confederation with its own language, culture, history and contributions. We are also reckoning now, in a much more vigorous way, and appropriately so, with indigenous peoples, and there are questions of political representation that come up with respect to indigenous peoples as well, which is something we have not done a good job of at all in Canada in so many ways over the years. We have had no formal representation of indigenous peoples in this place, and there are no seats set aside. That is a conversation for another day, too.

What I think is important about Bill C-14 is that it is bringing people together from all sides of the chamber to recognize that while we have these larger debates, which are important debates and I do hope we will find good ways of having those debates where we treat each other well and work together on this project of constant negotiation that is Canada, we can at least agree that we should not be taking any steps backwards. I think that, at the very least, this law, if it should pass, would prevent us from taking steps backwards, even as we try to find our way forward.

We are not there yet. I think the debate around this bill has shown the extent to which we are not there in certain regards. However, I think it has been a positive exercise for this place to have occasion to talk about representation in Canada, what it does mean now and what it can mean in the future, and to have been able to do it in the context of a bill that, for all its imperfections and for all the legitimate criticism there is of it, has largely brought people together, because I think it has allowed for a better and a more responsible conversation than we sometimes have in this place.

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I am thankful for that, and I am anxious to see this bill pass quickly, because of the time constraints we are under with the boundary redistribution process already taking place. As we head further into the 21st century and face many great challenges, both large challenges that are planetary, in terms of climate change, and also real political challenges here at home, I hope this is a down payment on a better debate for how we find new and better ways of ensuring that all the voices of Canadians are represented in their right proportion here in the House of Commons to build a prosperous future for all of us.

• (1925)

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I also have a chance to speak to Bill C-14 later tonight, but as the conversation has been unfolding tonight, new ideas come to mind, and I would like to try some out on the member for Elmwood—Transcona.

When we think about our friend, the member for Nunavut, who is a spectacular member of Parliament, we know that one cannot get from Iqaluit to Inuvik without flying to southern Canada first, unless one hires a private plane. The population is sparse, but the job is enormous. What would the hon. member think about us changing representation by population to something that includes funding for individual MPs reflective of what their actual costs are from serving the people of their riding? This would apply to people in about half of the country. If we cut it off, about half of the territory of this enormous country is represented by 12 MPs. Their jobs are very different from those of the people who represent more concentrated, southern Canadian populations.

Mr. Daniel Blaikie: Madam Speaker, I certainly do think that the question of how we resource MPs is a very important one. We need to recognize how, depending on what riding one represents in the country, one can have a very different experience as an MP, and the community or communities one serves in those ridings are going to have very different experiences of having an MP.

There is already some provision made and some recognition of that disparity between different MPs, depending on the nature of their riding, but I know, having heard from some of the members of our caucus who represent very large ridings, particularly those in the north, that the resourcing conventions we already have are inadequate to the task. We have only to sit down with them to talk about their experiences to know they are inadequate. It is certainly something that we should be looking at trying to remedy.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Madam Speaker, I really enjoyed my colleague's speech, in part because he spoke in French, at least for a bit. I think that is important to acknowledge. I also got a real sense that he is open to this process.

He acknowledged that Bill C-14 does not fix Quebec's problem. I was happy to hear that, because it is hard to get members from the other parties to admit that. He also went as far as to say that he would be prepared to support our proposal to ensure that Quebecers have a minimum of 25% of seats, which is a good thing. If all members of the House could agree on that, I think there would be a

lot of happy people in Quebec. It might even facilitate some agreements.

However, I did not go into politics to get Quebec 25% of the seats. I did it to make sure Quebec has 100% of the seats and forms its own country.

I know that in the past, the NDP adopted the Sherbrooke declaration, which recognized that Quebec's right to self-determination is fundamental and inalienable. I was wondering how far his party's thinking has come on this issue.

• (1930)

Mr. Daniel Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, the NDP has supported the principle of asymmetrical federalism since 1961. I may not fully understand the term "self-determination", but we have always tried to ensure that Quebec's need to have more decision-making power is recognized, particularly in relation to federal programs. We have always wanted to protect that with respect to federal programs.

Personally, I think that a confederation can work well when the provinces work together. The federal government does not always play the role of telling the provinces what to do. The federal government can bring the provinces together to collaborate and negotiate in good faith. It can be there to provide funding and support for national initiatives that all the provinces also support.

[*English*]

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise this evening to debate Bill C-14.

For those who might just be catching up on what Bill C-14 is, it deals with an updating of the grandfather clause of the Constitution from 1867, as reset in 1985. I think at some point in this place we should put forward a grandmother clause. I was just looking at some of my other female colleague MPs in this place.

The grandfather clause says that this is what it is and we are going to keep it the way it was. What we are doing with this bill is saying that the composition of Parliament will not drop below the seat count of the 43rd Parliament. That is basically what we have now: 338 MPs, of which 78 are from Quebec and 121 are from Ontario. My home province of British Columbia will have no fewer than 42 seats going forward under the new, as I rename it, "grandmother clause".

There are a number of issues to unpack in this bill. The primary one is that the bill is making sure that Quebec does not lose any seats in the current decennial review of representation by population and that we are more or less representing the same numbers of people across the country.

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This is no easy effort. This is very difficult. I just attended the public hearing in Victoria, B.C., and the Electoral Boundaries Commission for British Columbia was just proposing to add another seat because population redistribution is adding relatively more people to British Columbia than to some other provinces. The commission is proposing to add the new seat in interior British Columbia, which would have a big effect on the members for Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon and Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola. It would have very little impact on my own riding, but going through that process of staring at the riding map and speaking about representation by population put me very much in mind of some other ideas.

In fact, when I spoke at the public hearing in Victoria about the riding boundaries and the proposals of the Electoral Boundaries Commission, I asked them whether, in the interests of democracy, it is really in the interests of our constituents to add more MPs to the House of Commons year on year? I said to them that when I was first elected to this place in 2011, in the Parliament that I joined and in which I had the honour to stand in Centre Block for the first time, we had 308 members; now we have 338. Does that increase in numbers add to the representation of our constituents, or does it dilute it? Is the notion of adding an MP here and there really effective in representation?

As has come up recently in this debate tonight, I think about our colleagues who represent vast territories. The member of Parliament for Skeena—Bulkley Valley has a territory that I think is two times the size of Germany, but I may be wrong. I remember his predecessor, Nathan Cullen, saying something like that fairly often. When a riding is two times the size of Germany, it is very hard to get around.

Our colleague from Nunavut has an electoral district that takes in three time zones. It is an enormous territory, and commercial aircraft will not get people from one end to the other. They have to either hire private planes or fly from Iqaluit to Ottawa and then go up to Inuvik. It is not easy, and given current demographic trends, the population of Nunavut is not going to be the equivalent of my riding of Saanich—Gulf Islands, which, under the current proposal from the Electoral Boundaries Commission, would represent 122,000 people, or more than four times the population of Nunavut.

Let us think about what we could do to be creative. I said to the Electoral Boundaries Commission that much more important for democracy and representation by population would be fair voting, proportional representation, so that every voter knows that their vote is going to count. At that point, the very professional, hard-working team that is the Electoral Boundaries Commission for British Columbia said that this is beyond their area.

I take it to my colleagues here because it is specifically our area.

• (1935)

What is in the interest of democracy in the 21st century? Is it that we continue to add MPs to pile into this place? I suggest that when we look at the House of Westminster and the Commons chamber there, there are no desks because there is no room. If every MP showed up, they would not fit in the room because 650 MPs would be trying to squeeze into a chamber that would be perfect for about

half that number. If we constantly add more MPs, we add to the cost of this place.

Would average Canadians feel they are better served by continually adding to the cost of the House of Commons or by my alternate proposal? It would be less costly to the taxpayer and I believe more efficient in properly representing our constituents if, depending on population, what is called the member's office budget, or MOB, was expanded. It would mean that we would not add more MPs, but MPs who represented higher population areas would be able to have more constituency staff to handle the casework, to make sure that the level of representation we give our constituents is beyond gold standard.

That is what we want to do. We want to be able to respond to the constituents who say they have been on the phone with Service Canada for nine hours, only to be hung up on and the call dropped. We do not have enough people in my office to deal with every single case that comes up, but we try.

What I would propose is that we look at the job of a member of Parliament. We do two things in this place. As our opening prayer by the Speaker suggests, we pass laws and make wise decisions, or at least we try. We debate public policy, as we are doing tonight. We also serve, in a completely different way, our constituents in a non-partisan way. We help them with their pensions, their passports, their unemployment insurance, their disabilities, the CRA, their need for help. We all have our issues. We work really hard to help our constituents.

Would we not have better representation if we did not just add to the number of members of Parliament in this place, but expanded the resources for those who are challenged by large population numbers or huge distances? A member of Parliament with a huge terrain to cover would have the budget to have offices in more locations to be more convenient for constituents. Representation by population may not be the most democratic way to ensure that Canadian democracy thrives.

Regardless of political stripe, we should all be troubled by what just happened in Ontario. Almost 60% of eligible voters did not turn out to vote. There are a number of theories for why that happened. That means a majority government that got 40% of the vote of the 43% of people who showed up elected a majority without the majority of public support. In fact, the Doug Ford government in Ontario has the active support, as measured by who went out to vote for him, of 18% of the Ontario public.

I am not blaming Doug Ford. The first-past-the-post voting system does not encourage voting. It is the minority of countries, by the way, that use first past the post. Countries with fair voting see people interested in turning out to vote.

• (1940)

[*Translation*]

Voter turnout in countries that use a proportional voting system is higher than in countries like ours, with our current voting system.

[*English*]

We could make a really big difference if we revived the Prime Minister's 2015 election campaign promise that 2015 would be the last election under first past the post. It is hard to revive that because we had elections in 2019 and 2021, but we could. We could and we should ask what is in the interest of democracy today. Is it adding more MPs to this place, increasing the cogs in the wheels of large political machines where people show up here and are told how to vote by their party whips, or is it making it more democratic by ensuring that everyone here and that Parliament as a whole represent accurately the way Canadians actually voted?

[*Translation*]

It is not too late to make this change. It is urgent.

[*English*]

I want to close the discussion on Bill C-14 by bringing us back to more fundamental questions: Can we improve the services we provide to our constituents? Can we ensure this place does not just expand forever as we have more population? Can we deliver real democracy that inspires Canadians?

Mr. Patrick Weiler (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague from Saanich—Gulf Islands for sharing some very insightful questions that came up at her public hearing for boundary redistribution. I am very interested because I have one coming up for own riding. I agree it is very troubling to see the level of turnout we just had in the Ontario election.

I also agree with the fact that we need to better support our constituency staff, who are doing incredible work. I am very grateful for the constituency staff I have. They make my job much easier and help so many constituents.

Given the low turnout we saw in Ontario, what would her thoughts be on the Government of Canada looking at a mandatory voting system along the lines of what countries such as Australia have?

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, I had promised another friend I would not mention the Special Committee on Electoral Reform, on which we both served, but one of the things we studied was whether mandatory voting makes a difference. We were tasked with looking at what voting system would be best for Canada. While I was a member of that committee, I discovered that the first time a parliamentary committee had studied first past the post was in 1921, and that parliamentary committee concluded that first past the post was not a system that worked for Canada.

Government Orders

In studying mandatory voting, I concluded it might be an improvement over what we have now, but it does not inspire people to vote. It makes people feel they have to vote, and I would rather inspire them to know their vote is really going to count.

Mr. Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, does the member believe British Columbia should have equal representation in the House of Commons? The band-aid solution we are applying here to Bill C-14 is really just avoiding the big questions our country is facing. Also, I would love to hear some more comments from the member on her interaction with the electoral commission about effective representation in rural Canada.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, I would like to put forward that the hon. member for Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon is such a good MP that he should not worry that he needs more people on his team. We, in British Columbia, represent our constituents well, and I do not think mere numbers make that much of a difference. He obviously is not in my party. I worry, actually, about the way the boundary commission proposes to split up Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon. As he will know, I am very attached to parts of that riding, particularly Ashcroft, and would like to see good representation continue.

As for the electoral commission, it was a good experience. I have to say, which has also been confirmed with other MPs, we are not finding a lot of our constituents are super interested in showing up at these hearings. Maybe they are not being well advertised. I do not know, but when voting time comes, I worry constituents who have lived in one riding will suddenly say they do not know where to vote. I worry about making too many small changes that are not necessary, such as on Vancouver Island, but I wish the hon. member for Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon very good luck in whatever is happening to his riding.

• (1945)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to the speech by my colleague from Saanich—Gulf Islands.

I would like her to explain something. On March 2, the Bloc Québécois moved a motion that my colleague supported. The motion sought to maintain Quebec's political weight and not have it lose a seat. The Bloc Québécois then presented Bill C-246, which was along the same lines as the motion that my colleague supported, but she voted against it.

Today, the government is trying to salvage the situation with Bill C-14. This bill seeks to preserve the number of seats, but not the political weight, because other seats could be added for other provinces outside Quebec.

Adjournment Proceedings

I would like my colleague to explain why she voted for the Bloc Québécois motion and then voted against the Bloc Québécois bill.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Saanich—Gulf Islands for a brief response.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, that is a very good question, and it will be difficult to answer briefly.

I had issues with the private member's bill designed to protect political weight. I am in favour of the principle, but the idea of a fixed percentage such as 25%, and not some other percentage, is an issue for me.

Maybe I was mistaken, but I am open-minded, which is why I am in favour of the principle. However, I am not in favour of the private member's bill. I am sorry.

The Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to order made earlier today, Motion No. 1 at report stage is deemed put and negatived on division.

The bill is deemed concurred in at the report stage on division and deemed read a third time and passed on division.

(Bill concurred in at report stage, read the third time and passed)

[*English*]

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. deputy government House leader.

Mrs. Sherry Romanado: Mr. Speaker, I am sure if you canvass the House, you will find unanimous consent to see the clock at midnight.

The Deputy Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

[*English*]

HEALTH

Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise in the House at this late hour to discuss an issue that has been on the minds of Canadians. Though it has been in the news this week, there is a lot more information, and we have a lot more questions than we have answers from the government. I am pleased that I will have the opportunity to get a response from the hon. parliamentary secretary on what metrics the government has used to arrive at some of the decision points it has taken over the last couple of days.

Yesterday, we heard an announcement that there would be a suspension of some of the COVID-related travel requirements that have been imposed by the government during COVID-19. The suspension signals to us the prospect that these will be brought forward later, so a few questions arise.

What were the metrics the government viewed yesterday that informed that decision? What was hospital capacity yesterday? What was the waste-water surveillance number telling it yesterday across the country? What was the R-naught yesterday telling it across the

country? What was the prevalence of COVID-19 detected with the random testing administered at our borders?

These questions, along with other epidemiological indicators the government has been relying on, would have informed the decision that it made yesterday, at least we hope they did. If they did, we are looking for an answer to what those numbers were yesterday. Why are the numbers important? It is because we need to tell Canadians how we will do in the future against that past performance. For that past performance, we will use yesterday as the benchmark.

Part of the concern comes from the day prior, when the government was saying it was unsafe for an individual who was unvaccinated to get on a plane with an individual who had two doses of one of the regular vaccines that have been offered in Canada for COVID, the Pfizer or the Moderna two-dose series. Yesterday, the Minister of Health told Canadians that having two doses is no longer effective, and at the same time said that it is now safe for people with two doses and people with no doses to get on a plane together. That is leaving Canadians with some mixed messages. They are confused.

Canadians want to know why the government made this announcement yesterday, what the conditions would have to be for the government to permanently end mandates and what the conditions would have to be for it to reintroduce them. That is what a lot of people have been asking me today. We are suspending them, but what would it have to look like for the government to reintroduce them?

People are worried about opening a small business this year. They are wondering about how many staff to take on. They are considering travel plans, whether they should fly out to see their mom and dad across the country or visit a loved one. What if we change the rules and they are not allowed to travel back?

The further contradiction that has come to pass is that a Canadian can travel in Canada on an aircraft, vaccinated or unvaccinated, but an unvaccinated individual cannot cross the border and then travel in the U.S. A vaccinated individual can. They can get on a plane and travel with vaccinated and unvaccinated folks. What magically happens at the border that the government does not want to allow folks who have not been vaccinated to come to Canada at this point, when we know that vaccinations are not preventing the transmission of COVID?

I am really looking for answers from the government today on how it arrived at those decisions yesterday and on what would trigger further decisions to end mandates.

Adjournment Proceedings

• (1950)

Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Sport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his collaboration on the health committee over the last couple of months. It has been challenging. That said, I would just caution that when we use language like “the vaccines do not prevent transmission and do not prevent this and that,” it limits all of those things. It is very well-founded that the vaccines are very, very good at limiting all of those factors and they have been very effective in keeping our communities safe, as the member well knows. He regularly states in the House, and I am glad that it is true, that his riding is one of the most vaccinated ridings in Canada. I am happy to hear that. That is fantastic.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of Canada has been supporting Canadians and the Government of Canada has implemented policies and public health measures to prevent the spread of infection. We have provided access to vaccines to minimize serious illness and death and we have worked hard to preserve health system capacity and reduce transmission to protect high-risk populations.

Just yesterday, as a result of all this good work, the Government of Canada was able to announce that we are suspending the vaccine mandate for federally regulated transportation sectors as well as federal employees.

With better levels of immunity from vaccination, the wider availability of antiviral drugs and lower hospitalization rates, Canada is now better equipped to effectively manage the COVID-19 pandemic and reduce pressure on the health care system.

While the suspension of vaccine mandates reflects an improved public health situation in Canada at this point in time, the COVID-19 virus continues to evolve and circulate in Canada and globally. COVID-19 remains a public health threat and staying up to date with vaccinations, including booster doses, remains the best line of defence against serious illness, hospitalization and death.

Because vaccination rates and virus control in other countries vary significantly, current vaccination requirements at the border will remain in effect. This will reduce the potential impact of international travel on our health care system and serve as an added protection against any future variant.

Vaccination continues to be one of the most effective tools to protect Canadians, including younger Canadians, our health care system, as well as our economy, and, as my colleague mentioned, to prevent lockdowns and to prevent more disruptions to small businesses.

The Public Health Agency of Canada has been providing guidance and advice related to the pandemic for more than two years. The agency will continue to review Canadian and international evidence and data from vaccine manufacturers to support public health decision-makers and program implementation. Additionally, it will work to address barriers to vaccination and improve confidence in the COVID-19 vaccine program through communication efforts.

The public health experts' guidance and advice regarding vaccine mandates was and will continue to be informed by the latest scientific evidence available. Effectiveness, availability and the uptake

of vaccines and the evolving domestic and international epidemiological situation, hospital and ICU capacity, long-range modelling, as well as the effectiveness of other public health measures to keep Canadians safe are also taken into consideration.

This pandemic is not over. I think we can all agree on that. Staying up to date with vaccinations, including booster doses, is absolutely critical. The Public Health Agency of Canada is working with provinces, territories, indigenous communities and stakeholders to examine vaccination strategies in both the short and the long term.

While my colleague was asking me the question, I did look up some numbers. In the worst weeks of this pandemic in Canada, we were averaging upward of 200 deaths per day. That is a massive number and a huge tragedy. Today the numbers are lower, thanks to all of the public health measures, and we are averaging 32 deaths a day, based on a seven-day average. This pandemic is clearly not over. If at any other time in our parliamentary careers or in our adulthood, we were experiencing something that causes 30 Canadian deaths a day, I think we could all agree it is of great concern.

A year or two ago, when we started talking about vaccinations, we all agreed in the House that vaccinations should not be a political issue. We all had to work together to ensure that our communities had all of the information necessary. We had a good campaign and I think we all have to recognize that the campaign is not over. We need to work together to keep our communities safe.

• (1955)

Mr. Michael Barrett: Mr. Speaker, another contradiction I want to address with the parliamentary secretary is that, two days ago, the Prime Minister announced that he tested positive for COVID-19. I was pleased to see him participate in proceedings in the House today, which tells us that it is mild, as he said on social media.

His office has now signalled that next week he is going to be travelling to Rwanda, to Germany and to Spain. This is inside 10 days. Someone who returns to Canada and is COVID-positive must self-isolate for 10 days. We have heard from the government over and over again that it wants to be cautious. Everything is about the precautionary principle.

What is the message the government is sending to Canadians when someone, within 10 days of being diagnosed with COVID, is going to travel to multiple countries and is going to travel by aircraft? Really, is that the cautious message the government says it has been sending?

Adjournment Proceedings

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Mr. Speaker, Canada's health measures have been and will continue to be based on review, analysis, expert opinion and science. We are going to continue to take into account the evolving scientific evidence related to the virus and its characteristics as well as its epidemiology. We will also consider emerging variants of concern, the value and impact of public health interventions and the impact of vaccination and vaccine effectiveness as we move forward. Again, staying up to date with vaccinations, including booster doses, remains the best line of defence against serious illness, hospitalization and death.

The waves of this pandemic have risen and fallen for more than two years now, and as they rise and fall, we shift our priorities accordingly. We continue to respond to the challenges that we face in the ongoing management of COVID-19.

I thank the member for his conversation tonight.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as always, it is a pleasure and privilege to rise in this place.

Today, I want to talk about Alberta and our economic recovery. For decades, Alberta has played an oversized role in Canada's economy, largely in part due to the oil and gas sector. During boom times, Alberta's GDP was the largest in Canada, the largest in North America and among the largest in the world. Even during the busts, Alberta workers were contributing more per capita to the building of Canada than any other province. For over 50 years, Alberta workers have helped make Canada a prosperous country. Now, Alberta workers need help and this government needs to be there for them.

Albertans know that climate change is real, and we know that our future cannot depend on oil and gas. Even now, when postpandemic demand is rising and Russia's illegal war in Ukraine is driving up the price of oil and natural gas, even now when fossil fuel corporations are making record profits while gouging Canadians at the pumps, even now we know that our future is not in oil and gas, because the jobs are simply not there.

When Alberta Conservatives were handing billions in corporate tax cuts to the sector over the past three years, oil and gas companies were laying off workers. When this government gave billions for oil well cleanup, it did nothing to create jobs or to mitigate pollution. Every day the evidence becomes clearer and clearer: Handing out public money to these massive corporations does not create jobs and it does not help workers. All it does is line the pockets of foreign investors.

Instead, this government needs to help Alberta. It needs to invest in Alberta to diversify our economy. For Canada to meet its climate obligations, for Canada to have a sustainable economy, for Canada to build an equitable and prosperous future for all, Canada needs to invest right now to help diversify Alberta's economy before it is too late.

This government has made multiple promises to workers for a just transition. We heard promises in 2019, and we heard promises in 2021, but we just have not seen it yet. I stand in this place and say that it is not unusual for us to hear the right words from this

government and not see the work follow through to make the actions happen.

There have been massive investments in Quebec's and Ontario's economies, but when it comes to Alberta, this government is missing. If it needs help determining what to do, I am here to help. There is a lot of opportunity in Alberta to develop a greener and more diversified economy. There is opportunity to create jobs right now and to bridge to the jobs of the future.

Right now, oil and gas workers need financial support through the transition and targeted education and retraining. Rachel Notley did it with coal by listening to workers and their communities. The formula is there.

Many of the impacted communities are indigenous where investment in post-secondary education and indigenous-run programs would have the greatest impact, programs like the Peace Athabasca Delta Institute, which needs federal investment to build an environmental monitoring and research facility. Instead of throwing money at oil companies for site cleanup, those funds should be directed to the Indian Resource Council's first nations site rehabilitation program to create jobs and economic opportunity where it matters the most. The Building Trades of Alberta's path forward program needs to retrain indigenous workers as well.

• (2000)

Ms. Julie Dabrusin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member opposite for raising the issue of the importance of protecting the environment, lowering emissions and creating good-paying, sustainable jobs for workers in Alberta.

Our government is committed to a just, equitable and prosperous transition that supports all regions, all communities and all workers. It is about creating good-paying, sustainable jobs for workers.

Since 2015, the Government of Canada has invested \$100 billion in clean growth, to ensure that Canada can seize the economic opportunity of tomorrow, that we collectively reduce our emissions and that workers from coast to coast to coast have the tools they need to thrive in the economy of the future.

We have also made numerous investments for clean energy futures in the member's province of Alberta. For instance, we have invested in the Alberta Carbon Trunk Line and the Suffield Solar Project, and we have funded the support of the operation of long-range fuel cell electric trucks between Calgary and Edmonton. These are a few of the many examples of our support for the energy workers in the beautiful province of Alberta. It is our support for sustainable jobs. These steps reflect our belief that hard-working and innovative Albertans will continue to play a pivotal role in building our great country and getting us to our ambitious climate targets to reduce emissions.

As the Minister of Natural Resources has told this chamber, budget 2022 included significant funding in the budget to work with Alberta, Saskatchewan and other provinces to diversify their economies. He mentioned that the \$4 billion for critical minerals, which will be particularly important for Alberta, is a part of that transition. The budget also included a tax credit to support investment in carbon capture technology. This will play a vital role in driving emissions down, particularly in hard to abate sectors such as steel and cement, while also creating or securing thousands of sustainable jobs for Albertans in the energy industry, including in the emerging biofuel and hydrogen sectors. That is on top of budget 2021's \$1.5-billion pledge to expand clean fuels, including biofuels and hydrogen.

Our government is also helping workers transition toward new opportunities. Budget 2021, for instance, included skills training measures to support close to 500,000 new opportunities for sustainable jobs for workers. Our government has committed to investing \$2 billion through the new futures fund to support local and regional economic diversification in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Newfoundland and Labrador, as well as to ensure that workers and communities are equipped to prosper as our country and the world moves to net zero.

I will point to the \$185 million we have invested to help coal workers and communities in provinces such as Alberta develop new skills and create new opportunities. We plan to build partnerships with every province, including Alberta, in the coming months, to identify and accelerate the highest growth opportunities in areas of strength for the province, such as carbon capture, hydrogen, biofuels and critical minerals. We will continue to work collaboratively with the Province of Alberta, with industry, with labour and workers to ensure that we move forward in a manner that will create a clean, low emission, prosperous economy for Albertans and all Canadians.

● (2005)

Ms. Heather McPherson: Mr. Speaker, I am asking the government to invest in Alberta's future by helping to diversify our economy. The Canadian critical drug initiative is the perfect example of a project that should be funded by the government. This initiative comes out of the University of Alberta in my riding of Edmonton Strathcona and it is led, in part, by a Nobel Prize-winning scientist, Dr. Michael Houghton.

This initiative would address the critical gap in Canadian capacity for development and manufacturing of the majority of medication used in Canada. This would allow the government to address Canada's vulnerability when it comes to global pharmaceutical sup-

ply chains, at the same time that it creates jobs and economic opportunities for Albertans. The government has invested in life science capacity in Montreal and elsewhere in Canada, but it has not addressed the critical vulnerability. This is an opportunity to invest in Alberta.

Will the government provide this funding?

Ms. Julie Dabrusin: Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw the member opposite's attention to another aspect of our government's just transition agenda for good-paying, sustainable jobs for Canadians. I am sure she knows that some companies are concerned about a skilled labour shortage during this transition. That is why we are so focused on skills training.

However, we also want to encourage more Canadians of diverse backgrounds to consider careers in the natural resources sector, and that includes getting more women to consider this option. This is one of the reasons why we are supporting affordable child care in every province and territory. Our government's work has already resulted in child care fees being cut in half for Alberta parents.

MARINE TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege tonight to rise to talk about a project we would like to see in our riding for a floating dry dock in the Alberni Valley. We have the only deep-sea port on the west coast of Vancouver Island, and we have an incredible company, Canadian Maritime Engineering, that is working in partnership with the City of Port Alberni and first nations and that is well supported in our region. We would like to see it expand and create a floating dry dock to fill the void of floating dry dock space, which is currently under incredible demands and pressures. I was at the Pacific Northwest Regional Economic Conference in 2018. It was cited that \$3 billion was needed annually for floating dry dock repair and maintenance, and that capacity was full.

When this project first came forward, BC Ferries provided a letter of support, citing the need for floating dry dock space. Mark Collins, the CEO and president of BC Ferries, visited the port himself. He wrote that letter of support and was pleased to support the application. We know that currently BC Ferries has set out \$3.5 billion to \$4 billion over the next 12 years in infrastructure for new vessels. It spends about \$150 million annually on ship repairs, which is quite significant.

Adjournment Proceedings

We know this has been a long-standing vision. I approached Transport Canada a few years back to talk about this important opportunity. It cited that there was no current funding mechanism available for floating dry docks, yet we have seen huge amounts of money invested through the national shipbuilding strategy, which is absolutely critical and important in Vancouver, Montreal and Halifax. We have the longest coastline in the world, so it is absolutely essential that we support marine infrastructure throughout our coastal communities, as Norway has done. Mr. Collins cited how Norway went on a robust program of developing its small ports for ship maintenance and repair, and as a result has built more resiliency in these local communities.

Not to take away from those important shipyards, but we have heard Irving Shipbuilding in your home province, Mr. Speaker, citing that it needs \$300 million more to fulfill its obligations for the national shipbuilding strategy. I am not saying that I am opposed to it, but I have to say that the frustration is real when we have an opportunity to fill dry dock needs right on Vancouver Island for the Pacific northwest. It may not be for the military, but certainly we could help and offer federal government supports when it comes to maintenance and repair for the Coast Guard. We have an incredibly skilled workforce right in Port Alberni. We have electricians and welders, as well as people who are working outside of the community who could return home. It is the most affordable place in southwestern British Columbia.

Right now the Province of B.C. is embarking on a very important and historic study to look at shipbuilding and to support the shipbuilding sector in British Columbia. The Minister of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation, Ravi Kahlon, said the province is developing a “comprehensive shipbuilding strategy [that] will allow B.C. to take full advantage of...coastal strengths and build a healthier, more sustainable marine economy”.

The Province of B.C. is going to need a federal partner, and I want to know that the federal government is going to be there to provide resources and help solve the problems we have. I am hoping that tonight we are going to hear from the minister that the government is going to be there to work with us, with our communities and with first nations. It is an important step toward reconciliation in the community where I live, and I think there is no better place than the Alberni Valley for this project.

● (2010)

Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Sport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague and friend for his advocacy for his neighbours. I would also like to thank him for his recent work on his private member's bill on decriminalization. It is so important and I was proud to support it in the way that I could. Let me put it that way. I have a lot of respect for the member and I want to support that work as best as I can.

The member is probably wondering why the parliamentary secretary for health and sport is answering a question about transportation. I am filling in for a colleague tonight. Many will also appreciate that I have spent some time on the water, so maybe I can do it some justice.

This government's overarching goal is to ensure that Canada's transportation system supports our ambitious economic growth and jobs creation agenda. Canadians require a safe, reliable and sustainable transportation system that facilitates trade and the movement of both people and goods.

To advance sustainable growth, Canada's system of Canadian port authorities is responsible for leading infrastructure development on federal port lands. Working at arm's length from the federal government, Canadian port authorities are governed by boards of directors, who are relied upon for setting the strategic direction and managing operations, including securing financing for infrastructure improvements.

Recognizing that global supply chains continue to be disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, labour shortages, the growing impacts of climate and other key factors, it is a priority to ensure that Canadian supply chains are resilient and fluid. Building on the National Supply Chain Summit that was held in late January, the Minister of Transport also created a Supply Chain Task Force which is consulting broadly with industry associations and experts to examine key pressures and make recommendations regarding short-term and long-term actions to strengthen the efficiency, fluidity and resiliency of transportation infrastructure and the reliability of Canada's supply chain.

In addition, the Government of Canada has dedicated considerable funding to Canada's trade and transportation infrastructure through the \$4.2-billion national trade corridors fund. As of March 2022, approximately \$2.1 billion in funding has been announced for 102 strategic projects across Canada, which are leveraging more than \$4.4 billion in total infrastructure investments from private and public partners for air, marine, rail and road projects across every province and territory. Through the national trade corridors fund, the government took immediate action to address current supply chain challenges and launched a dedicated \$50-million call for proposals to relieve supply chain congestion at Canadian ports, which were closed in February.

In addition, the government continues to invest to improve Canada's trade corridors through the call for proposals to increase the fluidity of supply chains, which closed at the end of March. Furthermore, the Canada Infrastructure Bank has announced important investments into port infrastructure, including \$300 million into the Contrecoeur container terminal at the port of Montreal.

The government is investing in Canada to promote rapid and sustainable growth and that is why the government will continue to support Canada's ports.

I thank my hon. colleague for this important conversation.

• (2015)

Mr. Gord Johns: Mr. Speaker, it was not long ago that we had a Conservative government that removed a tariff of 25% for those who wanted to build ferries outside of our country. That money could have been used to develop shipyards in our country. We hear from Conservatives that they want faster and cheaper ships built outside of Canada. We know we can do better.

Right now, the Liberals still are not investing in small shipyards. I appreciate the effort they are making with the national shipbuilding strategy, but they have not done that. We have invited transport minister after transport minister to come to our community to meet with the Port Alberni Port Authority to hear about this great opportunity, to meet with first nations and the City of Port Alberni. We have had support from, as I said, BC Ferries and many others.

We have done a third party assessment of this proposal and it is coming out with solid support, yet there are still no supports. We know that we do not currently deal with ship-breaking, for example, in the right way. This could be an opportunity, as well, for us to fulfill our environmental obligations, which we are not fulfilling.

Hopefully, we will be able to work together on developing this important piece of infrastructure.

Mr. Adam van Koevorden: Mr. Speaker, like the member, I have important infrastructure projects in my riding as well, including ones for transportation. I can tell him that we have benefited from recent investments and I would be happy to work with the member on future projects in his riding as well.

Adjournment Proceedings

The Government of Canada is committed to supporting Canada's ports as they are critical for Canada's economic recovery from COVID-19 and beyond. Consequently, the government will continue to invest in infrastructure at Canada's ports.

We look forward to supporting key port infrastructure projects with the additional \$1.9 billion that was announced in budget 2022 for the national trade corridors fund. To date, the national trade corridors fund has committed nearly \$500 million toward port and marine infrastructure development proposals across Canada to support Canadian trade, which is leveraging more than \$1 billion in total investments with public and private partners.

This government has always aimed to invest in Canada to promote strong and sustainable economic growth. Canada's ports will play a key role in achieving this goal in the future and through the proposals they are able to advance under the national trade corridors fund.

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: The motion that the House do now adjourn is deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 8:18 p.m.)

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